

BOOK OF HIDDEN PATHS

Random Encounters in Pathfinder 2.0

Douglas Sun

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Random Encounters in Pathfinder

by Douglas Sun

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"Still round the corner there may wait
A new road or a secret gate,
And though we pass them by today,
Tomorrow we may come this way
And take the hidden paths that run
Towards the Moon or to the Sun."

— JRR Tolkien,
The Fellowship of the Ring



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INTRODUCTION

Random encounters have been part of fantasy RPGs for a long, long time — since before *Pathfinder* was even born. I have on my desk before me my copy of the *AD&D Dungeon Masters Guide*, much worn at the corners after 40 years and David Sutherland's iconic cover art marred by scuff marks. Towards the back, there's a big appendix that addresses the subject of unplanned creature encounters and how to introduce them into a campaign. I remember being much intrigued by the notion — the serendipity of the DM making things happen without having planned them in advance. Just as in life, an event could come at you seemingly out of nowhere, and it would be as much a surprise to the person running the game as to the players. And there were the encounter tables. So many tables, so rife with possibilities....

But for all those tables — crunchy, concrete things that should tell you everything you need to know — I felt there was something lacking that kept them from being truly useful:

Okay, so I roll my percentile dice and check the result for the environment through which the party is traveling. It turns up, "Orc."

Right. Presumably, there's more than one orc. So it really should be, "Orcs." But how many orcs are there? What are they doing here — which, in turn helps answer the related and all-important question, how do they react to meeting the party? It would help to have some cues to jump-start the encounter.

But there is no further guidance. Instead, I imagine Gary Gygax glaring at me, visibly annoyed: "Whaddyou mean? It's orcs. Deal with it."

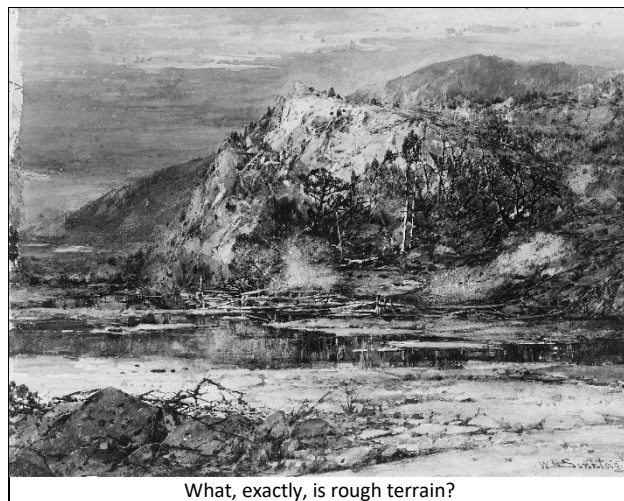
I suppose the expectation was that I would just go to the *Monster Manual* and figure it out from there. But even with the information in the *Monster Manual*, the process felt less helpful than it should have been. For another thing, there wasn't any discussion of how to decide the appropriate terrain type. Again: "Whaddyou mean? A forest is a forest. Sheesh." Which seems sufficient on the surface, but when you pick apart the question this only leads you to more questions, like, what makes a forest a forest instead of a few trees in the middle of a plain? Or, what exactly is rough terrain?

Since then, fantasy RPGs have usually mentioned random encounters and included guidance on how to cope with them. They have become so firmly entrenched that they're standard kit in fantasy CRPGs and video games that have drafted in the wake of *Dungeons & Dragons*.

However, the *Pathfinder 2nd Edition* core rules have little to say about them. Personally, I find this a curious and unfortunate omission and I believe that the game deserves a deeper exploration of how and why random encounters happen.

Hence this book. My purpose in *Book of Hidden Paths* is to give you more precise and thorough guidance on how to create random encounters in your campaign than what you find in the *Pathfinder* core rules. The *Pathfinder* OGL includes a pretty wide range of living (and undead) things that can pop out of nowhere and bare fangs at your party, and this book includes creatures from each of the three *Bestiaries* that have been published at the time of this writing. Each of the ten chapters defines and encompasses a different type of environment and includes a series of tables that cover a broad range of credible encounters for that environment. Yes, random encounters can and do happen in towns and cities, but I'd like to treat them as a different subject for a different book; *Book of Hidden Paths* limits itself to wilderness encounters. For each creature, you'll find a discussion of how it's likely to react to your party and how many of them your party encounters — an array of possibilities from how to break a wild horse to what's running through the mind of that ancient red dragon wheeling overhead.

But first, let's take a step back and discuss what random encounters represent and why they should exist at all.



What, exactly, is rough terrain?

But first, let's take a step back and discuss what random encounters represent and why they should exist at all.

What a Brave New World

I once gave a talk at GenCon on anime and games that was really a talk about adapting licensed properties into marketable games. In preparing it, I came to realize why it is more difficult to adapt some movies, shows and novels into an RPG than it is with others. An RPG setting

requires that the players can carve out a space inside it that belongs to their characters first and foremost. They can (and probably should) have the chance to intersect with canonical characters and events, but the game needs to belong to your group and their characters alone. Some imaginary worlds make it fairly easy to do this, while others don't. For instance, it's easier to turn the Star Trek universe into a viable RPG than *The Lord of the Rings* and Middle Earth. I won't go off the rails and discuss exactly why this is so, but in my experience it is so.

Likewise, your *Pathfinder* campaign reveals to your players part of a larger world — that is to say, they experience only part of your entire campaign setting. It feels like a complete experience, but that is because they make that part wholly their own. You may have a vast and wonderful world between Heaven above and the Earth below laid out like a glorious buffet for your players, but chances are they're only going to experience part of it. What they actually experience is limited to their individual angles of vision — that is, what they can see, hear and touch. Even if they can scry — and scry like the scrying-est wizard that ever cast *scrying* — they're only going to come into direct contact with a fraction of what is in your world. There's simply too much going on the background, beyond the player characters' ability to perceive it. Like sprites in a video game, except that you can't zoom in wherever you want to get a closer look at them.

Random encounters represent a collision between what is seen and what was, until just now, unseen in your world. Something that was unknown to your players — even to you as GM — now emerges into their awareness. What happens when those bubbles bounded by the range of perception collide becomes the core of the encounter.

In that sense, random encounters represent what military terminology calls a meeting engagement. Both sides stumble upon each other, not knowing for sure that the other was there. It's a spontaneous occurrence, one not fully anticipated by either side when they set out from their base. One side may have more time to prepare because it becomes aware of the other side's presence first, but it's all relative in a situation like this. You don't know about that gnomish raiding party until it crests the top of the hill that you're climbing, and likewise, they didn't know about you, either.

Open System, Not Closed

Random encounters give the appearance of coming out of thin air because they represent the inevitable loose ends in the vast fabric of your campaign world, the places where you haven't filled in the details, but there could be

something happening there. Those gnolls cresting the hill came from somewhere; they have a lair that serves as their home base. You just didn't figure out that they were there before you rolled up the encounter. Or perhaps you knew that there were gnolls in the area, but you didn't know that they had sent out these scouts, or this raiding party with which your player characters now find themselves nose-to-nose.



In this sense, your campaign world is an open system, or at least, a system with Swiss cheese-like openings in it. Unless you have determined and continually oversee every square mile of it, there are bound to be places — quite a lot of them, actually — where it's not certain what is going on there. You can think of random encounters as events that emerge from those undetermined spaces.

By the way, that's why I never fully bought into using random encounters in dungeons. That random encounters appendix in the AD&D *DMG* spends rather a lot of time on them, apparently on the assumption that you can encounter almost anything at any time in a dungeon (as long as the encounters get more difficult the lower down you go).

This isn't to disparage good, old-fashioned dungeon crawls. There's nothing wrong with descending into the depths and just hacking away at whatever happens to be there. But I think of dungeons as closed systems. Compared to the vast wilderness, they're small and self-contained. As the GM, you have no doubt put some work into pre-determining who and what is in them, and this puts tight limits on what your party could plausibly encounter outside of your script. Whatever gets added to the experience through a random encounter really ought to be subtracted from a known location in the dungeon, because otherwise the how and why behind its presence is just too improbable.

That's the main reason that I do not cover dungeons in this book (natural cavern systems are another matter, and Chapter 1 addresses them). Wilderness is an open system, or at least mostly open. A dungeon is a closed system.

Unplanned, Not Planned

Another way to look at random encounters is to understand that they are not to be confused with the encounters that you have mapped out and planned for your party as part of the narrative framework of your campaign. They're things that happen along the way as your party goes from Point A to Point B. In a world in which traveling from one place to another can take quite a long time, it leaves open the possibility that something exciting can happen in between.

The Monsters We Met Along the Way

In *The Odyssey*, Odysseus' overarching goal is to return to Ithaca and reclaim his kingdom and the boss monster battle is his fight with Penelope's suitors. Taken one-by-one, they don't look much like boss monsters, but you can think of them as a single, massed opponent — not quite like the component parts of Voltron coming together, but still a good fixed encounter. Put in that context, many of the episodes in Odysseus' journey up to his meeting with Nestor can be viewed as random encounters. When you put the entire picture together, they show us Odysseus' persistence and fortitude, but in the moment episodes like the Cyclops and the Sirens seem like things that just popped out at him and his crew from out of nowhere.

However, they are a different matter from the encounters that you have planned as signposts for your party. Of course, you will have places that your party must go and obstacles that they must overcome in order to complete the quest and fulfill their destinies as

heroes. That's the frame on which you hang your campaign. They're the things that have to happen if everything is going to make sense in the end. You're going to lay those out in advance, you can't leave them to a random encounter table. This book is not meant to supplant them.

But if random encounters are not part of the structural framework of a campaign, they're not essential to the narrative; so why have they always been part of fantasy RPGs? I suspect that the answer lies in the origins of *Dungeons & Dragons* in the mythology of quests and adventure. Those great, timeless stories have boss monsters and overarching goals, as well as incidents along the way that are crucial to the narrative line. But the journey through dangerous and unfamiliar territory — and the persistent feeling of unseen menace that comes with it — is also a key ingredient of those myths. In *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* Joseph Campbell calls it the Journey into the Unknown.

For instance, you find this feeling in Arthurian romance, particularly the tales of the quest for the Holy Grail. The landscape through which the Knights of the Round Table make their way feels vast and mysterious even to the modern reader, who can step back and realize that we're talking about an area no larger than part of the British Isles. There's no escaping the sense that this is a spawning ground for hazards as yet unknown. Translated into roleplaying games, random encounters represent this mood of journeying into the unknown made material. You won't find a Questing Beast because it isn't in any of the *Bestiaries*, but even so *Book of Hidden Paths* offers you a wide range of unpredicted encounters, both wondrous and somewhat mundane. A random meeting with a chimera ought to do in its stead.

Not the End of the World, Perhaps the Beginning of... Something

That being said, I do want to make it clear that I don't intend anything in *Book of Chance Meetings* to upend your plans for your campaign. I don't see the role of random encounters as anything so drastic. They should add spice to your campaign — an ongoing feeling of dreadful anticipation about what lies over the next hill, or what could be concealed by those trees along the way to where your party really needs to go — but they should not cancel what you have in mind. Unless, of course, you want them to provide you with guidance, in which case, I say, have at it and use them to improvise as much meaningful detail as you like.

To that end, you will find that the guidance for scaling encounters to fit your party's level tries to err on the side of not testing them too severely (see the next part of the

Introduction, “How to Use This Book”). In cases where the encounter is just going to be too much monster for your party’s average level, you always have the option of re-rolling for a more reasonable encounter, as far as I’m concerned. For a 1st Level party to tramp through a marshy river delta only find itself face-to-face with a froghemoth — well, that’s just not going to end in a satisfying manner for anyone but the froghemoth.

On the other hand, you can look at random encounters as serendipitous opportunities to gain resources. Treasure from a defeated monster, a wild horse or even a griffon that someone in your party wrangles and tames into a mount, or a meeting with locals who are willing to share what they know about the area — all of these things can come from random encounters as well.

Friendly encounters can offer your party a sidequest that provides them with a quick break from the main thrust of your campaign. Every long story needs a change of pace, and maybe accompanying an understaffed caravan through dangerous country, or tagging along with some hobgoblin mercenaries in the middle of a war, is just the thing for your party right now.

Also, if your party happens to be down a player character or two and you’re looking for an opportunity to introduce their replacements, random encounters can provide you with one. Did your party rescue someone held captive by bandits? Did they somehow persuade a cleric-turned-hermit to leave his or her life of devotional solitude for adventure and glory? There you go, then. Instead of adding a friendly NPC, let a player run the character as a PC.

Random encounters are still one of the most intriguing aspects of fantasy RPGs. However, I think that it also continues to receive a less thorough treatment than it deserves, at least in the canonical sources. I hope that *Book of Hidden Paths* is, at least, a step toward redressing that lack. I hope that it makes life easier for you GMs when you roll for a random encounter and the die tells you, “Well, *something* happens,” and that it helps you come up with something for your players that is not only engaging, but logically consistent with your campaign world.



HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Having discussed some of the deep background and meta-level thinking behind *Book of Hidden Paths*, let's get closer to ground level. So: How exactly do you use this book?

First of all, you need the *Pathfinder* core rulebooks. *Book of Hidden Paths* doesn't include creature stats and it refers to but doesn't reproduce NPC templates; you'll have to go to the source for that information. It refers to various rules mechanics (especially skill and attribute checks, but also certain rules regarding conditions and hazards) that are explained in the core rulebooks, but not here. Last but by no means least, *Book of Hidden Paths* refers you to the tables in the core rules for determining the composition of treasure.

With that stated for the record and out of the way, here's the executive summary of how to use this book: First, decide what type of terrain you should use and go the corresponding chapter. Then, roll on the first table in that chapter (Table X.1) to determine the encounter category. Then, roll on the appropriate category table (Table X.2-6) to determine the creature encountered. Finally, consult the entry for that creature and, if necessary, roll on the indicated sub-table (Table X.X.X) for more specific information. At that point, you should be ready to set up the encounter for your party and, as appropriate, go for the total party kill. Good luck.

Each chapter is set up to reflect this flow (although the part about the TPK is strictly up to you), but here's a more detailed breakdown:

Step 1: Decide Where You Are

The frequency with which random encounters occur is really a matter of taste. The *Pathfinder 2nd Edition* core rules offer no guidance in this regard. Reaching back into history (which is never a bad guide for anything) the *AD&D DMG* suggests a 1-in-12 or 1-in-10 chance of wilderness encounters, depending on whether the area is partially or entirely settled. It recommends checking at intervals throughout the day, two to six times depending on the terrain type. Personally, I don't see the need to vary so widely by terrain type. So if you're really counting on me to tell you what to do, I recommend a 1-in-10 chance of a random encounter, checked three times per day — twice while traveling and one while taking an extended rest (just to see if anything rouses your party while it's asleep). In the end it's up to you as GM to decide how often to check and what probability to use.

Once you have decided that a random encounter is in order, you need to figure out the terrain in which it takes place. *Book of Hidden Paths* divides your campaign world into ten different basic terrain types, with each chapter covering a different type. A brief definition of that terrain opens each chapter, and I hope this helps in instances where the questions of which one to use seems muddled. For instance, let's say your party is investigating a stand of trees in the middle of a vast plain. Are they in a forest, or grasslands? The beginning of each chapter should help you work that out.



First, decide what type of terrain you should use.

You should also decide the climate zone in which the encounter takes place, because this can influence the likelihood of encountering certain creatures. Beneath some tables, you will find a die-roll modifier based on the regional climate, as influenced by its latitude. For this purpose, *Book of Hidden Paths* divides your world into three climate zones: sub-arctic, temperate and tropical.

Sub-arctic covers tundra as well as more temperate regions that are still influenced by polar climate (north and south). It's cold or kind of cold most of the year, and it snows rather than rains. Alaska, Scandinavia, Southern Argentina and Chile are all examples of sub-arctic areas. This book uses "temperate" as more or less interchangeable with "subtropical." These regions are marked by distinct, but not necessarily extreme, seasonal

temperature variations. When the seasons change, you notice it. The Mediterranean Basin, Southern Africa, most of the United States and most of China fall in the temperate band.

Tropical describes regions along the equator and just off to either side of it. Tropical regions receive more sunlight than other parts of the world, so they're hotter and wetter than anywhere else — unless you're talking about mountains and deserts, but even then they're going to be hotter than similar places in the other climate zones. Hence, in this sense, tropical climate covers the Sahara Desert just as it does the rainforests of Brazil and Southeast Asia and the islands of Polynesia.

Step 2: What Manner of Beast Is It?

Once you've settled the question of environment, go to the appropriate chapter, consult the first table — the top-level table — and get your d20 working to determine the category of creature. *Book of Hidden Paths* organizes encounters into six categories:

Aggressive Creatures. This covers natural predators like lions and tigers as well as out-and-out monsters, like frost worms and gibbering moutherers. While varying in appearance, all of them share the instinct to attack first. With relatively intelligent monsters such as trolls, they may try to intimidate your party before they try to kill them, but in any case violence and predation always lie just beneath the surface of the encounter. This category also includes insects, snakes and spiders — which may seem like unlikely company for the likes of medusas and yeth hounds, but they're here under the assumption that if you're close enough to notice them they instinctively lash out at you. An encounter from this category means that your party is almost certainly in for a fight.

Defeating creatures from this table does not yield treasure unless so noted.

Neutral Creatures. On the other hand, not every interesting encounter automatically leads to a fight. Prey animals (like moose and boar) and wild animals like bears and elephants attack your party only if provoked. In these cases, you as GM have the option of requiring a skill check — usually Survival or Nature — from your party if they wish to avoid an animal attack. If they demonstrate sufficient survival skill or book-knowledge of how to deal with animals, they get off clean; if not, someone makes a false move that provokes the animal to attack. This category also includes creatures that can be tamed or befriended, such as horses and benign fey creatures. The entry for that creature may include mechanics for turning it into a useful companion.

In addition, *Book of Hidden Paths* treats certain intelligent monsters — in particular, dragons — as neutral rather than aggressive because it is quite possible that intimidation and violence just won't be part of the encounter. For one thing, their alignment may dictate that they are indifferent or even friendly unless your party convinces them to act otherwise. More important, they are intelligent beings capable of making complex plans and dealing with your party would be a pointless distraction from them. Perhaps they just have more important things to do than to kill your player characters.

Defeating creatures from this table does not yield treasure unless so noted.

Humanoids. Simply put, this category covers anyone and anything classified as humanoid in the *Bestiaries*. It also includes popular PC ancestries such as elves and dwarves, but also classic bad guys like orcs and gnolls. It's just as simple as that, with the nature of the encounter depending on the type of humanoid you rolled up.

Unless so noted, you may assume that humanoids carry treasure even when away from their lairs.

"Umm.... You got this."

When the text suggests (or calls for) your party to make a skill check in dealing with creatures, you may handle it in either of two ways. You may have your players designate one party member to step forward and deal with the creature, in which case the result hangs on that one character's skill check. Or you may treat it as a sort of group check, in which all party members must make the skill check. In this case, however, all must succeed in order for the check to succeed, but if only one party member fails, the check fails.

Humans. Think of this category as one that covers professions rather than creatures. Some encounters with sentient beings are bound to focus on what they're doing when your party comes upon them, and the matter of their ancestry is less important than that. They may be merchants traveling between settlements, hunters out looking for game, or bandits on the lookout for a different kind of prey. That activity and how it defines them determines how they're equipped and how they react to your party. They may or not be human — the composition of the group is a matter of your discretion. I call this category "Humans" only to reflect the fact that in *Pathfinder*, as in fantasy in general, humans are the measure of all things; everyone else is defined by how they differ from them, and humans have a versatility and scope of self-definition that is allowed to no one else.

Unless so noted, you may assume that humans carry treasure even when away from their home base.

Watch Out! This category covers incidental hazards presented by objects rather than creatures, or even by the terrain itself (such as quicksand). There's nothing here that will make headlines, just a little harassment to add some flavor to your campaign and remind your party that the adventuring life is not all glory.

Step 3: Determine What's There

After you settle on a terrain type and roll up the encounter category, go the appropriate category table and get your polyhedral dice going to determine the encounter more precisely. Consult the entry for that creature. In some cases, you will have to roll on a sub-table to determine the creature encountered. In some chapters, types of fey even have their own sub-sub-tables. The *Bestiaries* have a lot of fey.

Each entry has a notation indicating which *Bestiary* volume — *B1*, *B2* or *B3* — contains the entry for that creature.

Step 4: Consider Why and Reckon How Many

The rest of the entry provides you with guidance for shaping the encounter. Each entry contains three types of information: a discussion of why this creature is here and what it is doing — which, in turn, influences how it reacts when it discovers your party; how many of them are present; and of course, what treasure is to be had by defeating them (if any).

First off, I try to address the lack of guidance that I mentioned earlier as my biggest problem with how random encounters are generally presented. Here, you'll find suggestions regarding why that creature is in that place at that moment, what it has in mind and how it might react to meeting your party. In any event, the precise details of the encounter depend on where it happens in *your* campaign world and what *your* party is doing. I can't provide you with that level of finish, but I can at least give you some raw material from which you can shape the final product.



There is an underlying "why" behind every creature encounter.

The Griffon Whisperer

Many entries specify that you may (or must) have one or more party members make a skill check of some sort to determine how creatures react to their presence. In many cases, the results are simple and binary: succeed, and it doesn't attack; fail and it gets angry — and you won't like it when it's angry. However, in some situations it's helpful to distinguish between critical success and ordinary success, and/or critical failure and ordinary failure. In these cases, *Book of Hidden Paths* spells out the full range of possibilities, formatted in a way that should look familiar to a Pathfinder GM, and generally playing out along these lines:

Critical Success: The creature reacts favorably to your party. It is willing to use its spells, special abilities or other valuable resources to help them, as seems appropriate.

Success: The creature is, at worst, indifferent to your party. It may or may not choose to wave "hello" as they pass.

Failure: At best, the creature remains aloof to your party. It may warn them to stay away, but it does not attack immediately.

Critical Failure: Whatever your party did or said, the creature construes it in the worst possible way. It attacks first, regardless of whether or not it intends to ask questions later.

Most entries assume that you are running a Level 1 party through its paces. Regardless of whether or not this is the case, *Scaling the Encounter* gives you advice for matching the challenge to the average level of your party. Determine the average level of your party by adding together each party member's level and dividing the sum by 4, fractions rounded down. For instance, the average level of a party consisting of six Level 5 characters would be 7 for this purpose: $5 \times 6 = 30$; $30 \div 4 = 7.5$, rounded down to 7.

In many cases, ratcheting the creature's stats up or down according to the rules for elite or weak encounters should work just fine. However, *Book of Hidden Paths* encompasses so many creatures and player characters of all levels that tinkering of this sort won't always yield a satisfying result.

In these cases, I suggest scaling up the encounter using a formula expressed as a ratio of number of antagonists to your party's level. Here, you should round up fractions.

For instance, I suggest that you scale up an encounter with wyverns so that the encounter group consists of one elite for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level. For a party with an average level of 12, this generates 1.2 elite wyverns, which you should round up to two.

Fortune Favors the Bold

Personally, I see nothing wrong with allowing for variability in how much (or how little) treasure a party can snag in a given period of time. I have always felt that uncertainty is part of the excitement of a roleplaying game, and coping with a lack, or a surfeit, of money is an appropriate and engaging challenge. As every "Cowboy Bebop" fan knows, the most compelling stories can come out of the worst luck with money. Conversely, as Deng Xiaoping famously reminded us all, "It is glorious to get rich."

Encounters drawn from this book should tax your party's resources just enough to be engaging. They're not supposed to be boss fights. Unless you can somehow integrate them into the main thrust of your campaign, they are meant to be entertaining accents to your campaign; they need not interfere at all with your overall plan. Notwithstanding what I said earlier about total party kills, if you have a strong plan for your campaign, it would pretty well screw things up if your party was wrecked by a random bunch of drow just as they turned a blind corner in a cavern complex, no matter how sophisticated a backstory you work up for why they are even there in first place.

Finally, you may find important information under the *Treasure* sub-heading. No doubt, someone in your party, like Igor in *Dork Tower*, spent an action to ready his treasure sack. Not every entry has notes regarding treasure, because some creatures just won't have anything to loot; for instance, wild animals don't bring money with them when they leave their lairs. But monsters that strike from within their lairs (like will-o-wisps, for instance) or swallow their victims whole should have something worth taking once you've dealt with them — slit open a cave worm and it's Christmas morning, but with guts and ichor instead of bows and wrapping paper. Most humanoids maintain a sufficient level of material culture so that they carry something of value and they almost certainly keep some wealth and possessions in their home base.

As for tallying up the treasure, that's going to require treating the guidance in the core rules like putty that you shape to your purpose instead of stone into which rules are carved. *Pathfinder 2nd Edition* has you allot treasure to your party based on a rigid structure in which you dole out a certain amount during the time it takes for your

party to progress from one level to the next. This doesn't allow for much spontaneity, or account for variations in the amount of treasure that different creatures might plausibly have. The system presented in the core rules assumes that you're mapping everything out in advance — just the opposite of allowing for random encounters.

As a compromise between the spirit of spontaneity that *Book of Hidden Paths* embraces and the commitment to orderly progression underlying the guidance in the core rules, I suggest the following: On the assumption that 10-15 encounters of moderate difficulty should advance your party one level, the total value of treasure found in a lair should equal 20% of the total value of the treasure that you're supposed to dole out according to your party's current level, rounded up to the nearest gp. So if your party is Level 1 and they have just destroyed a small kobold tribe in their lair, they have 18 gp worth of treasure available to loot.

If your party defeats treasure-bearing creatures away from their lair, they can still loot them for their pocket change. In this case, the total haul equals 5% of the total value of the treasure that you're supposed to dole out according to your party's current level, rounded up to the nearest gp. This is as close as I can get to embracing the reality that random encounters will produce variable rewards for your party without throwing out the core rules entirely.

A Note on Morale, or: "Run Away!"

And that, in sum, is how to use the material in Chapters 1-10.

However, I'd like to address one more topic before setting you loose on them: that of group morale. Your players, of course, decide how much of a fight their characters put up, and as GM you control the actions of NPCs. But what about monsters? Do they have the option to fight or flee? And if so, when and how does it kick in? This is another question that has long dogged me about how to handle encounters. Does it make sense that creatures inevitably fight to the last bugbear, or does it make more sense that if you kill enough of them, the rest cut and run?

I'd say this question is especially pertinent to random encounters. If they're defending their lair, yes, it makes sense that creatures would fight to the death. But as I remarked earlier, I see random encounters as meeting engagements in which the two sides come together by accident. In most cases, there's nothing territorial at stake, no hearth and home to protect. Without so much riding on the outcome of the fight, why would creatures — even mindlessly aggressive ones — fight your party to end?

If this question has occurred to you, too, I suggest the following:

At the beginning of the round after the first enemy creature becomes dead or incapacitated, compare the total levels of the remaining enemy creatures to the average level of the characters in your party that are not dead or incapacitated. For this purpose, treat level 0 creatures as 2/3 level; level -1 creatures as 1/2 level; and level -2 creatures as 1/3 level. Treat weak creatures as one increment below their normal level. Treat elite creatures as two increments above their normal level. If the enemy levels are no more than half of your party's average level, make a Will check on the enemies' behalf against your party's highest Intimidation DC. If the check succeeds, the creatures remain committed to the fight, but you should make the check again at the beginning of every subsequent round as long as the remaining enemy levels are no more than half of your party's average level, until the check fails or until all of the enemy are dead or incapacitated. If the check fails, they withdraw, moving directly away from your party and leaving their casualties behind.

Sometimes I Repeat Myself, and At Other Times I Repeat Myself

No doubt, you will notice some repetition from chapter to chapter, that the entry for a particular creature bears a striking resemblance to the entry for that creature in a different chapter. This is not a coincidence — nor do I consider it laziness on my part. For one thing, standardizing expression is an important part of writing rules; it lets you know at a glance that this thing here is basically the same as that thing over there, and you can move on. Like shorthand, it allows you to digest information more efficiently.

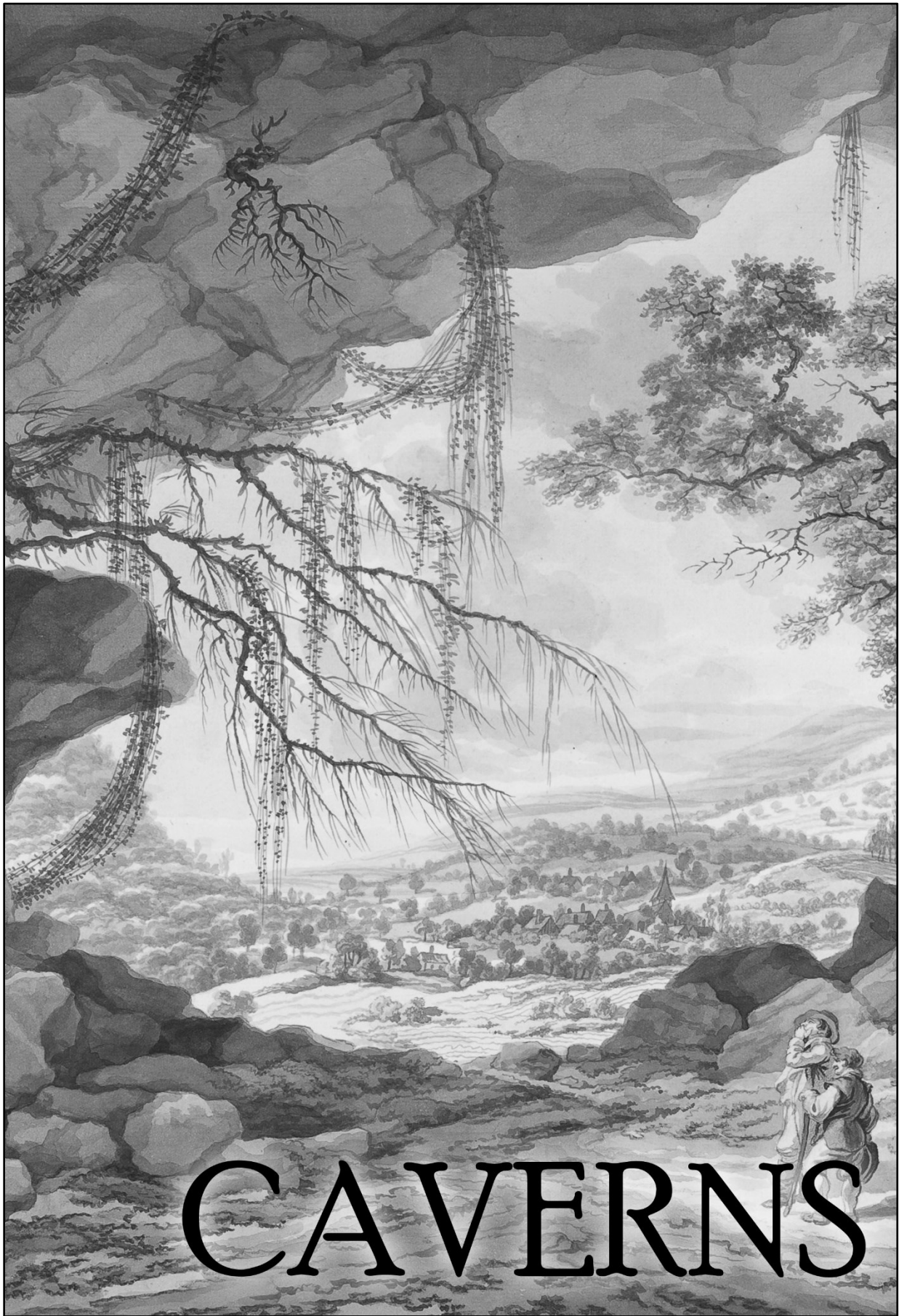
For another, a creature's essential nature doesn't change much depending on the terrain. So its likely motivations and actions will not vary significantly from one environment to the other and there's no point in pretending otherwise. Orcs are not vicious marauders when you encounter them in hill country, but gentlemen farmers in the plains.

them adds to its credibility, and using your party's highest Intimidation DC as a proxy for their ability to put mortal fear into an enemy gives them a subtle, but credible way to express their heroism.



If the enemy is a single creature and not a group, the enemy Will check is triggered when the creature is reduced to half of its hp or lower.

You may use this mechanic or not, at your discretion. I offer it because I think that giving your enemy the option to break off an encounter when it's clearly going against



CHAPTER ONE

Caverns and the Underground

What are Caverns?

First of all, it's important to establish what "caverns" means in the context of this book. You can find a hole in the ground or a small cave, one that can house a couple of bears or a penny packet of goblin marauders, almost anywhere. Caverns, on the other hand, are networks of chambers and connecting passages closed off from direct sunlight. They're large enough to form an ecosystem of their own and they host a variety of creatures great and small. The network of caves that serves as an apartment building for various evil humanoid tribes in that most venerable of *Dungeons & Dragons* modules, *The Keep on the Borderlands*, is a classic example of caverns under this definition. Those you who came to *Pathfinder* from *D&D* may also recognize the Underdark in the *Forgotten Realms* as an epic example.



Even a large cavern is an enclosed space.

Caverns run deep into the earth, but they may also be carved out of hillsides and mountainsides. In all cases they are by definition spaces closed off from direct sunlight, open sky and, to a substantial extent, fresh air. Therefore, this chapter uses terms like "subterranean" and "underground" somewhat loosely, in that a cavern that burrows into the side of a mountain at 10,000 feet above sea level is just as subterranean as one that delves into the bowels of the earth.

Caverns represent the most harrowing environment you can find on the Material Plane. Not only are they physically and psychologically grueling, but they are home turf to a menagerie of monsters, some of which you won't find anywhere else. Sounds like a relaxing vacation, doesn't it? Have fun!

What Do You Find in Caverns?

When you determine that a random encounter is in order, roll on Table 1.1 to determine the category:

TABLE 1.1

Encounter type - Caverns

d20	CATEGORY
1-7	Aggressive Creatures (Table 1.2)
8-11	Neutral Creatures (Table 1.3)
12-16	Humanoids (Table 1.4)
17	Humans (Table 1.5)
18-20	Watch Out! (Table 1.6)

Then, roll on the appropriate table to determine the creature, person or thing encountered.

Dungeons = Caverns?

For purposes of this discussion: No. Caverns are natural formations created by geological forces, such as weathering and volcanism. To the extent that dungeons are constructions — that is, they were designed and constructed by intelligent beings — they are not the same thing as caverns, although caverns can make a perfectly good setting for a good old-fashioned dungeon crawl. On the other hand, abandoned mines may qualify as caverns in that, given enough time, they revert to wilderness.

Encounters in caverns almost inevitably take place at close quarters. Even a large cavern is an enclosed space. And besides, the complete absence of sunlight ensures that it is impossible to see very far.

TABLE 12**Aggressive Creatures - Caverns**

d100	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Aurumvorax
3-5	Basilisk
6-8	Bloodseekers
9	Cave Worm
10-13	Centipede
14	Choker
15-16	Cloaker
17-18	Destrachan
19-21	Elemental, Earth
22-23	Elemental, Mephit
24-26	Fleshwarp
27-30	Fungus
31-32	Gibbering Moulder
33	Gogiteth
34-35	Gorgon
36	Gremlins
37	Grikkitog
38-39	Gug
40-41	Hell Hound
42-47	Insects
48-50	Medusa
51-52	Mimic
53-55	Minotaur
56-61	Ooze
62-63	Otyugh
64	Redcap
65-66	Roper
67-69	Rust Monster
70-72	Scorpion
73-74	Shuln
75-77	Snakes
78-82	Spiders
83-84	Stygira
85-87	Troll, Cavern
88-94	Undead
95	Vampiric Mist
96-97	Warg
98	Xill
99-100	Yeth Hound

Aurumvorax (B2). Your party crosses paths with one of these metal-consuming predators. It may have slipped the leash of dwarven miners who kept it as a guardian, or it may be native to this place. Either way, its first instinct

is to attack your party. Either it views them as intruding on its turf, or it senses food — coins and other items made of precious metals — on them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 7, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 7-8, use a weak aurumvorax for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 12, use an encounter group of one elite aurumvorax for each multiple of 13 in your party's average level.

Basilisk (B1). Your party follows a passageway that broadens out into a chamber, and they notice some unmoving shapes in the darkness. You may require a successful DC 15 Perception check to realize that they're realistic stone figures of various creatures, some of them in pieces, as if partially eaten. Somewhere in the gloom, a basilisk lurks, waiting for prey.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak basilisk for the encounter. If your party's average level is 8-11, use one elite basilisk. If your party's average level is higher than 11, they encounter two elite basilisks sharing a lair — or, if you wish, substitute one elite dracolisk (B2).

Treasure: The lair contains scattered valuables belonging to the basilisk's previous victims. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value. If there is more than one basilisk in the encounter, consider that basilisk eggs may also be present for the taking.

Bloodseekers (B1). Though most notorious in the surface world (where they are also known as stirges) as the bane of anyone who keeps livestock, these parasitic creatures also haunt subterranean spaces. Here, they hang bat-like from the ceilings of caverns and wait for prey to come their way. Have your party make a DC 15 Perception check. If it succeeds, they notice 1d6 weak bloodseekers clinging to the ceiling. If it fails, they don't notice the bloodseekers until they swoop down and attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3, use an encounter group of 1d4 bloodseekers. If your party's average level is 4-5, use 1d4 elite bloodseekers. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite bloodseeker for each level in your party's average level.

Cave Worm (B1). It's never a good sign when the very earth that encloses you rumbles and quivers. One of the most disturbing possibilities is that a nearby cave worm is tunneling through the rock — perhaps part (or all) of this cavern complex was created by cave worm burrowing — and that it will spot the party as its next meal when it

bursts into view. They're scavengers, but live prey constitute a special treat. The worm's approach should give your party enough time to sense that something is amiss and do something about it. Combat begins when it smashes through the rock wall within striking distance of your party.

Roll on Table 1.2.1 to determine the variety of cave worm encountered:

TABLE 1.2.1	
Cave Worm - Caverns	
d6	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Purple Worm
4	Azure Worm
5-6	Crimson Worm

It's going to be a bad situation, regardless.

Purple Worm (B1). This is the most common type of cave worm, but try telling anyone staring into the maw of one that it's "just a purple worm."

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 11, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 11-12, use a weak purple worm for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 16, use one elite purple worm.

Azure Worm (B1). Azure worms have a strong affinity for water, so it's unlikely that you will find one unless in or near a flooded tunnel or a large subterranean body of water. If the surroundings are arid, use a purple worm for the encounter.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 13, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 13-14, use a weak azure worm. If your party's average level is higher than 18, use one elite azure worm.

Crimson Worm (B1). Crimson worms have an affinity for elemental fire and if you encounter one, there is bound to be a strong subterranean source of heat nearby. That's why they're found under volcanos or near pools of magma, or near portals to the Plane of Fire. If your current location does not fit that description, use a purple worm for the encounter.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 16, feel free to re-roll for a different ➤

encounter. If your party's average level is 16-17, use a weak crimson worm. If your party's average level is higher than 20 use one elite crimson worm.

Treasure: Cutting open and gutting a cave worm is quite a chore, but it should reveal valuables that belonged to its previous prey — and cave worms eat a lot. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Centipede (B1). Centipedes are not aggressive by nature, but the giants among them are so large and so voracious that they constantly need to feed and their size allows them to deal with most creatures without fear. Your party finds itself targeted by 1d4 giant centipedes, hungry as always.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak giant centipedes. If your party's average level is 4-6, use an encounter group of 1d4 elite giant centipedes — or consider that your party has provoked the wrath of one giant centipede swarm (B1) hiding among some rocks. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite centipede swarm (B1) for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Choker (B2). A cavern complex inhabited by aggressive and dangerous humanoids and even more dangerous monsters is an unpromising hunting ground for a choker. One usually finds them in cities and towns where they can lurk in dark corners and strike at the unwary. However, there are also dark corners and tight passageways in caverns, and it is possible that a choker chased out of a friendlier environment has come here out of desperation. One such choker emerges from the subterranean gloom as your party passes and reaches out at a party member at the back of the party formation with its Strangling Fingers.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak choker for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one elite choker.

Cloaker (B1). A cloaker is more likely to lurk in the dark chambers of a cavern system than in the narrow passageways. That way it has enough elbow room to feed on what it kills without having to take it elsewhere. Even if it is outnumbered, it counts on its Infrasonic Moan ability to soften up its target before striking.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak cloaker for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use one elite cloaker.

Destrachan (B2). Your party may hear a destrachan before they see it, as the vocalization that it uses to navigate and locate prey can be heard around corners and in darkness. However, its echolocation is effective enough so that if you hear it, it also spots you.

Destrachans are vicious predators and their first instinct is always to attack and feed. They are intelligent enough so that your party can try to persuade them to leave them alone — if someone can speak to it in Undercommon, that is. But it's not easy. It requires a successful a DC 25 Diplomacy check. Any degree of failure, and the destrachan tries to make a meal out of them.

Destrachans are intelligent, but only up to a point. If your party encounters more than one destrachan (see *Scaling the Encounter*), you may allow a party member that knows Undercommon a DC 25 Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: The speaker sows discord among the beasts about how to proceed. The destrachans split into two groups and attack each other.

Success: The destrachans look at each other, then lumber off and leave your party alone.

Failure: The destrachans are not impressed. They attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 6, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use a weak destrachan for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 11, use an encounter group of one elite destrachan for each multiple of 12 in your party's average level.

Elemental, Earth (B1, B2, B3). Earth elementals come to the Material Plane through arcane summoning. But they may also cross over on their own via a natural portal with the Plane of Earth. A cavern complex carved from the guts of the earth would be a logical place for such a planar intersection.

The exact sensations and circumstances of the encounter depends on what manner of earth elemental your party encounters (see *Scaling the Encounter*). If it is intelligent enough to understand language, someone who knows Terran may try to interact with it. However, it is difficult to persuade an elemental to do something, and it should require a successful DC 20 (or thereabouts) Diplomacy check to do so. Otherwise, it's likely that the elemental will treat your party as an enemy; it bears an uncontrollable grudge against the Material Plane, whose residents are always trying to dominate elementals, or it is just on edge outside of its native plane.

Scaling the Encounter: What manner of earth elemental your party encounters depends on their average level. One earth wisp (B3) should make a reasonable encounter for a level 1 party. Otherwise, the elemental encountered should depend on your party's average level: one living boulder (B2) for a level 2 or higher party, one sod hound (B1) for a level 3 or higher party, one earthen destrier (B2) for a level 4 or higher party, one living landslide (B1) for a level 5 or higher party, one sand sentry (B2) for a level 6 or higher party, one xorn (B1) for a level 7 or higher party, one granite glyptodont (B2) for a level 8 or higher party, one stone mauler (B1) for a level 9 or higher party, or one elemental avalanche (B1) for a level 11 or higher party. If your party's average level is 15 or higher, use an elite elemental avalanche.

Elemental, Mephit (B1). These annoying little elementals have a habit of crossing over into the Material Plane, like ink bleeding through paper, and making nuisances of themselves. They are not predatory, but they are very annoying and they interpret any attempt to brush them aside as an attack. Subterranean environments attract various types of mephit. Roll on Table 1.2.2 to determine the kind of mephit your party encounters:

TABLE 1.2.2

Mephit - Caverns

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Dust Mephit
3-5	Earth Mephit
6	Ooze Mephit

Dust Mephit (B2). One dust mephit blocks your party's path. It fixes them with a piercing gaze and declares that they are doomed (in either Auran or Terran, of course). The actual circumstances do not matter. The mephit just knows that they're headed for a bad end. If your party tries to ignore it and move on, it follows them and refuses to let up. It doesn't like being ignored, and eventually it attacks them.

Earth Mephit (B1). Your party finds their path blocked by one earth mephit standing (or sitting, if you prefer) directly in their way. The mephit refuses to move no matter what your party says or does, and it attacks if your party tries to go around it.

Ooze Mephit (B2). Your party passes one ooze mephit lounging in an underground pool or muddy patch. Even in darkness your party may smell it if they can't see it; you may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to notice the pungent odor. It begs your party (in Aquan or Terran, of course) for a handout, like a ➤

valuable item or a service of some kind, and it shifts from wheedling to violence if it doesn't get what it wants.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite mephit for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Fleshwarp (B1, B2, B3). If drow are part of your campaign world, consider that these twisted creations of theirs may be found on their own, cast out by or escaped from their dark elven masters. Your party encounters one that has gone mad from its fate, and it automatically attacks anyone who disturbs its lonely exile in a fit of unthinking rage. Perhaps it is more calculating — though perhaps no less mad — and it somehow thinks that killing an elf or another enemy of the drow and presenting its head to its former masters will somehow restore it to favor. Or you may consider that hunger and insanity have given it a taste for human or humanoid flesh. Whatever motivation you give it, that should drive how it reacts to your party.

If drow are not a part of your world, you may still include fleshwarps as aberrations of nature and assign them whatever backstory you like. Perhaps there is no need to assign them any kind of origin myth, and they simply exist as a perversion of the natural order, or just another facet of a perverse world.

Scaling the Encounter: The fleshwarp encountered should depend on your party's average level: one grothult (B1) for a level 1-3 party, one drider (B1) for a level 4-6 party, or one Irnakurse (B2) for a level 7-9 party. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an encounter group of one elite ghonatine (B2) for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Treasure: If your party encounters the fleshwarp in a chamber rather than a corridor, they have probably found it sulking in its lair. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of its treasure.

Fungus (B1, B2, B3). Not all fungi are passive, odd-looking things that you can pick and eat. Roll on Table 1.2.3 to determine which of these oversized and possibly predatory fungi greets your party:

TABLE 1.2.3

Fungi - Caverns

d6	ENCOUNTER
1	Drakauthix
2-4	Myceloid
5-8	Violet Fungus

Drakauthix (B1). Because of its size and method of attack, a drakauthix is most likely encountered in spacious chambers with high ceilings. It's most effective when it can lurk above its victim's eye line, giving no hint of its presence until its appendages drop down out of the gloom.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 7, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 7-8, use one weak drakauthix for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 12, use one elite drakauthix.

Myceloid (B3). Your party comes across one of these ambulatory, humanoid-shaped fungi abroad from its colony looking for new sources of food. Myceloids scavenge for food but they prefer a fresh kill, so they attack. Assume that it has not yet used its daily allotment of Emit Spores.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak myceloid for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one myceloid for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite myceloid for two myceloids.

Treasure: An encounter group of four or more myceloids may be a small colony rather than a roaming band. In this case, your party encounters them in their lair and treasure collected from their victims lies strewn about. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Violet Fungus (B2). Seeing human-sized mushrooms may or may not startle your party. It probably depends on how jaded they are as adventurers. You may allow them a DC 15 Perception check when they get within 10 feet of the giant mushrooms to notice that what look like tendrils extending from their bases are moving towards them. In other words, a violet fungus has detected them and it attacks.

If there is a lair of subterranean humanoids nearby, ➤

it may use the violet fungus (or fungi) as a sentinel, and that some of them will investigate after hearing a disturbance involving the fungus.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak violet fungus for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use one elite violet fungus for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Gibbering Moulder (B1). With the environment limiting visibility, your party is likely to hear a gibbering moulder well before they can see it. Perhaps it makes its lair in a nearby subterranean pool, but it is just as comfortable in a dry, rocky cavern or tunnel. Needless to say, it attacks your party without hesitation — it is simply in its nature to do so.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak gibbering moulder for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use an encounter group of one elite gibbering moulder for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level. It's a gibbering moulder discussion group!

Treasure: Belongings from the gibbering moulder's previous victims might well remain trapped in its body, remaining intact while the flesh that once claimed them as its own has long since dissolved. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Gogiteth (B1). You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to hear the gogiteth approach before they can see it. Its joints pop and crackle loudly enough to resonate down subterranean passages from a ways away. However, the uncertainty of a skill check reflects the possibility that the monster detected the party's presence first and muffled its movements, in which case they don't spot it until they turn a corner and it's too close to miss.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 10, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 10-11, use one weak gogiteth for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 15 use one elite gogiteth.

Gorgon (B2). Your party comes across one hungry gorgon on the prowl, looking for prey to petrify and eat. It begins by using its breath weapon, and until it recharges, it attacks anyone that was not affected.

It's a bold move, but it is theoretically possible to wrangle a gorgon and use it as a mount, at least for a while. One large or two medium-size creatures must

successfully grapple the gorgon using both hands. They must maintain the grapple for 10 consecutive turns. At that point, the gorgon stops struggling and acknowledges the wranglers as its master, at least temporarily. It allows them to ride it. However, getting the gorgon to obey a command requires a successful DC 27 Nature or Intimidation check:

Success: The gorgon obeys the command.

Failure: The gorgon ignores the command.

Critical Failure: The gorgon reasserts its independence. It refuses to acknowledge commands until it is successfully wrangled again. Furthermore, anyone who tries to issue it a command until it is successfully wrangled again must make a DC 27 Intimidation check, and if it fails the gorgon attacks that character.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-7, use one weak gorgon for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 11, use one elite gorgon for each multiple of 12 in your party's average level.

Treasure: If you decide that this encounter takes place in the gorgon's lair, your party finds scattered valuables belonging to its previous victims. Use the guidelines for hoards in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Gremlins (B1). These mean little fey live dangerously in subterranean spaces. They're easily squashed by most of their neighbors. But such is their nature that they can't help themselves. Setting traps and laughing at their victims is what they do and they can conceal their snares more easily in the gloom of cavern complexes than anywhere else.

Your party comes across a trap set and watched over by gremlins. Use a trap described in the core rulebooks appropriate to your party's average level, or use one of your own devising. You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to notice the gremlins hiding nearby among some rocks or rubble. If they succeed, perhaps it is because one gremlin couldn't help giggling, or jumped the gun on taunting the victim.

To determine the exact type of gremlin encountered, roll on Table 1.2.4:

TABLE 1.2.4**Gremlins - Caverns**

d6	ENCOUNTER
1	Jinkin
2-4	Mitflit
5-6	Pugwumpi

Scaling the Encounter: For jinkins, use one jinkin for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite jinkin for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. If you don't feel like running a horde of gremlins, skip Table 1.2.4 and just use jinkins for the encounter, scaled appropriately.

For mitflits, use a baseline encounter group of 1d4 mitflits. If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak mitflits. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite mitflit for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

For pugwumpi, use a baseline encounter group of 1d4 pugwumpi. If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak pugwumpi. If your party's average level is 4-5, use an encounter group of 1d4 elite pugwumpi. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite pugwumpi for each level in your party's average level.

Treasure: If the trap guards the gremlins' lair, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of their treasure.

Grikkitog (B1). You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to notice that they're approaching a boulder or large chunk of rubble with primitive facial features — what looks like a monstrous maw and eyes. If it fails, they don't realize what's waiting for them in the gloom until they're close enough for it to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 12, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 12-13, use one weak grikkitog for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 17, use one elite grikkitog.

Gug (B1). Your party has the misfortune of bumping into one gug in its native element. Most likely, it is on its way to the outside world to hunt — and this chance encounter with your party means that it won't have to go all that way because it has found prey right here.

At your discretion, however, the gug may be on its way back from marauding and it chose to take a captive back to its lair. Rescuing an unfortunate soul from a gug is sure to gain your party an ally, and you may consider that there is a 10% chance that they have rescued someone of importance, whose safe return will earn them a substantial reward.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 8, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 8-9, use one weak gug. If your party's average level is higher than 13, use a pack of elite gugs for the encounter group, one for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Hell Hound (B1). Your party crosses paths with one hell hound that has come to the Material Plane to hunt. Or perhaps it is in a mean and paranoid mood, having come here as the companion of a more powerful fiend, and it somehow got separated from its master. In that case, it is none too pleased about wandering this plane alone and it takes out its separation anxiety on your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak hell hound. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use a pack of elite hell hounds for the encounter group, one for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Insects (B1, B2). You may not think of insects as predatory, but those that grow to monstrous size can be quite aggressive and even those that don't will cause trouble in their own way. Roll on Table 1.2.5 to determine the insects encountered:

TABLE 1.2.5**Insects - Caverns**

d10	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Ant
4-6	Beetle, Giant Stag
7	Cockroach
8	Dragonfly
9	Fly
10	Tick

Ant (B2). Your party is not looking through a magnifying glass; they really have come face-to-face with one human-sized ant. It's not a predator, but it is an omnivore that eats anything that seems like food and it is large enough to enforce its will. To it, your party looks like food. ►

Alternately, army ants are of normal ant size, but they come at you in a vicious, relentless swarm. If your party runs afoul of an army ant swarm (B2), it spots them (or more precisely, a food source somewhere among your party's belongings) during a rest halt and it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak giant ant for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one army ant swarm for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite giant ant for one army ant swarm.

Beetle, Giant Stag (B1). Like giant ants, giant stag beetles are mindless omnivores that feed voraciously, and when you're that large, almost anything looks like it could make a meal, including your party.

However, a skilled handler may wrangle a giant stag beetle and use it as a beast of burden. One large or two medium-size creatures must successfully grapple the beetle. They must maintain the grapple for 6 consecutive turns. At that point, the beetle stops struggling and acknowledges the wranglers as its master.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use a weak giant stag beetle for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite giant stag beetle for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Cockroach (B2). You find cockroaches wherever they can scavenge off of creatures higher up the food chain. For this purpose, caverns densely populated by monsters and humanoids can function just as well as urban environments in the surface world. During a rest halt, one giant cockroach goes after your party's rations. It won't attack unless threatened, but it eats everything up unless stopped.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite cockroach swarm (B2) for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Dragonfly (B2). Dragonflies are generally associated with bodies of water, especially when it comes time to reproduce. But there is a species of giant dragonfly that has adapted to life in subterranean spaces. Your party comes across one dragonfly nymph near the subterranean lake or pool where it recently hatched. Unfortunately, it's hungry because it recently ➤

hatched, and your party seems like food to its infant mind.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak dragonfly nymph for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite giant dragonfly (B2) for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level; these are adults defending eggs that they just laid in the water.

Fly (B2). There is plenty of rotting flesh in a populated cavern complex on which baby giant flies can feed, so that they grow up into big and strong giant flies. Your party comes upon the remains of... something... that has been almost entirely consumed by 1d4 giant maggots. They're still hungry and they're desperate enough to try to continue feeding on your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3 use an encounter group of 1d6 giant maggots. If your party's average level is higher than 3 use an encounter group of one giant fly (B2) for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. The flies have found a carcass into which to lay eggs, and they defend their spawning ground against a perceived threat.

Tick (B2). One giant tick hiding among some rocks spots your party as a suitably tasty source of nutritious blood. It emerges from cover and attacks a party member of your choice.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite giant tick for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Medusa (B1). You may require your party to make a successful DC 15 Perception check to notice them, but what appear to be realistic statues of animals and humanoids populate the chamber they just entered. A medusa makes its lair here and it surrounds itself with the petrified remains of its victims. It decides that your party would supplement its existing collection nicely.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak medusa for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use one elite medusa for the encounter.

Treasure: The medusa's gaze petrifies flesh, but not valuables. To total up the bits and pieces that once belonged to its victims, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Mimic (B1). Your party sees a chest sitting off to the side of a passageway. Is it filled with treasure that was abandoned for some reason? Unfortunately, no — it's a mimic. Caverns may seem like a dangerous environment for mimics, but experience teaches them that there are enough dumb and greedy creatures down here to provide prey. If your party inspects it up close, it attacks. You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to notice a twitch or some other movement that gives it away.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use a weak mimic for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use one elite mimic for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.



One encounter with a mimic can engender a deep distrust of treasure.

Minotaur (B1). Your party finds itself heading down a twisty tunnel that winds around and about, as if designed to disorient anyone who follows it. At the end of the confusing passage is a cavern housing a minotaur that sizes them up as its latest victims. However, if this is not an appropriate location for a legitimate minotaur's lair, you may consider that the minotaur is hungry enough to go abroad to hunt for food, or that it has been forced for some reason to relocate and it has set up in an impromptu lair without a proper labyrinth.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use a weak minotaur for the encounter. If your party's average level is 7-10, use one elite minotaur. If your party's average level is higher than 10, consider that two elite minotaurs inhabit this lair. They work as a team, seeking to attack your party from different angles.

Treasure: At the heart of the minotaur's lair is its treasure hoard — as well as the remains of its previous victims. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Ooze (B1, B2). Oozes are an icky occupational hazard of adventuring in caverns and dungeons. They're like black scum and hair clogs to a plumber, except that they can reach out, swallow you whole and dissolve your flesh. Roll on table 1.2.6 to determine the type of ooze encountered:

TABLE 1.2.6	
Oozes - Caverns	
d12	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Amoeba Swarm
3-5	Amoeba, Giant
6	Black Pudding
7-8	Gelatinous Cube
9-10	Gray Ooze
11-12	Ochre Jelly

Amoeba Swarm (B2). Have one amoeba swarm make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds, it looks like a granulated pool of slime spread over the cavern floor, and they don't realize it's a living thing until they're close enough for it to strike. Whether the amoeba swarm succeeds or fails, it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite amoeba swarm for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Giant Amoeba (B2). A single giant amoeba is smaller than an amoeba swarm and harder to spot. But it behaves in the same mindless and voracious way and it's easy to mistake it for a translucent puddle of slime. Handle the encounter the same as an amoeba swarm (see above).

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite giant amoeba for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. ➤

Black Pudding (B1). You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to notice that what looks at first like a patch of shadow is moving like spreading sludge. If they fail, they cannot react in time to avoid it and combat begins with the black pudding no more than 20 feet away.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak black pudding for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use one elite black pudding for the encounter.

Gelatinous Cube (B1). A gelatinous cube may be hard to make out in dim light. It is also large enough to block a typical tunnel or passage, so there's no good way to get around it even once you know it is there.

If you wish, consider that the gelatinous cube has fed just moments before your party discovers it. In particular, consider this as an option if your party contains members with enough hit points left so that they can sustain some acid damage in order to rescue someone from the belly of the cube. In this case, there is a human or humanoid of your choice inside the cube and it has not yet taken any damage from being digested. It may be the last surviving member of an adventuring party, an explorer, or even a foolish spelunker who came here on a lark. Feel free to roll on Table 1.5 if you want some guidance.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak gelatinous cube for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use one elite gelatinous cube for the encounter.

Gray Ooze (B2). You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to notice that some nearby rocks or rubble seem to have a wet sheen. It's always clammy in this enclosed and perpetually dark space, but this seems particularly unpleasant. If there is stonework present, the mortar between the stones seems to be oozing. That's because it's a gray ooze, and it strikes at the nearest party member with a metal shield or weapon.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use a weak gray ooze for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite gray ooze for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Ochre Jelly (B1). Your party notices that something seems about to drip down from the ceiling. You ➤

may require a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to realize that it's a dull yellow color — not quite right for it to be water. Of course, it's an ochre jelly and it's about to reach down and strike at them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak ochre jelly for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use one elite ochre jelly for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level.

Treasure: Most oozes feed on the move, so they have no lair where they accumulate treasure. In any event, black puddings and gray oozes are notorious for dissolving metal and any other substance of which a valuable item might be made. However, gelatinous cubes and ochre jellies are equally noted for destroying flesh, but leaving harder substances undamaged. Therefore, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of items stuck inside those oozes.

Otyugh (B1). Your party comes upon a pile of offal and other rotting discards. Given the limited visibility, you may have them make a DC 15 Perception check to smell it before they can see it. Unfortunately for them, it's also the lair of an otyugh, which reaches out from the unspeakable muck and attacks them. This otyugh may be an independent predator, or it may have a symbiotic relationship with a nearby humanoid colony that uses it as a combined garbage disposal and guard aberration. If the latter, you may roll on Table 1.4 to determine who or what takes alarm when they hear disquieting noises coming from their garbage dump.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak otyugh for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite otyugh for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Treasure: The belongings of the otyugh's previous victims lie scattered about its lair; it's just a question of whether your party has the stomach to go through it all after defeating the monster. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Redcap (B1). Subterranean spaces suit these murderous fey creatures, as the darkness, piles of rocks and rubble, and natural rock formations all allow them cover to ambush their victims. This gives them an advantage even if they are outnumbered.

One redcap stalks your party in the gloom. Have it make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception

DC. If it succeeds, it gets the drop and charges the character at the back of the party formation. If it fails, your party spots a small, wizened humanoid, with its pointed red cap the only giveaway to its true identity. It tries to play off meeting your party as an innocent chance encounter, but it keeps looking for an opportunity to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak redcap for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, a group of redcaps out for a spree — one elite redcap for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level — should make the encounter more challenging.

Roper (B1). As your party passes through a chamber, they realize that what looks like a stalactite or a stalagmite is no such thing; it's a roper. From the roper's point of view, your party looks like its next meal, and it acts accordingly.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 8, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 8-9, use a weak roper for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 13, use an encounter group of one elite roper for each multiple of 14 in your party's average level.

Treasure: Ropers wait for their prey to come to them, so wherever your party encounters them, that's going to be their lair. Valuables from their previous victims are either scattered about or inside their bodies. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Rust Monster (B1). Assuming that at least one member of your party wears armor or carries a weapon with ferrous metal in it, one rust monsters scuttles at them, drawn by its unique idea of what constitutes a hearty meal.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak rust monster for the encounter. Rust monsters do not occur in large groups, but if your party's average level is higher than 6, you can create a more challenging encounter with an encounter group of one elite rust monster for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Scorpion (B1, B2). Scorpions come in various sizes, but all of them have stingers and they don't hesitate to use them. Your party's approach disturbs at least one scorpion sheltering among some rubble. To determine what kind of scorpion attacks your party, roll on Table 1.2.7:

TABLE 1.2.7

Scorpion - Caverns

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-4	Cave Scorpion
5	Giant Scorpion
6	Scorpion Swarm

Cave Scorpion (B2). Though oversized, cave scorpions are still compact enough to shelter among boulders and large piles of rubble. You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to notice one cave scorpion in a sheltering place that doesn't quite hide it before they come within its striking distance.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite cave scorpion for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Giant Scorpion (B1). A giant scorpion is just too big to hide, and they have learned that because of their size others fear them more than they need to fear others. Your party comes face-to-stinger with one giant scorpion hunting for prey.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak giant scorpion for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite giant scorpion for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Scorpion Swarm (B1). On the other hand, a simple bunch of rocks or a modest pile of rubble can easily conceal a swarm of scorpions. Your party disturbs them in passing, or when stopping to rest, and they lash out.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use a weak scorpion swarm for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite scorpion swarm for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Shuln (B1). You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to hear a chiseling noise that appears to be coming from inside the solid rock that encloses them. If they succeed, they are not entirely surprised when a shuln bursts into the open in front of them, having burrowed its way through the cavern walls. Not only is this enormous mole rat-like beast a disquieting sight, it is also hungry and it attacks your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 9, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 10-11, use a weak shuln for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 15, use one elite shuln.

Snakes (B1, B3). It gets a little cold and clammy in caverns for many snakes' liking, but the surroundings do provide many places to hide for smaller snakes. This makes it hard to spot them — until they decide to strike at you. Roll in Table 1.2.8 to determine what kind of snake your party encounters:

TABLE 1.2.8

Snakes - Caverns

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Rat Snake Swarm
4	Giant Viper
5-6	Viper

Rat Snake Swarm (B3). Your party disturbs a swarm of rat snakes sheltering among some rocks or rubble. They are not venomous, but they defend themselves aggressively, and your party has passed the point of registering with them as a threat.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak rat snake swarm for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite rat snake swarm for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Giant Viper (B1). A giant viper has a hard time finding places to hide, but it does need to hunt and its relative size helps discourage potential enemies. Your party comes face-to-fangs with one giant viper looking for its next meal.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak giant viper for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite giant viper for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Viper (B1). Your party disturbs 1d6 vipers sheltering among some rocks or rubble. It's too late to avoid an aggressive response from them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak viper swarm (B3) for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite viper swarm for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Spider (B1, B2). Spiders in caverns have the right setup to weave large webs that are hard for larger creatures to avoid. A web that provides a meaningful encounter for your party is going to be too large to skirt — perhaps it spans a tunnel from side to side, blocking it entirely. It may be an empty web, as in Table 1.6: Hampering Web, or it may be crawling with spiders — or it may be that just one very big and dangerous spider calls it home and hunting ground.

Roll on Table 1.2.9 to determine what kind of spider your party encounters:

TABLE 1.2.9

Snakes - Caverns

d8	ENCOUNTER
1	Ether Spider
2-4	Hunting Spider
5	Ogre Spider
6-8	Spider Swarm

Ether Spider (B1). One ether spider literally appears out of nowhere to attack your party, having spotted them from its lair in the Ethereal Plane. Ether spiders are quite fearless, and they use their ability to jump back and forth between the Ethereal Plane and the Material Plane to conduct hit-and-run attacks, wearing down its targets until they are all incapacitated or dead.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, use a weak ether spider for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use one elite ether spider.

Hunting Spider (B1). One hunting spider in its web confronts your party. Unless they have adequate illumination or darkvision, you may require them to make a DC 15 Perception check to avoid walking right into it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, there is one elite hunting spider present in the web for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Ogre Spider (B2). The web houses one very large spider, an ogre spider. It may not wait for someone from your party to get entangled in its web; instead it uses its web ranged weapon attack to immobilize anyone who gets within range.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level ►

is 1-4, use a weak ogre spider for the encounter.

Spider Swarm (B1). The web houses one swarm of tiny spiders. All of them respond aggressively if something so much as touches their web.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3, use an encounter group of 1d6 spider swarms. If your party's average level is 4-5, use an encounter group of 1d4 elite spider swarms. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one elite spider swarm for each level in your party's average level.

Treasure. Larger spiders may have trapped humanoid-sized victims in the past and left some of their valuables caught in their web. You may use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value if you wish.

Stygira (B2). Your party has the distinct misfortune of crossing paths with one of these weird hermetic fey creatures, either by stumbling into its lair or while it is scavenging for gems. Whatever the case, it spots your party as victims to be used in its alchemical work and uses its special abilities to incapacitate as many of them as possible.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak stygira for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use one an encounter group of one elite stygira for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Treasure. As intelligent creatures who, on top of everything else, need gems to function, stygira carry some treasure items on their person. So they may yield some treasure even if they are not encountered in their lair. Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Troll (B1, B2). A cavern complex can be a tough place for a troll to make a living. There are too few soft marks and too many creatures who would rather fight back than let a troll shake them down. And that's to say nothing of the plentiful predators, who not only have no money to fork over, but they'd sooner gut you than parlay with you. But trolls live here nonetheless. Your party comes across one troll either gnawing on bones in the cavern in which it makes its lair, or blocking a tunnel so it can extort anyone who wants to get past.

Roll on Table 1.2.10 to determine whether your party encounters an ordinary troll (B1) or a cavern troll (B2):

TABLE 1.2.10

Troll - Caverns

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Cavern Troll
3-6	Troll

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak troll or cavern troll for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use an encounter group of one elite troll or cavern troll for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level. If scaling the encounter calls for more than one troll, you may substitute two elite troll hounds (B2) for one troll or cavern troll. If the encounter calls for more than two trolls or cavern trolls, you may also substitute one troll king (B1) for two trolls or cavern trolls.

Treasure: The troll's racket has worked well enough in the past. Its victims pay one way or another. If your party defeats the troll in its lair, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of its hoard.

Undead (B1, B2, B3). Considering how many different ways there are to meet a bad end in caverns, encountering the restless dead in this environment should come as no surprise. Roll on Table 1.2.11 to determine the undead abomination encountered:

TABLE 1.2.11

Undead - Caverns

d20	ENCOUNTER
1	Ghost
2-6	Ghoul/Ghast
7	Shadow
8-11	Skeletons
12-13	Skull Swarm
14	Specter
15-16	Wight
17	Wraith
18-20	Zombies

Ghost (B1). A ghost is hard to miss in the pitch dark of a cavern, and it leaves a vivid impression on anyone who sees it. Almost certainly, the ghost commoner ➤

that your party encounters is the remnant of someone who died unhappily in this horrible place. Perhaps it fell to its death in the darkness, or it was slain by any of the monsters or predatory humanoids that dwell here. You may make this into a hostile encounter by having the ghost try to possess a member of your party so that it may resolve unfinished business from its former life. This may lead to a small side quest for your party if this unfinished business involves retribution against the denizens of these caverns.

Scaling the Encounter: Ghosts always work alone. However, if you wish to make a more challenging ghost encounter for a 10th level or higher party, use a ghost mage instead of a ghost commoner. Or you may substitute a ghost of your own design.

Ghoul /Ghast (B1). In the monster-eat-creature subterranean world, there never seems to be any shortage of rotting corpses from which ghouls and ghaunts can spawn. One ghoul approaches your party, driven by mindless hunger for their flesh.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 4-5, use one elite ghoul or one ghast for the encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use one elite ghast. If your party level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite ghoul for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level, or one elite ghast for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Shadow (B1). The lurid glow of your party's torches casts a shadow of someone who isn't there! That's because the shadow is a creature in its own right, and even in complete darkness it could spot your party as its prey. Without thinking or feeling, it attacks the nearest party member, eager to drain the life from another victim and create one more of its own kind.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak shadow for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use one elite shadow for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Skeletons (B1). Your party comes across 1d4+2 skeleton guards that were once human or humanoid. They're still equipped in the arms and armor they had at their demise. Perhaps they were explorers or adventurers. Perhaps they were bandits, for whom these caverns provided less safety than they'd anticipated. In any event, they attack, driven by necromantic echoes of their battle lust or rage at their fate. ➤

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak skeleton guards. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite skeleton guard for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one skeletal champion for two elite skeleton guards.

Skull Swarm (B3). Your party has stumbled into an area suffused with necromantic energy. Perhaps they are near site of a large battle (or many battles of any size) and the remains of the dead have formed a clacking skull swarm that makes a horrifying cacophony, resounding off of the rock walls as it rolls toward them down the passageway.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 8, feel free to re-roll for a different undead encounter. If your party's average level is 8-9, use a weak clacking skull swarm for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 13, use one elite clacking skull swarm.

Specter (B2). Specters find the perpetual gloom of subterranean spaces much to their liking, as there is never any sunlight to hamper them. Your party comes upon one specter that was once someone who perished in this forsaken place, but all connections to who and what it was in life no longer exist. Only blind hatred of the living drives it to attack your party on sight.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different undead encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak specter for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use one elite specter.

Wight (B1). It's hard to notice details in the dark, so you may require your party to make a successful DC 10 Perception check to spot the death's-head grin and demonic red eyes on the otherwise humanoid figure before them before it can size them up. They have come face-to-face with a wight. The wight can have any one of a number of different backstories and motivations taken from its life. One possibility is that it was the leader of a bandit gang whose followers betrayed and killed him, and that it's looking to create spawn who will help it exact revenge. Or perhaps it was an adventurer stabbed in the back by his companions to create larger shares of the loot. Ultimately, it's up to you to decide what's going on with this wight and how it fits into your campaign world. ➤

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak wight for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite wight for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Wraith (B1). Given the darkness of their surroundings, you may require that your party make a successful DC 15 Perception check to see the gray, wispy form approaching them before it comes close enough to attack. This wraith was once someone who perished in this forsaken place. Perhaps your party passes a cairn improvised from rubble, or the wraith rises from bones stripped bare by a predator. Whatever the case, it takes out the resentment that it bore at the end of its life on your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, feel free to re-roll for a different undead encounter. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak wraith for the encounter. If your party's average level is 9-12, use one dread wraith (B2). If your party's average level is higher than 12, use one elite dread wraith.

Zombies (B1). Your party come across one plague zombie or 1d4 zombie shamblers that have been programmed to kill every living thing they encounter. The source of the necromancy that created these zombies is up to you. Perhaps they slipped the leash of their creator and they now wander mindlessly, looking for victims.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one plague zombie for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one zombie brute or one elite plague zombie for two plague zombies, or one zombie hulk for six plague zombies. If you want to create a large encounter for that "The Walking Dead" effect, freely substitute 1d4 zombie shamblers for one plague zombie.

Treasure: It's quite possible that ghosts and wraiths are encountered in or near the place where they died or were buried — in which case, the valuables they had on them are lying about somewhere. You may require a successful DC 15 Perception check to find them. Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

With skeletons and zombies, they may have with them some remains of what they had on their person at the time of their death. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Vampiric Mist (B2). Assuming that there is a source of moisture in the vicinity — a subterranean stream or pool, or even air moist enough for condensation to drip from the rocks will do — your party spots a weird red mist ahead of them. It's a vampiric mist, and it smells their blood. To it, their blood smells tasty.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak vampiric mist for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite vampiric mist for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Warg (B1). Your party crosses paths with one warg that has escaped from a pack kept by a local humanoid tribe, or otherwise gotten separated from them. It's hungry and your party looks like food.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak warg for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite warg for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Xill (B2). Xills only come to the Material Plane to kidnap hosts for their reproductive process, but they have learned that cavern complexes sometimes offer a target-rich environment. Yes, most of the residents are aggressive monsters and humanoids who would much rather fight than go quietly. But xills are confident that they can take most anyone. Your party crosses paths with one xill on the prowl.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak xill for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use one elite xill for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Yeth Hound (B2). The humanoids that dwell in cavern complexes like to keep these canine fiends, laboring under the impression that they are reliable companions, like domesticated wolves or dogs. They often find that yeth hounds have very different ideas about domestication. Your party crosses paths with one yeth hound that has terminated its arrangement with a nearby group of humanoids, perhaps after doing in one or more of them. Unfortunately for your party, it is now hungry without anyone to feed it, and they look like its next meal.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak yeth hound for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite yeth hound for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

TABLE 13

Neutral Creatures - Caverns

100	ENCOUNTER
1-9	Bats
10-17	Beetles, Flash
18-21	Behir
22-27	Blindheim
28-31	Blink Dog
32-39	Cave Fisher
40-45	Dragon
46-53	Leshy, Fungus
54-63	Lizard
64-67	Nymph, Lampad
68-79	Rats
80-82	Shaitan
83-88	Slurk
89-93	Sportlebone
94-100	Tatzlwyrms

Bats (B1). Of course you encounter bats; you're exploring caverns. Your party approaches a colony consisting of one vampire bat swarm, all of them hanging from the ceiling and walls. However, even though they're uncomfortably close to the bats' lair, it's possible to avoid setting them off. You may have your party make a DC 15 Survival or Nature check. If they fail, someone makes a false move that triggers the bats' fight-or-flight response. Having nowhere to flee, the bats fight.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one vampire bat swarm for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite vampire bat swarm for three vampire bat swarms. You may also freely substitute one giant bat for two vampire bat swarms and one elite giant bat for four vampire bat swarms.

Beetles, Flash (B1). Your party comes across 1d6 flash beetles scuttling along the cave floor. They are not aggressive, but they fight back if attacked — if they're hunted for their luminous glands, for instance.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 5 and they're in a mood to harvest flash beetles, you may use an encounter group of one flash beetle for each level in your party's average level.

Behir (B2). These immense, serpentine creatures are semi-intelligent and it's possible to talk your way out of a violent encounter with them if you speak Draconic. A successful DC 20 Diplomacy check should do the trick. However, behir are aggressive by nature. They live

violent lives and their first instincts are to treat smaller creatures as prey and assume that larger creatures are enemies.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 6, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use one weak behir. If your party's average level is higher than 11 use one elite behir.

Blindheim (B2). These subterranean creatures hunt small animals and fish, but they are also used to being hunted by larger creatures who want to use their bioluminescence for their own unscrupulous ends. When one blindheim crosses paths with your party this brings its fight-or-flight instincts to the fore. You may require your party to make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check:

Critical Success: The blindheim instinctively submits to the party and willingly follows it.

Success: It scampers off, avoiding a confrontation.

Failure: Someone in your party makes a false move that provokes it to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite blindheim for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Blink Dog (B2). A dog with long ears and a wisp of fur hanging from its chin may seem an odd sight in the subterranean world. But it has a serious purpose in being here; it's a blink dog scouting on behalf of its pack as it roams the Material Plane to keep it safe from evil influences.

If it intuits that there are evil characters with bad intentions in your party, it keeps its distance and uses its innate spells to get away. Otherwise, anyone who is fluent in Sylvan can communicate with it, although it may take a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check to overcome its natural aloofness. A blink dog on a mission may provide your party with a sidequest as it asks them to help its pack. Alternatively, a successful Diplomacy check (DC 15 or 20, depending on whether or not it diverts the blink dog from its purpose) by a good-aligned character in your party may persuade it to accompany them for a short while.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish, you may use a pack of blink dogs consisting of one for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

Cave Fisher (B2). These oversized subterranean crabs are not predatory, but they fight back if threatened. They use

spider web-like filaments to pin anything that threatens them and their claws do more than leave a mark. Your party spots one cave fisher trying to conceal itself in a dark corner. You may require them to make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check to avoid provoking the cave fisher. If it fails, someone makes a false move and it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is higher than 5, use a colony of one elite cave fisher for each multiple of 6 in your party’s average level as the encounter group.

Dragon (B1, B2). Dragons encountered at random in a subterranean space are coming from or returning to their lair. It’s not at all unusual for them to keep their lair in caves and such, and they have to have some way of getting in and out so they can terrorize the puny beings who live in the open, right? To determine what kind of dragon your party encounters, roll on Table 1.3.1:

TABLE 1.3.1

Dragon - Caverns

d12	ENCOUNTER
1	Black (B1)
2	Blue (B1)
3	Green (B1)
4-5	Red (B1)
6	White (B1)
7	Brass (B1)
8	Bronze (B1)
9	Copper (B1)
10	Gold (B1)
11	Silver (B1)
12	Crystal (B2)

To determine its age, see *Scaling the Encounter*.

To be clear, this need not be a hostile encounter. A chance meeting with a dragon so close to its lair is bound to raise its suspicions. But they’re shrewd and highly intelligent creatures, so a dragon stumbling upon adventurers close to its hearth and home may want to figure out their angle — their reason for being here — before doing something it can’t take back. This encounter should test how well your party can talk its way out of a dicey situation (if they don’t want a close-quarters fight with a dangerous and iconic creature, that is).

Scaling the Encounter: Because dragons get tougher ➤

with age, the age of the dragon encountered should depend on your party’s average level — especially if you decide that this is going to be a hostile encounter. If your party’s average level is lower than 11, they encounter a young dragon. If their average level is 11-15, they encounter an adult dragon. If their average level is higher than 15, they encounter an ancient dragon.

Leshy, Fungus (B1). Even in subterranean spaces full of death and fear there are creatures who exist to preserve life. Leshys are intelligent plants that, in the surface world, live to cultivate and preserve other plants. In the underground they cultivate fungi and they themselves take a form that resemble oversized fungi. In the gloom of a cavern, your party spots a patch of fungi that is so neat and orderly (evenly distributed with bioluminescent fungi to make it visible) that it looks like a garden. That’s because it is a garden, tended by one fungus leshy.

You may require that your party make a successful DC 20 Perception check to notice a pair of eyes peeking at them from among the fungi. Leshys are not necessarily hostile; how they respond to your party depends on whether or not they sense that your party is a threat to them and their home. You may have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: The leshy likes the look of your party. It allows them to rest here. If they are attacked (by a pursuer, for instance), it fights alongside them as a friendly NPC.

Success: The leshy likes your party well enough. It allows them to stay here for one rest period, but no more and it does not fight to defend them (although it fights to protect its garden).

Failure: The leshy makes a noise that ought to be interpreted as skepticism. It tells your party to get off of its lawn and move along.

Critical Failure: Whatever your party said or did, the leshy interprets it as hostile. It attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is higher than 5, use a colony of one elite fungus leshy for each multiple of 6 in your party’s average level as the encounter group.

Lizard (B1, B2). As large as they are the giant lizards you are likely to find in the subterranean world are not aggressive. But they do fight back if they feel threatened. Your party spots one giant gecko (B1) clinging to the wall of a cavern or passageway. It’s minding its own business

for the most part. You may require your party to make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone in your party makes a false move that triggers an attack.

If there are kobolds in the area, you may choose to stage an encounter with shocker lizards (B2) instead. Kobolds try — often unsuccessfully — to domesticate these electrified reptiles, and escaped shocker lizards have nowhere to go but around and about the cavern complex. A lone shocker lizard flees at your party's approach, but a group of two or more may put up a fight. Have your party to make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone in your party makes a false move that triggers an attack. Zap!

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite giant gecko for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite giant chameleon (B2) for two elite giant geckos.

With shocker lizards, use an encounter group of 1d4+1 weak shocker lizards if your party's average level is 1-3. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use a pack of one shocker lizard for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level.

Nymph, Lampad (B3). Not everything is aggression and mayhem in the subterranean world. Your party crosses paths with a lampad that is bound to this place. It keeps an eye out for innocents who may need help, and it recognizes your party as such. However, you may require a DC 10 Diplomacy check to determine its reaction more precisely:

Critical Success: It is willing to travel with your party throughout the cavern complex as a friendly NPC.

Success: It shares its local knowledge and uses its spells to help your party.

Failure: It may share its local knowledge, but it refuses to aid your party more than that.

Critical Failure: Something worse happens than the lampad withholding its aid. It is so lonely that it clings to your party, using its Weep ability for 1d6 rounds, then again every 1d20 minutes after that until they part company with it. If you wish, roll to see if another random encounter occurs after each subsequent weeping fit, as the noise draws unwanted attention.

Scaling the Encounter: Unless you anticipate a hostile encounter, scaling is not terribly important. However, if your party's average level is 9-12 you may use an elite lampad, and if your party's average level is 13 or higher consider using a lampad queen for the encounter.

Rats (B1). You find rats everywhere they can find food. 1d4 giant rats sniff out your party's food rations as they cross paths with each other. They don't attack party members who don't interfere with their basic mission of acquiring food. But unless they are stopped, they eventually account for all of your party's rations, making off with what they don't eat on the spot.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3, use one rat swarm (B1) for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite rat swarm for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Gambling With Genies is Legal in Most States

The precise form that a wager with a shaitan should take is one of those things best left to you as GM. It can take virtually any form. It could be as simple as dicing for it — the shaitan just happens to have 2d6 in its pocket. Or it may have a deck of cards and it suggests playing a hand of whatever game is well known in your campaign world. It could be a riddle. It could be a physical challenge — a standing jump onto a nearby rock or climbing onto a tall ledge — that requires an Athletics or Acrobatics check from your party.

Your party may try to cheat to tilt the odds — it requires one party member to make a successful DC 25 Thievery check to add 1d6 to their roll, or some other appropriate advantage, without the shaitan noticing — but failure is sure to turn the encounter hostile.

Shaitan (B1). Your party crosses paths with one of these genies from the Plane of Earth as traverses the Material Plane looking for gemstones and precious metals. As a being of elemental earth, it is most comfortable in caverns and mines, where it does business with miners and other locals.

This shaitan may choose to ignore your party if it has more important things on its mind. However, if you feel like running an encounter with it, it asks them for leads on sources of gemstones and precious metals. If your party has a cache of gems on them, it notices. It may propose a wager with them as stakes.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 11 or higher, you may substitute a shaitan pasha (B1) just to provide a more closely-matched encounter.

Treasure: A shaitan abroad from its stronghold carries valuables on its person, as a sign of its status if nothing

else. Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Slurk (B1). Their tusks give slurks a fearsome appearance, but these frog-like creatures that occur throughout subterranean spaces feed on small animals and fight only when they feel threatened. Your party sees one slurk clinging to a rock wall or hanging from a ceiling, or just minding its own business and waiting for food to come along.

Have your party make a DC 10 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that the slurk interprets as hostile, and it attacks.

However, if this check succeeds, they have the option of persuading the slurk to follow them, in much the same manner as a stray dog or cat looking for a home. In this case, one party member may attempt a DC 15 Nature check; a character that speaks Draconic has the option of using Diplomacy instead:

Critical Success: The slurk becomes your party's collective pet. Any small party member may use the slurk as a mount.

Success: The slurk follows your party, but it only responds to the party member who made the successful Nature or Diplomacy check.

Failure: The slurk just stares at your party. It is not impressed.

Critical Failure: The slurk is really not impressed. It attacks.

A Monster-Eat-Monster World

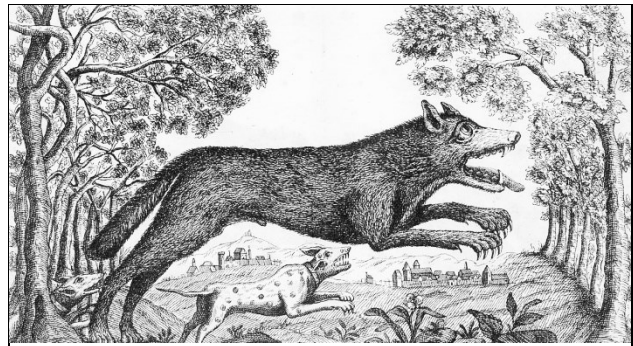
You may notice that there aren't many neutral encounters in this chapter. That's just how things worked out. The fact is, if you go through all of the creatures covered by the Pathfinder OGL and pick out the ones that seem characteristic of a subterranean environment, most of them are aggressive and predatory. More likely than not, whatever you find down here, it would be out of character if it shied away from a fight.

Sportlebore (B2). Your party spots what looks like perfectly good traveler's rations scattered on the ground. It looks quite edible. It's up to them whether they want to claim it as their own under the legal precedent set by *Finders v. Losers*. However, if they eat it they discover to their cost that there was a sportlebore among the goodies.

Scaling the Encounter: Eating a sportlebore may unleash a sportlebore swarm, which is probably a bit much to handle for a low-level party. If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak sportlebore swarm. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an elite sportlebore swarm.

Tatzlwurm (B2). Your party crosses paths with one of these small, semi-intelligent dragons. If it is winter, they have probably stumbled upon a space in which it has chosen to hibernate. In this case, they can do as they please as long as they make successful DC 18 Stealth checks. Failure wakes it up. Tatzlwyrms don't like being woken up any more than any other hibernating creature, and it attacks.

Otherwise, your party may encounter it while it is running an errand for its true dragon master. In this case, it may be nervous and stressed, and it may want nothing to do with strangers. Of course, this also assumes that there is a true dragon in the general area.



Above-ground creatures are far more willing to shy away from a fight.

In any event, you may have your party make a DC 15 Survival check; characters that speak Draconic may use Diplomacy instead:

Critical Success (Draconic speaker only): The tatzlwurm recognizes your party as a potential master, and it offers to serve them at the right price.

Success: It is willing to share information about its master and the local area.

Failure: It wants nothing to do with your party and brushes them off.

Critical Failure: Someone makes a false move to set it off, and it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, you may use an encounter group of one elite tatzlwurm for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

TABLE 1.4

Humanoids - Caverns

A large, cavernous space serves well as a permanent dwelling if you have the right temperament. With all of the encounters described below, there is a chance that they take place in or very near the creatures' lair. In that case, use the guidelines for hoards in How to Use This Book to determine the value of the treasure.

d100	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Alghollthu, Skum
4-7	Azer
8-10	Caligni
11-16	Deep Gnomes
17-24	Drow
25-30	Duergar
31-40	Dwarves
41-42	Eunemvro
43-47	Fire Giant
48-55	Goblins
56-61	Hobgoblins
62-71	Kobolds
72-75	Morlock
76-79	Ogre
80-87	Orcs
88-93	Ratfolk
94-97	Werecreature
98-100	Xulgath

Alghollthu, Skum (B1). These degenerate former foot soldiers of the alghollthus now congregate around underground bodies of water, where they defend their territory against those who hold them in contempt. Your party crosses paths with one skum patrolling the area around its tribe's settlement. It demands to know your party's business but it won't attack without provocation. If no one in your party speaks Undercommon and they wish to parlay with it, you may require a DC 15 Diplomacy check: If it succeeds, the skum keeps trying to communicate with them, or at least it is willing to let them go on their way. If the check fails, the skum attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak skum for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one skum for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite skum for three skum. A large group of skum may be a war party on its way to strike one of the tribe's neighbors, which it has deemed a threat.

Azer (B3). Your party crosses paths with one of these exiles from the Plane of Fire. Unlike other denizens of the underground, they are not hard to see in their darkness — unless they use helmets to cover the wisps of flame that form their hair. This azer most likely belongs to a nearby community of azers and it is either patrolling or exploring the area near their home base. It regards your party with some suspicion, given that azers prefer to conceal their presence from outsiders. Its first duty is to back off and report your presence to the rest of its colony, but a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check (DC 15 if they address it in Ignan) persuades it to hear out whatever you have to say to it.

Scaling the Encounter: Azers are not automatically hostile to your party (unless your party has an efreeti with them), so scaling the encounter may not be a big deal. However, if you want to create a proper challenge, use a baseline encounter group of one azer for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite azer for three azers.

Caligni (B1, B2, B3). These mischievous humanoids are in their element here, so it is not out of the question that your party should encounter one caligni dancer (B1) shuttling messages between scattered caligni settlements. It may eye your party suspiciously as it brushes past them — or it may consider them a target of opportunity and try to pick a pocket or cut a purse.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one caligni dancer for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one caligni creeper (B1) for two caligni dancers and three caligni slayers for one caligni dancer. You may also substitute one caligni slayer (B2) for four caligni dancers; one caligni vanguard (B3) for five caligni dancers; and one caligni caller (B2) for six caligni dancers as the leader and sub-leaders of the group. Most likely, a group of caligni is a raiding party on its way to (or back from) the surface world.

Deep Gnomes (B1). Your party crosses paths with one deep gnome scout from a nearby settlement. It's looking for new sources of gems, or patrolling for duergar or other potential enemies. Svirfneblin are instinctively suspicious of outsiders, so the scout tries to hide among rocks and rubble at your party's approach. That being said, they are not inherently aggressive, and the scout could provide local knowledge and even material assistance if your party wins its trust. You may require a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check to make this so, although you should reduce the DC to 10 if a gnome does the talking:

Critical Success: The deep gnome is willing to travel with your party a short ways — at least enough to help orient

them. A deep gnome rockwarden (see *Scaling the Encounter*) is willing to use its spells to help them.

Success: It provides your party with local knowledge, but no more.

Failure: It wants nothing to do with you, refuses to help, and goes on its way.

Critical Failure: Whatever your party said, it upsets the deep gnome very much. A scout flees to warn its settlement; the next random encounter with deep gnomes might be hostile. A warrior or a rockwarden attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: Use one deep gnome scout for each level in your party's average level as the baseline encounter group. You may freely substitute one deep gnome warrior (B1) for two deep gnome scouts, or one elite deep gnome scout for four deep gnome scouts. You may also substitute one deep gnome rockwarden (B1) for five deep gnome scouts as the group's leader.

Drow (B1). Drow are in their element in this kind of environment. Your party crosses paths with one drow fighter. It may be manning an outpost for its clan, or actively patrolling the caverns for potential enemies. Or it may just be a messenger shuttling between drow settlements, or between the drow and other denizens of the caverns. In any event, the drow fighter treats your party with deep suspicion — anyone who is not drow is a potential enemy. Getting it to cooperate is a tall order, as drow are also haughty with outsiders. It requires a DC 20 Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: Somehow, you win the drow's trust. It is willing to share accurate local information and help your party orient itself.

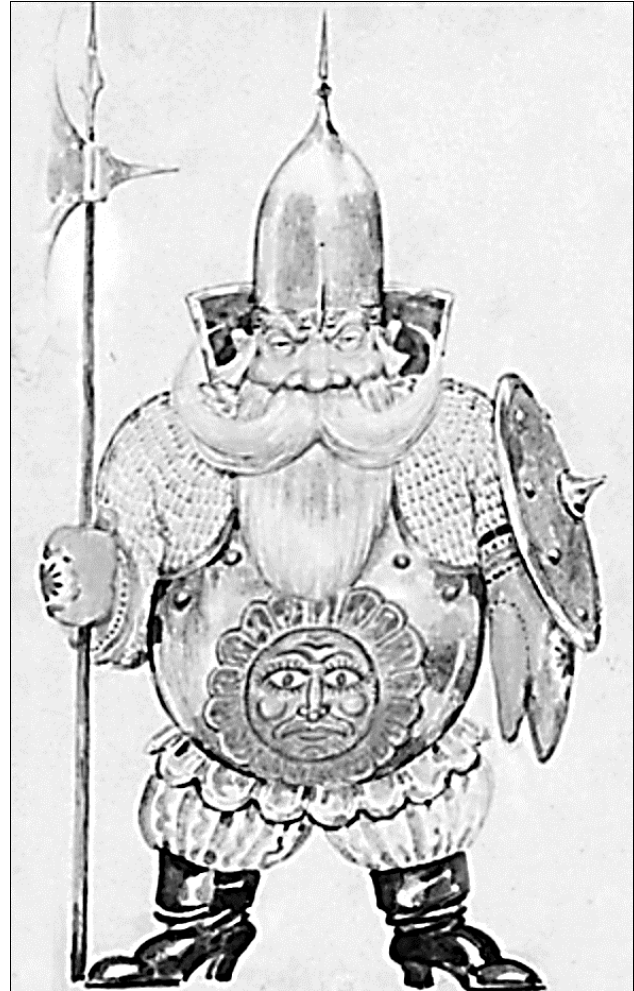
Success: You win the its trust and willingness to help — but only if there are no elves or half-elves in your party.

Failure: It wants nothing to do with you and your kind. At your discretion, however, it may play a trick on your party by giving it false information — leading it astray, or into a hostile encounter.

Critical Failure: This particular drow fighter decides that defeating these outsiders single-handed will gain favor with its elders, so it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one drow fighter for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one drow rogue (B1) for two drow fighters, or one elite drow fighter for four drow fighters. You may also substitute one drow priestess (B1) for three drow fighters as the group's leader.

Duergar (B1). Your party crosses paths with a lone figure that looks like a dwarf, but with gray skin that seems to blend into the gloom of the cavern. It's a duergar, and most likely it's there for either of two reasons: It's a duergar taskmaster (B1) on its way to or from a work gang engaged in mining or quarrying; or it is a duergar bombardier (B1) standing sentry for a nearby duergar colony.



Unless your party includes any known enemies, dwarves are unlikely to treat them with hostility.

Duergar do not automatically attack strangers, but they do regard your party with deep suspicion. It is possible that the presence of a dwarf in your party triggers them, and they challenge that character (or characters) to a fight at the slightest provocation. On the other hand, it is also possible that your party meets a duergar colony that could use some help dealing with a local rival in this subterranean world. In this case, they try to hire your party as mercenaries, offering them each an uncut gem (the value of which should depend on the term of service) as payment.

If neither of these cases apply, you may simply have your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check. If it succeeds, the

duergar is willing to share local knowledge. If it fails, the duergar tells your party to move along and leave it alone.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one duergar bombardier for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute two duergar sharpshooters (B1) for one duergar bombardier, or one elite duergar bombardier for four duergar bombardiers. You may also substitute one duergar taskmaster (B1) for two duergar bombardiers as the group's leader.

Dwarves. Your party crosses paths with a small group of dwarves in their natural environment. However, if your campaign world includes large subterranean concentrations of dwarves, such as full-fledged mining settlements, they should qualify as fixed locations rather than random encounters. A random encounter with dwarves may be an extension of those fixed locations, most likely a work or exploration party or a military patrol on the lookout for enemies. A subterranean wilderness is bound to include many familiar enemies, like orcs, goblins and duergar.

Unless your party includes any such enemies, dwarves are unlikely to treat them with hostility. It's more likely that they freely share their local knowledge and even material help — you may require a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check from your party in the latter case. An encounter with dwarves may also provide your party with a sidequest, with the dwarves trying to enlist them in defending their colony against external threats.

Scaling the Encounter: The encounter group consists of 2d6 miners plus two guards, or one guard and one acolyte. If you anticipate a hostile encounter, you may use a patrol or war party consisting of one guard and one archer sentry (armed with light crossbow instead of longbow) for each multiple of 5 in your party's average level, and if your party's average level is higher than 10 add one captain of the guard as the leader.

Eunemvro (B3). If your party comes upon one of these odd, extraplanar humanoids it is a good bet that there are undead nearby. Destroying undead is the main — if not sole — focus of eunemvros' existence, and this one is pursuing a lead on a group of undead creatures or a powerful undead, like a lich. Eunemvro are aloof and it rarely occurs to them to ask strangers for help, so it's not a given that it offers your party a sidequest to come along with it. In fact, it becomes hostile if it suspects that your party harbors someone who practices necromancy. However, it may be persuaded to accompany your party for a while if destroying undead are involved; you may require a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check to make it so.

Scaling the Encounter: If you suspect that the encounter will turn hostile, use a weak eunemvro for the encounter if your party's average level is lower than 5. Conversely, if your party's average level is higher than 8, use an encounter group of one elite eunemvro for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level.

Giant, Fire (B1). A few fire giants like to live and work underground, getting as close to the source of their raw materials as they can. This means setting up shop near veins of ore and natural sources of subterranean heat. Your party crosses paths with one such fire giant. It may or may not attack, but it does regard them suspicion — forging and crafting is serious business, and the subterranean world is full of thieves, marauders and other enemies. You may require that your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check to convince the giant that they mean it no disrespect:

Critical Success: Your party wins over the fire giant. It offers to sell them some of its handiwork.

Success: They make little impression on the fire giant, which ignores them and goes on its way.

Failure: The fire giant warns them to leave it alone if they know what is good for them.

Critical Failure: Someone makes a false move or says exactly the wrong thing. The fire giant attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 8, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 8-9, use a weak fire giant for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 13, use a team of one elite fire giant for each multiple of 14 in your party's average level.

Goblins (B1). Goblins like to make their lairs in caverns, so it should come as no surprise if your party sees or hears a group of 1d4 goblin warriors. The goblins are probably associated with a nearby lair. They may be patrolling the tunnels near the lair or sentries posted at a fixed location. They may be a hunting party. Or they may be messengers traveling between their tribe and an allied tribe. But goblins are common enough and sufficiently comfortable in this environment that they may be out and about for no particular reason at all. As small as they are, they're also mean and cocky. So it should come as no surprise when they treat your party as a target of opportunity.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak goblin warriors. If your party's average level is 4-6, use an encounter group of 1d4 elite goblin warriors. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite

goblin warrior for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one goblin commando (B1), goblin pyro (B1), or goblin dog (B1) for one elite goblin warrior or two goblin warriors. You may also substitute one goblin war chanter (B1) for one elite goblin warrior or two goblin warriors as the group's leader.

A large group of goblins is likely to be a raiding party on their way out. Or they may be a raiding party on their way back, with loot and 1d6 human and/or humanoid captives. Consider that there is a 5% chance that any given captive is someone of consequence, who could provide your party with a significant reward for their safe return home. In either case, the encounter group has more important things to do than deal with your party. However, if your party finds a goblin lair, they fight to the death to defend it. In addition to the normal treasure found in the lair, there are 1d8 human and/or humanoid captives bound and eager for rescue.

Treasure: If the encounter group is a returning raiding party, use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value.



A lone hobgoblin may have more important business than attacking your party

Hobgoblins (B1). Hobgoblins prefer defensible strongholds with clear sight lines of the surrounding country, so caverns are not their preferred location to establish a lair. However, it's not inconceivable that a mercenary tribe fallen on hard times might take refuge

here, or that a successful tribe might set up a sort of subterranean recruiting station to pull in additional troops from the local humanoids.

Your party comes upon a lone hobgoblin soldier. It may be standing sentry or it may be patrolling the area near its lair. It is also possible that it's a courier shuttling back and forth between other humanoid settlements, trying to recruit allies or just communicating with other hobgoblins. A sentry would want to know your party's business in being here, but otherwise it probably has more important business than attacking your party.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one hobgoblin soldier for each level in your party's average level. You may substitute one goblin dog (B1) for one hobgoblin soldier as long as goblin dogs do not outnumber hobgoblins. Also, you may freely substitute one elite hobgoblin soldier or one hobgoblin archer (B1) for four hobgoblin soldiers. You may substitute one hobgoblin general (B1) for six hobgoblin soldiers as the group's leader.

A large group of hobgoblins indicates that the winds of war are brewing — although ultimately, that sort of thing should be determined by what else is going on in your campaign world. Unless your party has stumbled upon the hobgoblin lair, a large hobgoblin encounter group would be a war band on their way to or from the war zone. That war zone might be located in the outside world, or they may be party to a war in the caverns themselves. In any event, they have more important business than attacking your party; in fact, they might even size them up and try to recruit them to fill out the ranks.

Kobolds (B1). Your party comes across 1d4 kobold warriors. Unless your party stumbles upon their lair, these nasty little reptilian humanoids are most likely out hunting. To them, your party looks like a good source of plunder. If your party does not surprise them, they fan out to take cover among rocks and rubble, hoping to ambush them as they pass. If there are ledges in the tunnel, they climb onto them and drop rocks onto your party.

With a large encounter group, it's possible that your party has stumbled upon the kobolds' lair. In this case, all entrances to the cavern should have a trap of your choice (see Table 1.6: Traps) associated with it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak kobold warriors. If your party's average level is 4-6, use an encounter group of 1d4 elite kobold warriors. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one kobold scout for each level in your party's average level. You

may substitute one kobold dragon mage (B1) for three kobold warriors as the group's leader.

Morlock (B2). When one of these brutal, dead-eyed humanoids spots your party, instinct compels it to do one thing: hunt. You may have the morlock make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If the morlock succeeds, it can track your party until it finds the right moment to strike — perhaps one party member lags behind, or the passageway narrows to single-file.

Morlock clans often use traps to guard their lairs. You may consider that this encounter takes place close enough to the lair so that the morlock is content to track your party until they set off a simple hazard of your choice (see Table 1.6: Traps).

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak morlock for the encounter group. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one morlock for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite morlock for three morlocks.

Ogre (B1). Regardless of whether you consider them undersized giants or oversized humanoids, there is no denying that ogres like to shelter in caverns, despite the low overhead clearance, in between raiding the surface world and picking fights with their equally violent neighbors. Your party spots one ogre warrior, and in a cramped subterranean passageway it is hard to avoid it. It is brutish enough and sufficiently confident in its powers to try to take them captive, or kill them outright if they resist.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak ogre warrior for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one ogre warrior for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite ogre warrior for two ogre warriors, or three ogre gluttons (B1) for four ogre warriors. You may also substitute one ogre boss (B1) or one onidoshi (B2) for two ogre warriors as the group's leader.

Orcs (B1). It's a dangerous way to make a living in the subterranean depths, but that does not deter orcs who exist by taking what they can from their neighbors. In particular, they like to pick on dwarf mining colonies, if they can find them — not only are dwarves good at finding precious metals, but wreaking havoc on them is fun.

Your party crosses paths with 1d4 orc brutes. They're most likely a scout party out to get the lay of the cave, although they may already have found a vulnerable target small enough for a band of this size to raid. As brutal as they are, there's no guarantee that they'll pay

your party much attention. Their leader may look your party over and decide that they're not worth the bother. But they may also decide to interrogate your party for information about the surrounding area, and they'll easily resort to violence if your party is slow to cooperate. They are less likely to give your party a break if there are dwarves in it. They'll also make elf characters a special focus of their hostility, although it would surprise them to find an elf in this environment.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak orc brutes. If your party's average level is 4-5, use an encounter group of 1d6 orc brutes. If your party's average level is higher than 5 use an encounter group of one orc warrior (B1) for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite orc warrior for two orc warriors. You may also substitute one orc warchief (B1) for one orc warrior as the group's leader.

Treasure: A large orc group is likely an actual raiding party, perhaps headed to the surface world or on their way back from a successful attack. In the latter case, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of their plunder. Consider that there is also a 20% chance that the bandits have with them 1d4 captives. The identity of this captive is left to you as GM, as it should depend on local circumstances and fit into your campaign world.

Ratfolk (B1). Caverns tend to be too remote — and dangerous — for ratfolks' liking. But it is possible that your party might come across a lone ratfolk grenadier in their explorations. It may be an outcast from ysoki society, but it might also be part of a small community that has set up deep in the wilderness. That community itself might be an outcast or exiled group, with the details of its backstory dependent on the role that ratfolk might play in your campaign world.

Ratfolk are inherently suspicious of outsiders, and upon spotting you this lone grenadier might try to hide and challenge your party from a position where it can't be seen. If they can overcome its distrust — you may require a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check — it may be willing to share local knowledge and trade alchemical tools and ingredients.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak ratfolk grenadier. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one ratfolk grenadier for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite ratfolk grenadier for two ratfolk grenadiers.

Werecreature (B1, B3). To determine what manner of werebeast your party encounters, roll on Table 1.4.1:

TABLE 14.1**Werecreature - Caverns**

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Werebat
4	Wererat
5-6	Werewolf

All werecreatures assume their animal form if the encounter comes down to combat, although they may choose their hybrid form instead if they have access to a weapon.

Werebat (B3). Caverns are a natural habitat for werebats, even when you take into account that it is likely to have dangerous neighbors. A lone werebat in its animal form, out and about looking to add population to its colony, spots your party as potential fellow werebats. It changes into its hybrid form and attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak werebat. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite werebat for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Wererat (B1). One wererat from a colony that was chased out of a settled area tries to ambush your party and take its possessions. You may require your party to make a DC 20 Perception check to see it at a distance and notice that it changes between its animal form and its hybrid form before disappearing into the shadows, where it will wait for them to come within striking distance. If your party has darkvision, the DC is only 15.

Alternately, if there are ratfolk nearby, the wererat may approach your party in its hybrid form — essentially disguising itself as a relatively non-aggressive creature to lull it into dropping their guard. In this case, you may allow your party a DC 15 Nature or Survival check to see through the ruse; it doesn't work as often as one might think.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak wererat. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one elite wererat for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Werewolf (B1). Caverns can provide werewolves a refuge if they're being hunted in the outside world. However, this environment is not without its hazards. Your party crosses paths with one werewolf in its

hybrid form. It feels little need to conceal its identity because making a show of its true strength can scare off enemies. Instinctively, it regards your party as enemies, so it attacks first and asks questions later.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak werewolf. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite werewolf for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Xulgath (B1). Your party crosses paths with one xulgath warrior out to spy on its tribe's subterranean neighbors, or coming back from doing so. These troglodytes are aggressive brutes, so it relishes the chance to attack your party even though it is outnumbered. For it, the chance to gather trophies from its victims is worth the risk.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one xulgath warrior for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite xulgath warrior or one xulgath skulker (B1) for two xulgath warriors. In addition, you may substitute one xulgath leader (B1) for three xulgath warriors as the group's leader. A large xulgath group is likely a raiding party on their way to take out a local rival or on their way back from a successful attack. In the latter case, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of their plunder.

TABLE 15**Humans - Caverns**

d10	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Adventurers
3-5	Bandits
6	Exiles
7	Explorers
8	Fugitives
9-10	Miners

Adventurers. Unless your party are the only adventurers in your campaign world, it shouldn't come as a complete surprise to meet another party. Caverns are a classic destination for anyone looking to defeat monsters and gain wealth and glory. How they react to your party depends on a variety of factors. Are they rivals pursuing the same goal? If not, perhaps this party is willing to share useful information. In fact, if your party is stuck and having a hard time advancing the storyline of your campaign, a friendly encounter like this can help steer them in the right direction. Differences in alignment may also shape how the two parties react to each other.

Composition of this adventuring party is up to you and can vary widely according to circumstance. A party plunging into the underground might be foolhardy newcomers, or canny veterans. It may have at least one dwarf, brought along to use darkvision and because the rock runner and stonecunning feats come in handy here. It may also have at least one rogue to deal with traps and hazards.

Scaling the Encounter: Unless there is some possibility that this encounter turns hostile, the relative level of the party is mainly a matter of affect. A higher-level party might project self-confidence (even arrogance), while a beginning-level party might stumble about, unsure of themselves. If you're leaning towards a hostile encounter, however, consider that the average level of the party should be around your party's average level -2.

No Country for Much of Anyone

Compared to the other environments described in this book, you won't find many humans here. With the possible exception of mining, there is no routine business that would bring them to such a horrible place. Except for the foolhardy and the desperate, this is no place for humans.

Bandits. Caverns offer bandits a suitable place to make a lair, since officers of the law would have to be brave indeed to try to find them here. However, making their way to the outside world is a chore and a hazard, as is living in a place surrounded by creatures that would just as soon kill you for loot (or for food) as look at you.

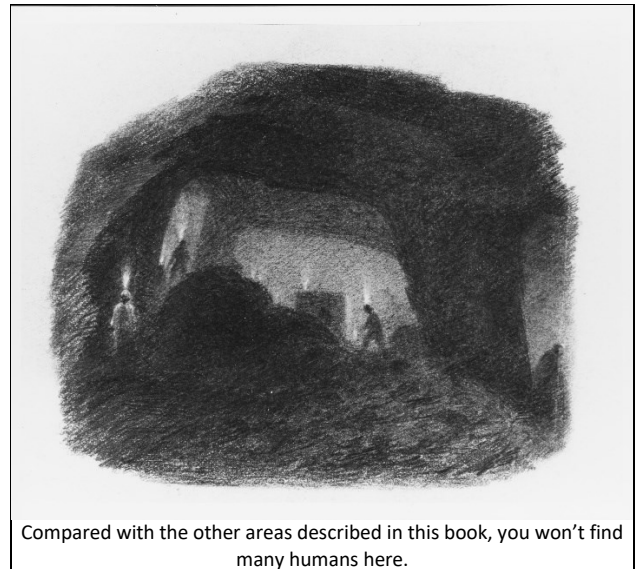
Your party runs into 1d4 bandits who have been sent to make sure the coast is clear. They may not treat your party as a target, as adventurers are usually too well-armed. However, if they belong to a gang that sees the residents of nearby caves as potential enemies, they may try to hire your party as mercenaries to supplement their numbers — and, ideally, take some blows for them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak bandits. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one bandit for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite bandit for two bandits. You may also substitute one gang leader for three bandits as the group's leader.

Treasure: You may decide that your party has surprised the bandits in their lair. If so, use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value and contents. Do so also if you decide that the bandits encountered are on their way back from a successful

raid. In that case, there is also a 20% chance that the bandits have with them a high-value captive whom they intend to ransom. The identity of this captive is left to you as GM, as it should depend on local circumstances and fit into your campaign world. Otherwise, use the guidelines for pocket change in *How to Use This Book*.

Exiles. Your party encounters 1d4 humans or humanoids who could serve as a source of adventure hooks. From their appearance, they have obviously seen better days. They have fled their home for any of a variety of reasons: Perhaps they are royalty or nobility who have been usurped; perhaps the opposite is the case and they are failed usurpers on the run. Or perhaps they have gotten caught up in a blood feud in their homeland and that's why they fear for their lives. Whatever the circumstance, they have come to this horrifying place as a last resort, looking for a refuge from their enemies. You may consider that some of their group have already fallen to the hazards of the subterranean world by the time your party finds them.



No matter their reason for being here, they should offer your party an adventure hook of some sort. It may involve protecting the exiles from their real (or imagined) pursuers. It may involve returning to their former home and securing an important item that was left behind (a family heirloom, a badge of office), perhaps even helping them return home and force their way back into their former stations. At the very least, exiles can provide your party with information about their former home territory, which in turn could be a key location in your campaign.

Use any NPC template you like for the exiles, depending on the backstory you assign them.

Explorers. Explorers differ from adventurers, much to their detriment. Pure desire to discover drives them, so they go forth lightly armed. This leaves them ill-prepared to face the menaces that live in caverns. Your party crosses paths with a small group consisting of one tomb raider, one guide and 1d4 torchbearers. Perhaps they are here thanks to the sponsorship of an academy or a ruler eager to know more about the world. Or perhaps the tomb raider is a wealthy eccentric who undertook this expedition on his or her own.

Such an encounter is not likely to be hostile. You may treat this as an opportunity for your party to receive some help from a knowledgeable stranger — the expedition is likely to have maps of nearby areas (and knowledge of those areas) and they're willing to share them. Conversely, they may have reached the point at which they realize that they're in over their heads and the caverns offer more dangers than they can handle. They may ask for food or supplies — or your party's protection — as they continue to explore.

Fugitives. Your party crosses paths with 1d6 bedraggled humans or humanoids stumbling along the broken cavern floor. They are unarmed, and they are barely clothed. At your discretion, they may have a manacle around one wrist, with the other manacle dangling on its chain. They're on the run from something. The manacles indicate that they are escaped prisoners. From whom they are fleeing and why they were imprisoned in the first place is up to you, and ought to depend on where in your campaign world this encounter takes place.

How the encounter plays out depends on how your party reacts, but one thing on which you may rely is that these fugitives did not go to the trouble of a jailbreak just to allow a bunch of strangers to take their freedom back from them. Each of them has learned to whip their freed manacle by the chain and wield it as a club. Treat the fugitives as prisoners, but without weapons (except for the manacle) or armor.

Treasure: Fugitives have no treasure.

Miners. Mines that are actively worked do not qualify as caverns in the context of this book; they're settled areas, not wilderness. However, miners who are foolhardy or just ignorant of the dangers may explore the cavernous wilderness, hoping to find treasures of the earth. Your party crosses paths with a small group of 1d10 miners convinced that they'll strike whatever it is they're looking for if they just keep stumbling through the darkness. If there is a mining colony nearby, they might well be an offshoot from it.

This is not likely a hostile encounter. Instead, the miners could have local knowledge that your party finds useful,

as well as torches, lamp oil, rope and other supplies for exploring underground. They might also want your party to serve as armed escort, having realized a little too late that dangerous creatures lurk here. In fact, if you want to stage a situation in which your party has the chance to rescue them from their foolhardiness, roll on Table 1.2 for an additional encounter.

TABLE 16

Watch Out! - Caverns

d20	ENCOUNTER
1	Abandoned Lair
2-3	Bioluminescence
4-7	Falling Rocks
8	Hampering Web
9-10	Loose Footing
11-12	Rock Slide
13-14	Sudden Drop
15-16	Sudden Gust
17	Trap
18-19	Tripping Hazard
20	Weird Acoustics

Abandoned Lair. A cavern network is a creature-eat-creature world. Your party finds an uninhabited chamber that demonstrates this grim fact. Roll again to determine the type of creature that once dwelt here. The cavern is littered with their abandoned possessions. Humanoids may have left behind something of their culture: cave paintings, art objects, religious objects, and the like. Your party may find their remains are here, as well — in other words, they were slaughtered where they lived.

There is a 50% chance that one entrance to the cavern is guarded by an active trap (see Trap, below).

Treasure: Determine the level of whatever occupied this abandoned lair. If you decide that the former residents were slaughtered here, there is a 20% chance that the invaders left some treasure behind. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the baseline value, and use 10% of that as the actual value. Otherwise, whoever attacked them took everything, and there is no treasure.

If there are no remains of the previous occupants, then the lair was abandoned. Perhaps they went to attack an enemy and never came back? In this case, roll on the appropriate Treasure Hoard table. In other words, your party stumbles upon a freebie.

Bioluminescence. Your party has the good fortune to find a colony of bioluminescent fungi or moss. The

illumination turns darkness into dim light, or dim light into bright light, in a 30-foot radius from the center of the colony.

Falling Rocks. Your party is exploring an environment entirely encased in rock. Who would have thought that loose stones and rubble would fall on them? Make a melee attack roll (no bonuses) against each party member. A successful attack causes 1d8 damage, but a successful DC 15 Reflex save halves the damage, rounded down.



Hampering Web. There is a finely-woven spider's web right in your party's path, spanning the entire width of the passage, but there is no spider present. Your party may make a DC 15 Perception check to spot the web before someone at the front of the party formation walks right into it. Treat as a hampering web, as per the hazard description in the core rules. In addition, for each failed attempt to escape by the trapped character, there is a 10% chance, cumulative with each new attempt, that one spider swarm appears from out of the darkness and enters the web from the top edge to see what it caught this time (if your party's average level is 5 or higher, consider using an ogre spider instead).

Loose Footing. In the gloom, your party fails to notice that they're following a passage that slopes downward. It's just steep enough to make you lose your balance if

you don't spot it. One character in the front of the party formation takes a tumble, suffering 1d8 falling damage. A successful DC 15 Reflex save halves the damage, rounded down.

Rock Slide. It's not a catastrophe, but it's enough cause problems. One side of the passageway was starting to crumble and your party's footfalls set it off. Choose a party member on the flank of the party formation. Loose rock cascades onto him or her, causing 2d6 damage. That character is also restrained until freed. A successful DC 15 Reflex save halves the damage, rounded down.

Pulling the restrained character free requires a successful DC 20 Athletics check, or your party must spend 10 minutes removing the rocks one by one.

Sudden Drop. Your party may or may not notice that a crevasse cuts across the passage in front of them. Have your party make a DC 15 Perception check to notice it in time to warn the characters at the front of the party formation. If the check fails, one character in front falls 20 feet and takes commensurate damage, although a successful DC 15 Reflex save halves it through proper bracing for impact.

The crevasse is narrow enough to cross with a running long jump, but this requires a successful DC 10 Athletics or Acrobatics check.

Sudden Gust. Whoosh! A sudden rush of air puts out all lit torches. You may allow anyone holding a torch a DC 20 Reflex save to keep it lit by shielding it just in time. Any torch that goes out requires a DC 10 Dexterity check to re-light it; failure means that it's useless.

If you wish, you may roll for a different encounter, using the occasion to throw something at your party from out of the sudden darkness.

Trap. Your party stumbles upon an old, but still active, trap. Who set it and why they set it is no longer apparent. But it's there nonetheless and your party still has to deal with it. Use a simple hazard described in the core rulebooks of a level less than or equal to your party's average level, or use one of your own devising. Traps in this environment are most likely simple, even crude, because of limits on the materials available — and the sophistication of those who built them.

Tripping Hazard. Pick a party member at the front of the party formation. That character trips over an object unseen in the dim light — a rock, or the remains of a creature, for instance. He or she must make a successful DC 10 Reflex save to avoid a hard fall that causes 1d4 damage — and perhaps no small embarrassment in the eyes of the other party members.

Weird Acoustics. The acoustics in this part of the caverns can be deceptive. Choose a party member to make a DC 15 Survival check. If it fails, that character believes that he or she has heard a monster of your choice vocalize nearby, or some other auditory phenomenon that indicates trouble close at hand. If it succeeds, the party member in question realizes that this is an illusion, and the noise is either much farther away than it seems, or it is something else entirely.

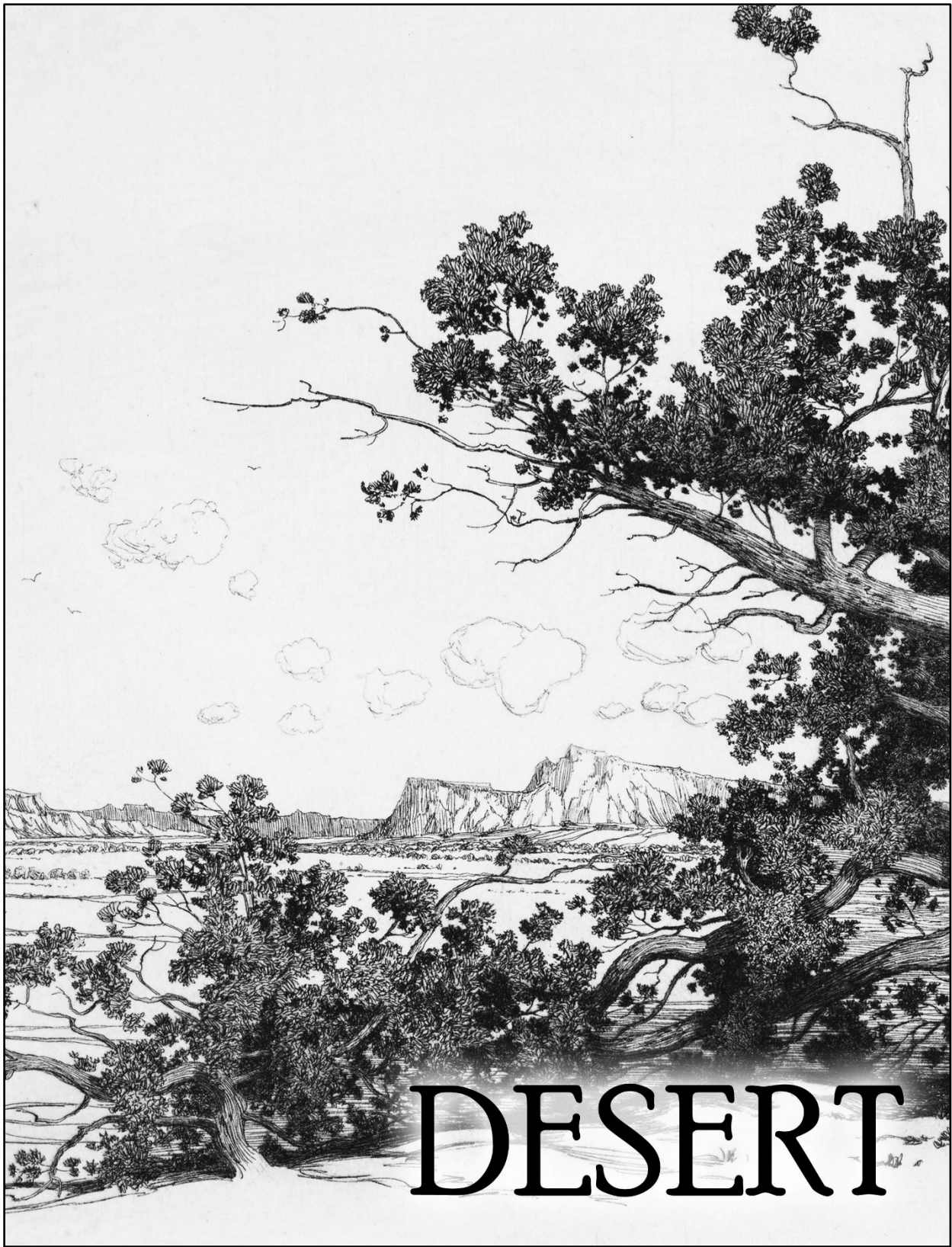
If you wish, roll on Table 1.6.1 for guidance on what your party thinks it hears:

TABLE 1.6.1	
Did You Hear That? - Caverns	
d10	What They Think They Hear...
1	Clash of weapons
2	Crash of falling rocks
3	Dragon roaring
4	Gibbering moulder babbling
5	Human or humanoid screaming
6	Monstrous howling
7	Shriekers shrieking
8	Voices speaking in Dwarvish
9	Voices speaking in Undercommon or Elvish with a Drow accent
10	Zombies or ghouls groaning

There’s No Ground Like the Underground

Caverns are a unique environment. Essentially, they embody what is deepest in and darkest about the human imagination — which explains a lot about the monsters that you find here, and practically nowhere else.





CHAPTER TWO

Desert

What is a Desert?

The desert, with its sweeping vistas, unforgiving climate and apparent hostility to living things, has always been a place of awe and danger. The *Tales of the Arabian Nights* tell us that dust devils and other such natural phenomena are powerful elemental spirits, and in so doing created a mythology that comes down to us in the present day, and not just through fantasy roleplaying games. In more practical terms, the desert is an environment characterized primarily by lack of rainfall and humidity. The rate of evaporation often exceeds rainfall, so the ground is arid, the air is dry and creatures and plants that cannot adapt to these conditions do not live here. Some humanoids and humans live in, or at least travel through the desert but they are relatively few and far between.

However, it is also the case that deserts can be found at various latitudes, so even though traveling through a desert always means traversing a dry place, the weather is not universally the same. Deserts close to the equator, like the Sahara, tend to be hot year-round, while deserts closer to the poles, like the Gobi, can get quite cold in the winter. Because of this, please note that some tables in this chapter require a die-roll modifier depending on the desert's latitude in your campaign world.

What do you Find in a Desert?

When you determine that a random encounter is in order, roll on Table 2.1 to determine the category:

TABLE 2.1

Encounter Type - Desert

d20	ENCOUNTER
1-8	Aggressive Creatures (Table 2.2)
9-13	Neutral Creatures (Table 2.3)
14	Humanoids (Table 2.4)
15-16	Humans (Table 2.5)
17-20	Watch Out! (Table 2.6)

Then, roll on the appropriate table to determine the creature, person or thing encountered.

Desert terrain tends to provide broad vistas with open sight lines. There aren't that many places to hide. As a general rule, encounters begin with both sides spotting

each other from a distance (unless otherwise specified). This requires that either or both sides deliberately closes the range before combat begins, which may allow either or both sides the chance to try to avoid a fight, if so desired.

TABLE 2.2

Aggressive Creatures - Desert

d100	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Gorgon
3-6	Basilisk
7-12	Cat, Leopard
13-15	Cauthooi
16-19	Centipede
20-22	Chimera
23	Doprillu
24-27	Drake, Desert
28-31	Elemental
32-34	Elemental, Mephit
35-38	Griffon
39-40	Grikkitog
41-43	Gug
44-51	Insects
52-54	Leucrotta
55-57	Manticore
58-60	Medusa
61	Mukradi
62-64	Roc
65-71	Scorpion
72-76	Snakes
77-80	Solifugid
81-86	Spiders
87-90	Toad
91-98	Undead
99-100	Zaramuun

+2 to the die roll if in a tropical desert

Gorgon (B2). Gorgons find hot climates inhospitable because bright sunlight and hot air heat up their carapace of metallic plates. But they live in sub-arctic or temperate deserts.

Your party approaches a gorgon's lair — perhaps it is a cluster of rocks, or a small cave hollowed out of a rocky outcropping. Petrified chunks lie scattered about outside the lair. You may allow your party a DC 15 Survival check to realize that they're crumbs leftover from the gorgon's previous meals. The monster is, of course, quite happy to prey on your party and save them for later if it isn't

hungry right now. You may also allow your party a DC 10 Perception check to hear the gorgon before they see it — it's the sound of sand and grit that has gotten in between its carapace plates rubbing against them.

It's a bold move, but it is theoretically possible to wrangle a gorgon and use it as a mount, at least for a while. One large or two medium-size creatures must successfully grapple the gorgon using both hands. They must maintain the grapple for 10 consecutive turns. At that point, the gorgon stops struggling and acknowledges the wranglers as its master, at least temporarily. It allows them to ride it. However, getting the gorgon to obey a command requires a successful DC 27 Nature or Intimidation check:

Success: The gorgon obeys the command.

Failure: The gorgon ignores the command.

Critical Failure: The gorgon reasserts its independence. It refuses to acknowledge commands until it is successfully wrangled again. Furthermore, anyone who tries to issue it a command until it is successfully wrangled again must make a DC 27 Intimidation check, and if it fails the gorgon attacks that character.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-7, use one weak gorgon. If your party's average level is higher than 11, use one elite gorgon for each multiple of 12 in your party's average level.

Treasure: The lair contains scattered valuables belonging to the gorgon's previous victims. Use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value.

Basilisk (B1). Your party comes across a cluster of rocks that, unfortunately, a basilisk has chosen for its lair. Here it preys upon creatures — and hapless travelers — taking shelter from the sun or blowing sand; they don't realize what they've gotten themselves into until it is too late.

Because the basilisk doesn't have to go far from its sheltering place, this encounter is likely to start at a closer range than a typical desert encounter. However, you may allow your party a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to hear something stirring behind the rocks, or at least to intuit that something is there.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak basilisk for the encounter. If your party's average level is 8-11, use one elite basilisk. If your party's average level is higher than 11, they encounter two elite basilisks sharing a lair — or, if you wish, substitute one elite dracolisk (B2).

Treasure: The lair contains scattered valuables belonging to the basilisk's previous victims. Use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value. If there is more than one basilisk in the encounter, consider that basilisk eggs may also be present for the taking.

Cat, Leopard (B1). Use "leopard" as a catch-all for big cats that you might find in a desert environment, like cougars and cheetahs. Your party sees one leopard feeding on a fresh kill — a wild goat, or some other suitable creature. Perhaps it has hunted an unfortunate human or humanoid. You may allow a DC 15 Perception check to determine if your party makes out what's happening at a sufficient distance to steer clear, if they choose. Otherwise, the leopard looks up at them with suspicion, not only unhappy that they have interrupted its meal, but determined that no one steals its kill.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak leopard for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, your party may come upon a leap of leopards feeding on a carcass, with one elite leopard for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.



Deserts do not provide many places to hide.

Cauthooj (B1). Food is scarce in the desert, but these weird emu-shaped predators make the most of their opportunities by manipulating their prey into killing themselves. Your party hears a cauthooj's disturbing vocalizations coming from behind a large rock. After that, what happens to them is up to them and their Will saving throws.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 10, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 10-11, use a weak cauthooj for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 15, use an elite cauthooj.

Centipede (B1, B2). Centipedes are not aggressive by nature, but the giants among them are so large and so voracious that they constantly need to feed, and their size allows them to deal with most creatures without fear. When your party disturbs 1d6 giant centipedes nesting under some rocks, the centipedes consider that live food has just been delivered to their door.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak giant centipedes. If your party's average level is 4-6, use one giant whiptail centipede (B2) for the encounter, or consider that your party has provoked the wrath of one giant centipede swarm (B1) hiding among some rocks. If your party's average level is 7-8, use one elite giant whiptail centipede. If your party's average level is higher than 8, consider using the granddaddy among centipedes, one titan centipede (B2). If this location won't accommodate a creature that large, use an encounter group of one elite giant whiptail centipede for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level instead.

The Meaning of Desert

One of the Roman historian Tacitus' most quotable passages comes from a speech that he attributes to a British chieftain who declares that, "The Romans make a desert, and call it peace." However, Tacitus doesn't mean by this that the Roman conquest of Britain made it look like an establishing shot from *Lawrence of Arabia*, or southern Nevada outside of Las Vegas. In some English translations, "wasteland" substitutes for "desert."

Similarly, if you go back far enough, references to St. Jerome living as a hermit use "desert" and "wilderness" interchangeably. Depictions through the Renaissance period often show him with plenty of trees in the background, not Saharan dunes. In other words, a desert is any place devoid of the fundamentals of human habitation.

This book, however, sticks to the more modern, scientifically-driven meaning of "desert." Creature, monster and plant alike, they are here because they have adapted to survive in an exceptionally arid land.

Chimera (B1). Your party spots a winged monstrosity with three different animal heads circling above them. This can only mean one thing: A chimera has spotted them as potential prey. There is a small chance that it has escaped servitude to another creature — you can't truly domesticate a chimera, you can only get it to cooperate for a while — but more likely it is just feral and hungry.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 6, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use a weak chimera for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 11, use an elite chimera.

Doprillu (B2). Your party crosses paths with one of these masked creatures because it is bored and it has gone abroad to look for a good fight. It spots your party as full of suitable candidates, so it plants itself firmly in their path and challenges one of them to a wrestling match. If your party is inclined to accept, then it is important to establish the terms of the contest. Those terms may be whatever you as GM choose; the doprillu will abide by them until its opponent cheats — in which case, it becomes sufficiently enraged to fight to the death, no holds barred.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 12, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 12-13 use a weak doprillu for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 18, use an elite doprillu.

Treasure: A doprillu may carry on its person some noteworthy items as trophies from its previous bouts. Use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value. If it loses its duel, it hands over one of its trophies — but if it wins, it demands something of real value from the character it vanquished. Anything less would be cheating, in its eyes.

Drake, Desert (B1). Drakes that have adopted to desert life use camouflage — the color and pattern of their hide — and burrowing into dunes to conceal their presence. Have one desert drake make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds, they are unaware of its presence until it leaps out from a sand dune to attack them. If it fails, your party notices a pair of glowering draconic eyes peeking out at them from the sand.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 6, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's level is 6-7, use a weak desert drake for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 11, you may use an encounter group of one elite desert drake for each multiple of 12 in your party's average level.

Elemental (B1, B2, B3). With its endless vistas of the earth below and the sky above, the desert offers elementals a relatively comfortable place in the Material Plane. To determine the elemental being that your party encounters, roll on Table 2.2.2:

TABLE 2.21**Elementals - Desert**

d8	ENCOUNTER
1-5	Earth Elemental
6-8	Air Elemental
9	Fire Elemental

+1 to the die roll of in a tropical desert

The exact sensations and circumstances of the encounter depend on what manner of elemental your party encounters (see *Scaling the Encounter*). If it is intelligent enough to understand language, someone who knows the elemental's native language may try to interact with it. However, it is difficult to persuade an elemental to do something, and it should require a successful DC 20 (or thereabouts) Diplomacy check to do so. Otherwise, it's likely that the elemental will treat your party as an enemy; it bears an uncontrollable grudge against the Material Plane, whose residents are always trying to dominate elementals, or it is just on edge outside of its native plane.

Air Elemental/Scaling the Encounter. In the desert, air and earth sometimes interact in a way that makes the air seem like a living thing. Other times, what seems like mundane air is actually an elemental living thing.

One air wisp (B3) should make a reasonable encounter for a level 1 party. Otherwise, the elemental encountered should depend on your party's average level: one spark bat (B2) for a level 2 or higher party, one zephyr hawk (B1) for a level 3 or higher party, one living thunderclap (B2) for a level 4 or higher party, one living whirlwind (B1) for a level 5 or higher party, one belker (B2) for a level 6 or higher party, one invisible stalker (B1) for a level 7 or higher party, one storm lord (B1) for a level 9 or higher party, one melody of the wind for a level 10 or higher party, or one elemental hurricane (B1) for a level 11 or higher party.

Earth Elemental/Scaling the Encounter. Few landscapes look as lifeless as the desert. It's barren mundane earth, spread out as far as the eye can see. However, what looks like mundane earth is sometimes an elemental living thing.

One earth wisp (B3) should make a reasonable encounter for a level 1 party. Otherwise, the elemental encountered should depend on your party's average level: one living boulder (B2) for a level 2 or higher party, one sod hound (B1) for a level 3 or ➤

higher party, one earthen destrier (B2) for a level 4 or higher party, one living landslide (B1) for a level 5 or higher party, one sand sentry (B2) for a level 6 or higher party, one xorn (B1) for a level 7 or higher party, one granite glyptodont (B2) for a level 8 or higher party, one stone mauler (B1) for a level 9 or higher party, or one elemental avalanche (B1) for a level 11 or higher party.

Fire Elemental/Scaling the Encounter. In tropical deserts, the heat can become so intense that it actually creates conditions that fire elementals can tolerate; it may even open up gaps between the Material Plane and the Elemental Plane of Fire.

One fire wisp (B3) should make a reasonable encounter for a level 1 party. Otherwise, the elemental encountered should depend on your party's average level: one ember fox (B2) for a level 2 or higher party, one cinder rat (B1) for a level 3 or higher party, one filth fire (B2) for a level 4 or higher party, one living wildfire (B1) for a level 5 or higher party, one striding fire (B2) for a level 6 or higher party, one salamander (B1) for a level 7 or higher party, one magma scorpion (B2) for a level 8 or higher party, one firewurm (B1) for a level 9 or higher party, or one elemental inferno (B1) for a level 11 or higher party.

There's an Elemental in My Soup

Elementals originate in and belong to their own planes. So what brings them to the Material Plane. Why are they here? There are mechanics for bringing them here through arcane summoning, but they're only allowed a limited time on the Material Plane.

This book assumes that elementals encountered at random have been trapped somehow away from their native planes. Perhaps they were summoned and could not find their way back — doomed like angry ghosts to wander a world where they do not belong, and in a mood to attack whatever cross their path. Or perhaps there is a natural point of convergence between the Material Plane and one of the Elemental Planes — an idea posited in *Found by the Way #8: Path to the Mizar Oasis*, from our series of location modules for *Pathfinder* and *Pathfinder 2nd Edition*.

Elemental, Mephit (B1, B2). These annoying little elementals have a habit of crossing over into the Material Plane, like ink bleeding through paper, and making nuisances of themselves. They are not predatory,

but they are very annoying and they interpret any attempt to brush them aside as an attack. Deserts attract various types of mephitis. Roll on Table 2.2.2 to determine the kind of mephitis your party encounters:

TABLE 2.2.2

Mephitis - Desert

d6	ENCOUNTER
1	Air Mephitis
2-3	Dust Mephitis
4-6	Earth Mephitis

Air Mephitis (B1). Your party spots a thin vapor trail describing an apparently random pattern in the desert air. It's an air mephitis. When it spots your party, it targets them for mischief and swoops down on them repeatedly, often uttering a piercing whine as it does so. It does not stop unless physically forced to do so, as it gets mindless amusement out of annoying your party.

Dust Mephitis (B2). Your party finds one dust mephitis blocking their path. It fixes them with a piercing gaze and declares that they are doomed (in either Auran or Terran, of course). The actual circumstances of your party do not matter. The mephitis just knows that ➤

they're headed for a bad end. If your party tries to ignore it and move on, it follows them and refuses to let up. It doesn't like being ignored, and eventually it attacks them.

Earth Mephitis (B1). Your party finds its path blocked by one earth mephitis standing (or sitting, if you prefer) directly in its way. It refuses to move no matter what your party says or does to get it out of the way, and it attacks if your party tries to go around it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite mephitis for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Griffon (B1). One griffon has strayed from its normal hunting grounds in more fertile lands. Pickings are slim, however, and when it sees your party its deepening hunger drives it to go for one of their mounts or pack animals — or at least, it thinks it has spotted a mount or a pack animal.

If taming and training griffons is part of your campaign world, then no doubt griffon trainers would pay well for

them. To subdue a griffon to the point where it can be bound and held captive, one large or two medium-size creatures must successfully grapple the griffon using both hands. They must maintain the grapple for 10 consecutive turns. At that point, the griffon stops struggling. How your party keeps it bound until it can be delivered is up to them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak griffon for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use a pack (flock?) of one elite griffon for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Grikkitog (B1). You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to notice that they're approaching a boulder or large chunk of rubble with primitive facial features — what looks like a monstrous maw and eyes. If it fails, they don't realize what's waiting for them until they're close enough for it to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 12, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 12-13, use one weak grikkitog for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 17, use one elite grikkitog.

Gug (B1). Not even a bold adventuring party expects to meet up with a bipedal creature with four arms and a gaping maw where one would expect to find the head, but there it is. Your party has the misfortune of bumping into one gug that has come to the surface world from its subterranean lair to hunt — and this chance encounter with your party means that it has found the prey for which it was looking.

At your discretion, however, the gug may be on its way back from marauding and it chose to take a captive back to its lair. Rescuing an unfortunate soul from a gug is sure to gain your party at least one ally, and you may consider that there is a 10% chance that they have rescued someone of importance, whose safe return will earn them a substantial reward.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 8, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 8-9, use one weak gug. If your party's average level is higher than 13, use a pack of elite gugs for the encounter group, one for each multiple of 14 in your party's average level.

Insects (B1, B2). You may not think of insects as predatory, but they can be quite aggressive and cause trouble in their own way. That's what happens when you act without the capacity to think about the consequences. To make things more troublesome,

insects have plenty of room to grow big in the desert.
Roll on Table 2.2.3 to determine the insects encountered:

TABLE 2.2.3

Insects - Desert

d12	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Ant
4-6	Beetle, Giant Stag
7	Cockroach
8	Fly
9-10	Tick
11-12	Wasps

Ant (B2). Your party is not looking through a magnifying glass; they really have come face-to-face with one human-sized ant. It's not a predator, but it is an omnivore that eats anything that seems like food and it is large enough to enforce its will. To it, your party looks like food.

Alternately, army ants are much smaller, but they come at you in a vicious, relentless swarm. If your party runs afoul of an army ant swarm (B2), it spots them (or more precisely, a food source somewhere among your party's belongings) during a rest halt or while they have camped for the night and attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak giant ant for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one army ant swarm for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite giant ant for one army ant swarm.

Beetle, Giant Stag (B1). Like giant ants, giant stag beetles are mindless omnivores that feed voraciously, and when you're that large, almost anything looks like it could make a meal, including your party.

However, a skilled handler may wrangle a giant stag beetle and use it as a beast of burden. One large or two medium-size creatures must successfully grapple the beetle. They must maintain the grapple for 6 consecutive turns. At that point, the beetle stops struggling and acknowledges the wranglers as its master.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use a weak giant stag beetle for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite giant stag beetle for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level. ➤

Cockroach (B2). You find cockroaches wherever they can scavenge off of creatures higher up the food chain. Food is harder to come by in the desert than in most environments, but cockroaches know how to get by on mere scraps. During a rest halt, one giant cockroach goes after your party's rations. It won't attack unless threatened, but it eats everything up unless stopped.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite cockroach swarm (B2) for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Fly (B2). Though life is scarce in the desert, there are still enough carcasses about to support scavengers. Baby giant flies feed on them so that they grow up into big and strong giant flies. Your party comes upon the remains of... something... that has been almost entirely consumed by 1d4 giant maggots. They're still hungry and they're desperate enough to try to continue feeding on your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3 use an encounter group of 1d6 giant maggots. If your party's average level is higher than 3 use an encounter group of one giant fly (B2) for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. The flies have found a carcass into which to lay eggs, and they defend their spawning ground against a perceived threat.

Tick (B2). One giant tick hiding among some rocks spots your party as a suitably tasty source of nutritious blood. It emerges from cover and attacks a party member of your choice.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite giant tick for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Wasp (B1). A large rock with an overhang that provides generous shade seems at first like a good place to take a rest halt. However, one giant wasp got there first and as far as it's concerned, you're threatening its nest. You may allow your party a DC 20 Nature or Survival check to back away before setting it off, but giant wasps are quick to anger and quick to sting.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak giant wasp for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 2, use an encounter group of one giant wasp for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. ➤

Alternately, if your mind recoils at the idea of wasps, you may use one weak wasp swarm for the encounter if your party's average level is 1-3. If your party's average level is 4-7, use one wasp swarm. If your party's average level is 8-11, use one elite wasp swarm.

Leucrotta (B2). Have the leucrotta make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds your party thinks they hear a plaintive cry, as if from a human or humanoid in distress. In this case, you may then allow them a DC 20 Nature check:

Critical Success: Your party knows for certain that it's a leucrotta faking it.

Success: Your party knows it's mimicry, not a real cry of distress.

Failure: Your party thinks it hears a cry for help in Common.

However, if the leucrotta fails its Stealth check, your party sees it trying to hide behind a rock. In any event, it's determined to prey upon them.

If you wish to run a more complicated encounter and give your party a sidequest, consider that the leucrotta is — or was — affiliated with a local band of gnolls. It may want to lure your party into the clutches of those gnolls, in which case it keeps using its Luring Cry ability until the trap can be sprung. See Table 2.4: Gnolls for guidance on scaling the encounter. On the other hand, the leucrotta may have been expelled by the gnolls whom it thought it led and it may try to enlist your party's help in revenging itself upon them, in return for all the treasure in their lair. In this case, treat the leucrotta as a friendly NPC — at least until the offending gnolls are defeated.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is less than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak leucrotta for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an elite leucrotta. If your party's average level is higher than 15, consider using two elite leucrottas working in tandem.

Manticore (B1). Your party spots a large winged beast in the sky. It's a manticore on the hunt, and it spots your party just as they spot it. Once it gets close enough to launch its spikes, it may choose to toy with its prey just to watch them squirm. In this case, it demands some kind of bribe in exchange for sparing them — a bargain it will keep, if your party makes the right offer. A suitable offer

might take the form of treasure or humiliating servitude that amuses it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for another encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak manticore for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an encounter group of one elite manticore for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Medusa (B1). It may be inconspicuous enough so that you should require a successful DC 10 Perception check to notice it, but your party passes what appears to be a realistic statue of an animal. In fact, a medusa has made its lair among some rocks nearby, where it surrounds itself with the petrified remains of its victims. It decides that your party would supplement its existing collection nicely. If your party investigates, they'll find more and more such statues until they reach the edge of the medusa's lair.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak medusa for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use one elite medusa.

Treasure: The medusa's gaze petrifies flesh, but not valuables. To total up the bits and pieces that once belonged to its victims, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Mukradi (B1). Fortunately for travelers, mukradi are few and far between, and they're large enough so that in the flat spaces of a desert you can spot one from a distance far enough to plot a way to avoid it before it gets too close. With its tremorsense, you can be sure that the mukradi has an inkling of your party's presence.

Scaling the Encounter: A mukradi is a lot to handle for anything but a high-level party. If your party's average level is lower than 13, feel free to re-roll for another encounter. If your party's average level is 13-14, use a weak mukradi for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 20 use an elite mukradi.

Roc (B1). A roc encountered in the desert has roamed far afield from its mountain or hilltop eyrie in search of food. If anything, this means that it is less likely to be picky in its choice of prey. It may prefer a single big, juicy target, but in a pinch a bunch of smaller ones — like your party and its pack animals — will tide it over.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 7, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 7-8, use a weak roc for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 12 use an elite roc.

Scorpion (B1). Your party takes a rest halt by some rocks and disturbs the giant scorpion sheltering among them. It has a large stinger, and it doesn't hesitate to use it. Whether it acts in what it perceives as self-defense, or because your party looks like prey, it makes little practical difference.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak giant scorpion for the encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use one scorpion swarm. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite giant scorpion for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.



Snakes (B1, B3). Venomous snakes make themselves at home in the desert. They like to shelter among rocks and strike from ambush, but they also need to sun themselves from time to time. In general, they go about without fear, knowing that anyone who tries to harm them must answer to their deadly bite first. Roll on Table 2.2.4 to determine the size of the snake(s) encountered:

TABLE 2.2.4
Snakes - Desert

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Rat Snake Swarm
4-5	Giant Viper
6-8	Viper

Rat Snake Swarm (B3). Your party stops to rest among some rocks among which some rat snakes have sheltered. You may allow them a DC 10 Perception check to notice the snakes before they get close enough to attack. Rat snakes are not venomous, but you don't want to get bitten by one all the same.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak rat snake swarm for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite rat snake swarm for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Giant Viper (B1). A giant viper has a hard time finding places to hide, but it does need to hunt and its relative size helps discourage potential enemies. Your party comes face-to-fangs with one giant viper looking for its next meal. ➤

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak giant viper for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite giant viper for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Viper (B1). Your party disturbs 1d6 vipers sheltering among some rocks. It's too late to avoid an aggressive response from them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak viper swarm (B3) for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite viper swarm for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Solifugid (B2). Like trap-door spiders, solifugids burrow into the ground, which provides excellent shelter and allows them to ambush their prey. Just don't call them spiders, since they only have six legs. You may require that your party make a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to spot a defect in the ground or a sand dune. If successful, you may then have them make a DC 15 Nature check to recognize it as the entrance to a giant solifugid lair. If the first check fails, they get their first hint that one giant solifugid has spotted them as prey when it emerges from its lair and charges them.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one giant solifugid for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite giant solifugid for three giant solifugids. You may also substitute one dunesnaker solifugid (B2) for 20 giant solifugids.

Treasure. Solifugids prefer to drag their prey into their lairs to feed. Valuables belonging to their victims therefore remain in their lair. You may use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value if you wish.

Spiders (B1). As a general rule, spiders that live in the desert tend to make their lairs between and beneath rocks, in a single desert plant, or even burrowing underground rather than weave huge webs. Having a place where they can escape the midday sun is more important than exercising their web-spinning chops. Your party is most likely to encounter them by coming too close to their lair for comfort — perhaps by resting in a rare and welcome bit of shade. You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to avoid being surprised when the spider rushes out to launch a pre-emptive strike on them. Roll on Table 2.2.5 to determine what kind of spider your party encounters:

TABLE 2.25

Spiders - Desert

d8	ENCOUNTER
1	Ether Spider
2-3	Giant Tarantula
4-6	Hunting Spider
7-8	Spider Swarm

Ether Spider (B1). One ether spider literally appears out of nowhere to attack your party, having spotted them from its lair in the Ethereal Plane. Ether spiders are quite fearless, and they use their ability to jump back and forth between the Ethereal Plane and the Material Plane to conduct hit-and-run attacks, wearing the party down until they are all incapacitated or dead.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, use a weak ether spider for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use one elite ether spider.

Giant Tarantula (B1). Tarantulas burrow into the ground and they either take whatever stumbles into their lair, or they emerge to ambush prey. As your party approaches, vibrations in the ground tell a giant tarantula that something juicy has come to its doorstep, and it jumps out and attacks. You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to notice a hole in the ground large enough to fit a large spider, and if successful, a DC 15 Nature check to realize that it's a tarantula burrow.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a hunting spider encounter instead. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak giant tarantula for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an encounter group of one elite giant tarantula for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Hunting Spider (B1). A hunting spider can represent either a web-spinning spider that has set up shop between two rocks, or a large trap-door spider with a burrow. It's up to you as GM what kind of encounter you want to set up.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite hunting spider for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Spider Swarm (B1). A large web houses 1d4 swarms ➤

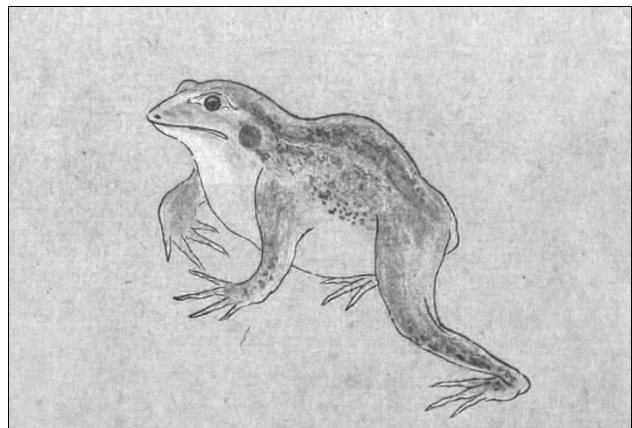
of tiny spiders. All of them respond aggressively if something so much as touches their web.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3, use an encounter group of 1d4 spider swarms. If your party's average level is 4-5, use an encounter group of 1d4 elite spider swarms. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one elite spider swarm for each level in your party's average level.

Treasure. Larger spiders may have trapped humanoid-sized victims in the past and left some of their valuables caught in their lair. You may use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value if you wish.

Toad (B2). Unlike frogs, toads can survive without abundant water, so it's not unusual to find them in the desert. They're also voracious predators, so giant toads have a habit of eating first and asking questions later, and the size of their prey presents little object. One giant toad that has taken over a burrow after eating its previous occupant spies your party, peeking out from the hole in the ground. It's hungry again.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak giant toad for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use a knot of one elite giant toad for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.



Giant toads are not bound by your limited definitions of "food".

Undead (B1, B2, B3). You won't find ghouls and ghosts in a desert because anything that's dead desiccates instead of rots. But that still leaves plenty of opportunity to meet up with undead as your party treks through the wasteland. There are many ways to die horribly in the desert, and sufficient opportunity for necromantic evil to disturb what rest they might otherwise manage. Roll on Table 2.2.6 to determine the undead abomination that greets your party:

TABLE 2.2.6**Undead - Desert**

d20	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Festrog
4	Ghost
5-8	Mummy
9	Revenant
10	Shadow
11-14	Skeleton
15-16	Wight
17	Wraith
18-20	Zombie

Festrog (B3). It is appallingly easy to die a lingering death from thirst or starvation in the desert, so festrogs are relatively common here as undead go. Your party suddenly realizes that they are being followed by one festrog, going about on all fours as if stalking them.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one festrog for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite festrog for three festrogs. A pack of festrogs may use pack hunting tactics, spreading out and approaching from multiple angles to hem in your party.

Ghost (B1). A ghost in the desert is easily mistaken for some random object glinting in the sun during the day, or a gust of sand at night. But it's no less real for all of that, and anyone who mistakes it for a natural phenomenon is in for a nasty surprise. Almost certainly, it is the remnant of someone who died unhappily in this terrible wasteland, alone and in terrible distress. Thirst, exposure and hunger are all likely causes of its demise. Perhaps this unfortunate person got lost and ran out of water or food far from any hope of resupply. Perhaps bandits or hostile nomads waylaid this person. Whatever the case, you may make this into a hostile encounter by having the ghost try to possess a member of your party so that it may resolve unfinished business from its former life.

Scaling the Encounter: Ghosts always work alone. However, if you wish to make a more challenging ghost encounter for a 10th level or higher party, use a ghost mage instead of a ghost commoner. Or you may freely substitute a ghost of your own design.

Mummy (B1). Unlike most undead found in the wild, mummies had a proper burial when they died and ➤

even underwent elaborate preparation before they were interred. Some necromantic magic has stirred them, and the purpose behind it generally involves guarding its burial place. Mummies encountered at random have wandered from their tombs, as if they have forgotten their original purpose, but the magic that created them as undead remains. Instinct drives them to attack, even though they no longer, strictly speaking, protect the place they were created to protect. That is what happens when your party crosses paths with one mummy guardian trudging through the desert.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is less than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak mummy guardian for the encounter. If your party's average level is 9-12, use a mummy pharaoh (B1). If your party's average level is higher than 13, use an elite mummy pharaoh.

Revenant (B2). Revenants have a specific motivation and a sharp focus for their hatred. Your party comes across the undead husk of someone who was murdered or abandoned to die in the pitiless desert. It seeks revenge against the particular party it holds responsible for ending its natural life. Assuming that this is not someone in your party, the revenant does not attack — in fact it might even provide your party with a sidequest if they can help the revenant locate the target of its vengeance.

Shadows (B1). The bright desert sunlight casts a dark shadow — but then your party realizes that the shadow doesn't belong to anyone! That's because it is a creature in its own right, an insubstantial undead intent on draining the life from the living. It's not particularly at home here and shadows prefer darkness, where they can strike unseen. All the same, it attacks the nearest party member, eager to spawn one more of its own kind.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak shadow for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use one elite shadow for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Skeletons (B1). Your party crosses paths with 1d4+2 skeleton guards — undead created from remains that have been stripped of flesh by scavengers and wind-blown dust, and bleached in the desert sun. They may be casualties from skirmishes involving bandits or nomads. They may be what is left of adventurers or travelers who got stranded in the merciless desert ➤

and perished. Driven by rage at their fate, they attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak skeleton guards. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite skeleton guard for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one skeletal champion for two elite skeleton guards.

Wight (B1). If your party wishes to decode the pile of rocks that pops up like a lump on the desert floor, you may allow them a DC 10 Nature check to realize that it's not a natural formation, and/or a DC 10 Society check to recognize that it's likely a crudely improvised cairn. However, the issue will be settled when a wight rises from under it and attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak wight for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite wight for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Wraith (B1). There are plenty of ways to come to a bad end in the desert, and your party has the misfortune to come across a wraith that was once someone who perished in this forsaken place, and which is now bound to it. Perhaps they pass an improvised cairn, or just a skeleton bleached in the sun and half-covered by drifting sand. Whatever the case, it takes out the resentment that it bore at the end of its life on your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, feel free to re-roll for a different undead encounter. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak wraith for the encounter. If your party's average level is 9-12, use one dread wraith (B2). If your party's average level is higher than 12, use one elite dread wraith.

Zombie (B1). Your party come across one plague zombie or 1d4 zombie shamblers that have been programmed to kill every living thing they encounter. The source of the necromancy that created these zombies we leave to you. Perhaps they slipped the leash of their creator and they now wander the desert, mindlessly looking for victims.

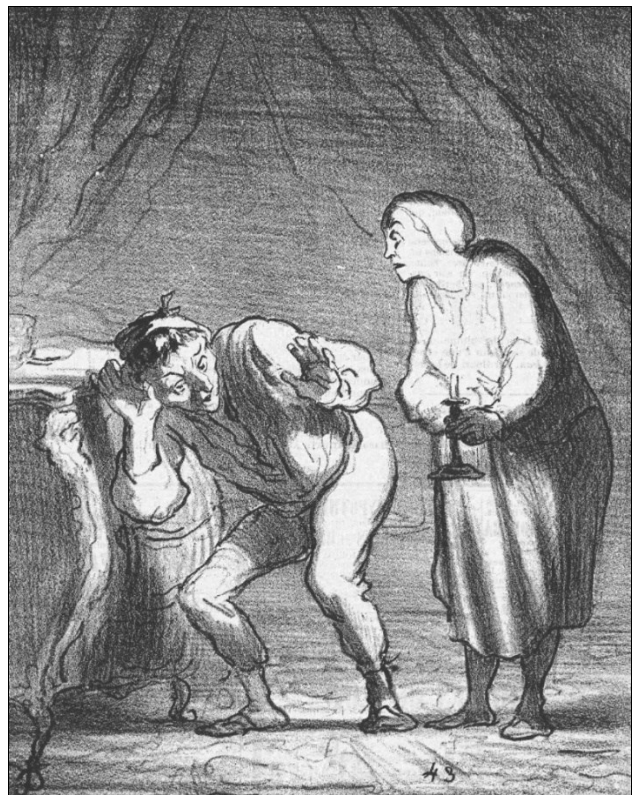
Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one plague zombie for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one zombie brute or one elite plague zombie for two plague zombies, or one zombie hulk for six plague zombies. ➤

If you want to create a large encounter for that "The Walking Dead" effect, freely substitute 1d4 zombie shamblers for one plague zombie.

Treasure: It's quite possible that ghosts and wraiths are encountered in or near the place where they died or were buried — in which case, the valuables they had on them are lying about somewhere. You may require a successful DC 15 Perception check to find them. Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

With skeletons and zombies, they may have with them some remains of what they had on their person at the time of their death. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Zaramuun (B1). You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to realize that a sand dune off to the side just moved in a way uncharacteristic of sand dunes. In fact, it is a zaramuun. As is its wont, it sees your party as offerings to the fiends that it worships, so it attacks them.



Any ghost encountered is usually someone who died tragically and alone in this wasteland and its abandoned spaces.

Scaling the Encounter: A zaramuun is a lot to handle for anything but a high-level party. If your party's average level is lower than 14, feel free to re-roll for a different

encounter. If your party's average level is 14-15, use a weak zaramuun for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 20, use one elite zaramuun.

TABLE 2.3

Neutral Creatures - Desert

d100	ENCOUNTER
1-4	Bats
5-9	Blink Dog
10-18	Camel
19-20	Dragon
21-25	Eagle
26-28	Genie
29-35	Hippogriff
36-42	Horse
43-48	Hyena
49-53	Leshy, Cactus
54-61	Lizard
62-63	Phoenix
64-65	Quetz Couatl
66-73	Rats
74-77	Rhinoceros
78-80	Simurgh
81-83	Sportlebore
84-86	Sphinx
87-91	Terror Bird
92-93	Thunderbird
94-100	Vultures

Bats (B1). You may find bats in the desert wherever there is enough shade to house a colony. Generally, this means that an encounter with bats happens when your party approaches a large rock crevice or looks for shelter in a cave. Here, they find one vampire bat swarm. However, even though this means getting uncomfortably close to the bats' lair, it's possible to avoid setting them off. You may have your party make a DC 15 Survival or Nature check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that triggers the bats' fight-or-flight response, and having nowhere to flee, they fight.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one vampire bat swarm for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite vampire bat swarm for three vampire bat swarms. You may also freely substitute one giant bat for two vampire bat swarms and one elite giant bat for four vampire bat swarms.

Blink Dog (B2). A dog with long ears and a wisp of fur hanging from its chin may seem an odd sight in the

subterranean world. But it has a serious purpose in being here; it's a blink dog scouting on behalf of its pack as it roams the Material Plane to keep it safe from evil influences.

If it intuits that there are evil characters with bad intentions in your party, it keeps its distance and uses its innate spells to get away. Otherwise, anyone who is fluent in Sylvan can communicate with it, although it may take a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check to overcome its natural aloofness. A blink dog on a mission may provide your party with a sidequest as it asks them to help its pack. Alternately, a successful Diplomacy check (DC 15 or 20, depending on whether or not it diverts the blink dog from its purpose) by a good-aligned character in your party may persuade it to accompany them for a short while.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish, you may use a pack of blink dogs consisting of one for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

Camel (B3). Your party sees 1d6 camels wandering through the desert without any apparent purpose. Though domesticated and widely kept as mounts and beasts of burden, wild camels do exist. They are bad-tempered, but they can be wrangled and trained to serve. To wrangle a camel, it must be successfully grappled with both hands and kept in grappled condition for 6 consecutive rounds. At that point, it becomes docile and submits to whoever grappled it. Because of its size, two medium-size creatures may grapple with the same camel simultaneously, and as long as one of them maintains its grappled condition, this counts toward the requirement for wrangling it.

Perhaps your party has found camels that belong to someone else. They wandered off from their masters, who would owe a favor or two to whomever returned their animals. Or perhaps the former owners met with a bad end, leaving the camels to their own devices. Perhaps they were merchants who perished from the desert's hazards, or simple travelers who fell afoul of bandits. In that case, use the guidelines for pocket change in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value of the contents of their saddle bags, which could include personal items that give hints as to their identity, and that their next of kin would appreciate having back.

Dragon (B1). Your party notices a large shape — almost large enough to blot out the sun — circling in the sky. It's a dragon on the prowl. To determine what kind of dragon roll on Table 2.3.1:

TABLE 2.3.1**Dragons - Desert**

d12	ENCOUNTER
1	Black
2-3	Blue
4	Green
5	Red
6	White
7-8	Brass
9	Bronze
10	Copper
11	Gold
12	Silver

To determine its age, see Scaling the Encounter.

To be clear, this need not be a hostile encounter. The dragon is not defending its lair, so it may just be curious about your party. It may have more important things to do and decline to take notice of them at all. Or it may be hungry and on the hunt, or it's angry because your party has intruded on territory it claims as its own.

Scaling the Encounter: Because dragons get tougher with age, the age of the dragon encountered should depend on your party's average level — especially if you decide that this is going to be a hostile encounter. If your party's average level is lower than 11, they encounter a young dragon. If their average level is 11-15, they encounter an adult dragon. If their average level is higher than 15, they encounter an ancient dragon.

Eagles (B1). Roll on Table 2.3.2 to determine if your party is fortunate enough to be spotted by a giant eagle, or they come across ordinary eagles hunting for small animals.

TABLE 2.3.2**Eagles - Desert**

d4	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Eagles
4	Giant Eagle

Eagles. Your party notices a convocation of 2d8 eagles wheeling overhead. If your party has a small animal kept as a pet or familiar, or food (travelers rations qualify) kept exposed, have the eagles make a DC 15 ➤

Perception check. If they succeed, they dive and try to snatch it up, attacking anyone who gets in their way. Food is hard to come by in the desert, and they're hungry.

Giant Eagle. On the other hand, your party may have the good fortune to enter territory patrolled by a giant eagle. If your party has predominantly good characters (or at least, no evil characters), the giant eagle follows them to the limit of its domain, providing a sort of combat air patrol for your party. If your party hails it (remember, giant eagles only understand Auran and Sylvan), it responds. Convincing it to do your party a service requires a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check. Unless your party consists entirely of good characters, a critical success is needed to gain its full cooperation.

Alternately, if you want to provide your party with a sidequest, the giant eagle tries to enlist them in dealing with some evil humanoids in its territory. However, since it cannot speak, have your party make a DC 15 Nature check. If successful, they understand that it wants them to follow it. Critical success indicates an educated guess that it wants help dealing with enemies.

Genie (B1). Travelers in the open desert beware: It could be that the gust of wind or column of swirling sand you see in the distance is one of these legendary elemental beings. Roll on Table 2.3.3 to determine the genie encountered:

TABLE 2.3.3**Genie - Desert**

d8	ENCOUNTER
1-4	Djinni
5-6	Efreeti
7	Janni
8	Shaitan

Djinni. Your party notices a sandstorm blowing up suddenly. Maybe they spot it in the distance, maybe it flares up right on top of them. It could be a trick of nature in an unforgiving land. Or it could be a djinni out for a joyride, in which case kicking up the sandstorm in their midst is its equivalent of flying low overhead just to give them a little scare. When a djinni meets your party while gallivanting about the open desert, it's quite likely that it is bored and looking for excitement. The djinni dogs your party until it is satisfied, but your party can also use this as leverage. ➤

You may require a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check to pull it off, but they could exchange the promise of amusement for the djinni's help, in which case it joins your party as a friendly NPC — at least until it gets bored of their company, or tired of waiting to have fun.

Efreeti. An efreeti in the Material Plane likely has slaving in mind, and not much else. If your party encounters one, mostly likely it tries to cow your party into becoming its captives. If it comes to a fight, the efreeti tries to kill only as many as absolutely necessary to get the rest of your party to submit to it — they're more valuable to it as captives than as corpses. If they try to talk their way out of this predicament — perhaps they want to convince the efreeti that they can lead it to more and better captives — you may require a successful DC 20 Diplomacy for the ruse to work.

Janni. Jann are the mutts of genie-kind, neither wholly one thing or the other. They do not feel at home in any of the Elemental Planes, but they bristle at being mistaken for humans. Their habitual prickliness on this point leads to quarrels that they tend to exacerbate, and sometimes they get expelled from the company of humans and their friends.

Your party comes across one such janni, looking for another settlement to call home after being expelled for its inability to play nicely with others. It may be willing to share local knowledge. You may require a DC 15 Diplomacy check for your party to win it over:

Critical Success: The janni is willing to travel with your party for a while. Treat it as a friendly NPC.

Success: The janni is willing to share local knowledge, as well as information about its former abode.

Failure: The janni is indifferent to your party. It goes on its way without offering any help.

Critical Failure: They anger the janni to the point where it draws its scimitar.

Shaitan. Your party crosses paths with one of these genies from the Plane of Earth as traverses the Material Plane looking for gemstones and precious metals. It may ignore your party if it has more important things on its mind. However, if you feel like running an encounter with it, it asks them for leads on sources of gemstones and precious metals. If your party has a cache of gems on them, it notices and ►

may propose a game of chance with the gems as stakes. See sidebar, "Gambling With a Genie is Legal in Most States" in Chapter 1 for suggestions.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 15 or higher, you may use a genie noble (B1) just to provide a more closely-matched encounter. Also, it is possible to encounter a group of jann traveling together; you may use an encounter group of one janni for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level, or one elite janni for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Treasure: A genie abroad from its stronghold carries valuables on its person, as a sign of its status if nothing else. Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value. In addition, if your party encounters an efreeti with captives, consider that at least one of them is a high-value prisoner — someone whose standing is such that his or her rescue and safe return would fetch a handsome reward.

Hippogriff (B2). Your party sees a hippogriff circling overhead, looking for its next meal, or on the ground dealing with its prey. Hippogriffs are aggressive hunters and your party's pack animals make a tempting target, but the presence of armed humans and humanoids may deter them. Whether or not this is a hostile encounter is up to you.

Hippogriffs may be a kind of prey as well as predators. If hippogriffs are used as mounts in your world, it must follow that captive adults have value as breeding stock, and chicks captured from the wild also have value because they are still young enough to be tamed. To that end, you may allow your party a DC 20 Survival check to trace a path to the hippogriff's lair (likely to be sited atop a large rock or on a hilltop) after observing it for a while. If your party has someone capable of flight, reduce the DC to 15. To subdue an adult hippogriff to the point where it can be bound and held captive, it must be successfully grappled with both hands and kept in grappled condition for 10 consecutive rounds.

Scaling the Encounter: The hippogriff population in a desert is likely to be sparse. But if you want to stage a hostile encounter and you need to make it more of a challenge, use a herd of one elite hippogriff for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

Horses (B1). Some horse breeds have adapted to live in the desert. Your party comes across a small herd of

them. They only questions are, how many of them are there, and do they belong to someone else? Horse encounters are unlikely to be hostile, although they may put up a fight if you try to wrangle them before they've been broken. Roll on Table 2.3.4 to determine the nature of the horse encounter:

TABLE 2.3.4

Horses - Desert

d10	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Riding Horses
3-7	Riding Ponies
8	War Horses
9-10	War Ponies

Riding Horses. Your party comes across 1d6 riding horses grazing, or moving at a walk. It's up to you to decide whether they're wild, or if they belong to someone. If the latter, is their herder nearby (see Table 2.5)? Have they escaped from someone who would pay a reward for their return?

If they are wild, they can be wrangled. To wrangle a riding horse, it must be successfully grappled with both hands and kept in grappled condition for 6 consecutive rounds. At that point, it becomes docile and whomever grappled it may ride it or use it as a pack animal. Because of its size, two medium-size creatures may grapple with the same riding horse simultaneously, and as long as one of them maintains its grappled condition, this counts toward the requirement for wrangling it.

Riding Ponies. Instead of riding horses, your party comes upon 2d4 riding ponies. The same considerations about whether they are wild or astray from their owner apply. A wild riding pony may also be wrangled in the same manner as riding horses, although only one medium-size creature or two small-size creatures may try to wrangle it at any one time.

War Horses. Your party comes across 1d4 war horses. Whether their owners were killed in battle, or they just escaped from the stable, is up to you. If the former, they wear empty saddles. War horses do not need to be wrangled; they have been broken and disciplined, so they're used to working with human or humanoid riders. However, they're also trained fighters and if you don't approach them just right in a situation like this, they'll take you for the enemy and attack. If your party approaches the warhorses, require a successful DC 15 Nature check to avoid setting the horses off. ►

War Ponies. Instead of war horses, your party comes upon 2d4 war ponies. The same considerations apply to them as to war horses; they're just smaller, as they are trained and kept to accommodate smaller riders.

Hyena (B1). Your party comes across a lone hyena scavenging the carcass of some creature that has expired in the desert. It looks up at them as they pass, instinctively concerned that something has come to steal the food source that it found fair and square. You may require a DC 15 Nature or Survival check if your party wishes to avoid a confrontation. Failure means that someone has made a false move that sets off the hyena.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one hyena for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite hyena for three hyenas. You may also freely substitute one hyaenodon (B1) for three hyenas and one elite hyaenodon for six hyenas.

Leshy, Cactus (B3). As your party approaches a patch of cacti, you may allow them a DC 10 Perception check to notice that one cactus has arms and legs and eyes. It is actually a cactus leshy, and its lot is to protect this patch of plant life in the otherwise arid desert. In any event, as your party draws near it steps out to determine whether or not you are a threat. At this point, you may have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Diplomacy check in dealing with the leshy:

Critical Success: The leshy likes the look of your party. It allows them to rest here — just be careful about getting pricked. If they are attacked (by a pursuer, for instance), it fights alongside them as a friendly NPC.

Success: The leshy likes your party well enough. It allows them to stay among the cacti for one rest period, but no more and it does not fight to defend them.

Failure: The leshy makes a noise that ought to be interpreted as skepticism. It tells your party to get off of its lawn and move along.

Critical Failure: Whatever your party said or did, the leshy interprets it as hostile. It attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 5, use a colony of one elite cactus leshy for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

Lizard (B1, B2). Oversized lizards in the desert fight back if they feel threatened, but they are typically not

aggressive. Neither are shocker lizards when encountered by themselves, but a swarm of them can use their electrical abilities to shocking effect. Roll on Table 2.3.5 to determine which reptile your party encounters:

TABLE 235

Lizard - Desert

d4	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Giant Gecko
4	Shocker Lizard

Giant Gecko (B1). Use the giant gecko as a catch-all for big lizards in the desert. Your party spots one lizard sunning itself on a rock. It's minding its own business for the most part. You may require your party to make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. Failure means that that someone in your party made a false move that triggers an attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite giant gecko for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite giant chameleon (B2) for two elite giant geckos.

Shocker Lizard (B2). A lone shocker lizard flees at your party's approach, but a group of two or more may put up a fight. Have your party to make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone in your party makes a false move that triggers an attack. Zap!

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak shocker lizards. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use a pack of one shocker lizard for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level.

Phoenix (B1). At first, your party may mistake it for a column of flame rising from the desert floor. In fact, they have the rare privilege of meeting a phoenix. Phoenixes are benevolent beings, and they can be persuaded to use their abilities to help neutral or good-aligned characters. You may require a DC 15 Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: The phoenix is willing to accompany your party for a while. It's willing to use the full range of its powers to help your party.

Success: It is willing to use one of its spells to help your party.

Failure: It declines to help your party. It ignores them, or leaves.

Critical Failure: Your party angers the phoenix somehow. It flashes its Shroud of Flame ability to warn them that it is displeased, but it does not attack unless continually provoked.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party is mainly evil, there is a chance that the encounter will turn hostile because they clash with the phoenix's alignment. If your party's average level is less than 13, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. Use a weak phoenix if your party's average level is 13-14. If your party's average level is higher than 20, use an elite phoenix for the encounter. If you expect a peaceful encounter, there is little need to worry about disparity in levels.

Quetz Couatl (B2). As far as your party goes, an encounter with a quetz couatl is probably best understood as a chance to help your party along when they're struggling. With its impressive size, spectacular coloration and ability to fly, its appearance is designed for a bit of divine intervention, and that's how you can use it. The quetz couatl may be acting on behalf of a good-aligned deity followed by a party member, or it may be following them of its own accord, waiting to step in when they seem to be at a dead end.

This assumes that your party is good-aligned or, at worst (from the quetz couatl's point of view) lawful neutral. If your party is predominantly evil, it may choose to hinder them instead. Perhaps it steps in to defend good-aligned creatures from your party.

Rats (B1). You find rats everywhere they can find food. 1d4 giant rats sniff out your party's food rations as they cross paths with each other. They don't attack party members who don't interfere with their basic mission of acquiring food. But unless they are stopped, they eventually account for all of your party's rations, making off with what they don't eat on the spot.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3, use one rat swarm (B1) for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite rat swarm for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Rhinoceros (B2). Rhinoceros are herbivores and not predatory. But they turn aggressive if they think they're threatened — and with their poor eyesight, it's not unusual for them to mistake someone else's intentions. One rhinoceros looking for forage spots your party (if your party is in a sub-arctic desert, use one wooly rhinoceros for the encounter). Have your party make a DC 20 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone has

made a false move that the rhino interprets as a threat, and it charges.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak rhinoceros for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use a herd of one rhinoceros for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level as the encounter group.

For wooly rhinoceros, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter if your party's average level is lower than 4. If your party's average level is 4-5, use one weak wooly rhinoceros for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use a herd of one wooly rhinoceros for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level as the encounter group.

Simurgh (B1). It's a rare thing that one of these creatures with the body of a fox, broad and colorful wings, and the talons of a bird of prey should want to have a word with your party. But you may use it as a chance to give them a sidequest if they are good-aligned. The simurgh utters a cry of greeting from above, then glides down to converse with them. It may be on an errand from a good-aligned deity, or it may be hunting evil creatures in the area of its own volition. Either way, at the very least it asks your party for relevant information, and it may even ask their help in completing its mission.

Sphinx (B1). Your party crosses paths with a wandering sphinx that has gone abroad in search of knowledge and adventure. It spots your party as a potential source of new lore and it attempts to strike up a conversation with them. An encounter with a sphinx is therefore more likely to be academic than combative, so it is up to you as GM how deeply you want to pursue it. It may try to trade lore for lore, or it may feel that it owes your party a favor if they can teach it something it did not know before. Alternately, if it intuits that it knows something that would be of value to your party, it challenges them to solve a riddle in exchange. This may be an opportunity to advance the storyline of your campaign if you feel that your players need a hint. Or the sphinx could offer them a sidequest, helping it find a source of obscure knowledge that is supposedly located somewhere around here.

Sportlebone (B2). Your party spots what looks like perfectly good traveler's rations scattered on the ground. It looks quite edible. It's up to them whether they want to claim it as their own under the legal precedent set by *Finders v. Losers*. After all, food can be hard to find in the desert. However, if they eat it they discover to their cost that there was a sportlebone among the goodies.

Scaling the Encounter: Eating a sportlebone may unleash a sportlebone swarm, which is probably a bit much to

handle for a low-level party. If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak sportlebone swarm. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an elite sportlebone swarm.

Terror Bird (B3). These axe-beaked flightless birds are mean, but they're not as aggressive as their name suggests. Your party comes across one terror bird chasing down small animals across the desert floor. It doesn't like having its hunt interrupted, but it's not a sure thing that it attacks. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone has made a false move that angers the terror bird, which then charges the party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak terror bird for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one terror bird for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite terror bird for three terror birds.



What's in a name? Terrorbirds are not as aggressive as their name would lead you to believe.

Thunderbird (B2). Violent thunderstorms can come suddenly to deserts, but not all of them are the result of weather fronts clashing. As rare as phoenixes and almost as powerful, thunderbirds come down from their mountain eyries to demand obeisance from puny creatures who live in the lands below. They tend to react poorly when they do not receive the respect they feel that they deserve, and their wrath takes the form of a sudden storm.

You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to realize that the fast-moving storm cloud they see has an enormous living creature at its heart. It's a thunderbird

on its way to punish a desert settlement that refuses to pay it tribute. If your party hails the thunderbird and tries to negotiate with it, you may require a successful DC 25 Diplomacy check to get it to stay its wrath. If they fail, they have an opportunity for a quick sidequest, warning the thunderbird's target and earning their gratitude for giving them time to get out of the way.

Vulture (B3). The desert offers many ways for the reckless and unfortunate to die, and the vultures here never seem to go hungry for long. Ordinary vultures are mere scavengers and can be chased off without much trouble. However, a giant vulture is a different matter. Confident in its size and strength, it is prepared to defend its food source against all comers. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, a party member makes a false move that provokes the vulture to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak giant vulture for the encounter. Otherwise, use a flock of one giant vulture for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level as the encounter group. You may freely substitute one elite giant vulture for two giant vultures.

TABLE 2.4

Humanoids - Desert

d20	ENCOUNTER
1	Catfolk
2	Eunemvro
3-4	Giant, Desert
5-6	Gnolls
7-9	Goblins
10	Hobgoblins
11	Kovintus
12-13	Ogre
14-16	Orcs
17	Planar Scion, Geniekin
18	Ratfolk
19	Tengu
20	Werecreature, Werewolf

Catfolk (B1). Your party encounters one catfolk pouncer possessed with wanderlust and traveling the world, as is the habit with amurrans. Either it is traveling the same path as them, or it hails them with a friendly greeting while lounging in the shade by the side of the road. It is eager to know what your party is doing here, but it has no ulterior motive than pure curiosity. It freely shares whatever knowledge it has.

A catfolk pouncer may make a useful NPC in the sort of encounters that low-level parties are likely to face. You may require your party to make a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check to convince it to travel a while in their company and share in the adventure. However, if your party is predominantly evil, a critical success is required.

Scaling the Encounter: The farther from catfolk's tropical homelands, the more likely you will find them traveling alone. If this encounter happens in a tropical desert, use an encounter group of 1d4 catfolk pouncers; otherwise, there is only one. If you want to raise the level of the encounter to make it worth the while of a higher-level party, use elite catfolk pouncers.

Eunemvro (B3). If your party comes upon one of these odd, extraplanar humanoids it is a good bet that there are undead nearby. Destroying undead is the main — if not sole — focus of eunemvro's existence, and this one is pursuing a lead on a group of undead creatures or a powerful undead, like a lich. Eunemvro are aloof and it rarely occurs to them to ask strangers for help, so it's not a given that it offers your party a sidequest to come along with it. In fact, it becomes hostile if it suspects that your party harbors someone who practices necromancy. However, it may be persuaded to accompany your party for a while if destroying undead are involved; you may require a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check.

Scaling the Encounter: If you suspect that the encounter will turn hostile, use a weak eunemvro for the encounter if your party's average level is lower than 5. Conversely, if your party's average level is higher than 8, use an encounter group of one elite eunemvro for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level.

Giant, Desert (B3). Some giants wander the desert and they project a stern and forbidding demeanor in keeping with the unforgiving land in which they travel. Your party crosses paths with one such desert giant. Most likely, it is exploring or running an errand on behalf of its nomadic tribe. If that is the case, it may ask your party for help or local knowledge. If your party needs its help, it may be willing to dip into its tribe's store of lore to provide it; you may require that they make a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check to make it so. Desert giants consider themselves righteous and they are not as inclined to violence as many of their giant cousins, so they would have to be seriously provoked before they attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 7, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 7-8, use a weak desert giant for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 12, use an encounter group of one elite desert giant for each multiple of 13 in your party's average level.

Gnolls (B1). Your party crosses paths with one gnoll hunter trekking through the desert. It's scouting for settlements with anything worth taking, or spying on caravan routes so its tribe can plot an ambush. Keeping that in mind, it probably has more important things to do than hassle your party; however, it's quite possible that it will bully them for useful information and if it senses weakness it might even attack them despite being outnumbered.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak gnoll hunter for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one gnoll hunter for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may substitute one elite gnoll cultist and/or one gnoll sergeant for two gnoll hunters as the group's leaders. If you want to keep down the size of the encounter, you may freely substitute one elite gnoll hunter for two gnoll hunters.

If the gnoll group is relatively large this may be an actual raiding party. They may be on their way back from a successful raid, spattered with blood and taking with them captives whom they will sacrifice to their demon god. In either case, they ignore your party if your party declines to interfere with them, guided as they are by their primary purpose.

Treasure: If the gnolls are coming back from a successful raid, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the fruits of their labor.

Goblins (B1). Goblins who choose the desert make their lairs in caves — preferably within striking distance of caravan routes, or oases or other settlements that they can plunder. Your party spots a group of 2d4 goblin warriors and it's likely that they're associated with a nearby lair. They may be patrolling their neighborhood, or they may be looking for raiding targets for their tribe. As small as they are, they're also mean and cocky. So it should come as no surprise when they treat your party as a target of opportunity.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak goblin warriors. If your party's average level is 4-6, use an encounter group of 1d4 elite goblin warriors. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite goblin warrior for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one goblin commando (B1), goblin pyro (B1), or goblin dog (B1) for one elite goblin warrior or two goblin warriors. You may also substitute one goblin war chanter (B1) for one elite goblin warrior or two goblin warriors as the group's leader.

A large group of goblins is likely to be a raiding party on their way out. Or they may be a raiding party on their

way back, with loot and 1d6 human and/or humanoid captives. Consider that there is a 5% chance that any given captive is someone of consequence, who could provide your party with a significant reward for their safe return home. In either case, the encounter group has more important things to do than deal with your party. However, if your party finds a goblin lair, they fight to the death to defend it. In addition to the normal treasure found in the lair, there are 1d8 human and/or humanoid captives bound and eager for rescue.

Treasure: If the encounter group is a returning raiding party, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Hobgoblins (B1). Your party comes across a lone hobgoblin soldier. It may be patrolling the area near its lair — a fortified cave or a small stockade situated on barren, elevated ground — or it may be a courier shuttling back and forth between other hobgoblin settlements. If war is brewing in this corner of the world, hobgoblin mercenaries ought to have plenty of business. They might even hire on as caravan guards for merchants just desperate enough to employ them. A sentry would want to know your party's business in being here, but otherwise it probably has more important business than attacking your party.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one hobgoblin soldier for each level in your party's average level. You may substitute one goblin dog (B1) for one hobgoblin soldier as long as goblin dogs do not outnumber hobgoblins. Also, you may freely substitute one elite hobgoblin soldier or one hobgoblin archer (B1) for four hobgoblin soldiers. You may substitute one hobgoblin general (B1) for six hobgoblin soldiers as the group's leader.

A large group of hobgoblins indicates that the winds of war are brewing — although ultimately, that sort of thing should be determined by what else is going on in your campaign world. Unless your party has stumbled upon the hobgoblin lair, a large hobgoblin encounter group would be a war party on their way to or from the war zone. They have more important business than attacking your party; in fact, they might even size them up and try to recruit them to fill out the ranks.

Kovintus (B3). Kovintus in the desert live in natural caves, or in ingenious shelters that they build into the side of sand dunes. Your party meets one kovintus geomancer as it takes a recreational stroll; or perhaps it is on its way to leave an offering for a local deity. If your party wishes to speak with it, have them make a DC 15 Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: The kovintus is willing to share its maps and use its primal spells for their benefit.

Success: It shares its maps, but offers no more.

Failure: It is wary of your party and it does not agree to help them at all.

Critical Failure: Your party angers the kovintus to the point where it attacks them.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish, you may use an encounter group of one elite kovintus geomancer for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Ogre (B1). In the desert, ogres shelter in caves and emerge to terrorize caravans and settlements. Your party spots one ogre warrior out scouting for potential targets on behalf of its tribe. It is brutish enough and sufficiently confident in its powers to try to take them captive, or kill them outright if they resist.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak ogre warrior for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one ogre for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite ogre warrior for two ogre warriors, or three ogre gluttons (B1) for four ogre warriors. You may also substitute one ogre boss (B1) or one onidoshi (B2) for two ogre warriors as the group's leader.

Orcs (B1). There are more promising places than the desert for orcs interested in plunder and slaughter; it's too sparsely populated to offer a lot of targets. However, orcs can make do in almost any environment. Orcs encountered in the desert may be from a tribe in exile, or one that is based in nearby hills or grasslands and finds itself blocked from projecting its power into more profitable areas.

Your party crosses paths with 1d6 orc brutes. They're most likely a scout party, although they may already have found a vulnerable target small enough for a band of this size to raid. As brutal as they are, there's no guarantee that they'll pay your party much attention. Their leader may look your party over and decide that they're not worth the bother. But they may also decide to interrogate your party for information about the surrounding area, and they'll easily resort to violence if your party is slow to cooperate.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak orc brutes. If your party's average level is 4-5, use an encounter group of 1d6 orc brutes. If your party's average level is higher than 5 use an encounter group of one orc warrior (B1) for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite orc warrior for two orc warriors. You

may also substitute one orc warchief (B1) for one orc warrior as the group's leader.

Treasure: A large orc group is likely an actual raiding party, either headed to their target or on their way back from a successful attack. In the latter case, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of their plunder. Consider that there is also a 20% chance that the raiders have with them 1d4 captives. The identity of these captives are left to you as GM, as it should depend on local circumstances and fit into your campaign world.

Planar Scion, Geniekin (B2). These offspring of genies and humans are rare and their presence scattered, but they seem to be more common in the desert than in other lands. Roll on Table 2.4.1 to determine the type of geniekin your party encounters:

TABLE 2.4.1

Geniekin - Desert

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Suli
4-5	Sylph
6-8	Ifrit

Suli. Suli dune dancers tend to fill a specialist role in desert communities as local diplomats, often found at the side of the leader of that community. Their role is to help soothe disagreements within the community, and to negotiate with outsiders. Your party crosses paths with one sulis dune dancer traveling alone on such a diplomatic errand. It is willing to share local knowledge, and it may offer your party a sidequest escorting it the rest of the way to its destination. It may reward them by composing a song trumpeting their heroic virtues.

Sylph. When they live in tightly-knit desert communities, sylphs can make themselves a nuisance when their neighbors suspect that they know one too many of their secrets. They are notorious, after all, for listening to voices "carried on the wind" that others may not want them to hear. Your party comes upon one sylph sneak that has been kicked out of a village for just that reason. It is happy to share local knowledge — of which it ought to have quite a bit — and it may also ask to travel with them for a while.

Ifrit. Ifrits are treated with contempt in the Plane of Fire, so they prefer to spend their time in the Material Plane. They find the intense heat of ►

temperate and tropical deserts amenable, and they travel between settlements, often in the company of caravans, as itinerant entertainers. Your party crosses paths with one ifrit pyrochemist traveling from one village to another. It may favor them with fire dance or trade alchemical items for the right price. You may require a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check for your party to persuade it to do business with them.

Scaling the Encounter: Large groups of geniekin are all but unheard of. But if you want to bulk up the encounter for a higher-level party, use one elite geniekin for each multiple of 5 in your party's average level.

Ratfolk (B1). Ratfolk find desert life as challenging as does anyone else, but scattered ysoki communities exist out here. They may be outcasts from communities in more fertile lands, or they may have chosen to live here, within reach of desert caravan routes that allow their merchants to do a little business. Your party crosses paths with one ratfolk grenadier out scavenging for useful items.

Ratfolk are suspicious of outsiders, and upon spotting you this lone grenadier might try to hide and challenge your party from a position where it can't be seen. If they can overcome its distrust — you may require a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check for this to happen — it may be willing to share local knowledge and trade alchemical tools and ingredients.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak ratfolk grenadier. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one ratfolk grenadier for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite ratfolk grenadier for two ratfolk grenadiers.

If the group consists of four or more ratfolk, they have a cart full of trade goods and a draft animal and they're on their way to join a caravan. In this case, gaining their trust could result in a sidequest working for them as caravan guards.

Tengu (B1). Given that these humanoids with crow-like features are widely distrusted, it's a safe bet that a tengu encountered on the road is an outcast of some sort. Probably, it has been kicked out of a settlement on suspicion of being up to no good.

Your party crosses paths with one tengu sneak. It is not aggressive, but it may be desperate. So it resorts to the skills that got it into trouble in the first place. At your discretion, it flags down your party and strikes up a

conversation, perhaps offering useful local knowledge to keep them distracted. You may have it make a Society check against the highest Intimidation DC in your party as it weighs the risks and rewards of trying to pick a pocket. Success indicates that it has decided to go for it — i.e., your party has failed to scare it off. It then targets the character with the lowest Intimidation DC.

Scaling the Encounter: It's almost unheard of to find a large group of tengu wandering the wilderness. However, if you want to create a more challenging encounter, use one elite tengu sneak for the encounter, or a group of one normal tengu sneak for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level. Half of them try to distract your party from the other half trying to pickpocket them.

Werecreature, Werewolf (B1). A werewolf in the open desert is likely a wanderer, an exile from a distant land. It is restless, always desperate to escape its terrible curse, yet trapped by it. When it comes across your party, rage at its own fate drives it, almost without thinking, to spread its curse so that others will know its suffering. However, it is clever enough to approach its human form, pretending to be a lost traveler, or a merchant whose caravan was destroyed by bandits. Once your party gets close and drops its guard, it attacks. If it has a weapon at hand, it changes into its hybrid form; otherwise it changes into its animal form.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak werewolf. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite werewolf for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

TABLE 25

Humans - Desert

d20	ENCOUNTER
1	Adventurer
2-4	Bandits
5	Exiles
6	Explorers
7	Fugitives
8-10	Herders
11-12	Hermit
13-15	Merchants
16-20	Nomads

Adventurers. Unless your party contains all of the adventurers in your campaign world, it's at least theoretically possible that they'll run into another adventuring party tramping through the desert. Perhaps they're pursuing the same objective as your party. Perhaps they have a different mission; perhaps they're

headed for a site that your party knows nothing about (like ancient ruins said to hold lost treasures). Perhaps they're lost and starving, or wounded, or cursed. How they react to your party depends on a variety of factors. Are they rivals pursuing the same goal? If not, perhaps this party is willing to share useful information. In fact, if your party is stuck and having a hard time advancing the storyline of your campaign, a friendly encounter like this can help steer them in the right direction. Differences in alignment may also shape how the two parties react to each other.

Composition of this rival party is up to you and can vary according to circumstance. A party braving the desert would be well-advised to have someone accomplished in Survival, such as a ranger, with them. Conversely, a party that is struggling may be in a bad way precisely because none of them is well-versed in Survival or Nature.

Scaling the Encounter: Unless there is some possibility that this encounter turns hostile, the relative level of the party is mainly a matter of affect. A higher-level party might project self-confidence (or arrogance), while a beginning-level party might stumble about, unsure of themselves. If you're leaning towards a hostile encounter, however, consider that the total challenge level of the party should be your party's average level -2, more or less.



A friendly encounter could help steer your party in the right direction

Bandits. The desert is not the most comfortable place in which to be a bandit. But it does have a way of discouraging the forces of law from coming after them, and if they can get timely information about merchant caravans passing through, the rewards make it worthwhile to get some sand in their boots. Bandits encountered here are probably either on their way to or coming back from the nearest caravan route — although a small group may be scouts or lookouts protecting the nearby cave in which they take shelter.

They might not target your party, as adventurers are usually too well-armed and too hard to bully. But they may make an exception if your party carries a conspicuous and obviously valuable treasure, or they outnumber your party by at least three to two. It's more likely that they assume that your party is a posse sent out

after them — or that your party intends to rob them of what they took from others by force.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak bandits. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one bandit for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite bandit for two bandits. You may also substitute one gang leader for three bandits as the group's leader.

Treasure: You may decide that your party has surprised the bandits in their lair. If so, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value and contents. Do so also if you decide that the bandits encountered are on their way back from a successful raid. Consider that there is also a 20% chance that the bandits have with them a high-value captive whom they intend to ransom. The identity of this captive is left to you as GM, as it should depend on local circumstances and fit into your campaign world.

Exiles. Your party encounters 1d6 humans or humanoids who could serve as a source of adventure hooks. From their appearance, they have obviously seen better days. They have fled into the desert for any of a variety of reasons: Perhaps they are royalty or nobility who have been usurped; perhaps the opposite is the case and they are failed usurpers on the run. Or perhaps they have gotten caught up in a blood feud in their homeland and that's why they fear for their lives. Whatever the circumstance, they have left their home for this desperate and forsaken place because they need to hide.

No matter their reason for being here, they should offer your party an adventure hook of some sort. It may involve protecting the exiles from their real (or imagined) pursuers. It may involve returning to their former home and securing an important item that was left behind (a family heirloom, a badge of office), perhaps even helping them return home and force their way back into their former position of prominence. At the very least, exiles can provide your party with information about their former home territory, which in turn could be a key location in your campaign.

Use any NPC template you like for the exiles, depending on the backstory you assign them.

Explorers. Your party bumps into a small party driven by human curiosity to explore and map the desert wastes. The group consists of one chronicler and one guide accompanied by 1d4 bodyguards. Perhaps they are here thanks to the sponsorship of a ruler or noble who has heard rumors that precious metals and gemstones can be found out here, or an academy looking for a lost civilization. Perhaps one of the explorers is a wealthy

eccentric who undertook this expedition on his or her own.

This encounter is not likely to be hostile. Explorers are open and curious, despite the fact that the desert offers so many ways for them to perish. Instead, you may treat this as an opportunity for your party to receive some help from a knowledgeable stranger — the explorer is likely to have excellent maps of nearby areas (and knowledge of those areas) and is willing to share them. Conversely, an expedition that has been in the field for a while may be running short on supplies — not just cartography supplies, but fresh water — and they would pay well if your party can provide help. Also, if your party is in the mood for a sidequest, an explorer may offer one: If the expedition is headed into particularly dangerous territory, it may want additional guards to keep it safe.

Fugitives. Your party crosses paths with 1d6 bedraggled humans or humanoids stumbling through the desert. They are unarmed, and they are barely clothed. At your discretion, they may have a manacle around one wrist, with the other manacle dangling on its chain. They're escaped prisoners who have fled into the open desert. From whom they are fleeing and why they were imprisoned in the first place is up to you, and ought to depend on where in your campaign world this encounter takes place.

How the encounter plays out depends not only on how your party reacts, but on the state of mind you assign to the fugitives. On the one hand, it's hard to imagine that they went to the trouble of a jailbreak just to allow a bunch of strangers to take their freedom back from them. On the other hand, they might be desperate with thirst and ready to give up. Each of them has learned whip their freed manacle by the chain and wield it as a club.

Treat the fugitives as prisoners, but without weapons or armor.

Treasure: Fugitives have no treasure.

Herders. Your party spots in the distance a herd of goats, or some other herbivore suitable to an arid environment. There are 1d4 herders in their midst. Your party startles them, but they are not necessarily hostile. It's just that they didn't expect to meet anyone out here; it's usually just them and their animals. If you wish, you may require your party to make a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check to calm them.

That being said, the herders can provide your party with helpful local knowledge. They know all the nearby sources of water, the places where monsters are reputed to reside, gossip from any settlements in the area. They

may even have specific knowledge that can help your party get where they want to go.

Treat herders as trackers, but without the armor. They carry crooks or staves that they can wield two-handed as clubs.

Hermit. A desert cave is a prime location for someone who has decided to withdraw from worldly cares, but that that doesn't mean bold adventurers like your party won't stumble upon it. One hermit lives here, devoted to a pure and simple life of contemplation. The hermit may be a divine spellcaster, for whom seclusion and meditation is a form of service to a deity. It takes a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check to get past the fact that your party has broken this seclusion, but the hermit may be willing to use divine spells to aid them.



Hermits may have chosen to withdraw from the world for a wide variety of reasons and may not be happy to be disturbed.

Alternately, your party may have found a secular hermit — someone who, having been wounded by failure or grown weary of success, decided to retire completely from the world. Such a person won't have divine spells, but may have magic items, local lore, or even knowledge and personal connections from his or her former life that would help your party.

Yet another possibility is that this hermit is a retired adventurer or soldier, in the manner of knights in the Arthurian romances who became hermits to repent of lives spent fighting each other and dallying with married ladies. Hermits in this mold have discarded their fighting gear, but they may be persuaded to leave their seclusion and join your party as friendly NPCs.

Treat a religious hermit as a cultist, prophet or priest, but feel free to generate a higher-level divine spellcaster if you want to create a more spectacular effect with this encounter. Treat a secular hermit as an NPC class of your choice, or use a character class and level of your choice.

Treasure: Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine if the hermit has any magic items and/or valuable devotional items.

Merchants. If your party plays it safe and sticks to roads or major trails as they traverse the desert, it's a reasonable bet that they share that route at some point with a caravan consisting of 2d6 merchants and 2d8 guards accompanying a string of camels or mules carrying trade goods.



As a natural first reaction to armed strangers, the caravan guards interpose themselves between your party and the pack animals. You may require a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check to convince them that your party means no harm. In turn, traveling merchants could help your party by selling them necessary items, exchanging hard money for treasure items or providing knowledge of just about anywhere in your campaign world (where is this caravan going, and where did it originate?). A

caravan that is low on guards might offer to hire your party as additional security.

Treasure: Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the total value of the caravaners' individual possessions. In addition, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of goods and/or hard money in the caravan.

Nomads. Perhaps all your party sees at first is dust kicked up from the desert floor, or perhaps they're close enough to notice that it's a group of 2d8 nomads mounted on riding horses or camels creating the disturbance. They're native to this desert and although they live on the move, constantly looking for places to hunt and graze their mounts, they consider the entire desert their territory and treat outsiders with suspicion. You may require a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check, ratcheted down to DC 10 if your party offers them gifts, to win over the nomads, who may then help your party by trading animals suitable as mounts or pack animals, or providing useful local knowledge about water sources, monster lairs, etc.

Treat one of the nomads — the leader of the group — as a tracker. Treat the rest as commoners who are armed and armored in the same way as the leader.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish to stage a hostile encounter and need to increase the challenge, make the nomads elite if your party's average level is higher than 4.

TABLE 2.6

Watch Out! - Desert

d12	ENCOUNTER
1	Carried on the Wind
2	Falling Rock
3	Flash Flood
4	Footprints
5	Hidden Hole
6	Mirage
7-8	Sand Pit
9-10	Sandstorm
11-12	Tripping Hazard

Carried on the Wind. Choose a party member to make a DC 15 Survival check. If it fails, that character believes that he or she has heard a noise made by a nearby creature or a dangerous natural phenomenon. It can be as consequential as a dragon's roar, or as eerily intimate as a rattlesnake's rattle. However, this is an illusion; the sound is coming from much farther away than it seems, and it may not be real at all. If the check succeeds, that

party member realizes that this is an illusion, and the noise is either much farther away than it seems, or it is something else entirely.

If you wish, roll on Table 2.6.1 for guidance on what your party thinks it hears:

TABLE 2.6.1

Did You Hear That? – Desert

d10	They Think They Hear...
1	Dragon roaring overhead
2	Footsteps of a large group of humans or humanoids
3	Giant insects buzzing
4	Hoofbeats of horses or other herd animals
5	Lion or other big cat roaring
6	Movement behind a cluster of rocks
7	Roc shrieking overhead
8	Voices speaking in Common
9	Voices speaking in Orcish
10	Windstorm

Falling Rock. Your party takes a rest in the shadow of a rock formation, or passes close by it to take advantage of the shade. Unfortunately, it isn't as stable as it seems. A chunk of rock large enough to leave a mark tumbles onto the closest party member (or pick one at random). The rock causes 1d8 bludgeoning damage, but a successful DC 15 Reflex save halves the damage, rounded down.

Flash Flood. It can be tempting to take a rest stop in a gully or travel along it, to make advantage of the shade it provides. A dry depression is also an obvious place to heed the call of nature. However, this leaves you vulnerable to flash floods, which can brew up in the desert before you know it. Unless your players make it a point that their characters are keeping to higher ground, sudden rain upstream creates a rush of water that may sweep up one or more party member. Treat this as a perilous flash flood.

Footprints. Your party spots human or humanoid footprints. Require a successful DC 15 Survival check to realize that they are very old, and they will not lead to anything useful. Failure may lead to an amusing (for you as GM, anyway) wild goose chase.

Hidden Hole. The ground beneath the feet of a party member at the front of the party formation gives way.

It's a hole in the ground — perhaps an animal burrow that is easily stepped in by accident, or it's so extensive that it weakens the ground above it and too much weight on it causes it to collapse underfoot. Have your party make a DC 15 Perception check to spot one that is right in their path in time to avoid it. Failure means that a party member steps into it, with all of the hazards that come with an unexpected tumble. That party member suffers 1d6 damage, with a DC 15 Reflex save to halve the damage.

Mirage. Your party sees a large body of water in the distance — or rather, that's what they think they see. You may allow them a DC 15 Nature or Survival check to recognize that this is a mirage, and they will have to look elsewhere to refill their canteens. If they fail and decide to chase after this illusory oasis, you may allow them another check for every two miles traveled.

If this encounter takes place at night, re-roll for a different encounter.

Sand Pit. Unless your party is traveling a road or an established path, they step into a patch of sand that will not support their weight. You may allow your party a DC 20 Nature or Survival check to spot the danger in time to avoid it. Failure means that a character at the front of the party formation has stepped right into it. Treat it as quicksand.

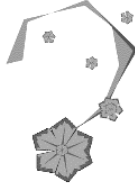
Sandstorm. A sudden sandstorm blows up and catches your party in it for 1d6 x 5 minutes. During this time, treat creatures and objects in the area around them as concealed, all movement allowances are halved and no aerial movement is allowed except with a successful DC 20 Athletics check.

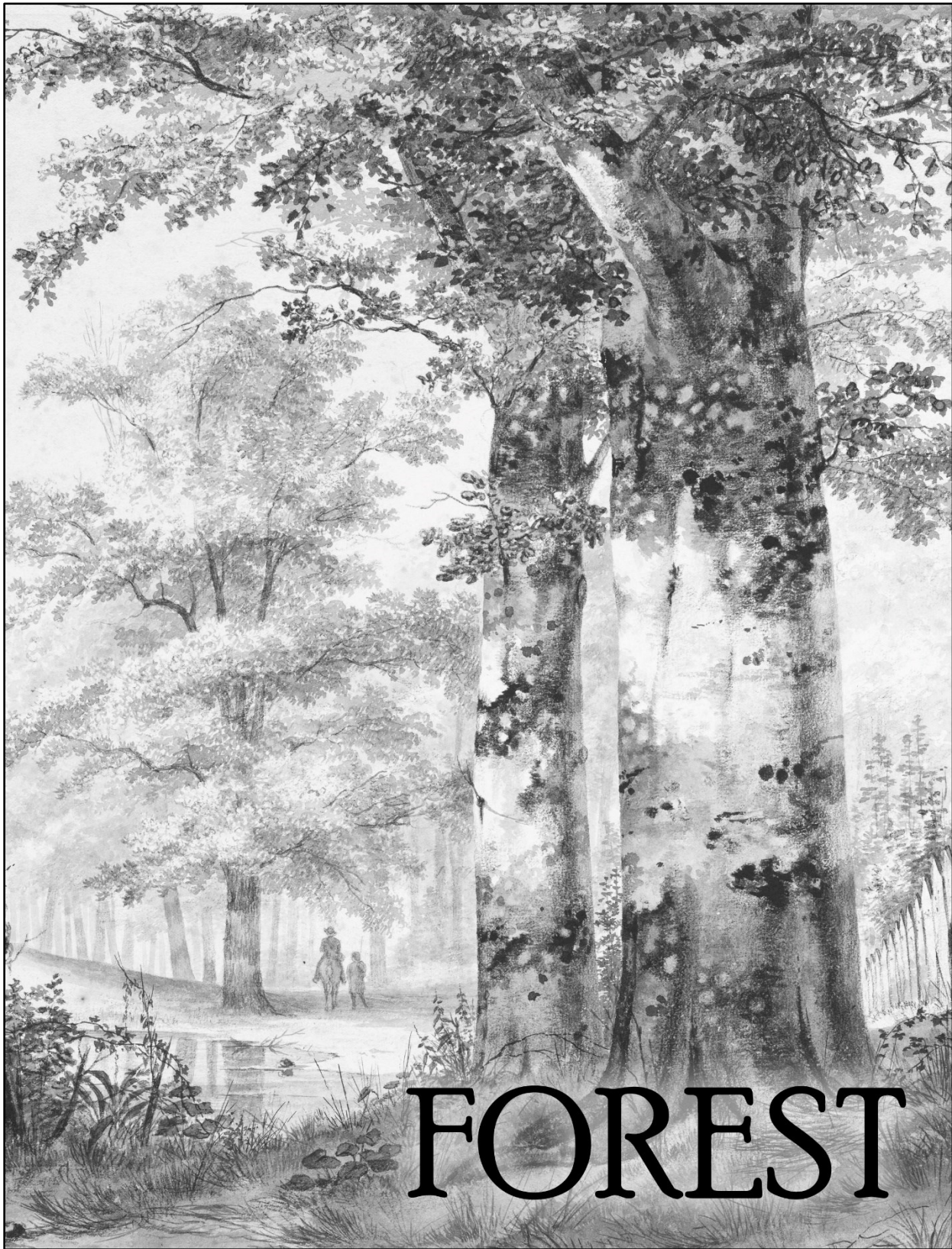
In addition, sand and grit blown about with such force can cause lingering problems even for those properly girded for desert travel. Once the storm ends, have each party member make a DC 15 Fortitude or Survival check. Those who fail suffer lingering effects from irritation to the eyes and upper respiratory tract until the next long rest: -1 status penalty to Fortitude checks and a -2 status penalty to Perception checks. If your party has the misfortune to be hit by more than one such storm before they can take a long rest, these penalties are cumulative.

Tripping Hazard. Pick a party member at the front of the party formation. That character trips over an unseen obstacle — a rock sticking up out of the sand, or a half-buried skeleton, for instance. He or she must make a successful DC 15 Reflex save to avoid a hard fall that causes 1d4 damage — and perhaps no small embarrassment in the eyes of the other party members.

Just Deserts

Its relative hostility to life makes the desert an exotic environment, and perhaps it's just not a big part of your campaign world. Or maybe you're a Frank Herbert fan, and your campaign world is nothing but desert. Either way, it's worth considering how and why life, whether sentient or unintelligent, survives here as a point of comparison against more hospitable places.





FOREST

CHAPTER THREE

Forest

What is a Forest?

This may seem painfully self-evident, but it is useful to clarify that in this book, “forest” refers to a large land area dominated by trees and mostly, if not entirely, free of human settlement. Other intelligent beings may live here; various humanoids might go about their business in a forest. And, of course, elves and most fey consider forests to be their home turf. But they share the area with a variety of wild animals and monsters that includes — but is not limited to — the encounters described here. However, cultivated areas in which trees are grown and tended do not count. Even large orchards still qualify as agriculture, not wilderness.

Welcome to Sherwood

In England in the Middle Ages, the word “forest” was not, strictly speaking, a description of the terrain. It indicated that a place was royal land, land that belonged to the Crown. Hence, the actual Sherwood Forest was not a solid mass of trees in which Robin Hood could hide from the Sheriff of Nottingham, but a patchwork of wooded areas and rolling grassland, and some of the grassland was actually cultivated. But the whole area was still a forest. In other words, the term belonged to the real estate business, not to topology or biological science.

Just thought you’d like to know that.

Any description of who and what you are likely to encounter in a forest is complicated by the fact that forests are prominent features of the land just about everywhere you go and one must make allowances for differences in climate. Therefore, some tables in this chapter require die roll adjustments based on which of the three different classifications of forest describes your party’s current surroundings: boreal, temperate or tropical.

Boreal forests occur in cold weather areas — in the sub-arctic bands, or at high altitudes. In fact, it might make more sense to use the tables in this chapter instead of those in Chapter 8 if the mountains in which your party finds itself is heavily forested. The tables here make similar allowances for the cold — you’ll find winter wolves in the sub-arctic, but not many boa constrictors.

Conifers predominate in sub-arctic forests, as they do in forests at high altitudes.

Hot, humid weather with high rainfall characterizes tropical forests — jungles or rain forests, if you prefer to call them that. The climate encourages lush growth of evergreen trees and sustains certain fauna that you won’t find in colder climates. Cold-blooded creatures can thrive here because of the heat. As a sort of flip side to boreal forests, boa constrictors thrive here, but winter wolves can’t stand the heat as well as the humidity.

As the name suggests, temperate forests enjoy a moderate climate — temperatures that are cold in winter, but not too cold; hot in summer, but not too hot; and rainfall that is enough to support abundant flora, but not excessive. Both coniferous and deciduous trees may thrive here, as well as animal life that prefers a relatively mild climate. Temperate forests also include tropical dry forests. Tropical dry forests lie in the tropical climate band, but they don’t receive nearly the same rainfall as jungles/rainforests, so their flora and fauna are more comparable to that of temperate forests.

What Do You Find in a Forest?

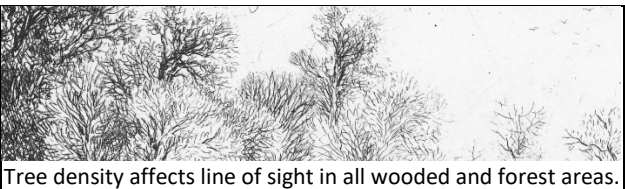
When you determine that a random encounter is in order, roll on Table 3.1 to determine the category:

TABLE 3.1
Encounter Type - Forest

d20	CATEGORY
1-6	Aggressive Creatures (Table 3.2)
7-12	Neutral Creatures (Table 3.3)
13-16	Humanoids (Table 3.4)
17	Humans (Table 3.5)
18-20	Watch Out! (Table 3.6)

Then, roll on the appropriate table to determine the creature, person or thing encountered.

Note that line of sight does not extend very far in the middle of a forest. At most, your party has a clear view to the other side of a clearing. Otherwise, trees, heavy undergrowth, dead logs and other physical obstacles make it hard to see very far. Therefore, whomever or whatever your party comes across, the encounter is likely to start at fairly close quarters.



Tree density affects line of sight in all wooded and forest areas.

TABLE 3.2**Aggressive Creatures - Forest**

d100	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Wolverine
4-6	Owlbear
7-12	Wolf
13-14	Barghest
15-17	Basilisk
18-22	Cat
23-24	Catoblepa
25-28	Centipede
29-31	Drake
32-33	Elemental, Ooze Mephit
34-36	Ettin
37-40	Fey
41-42	Griffon
43-48	Insect
49-51	Leucrotta
52-53	Medusa
54-55	Nilith
56-58	Ooze
59-65	Plant
66-68	Scorpion
69-74	Snake
75-80	Spider
81-83	Troll
84-88	Undead
89-90	Vampiric Mist
91-93	Warg
94-95	Will-o'-Wisp
96-98	Web Lurker
99	Xill
100-101	Yeth Hound
102-106	Shambler

+3 to the die roll if in a temperate forest.

+6 to the die roll if in a tropical forest.

Wolverine (B2). These ferocious predators stalk boreal forests, and it seems as if they're always hungry. Or even worse, they're spoiling for a fight just for the sake of it. Your party hears the unmistakable snarl of one wolverine as they pick their way through the forest, and it can only mean trouble.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak wolverine for the encounter. If your party's average level is 4-7, use one giant wolverine (B2). If your party's average level is higher than 7, use one elite giant

wolverine for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

Owlbear (B1). Your party hears a terrible shriek echo through the forest. You may require a successful DC 15 Nature check to recognize it as an owlbear's Bloodcurdling Screech ability. Shortly thereafter, one of these monstrous beasts comes crashing through the forest, eager to prey on your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak owlbear for the encounter. If your party's average level is 7-10, use one elite owlbear. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use a mated pair of elite owlbeards for the encounter group.

Wolf (B1). Wolves haunt boreal and temperate forests, where they are a common, but quite effective pack predator. Your party comes across one wolf, separated from its pack — or perhaps it is the last survivor of a pack. It's hungry enough to attack your party, regardless of the odds.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one wolf for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite wolf or one dire wolf for three wolves, or one elite dire wolf for six wolves.

Treasure: Furriers in your world may be willing to pay for wolf pelts. How much is ultimately up to you, but 1 gp is a reasonable baseline price for a normal wolf pelt and 2 gp for a dire wolf pelt. Dire wolf pelts are not necessarily more desirable, but they are larger and offer more fur to work with.

Barghest (B1). You find barghests just about everywhere you find goblinoids — which is to say, you can cross paths with a barghest almost anywhere. In this particular situation, your party encounters a barghest disguising itself as a wolf to look less conspicuous while it roams the wilderness in search of prey. At a distance, it looks like a lone ordinary wolf, but once the barghest comes within striking distance of one party member it changes into its true form and attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use a weak barghest for the encounter. If your party's average level is 7-10, use a greater barghest (B1). If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an encounter group of one elite greater barghest for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Basilisk (B1). Your party comes across a small clearing in which a basilisk makes its lair. Here it preys upon creatures and hapless travelers who don't notice until it is too late that uneaten chunks of petrified creatures dot this open space among the trees. The basilisk remains in

the middle of the clearing, always on the alert for new victims.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is lower than 4, use a weak basilisk for the encounter. If your party’s average level is 8-11, use one elite basilisk. If your party’s average level is higher than 11, they encounter two elite basilisks sharing a lair — or, if you wish, substitute one elite dracolisk (B2).

Treasure: The lair contains scattered valuables belonging to the basilisk’s previous victims. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value. If there is more than one basilisk in the encounter, consider that basilisk eggs may also be present for the taking.

Cat (B1). “Cat” in this context refers to a variety of species of big cat — dangerous top predators in their native environment, not a small, domesticated fur ball that you might keep as a pet or a familiar. Your party comes across one of these hunting cats in either of two situations: Your party scares off a prey animal that it was stalking, or they come upon it while feeding and it suspects them of wanting to steal its kill. Either way, it’s angry enough at your party to attack. Roll on Table 3.2.1 to determine the big cat that your party encounters:

TABLE 3.2.1
Cat – Forest

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Leopard
4	Smilodon
5-6	Tiger

Scaling the Encounter: For leopards, use one weak leopard for the encounter if your party’s average level is 1. If your party’s average level is higher than 5, your party may come upon a leap of leopards feeding on a carcass, with one elite leopard for each multiple of 6 in your party’s average level.

For smilodons, feel free to use a leopard instead if your party’s average level is lower than 4. If your party’s average level is 4-5, use one weak smilodon for the encounter. If your party’s average level is higher than 9, use a pack of one elite smilodon for each multiple of 10 in your party’s average level as the encounter group.

Tigers always hunt alone. If your party’s average level is 1-3, use a weak tiger for the encounter. If your party’s average level is above 7, use an elite tiger. ➤

Catoblepa (B2). You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to hear the catobelpa stomping through the forest — or smell its foul odor — before they can see it clearly. Catoblepas are indiscriminate predators, so when it spots your party it is sure to regard them as food.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is lower than 10, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party’s average level is 10-11, use a weak catoblepa for the encounter. If your party’s average level is higher than 15, use one elite catoblepa.

Centipede (B1, B2). Centipedes are not aggressive by nature, but the giants among them are so large and so voracious that they constantly need to feed, and their size allows them to deal with most creatures without fear. When your party disturbs 1d6 giant centipedes partially hidden by the undergrowth, they consider that live food has just been delivered to their door.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak giant centipedes. If your party’s average level is 4-6, use one giant whiptail centipede (B2) for the encounter, or consider that your party has provoked the wrath of one giant centipede swarm (B1) hiding among the ground cover. If your party’s average level is 7-8, use one elite giant whiptail centipede. If your party’s average level is higher than 8, consider using the granddaddy among centipedes, one titan centipede (B2). If this location won’t accommodate a creature that large, use an encounter group of one elite giant whiptail centipede for each multiple of 8 in your party’s average level instead.

Drake (B1). A few different varieties of these primitive dragons may be encountered in forests. None of them are inclined to cut a hapless party of adventurers a break. Roll on Table 3.2.2 to determine the drake that your party encounters:

TABLE 3.2.2
Drake – Forest

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Wyvern
4	Flame Drake
5-6	Jungle Drake

+1 to die roll of in a temperate forest, +2 to die roll if in a tropical forest.

Wyvern. Though no more intelligent than other drakes, wyverns may act like evil dragons in toying with their victims, extracting tribute from them or ➤

humiliating them before destroying them. When a wyvern swoops down on your party from above the tree line, it may pause to taunt or extort your party before it attacks, just to get a reaction from them.

Flame Drake. Flame drakes occasionally come down from the volcanic mountains that they favor. Forests attract them because they sometimes start fires just for amusement. Your party may spot a flame drake in the sky through a gap in the trees as it prepares to use its Fireball Breath ability. Or you may have your party make a DC 15 Perception check to spot a puff of smoke among some trees in the distance.

Jungle Drake. Called jungle drakes mostly on account of their coloration, which helps them hide among thick foliage, it is nonetheless the case that these creatures dwell mostly in tropical forests. You may require that your party make a DC 15 Perception or Nature check to spot a jungle drake just below the tree line, waiting for them to approach within striking distance.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak drake for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an encounter group of one elite drake for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Elemental, Ooze Mephit (B2). Forests can be confusing environments for elementals because none of the four elements stand out by themselves. Air, Earth and Water all combine in equal parts, while Fire is very much anathema. All the same, forests can prove hospitable enough for ooze mephits, which compound the basic elements.

Mephits have a habit of crossing over into the Material Plane, like ink bleeding through paper, and making nuisances of themselves. They are not predatory, but they are very annoying and they interpret any attempt to brush them aside as an attack. Your party passes one ooze mephit lounging in a small boggy clearing. You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to notice its pungent odor before they see it through the trees. It begs your party (in Aquan or Terran, of course) for a handout, whether a valuable item or a service of some kind, and it shifts from wheedling to violence if it doesn't get what it wants.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite ooze mephit for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. It's a mephit pity party!

Ettin (B1). Your party hears two loud voices coming from somewhere amongst the trees. It's an ettin arguing with itself. If they choose not to avoid it, it calls out to them and demands that they help settle a dispute. It should be something that your party would find awkward or at least pointless to answer — for instance, whether elf flesh or dwarf flesh tastes more savory. No matter what answer the party gives, one or both heads accuses them of unfairly favoring the other and the ettin attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: As amusing as ettins can be if you run the encounter with the right sense of humor, you should feel free to re-roll for a different encounter if your party's average level is 1-2. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak ettin for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use one elite ettin for the encounter.

Treasure: The ettin carries some coins in a pouch looped around its loincloth. Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Fey (B1, B2, B3). It's easy to forget that not all fey are harmless. Their (usually) diminutive size and their eccentric appearance give them an advantage similar to that given to small dogs: Larger creatures interpret their aggression and malice as mere mischief and they don't take them seriously enough. Forests are their second home away from their native plane, so you're more likely to encounter them here than in any other environment. Roll on Table 3.2.3 to determine the fey creature encountered:

TABLE 3.2.3

Aggressive Fey – Forest

d10	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Twigjack
3	Elanax
4-6	Gremlins
7	Grimstalker
8-9	Quickling
10	Redcap
11	Kishi

Twigjack (B2). These vicious fey see themselves as defenders of the forest, and they use violence without compunction against anyone they view as intruders on the sylvan world. Your party may simply be traveling through the forest, meaning no harm at all.

They're spotted by a twigjack that doesn't care; they're intruders and they must be dealt with ➤

appropriately. Have the twigjack make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it fails, your party realizes that that odd bundle of vines and brambles among the trees is actually a creature. If it succeeds your party doesn't know it's there until it charges them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak twigjack for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite twigjack for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Elanax (B1). If your party crosses paths with one of these predatory fey and there is a fire nearby, it is a good bet that it sprints at them out of the conflagration. However, the elanax is anything but panicked; instead, it is keyed up and eager to hunt. In any event, it treats your party as a cat would treat a group of mice: It charges to break up the formation and focuses on chasing down a single victim.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different fey encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak elanax for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use one elite elanax.

Gremlins (B1). These mean, mechanically-inclined fey set traps near their inconspicuous lairs and they enjoy taunting their victims. Your party comes across such a trap. Use a trap described in the core rulebooks appropriate to your party's average level, or use one of your own devising. You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to notice the gremlins hiding nearby in and amongst the trees. If they succeed, perhaps it is because one gremlin couldn't help giggling, or jumped the gun on taunting the victim.

To determine the exact type of gremlin encountered, roll on Table 3.2.3.1. If you don't feel like running a horde of gremlins, skip Table 3.2.3.1 and just use jinkins for the encounter, scaled appropriately.

TABLE 3.2.3.1

Gremlins – Forest

d6	ENCOUNTER
1	Jinkin
2-4	Mitflit
5-6	Pugwumpi

Scaling the Encounter: For jinkins, use one jinkin ➤

for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite jinkin for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

For mitflits, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak mitflits. If your party's average level is 2-3, use 1d4 mitflits. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use one elite mitflit for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

For pugwumpi, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak pugwumpi. If your party's average level is 2-3, use 1d4 normal pugwumpi. If your party's average level is 4-5, use 1d4 elite pugwumpi. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite pugwumpi for each level in your party's average level.

Treasure: If the trap guards the gremlins' lair, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of their treasure.

Grimstalker (B2). Your party stumbles into a patch of forest claimed by a grimstalker. Their first hint might be a string of severed human or humanoid heads — its previous victims — hanging from the trees. Or it might be the presence of an assassin vine that it has cultivated to stake out its territory (see *Scaling the Encounter*). In any event, the grimstalker soon arrives on the scene, perfectly content to kill first and ask questions later.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, feel free to re-roll for a different fey encounter. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak grimstalker for the encounter. If your party's average level is 8-10, use one elite grimstalker or add one assassin vine (B2) to the encounter group to serve as the grimstalker's tripwire. If your party's average level higher than 10, use an encounter group of one elite grimstalker for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Quickling (B2). The line between playful mischief and sadistic menace is alarmingly thin, and quicklings demonstrate that as much as any creature in existence. Using their speed and a sharp weapon to torment passersby is amusement to them. One quickling spots your party picking their way through the forest. It's cocky enough to think that it can take them all by itself. ➤

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak quickling for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite quickling for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level. They all dash about among the trees as they try to befuddle your party.

Redcap (B1). These murderous fey kill just for the fun of it. They haunt the forest, where they can use cover to ambush their victims. This gives them an advantage even if they are outnumbered.

One redcap spots your party. Have it make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds, it gets the drop and charges the character at the back of the party formation. If it fails, your party spots a small, wizened humanoid, with its pointed red cap the only giveaway to its true identity. It tries to play off meeting your party as an innocent chance encounter, but it keeps looking for an opportunity to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak redcap for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, a group of redcaps out for a spree — one elite redcap for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level — should make the encounter more challenging.

Kishi (B3). Your party crosses paths with a human or humanoid who seems benign. Perhaps it presents itself as a lost traveler in need, or a peddler with useful things for sale, or a handsome wanderer. Unfortunately for your party, it is a kishi intent on using its innate ability to cast *charm* to lure away one party member to torment and ultimately kill that character for its own amusement.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 6, feel free to re-roll for a different fey encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use a weak kishi for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 11, use an elite kishi.

Griffon (B1). A griffon, roaming afield from its eyrie in nearby hills, spots your party through the trees and goes for one of their mounts or pack animals — or at least, it thinks it has spotted a mount or a pack animal.

If taming and training griffons is part of your campaign world, then no doubt griffon trainers would pay well for them. To subdue a griffon to the point where it can be bound and held captive, one large or two medium-size

creatures must successfully grapple the griffon using both hands. They must maintain the grapple for 10 consecutive turns. At that point, the griffon stops struggling. How your party keeps it bound until it can be delivered is up to them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak griffon for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use a pack (flock?) of one elite griffon for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Insects (B1, B2). You may not think of insects as predatory, but they can be quite aggressive and cause trouble in their own way. That's what happens when you act without the capacity to think about the consequences. To make things worse, insects in the wilderness sometimes grow monstrosously large. Roll on Table 3.2.4 to determine the insects encountered:

TABLE 3.2.4

Insects – Forest

d12	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Wasp
3	Beetle, Giant Stag
4	Cockroach
5-6	Fly
7-8	Mantis
9-10	Tick
11-13	Ant

+1 to die roll if in a tropical forest

Wasp (B1). Beware that pendulous thing hanging from a stout branch; it's the nest of a giant wasp. You may allow your party a DC 20 Nature or Survival check to recognize it for what it is before they get close enough to set off the one giant wasp guarding it, but giant wasps are quick to anger and quick to sting.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak giant wasp for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 2, use an encounter group of one giant wasp for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level.

Alternately, if your mind recoils at the idea of giant wasps, you may use one weak wasp swarm for the encounter if your party's average level is 1-3. If your party's average level is 4-7, use one wasp swarm. If your party's average level is 8-11, use one elite wasp swarm. ➤

Beetle, Giant Stag (B1). Like giant ants, giant stag beetles are mindless omnivores that feed voraciously, and when you're that large, almost anything looks like it could make a meal, including your party.

However, a skilled handler may wrangle a giant stag beetle and use it as a beast of burden. One large or two medium-size creatures must successfully grapple the beetle. They must maintain the grapple for 6 consecutive turns. At that point, the beetle stops struggling and acknowledges the wranglers as its master.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use a weak giant stag beetle for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite giant stag beetle for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Cockroach (B2). You find cockroaches wherever they can scavenge off of creatures higher up the food chain. During a rest halt, one giant cockroach goes after your party's rations. It won't attack unless threatened, but it will eat everything up unless stopped.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite cockroach swarm (B2) for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Fly (B2). Baby giant flies feed on carcasses so that they grow up into big and strong giant flies. Your party comes upon the remains of... something... that has been almost entirely consumed by 1d4 giant maggots. They're still hungry and primitive instinct drives them to try to continue feeding on your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3 use an encounter group of 1d6 giant maggots. If your party's average level is higher than 3 use an encounter group of one giant fly (B2) for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. The flies have found a carcass into which to lay eggs, and they defend their spawning ground against a perceived threat.

Mantis (B1). As with other oversized insects that roam the wilderness, mantises that grow large enough to qualify as giant have no self-awareness regarding their size, strength and voracity. They just know they have to feed. Your party spots one giant mantis lumbering through the trees, and it spots them as food.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak giant mantis for the encounter. If ►

your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite giant mantis for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level. You may substitute one deadly mantis for two elite giant mantises.

Tick (B2). Pick a party member at random. One giant tick pops out from the undergrowth and tries to attach itself to that character so that it can feed.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite giant tick for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Ant (B2). Your party is not looking through a magnifying glass; they really have come face-to-face with one human-sized ant. It's not a predator, but it is an omnivore that eats anything that seems like food and it is large enough to enforce its will. To it, your party looks like food.

Alternately, army ants are much smaller, but they come at you in a vicious, relentless swarm. If your party runs afoul of an army ant swarm (B2), it spots them (or more precisely, a food source somewhere among your party's belongings) during a rest halt or while they have camped for the night and attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak giant ant for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one army ant swarm for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite giant ant for one army ant swarm.

Leucrotta (B2). Have the leucrotta make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds your party hears a plaintive cry, as if from a human or humanoid in distress. In this case, you may then allow them a DC 20 Nature check:

Critical Success: Your party knows for certain that it's a leucrotta faking it.

Success: Your party knows it's mimicry, not a real cry of distress.

Failure: Your party thinks it hears a cry for help in Common.

However, if the leucrotta fails its Stealth check, your party sees it trying to hide behind a rock. In any event, it's determined to prey upon them.

If you wish to run a more complicated encounter and give your party a sidequest, consider that the leucrotta is — or was — affiliated with a local band of gnolls. It may want to lure your party into the clutches of those gnolls, in which case it keeps using its Luring Cry ability until the trap can be sprung. See Table 3.4: Gnolls for guidance on scaling the encounter. On the other hand, the leucrotta may have been expelled by the gnolls whom it thought it led and it may try to enlist your party's help in revenging itself upon them, in return for all the treasure in their lair. In this case, treat the leucrotta as a friendly NPC — at least until the offending gnolls are defeated.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is less than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak leucrotta for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an elite leucrotta. If your party's average level is higher than 15, consider using two elite leucrottas working in tandem.

Medusa (B1). It may be inconspicuous enough so that you have your party make a successful DC 10 Perception check to notice it, but they pass by what appears to be a realistic statue of a small animal. In fact, a medusa has made its lair in a small clearing nearby, where it surrounds itself with the petrified remains of its victims. It decides that your party would supplement its existing collection nicely. If your party investigates, they'll find more and more such statues until they reach the edge of the medusa's clearing.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak medusa for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use one elite medusa.

Treasure: The medusa's gaze petrifies flesh, but not valuables. To total up the bits and pieces that once belonged to its victims, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Nilith (B1). At first, it might look like a tree sloth that has been skinned, but it's really a nilith. These hateful aberrations take pleasure in striking fear and terror in their prey, so they do not drop down from trees to strike by surprise. Instead, they make a display, taking advantage of their innate spellcasting and Mind Crush ability to terrorize them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 8, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 8-9, use one weak nilith for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 13, use one elite nilith.

Ooze (B2). Oozes are not just native to caverns; they occur in patches of forest where there is perpetual shade and damp. To determine the type of ooze that your party comes across (or steps into), roll on Table 3.2.5:

TABLE 3.2.5

Ooze – Forest

d10	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Amoeba Swarm
3-5	Giant Amoeba
6-8	Slime Mold
9-10	Verdurous Ooze

Amoeba Swarm. Amoebas live in the soil of the forest floor, and sometimes they collect into large groups and act as a swarm. Have one amoeba swarm make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds, it looks like a granulated pool of slime, and they don't realize it's a living thing until they're close enough for it to strike. In any event, it attacks without thinking.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite amoeba swarm for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Giant Amoeba. Like other creatures in the wild, amoebas can grow big for their kind without becoming proportionately intelligent or discerning in its feeding behavior. A single giant amoeba is smaller than an amoeba swarm and harder to spot. But it behaves in the same mindless and voracious way and it's easy to mistake it for a translucent puddle of slime. Handle the encounter the same as an amoeba swarm (see above).

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite giant amoeba for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Slime Mold. Otherwise harmless fungi are a natural feature of the forest, as they help break down dead plants into nutrients to feed the next generation of living things. However, your party approaches a predatory slime mold that lives symbiotically with these fungi, and it spots your party as a chance to get its own life cycle going, lashing out to infect the closest character in the party formation.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak slime mold for the encounter. If ➤

your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite slime mold for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Verdurous Ooze. Your party passes a patch of undergrowth in which one of these green oozes has concealed itself. Have the verdurous ooze make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds, its coloration works as camouflage, and they don't realize that a predatory creature is present until they're close enough for it to strike.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different ooze encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use one weak verdurous ooze for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an encounter group of one elite verdurous ooze for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Plant (B1, B2). Plants are not always your friends. Just because they cannot see, cannot speak and they can barely move, it doesn't mean that they cannot prey on whatever comes within their reach. Roll on Table 3.2.6 to determine the plant that is eager to disabuse your party of the notion that it is just a vegetable:

TABLE 3.2.6

Plant – Forest

d20	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Calathgar
3-9	Assassin Vine
10-11	Dezullon
12-15	Flytrap
16-17	Mandragora
18	Scythe Tree
19	Tendriculous
20-21	Viper Vine

+1 to die roll in tropical forests

Calathgar (B2). A splash of bright blue and red is an unusual sight in a boreal forest, but a calthagar is no ordinary plant. It's not predatory, but it can defend itself as ably as any animal. One calthagar detects the presence of your party, which didn't realize that it was there until they approached within 30 feet. At this point, have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone has made a false move that registers as a threat, and it attacks. ➤

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak calthagar for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use a patch of one elite calthagar for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level as the encounter group.

Assassin Vine (B2). You may allow your party a DC 20 Perception or Survival check to notice that the unusually thick ground cover just twitched. If it fails, they don't realize that an assassin vine has used its tremorsense to spot them until they come within in its striking distance of its Grasping Foliage ability.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak assassin vine for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use a patch of one elite assassin vine for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level for the encounter group. In this case, locate the assassin vines so that they can strike from different angles.

Dezullon (B1). It is easy enough to mistake these oversized pitcher plants for just another part of the forest's undergrowth; even recognizing it as a carnivorous plant, one might still assume that it only preys on small animals. That is not the case, however, and they are quite capable of entrapping humans and humanoids as well.

You may allow your party a DC 20 Nature or Survival check to intuit that a menace to them lurks nearby before at least one party member comes within range of the dezullon's Stench ability.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 8, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 8-9, use a weak dezullon for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 13, use one elite dezullon.

Flytrap (B1). It's something of a misnomer to call these carnivorous plants flytraps because they are far too large and mean to content themselves with eating flies. Even giant flies provide them with little more than a snack. As your party makes its way through the forest, the flytrap extends its maw out of the undergrowth at them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak snapping flytrap for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use a patch of one elite snapping flytrap for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level for the encounter group. You may freely substitute one giant flytrap for two elite snapping flytraps. ➤

Mandragora (B2). Your party comes across something that looks like a small deformed humanoid sticking up out of the forest floor. It is, of course, a mandragora and it strikes at the nearest arcane spellcaster — or if none is present, the character carrying the most potions and/or alchemical materials. It is hungry enough so that it will even consume the blood of a creature without any magic in it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak mandragora for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use a patch of one elite mandragora for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

Scythe Tree (B2). Dead trees are not uncommon in the forest. However, dead trees are not always as they seem. You may allow your party a DC 20 Perception or Survival check to notice that the ends of some branches on that dead tree just ahead look strangely like curved blades. That's because they are curved blades; this is a scythe tree and it attacks as soon as your party comes within range.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different plant encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use one weak scythe tree for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use one elite scythe tree for the encounter.

Tendriculos (B2). As your party makes its way through a deep and particularly obscure part of the forest they see what looks like a tree with large fungi growing among its branches. You may allow them DC 15 Perception check to notice that its branches look more like tendrils and that they seem to be moving like tentacles. If it fails, they don't realize that something is amiss until they are within range of the tendriculos' tentacles.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different plant encounter — or you may consider that the tendriculos has recently fed, so it is no longer hungry. In that case, it just ignores your party as they pass. If your party's average level is 5-6, use one weak tendriculos for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use one elite tendriculos.

Treasure: If you decide that the tendriculous is not hungry, you may consider that it has regurgitated some treasure from its last victim. Use the ➤

guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value. This treasure is lying on the ground near the tendriculous and it is easy to spot.

Viper Vine (B2). Your party spots an enormous patch of ground cover. Unfortunately for them, it's a viper vine at rest and coiled like a snake. You may allow them a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to notice a flicker of motion that suggests that what they're approaching is no ordinary plant. Otherwise, the viper vine uses its tremorsense and Captivating Pollen ability as soon as someone in the party formation comes within range.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 11, feel free to re-roll for a different plant encounter. If your party's average level is 11-12, use one weak viper vine for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 16, use one elite viper vine.

Treasure: Because these predatory plants are not migratory and only slightly mobile, they hunt more or less in their lairs. This means that your party might find the accumulated belongings of the plants' previous victims after defeating them. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Scorpion (B1). Your party takes a rest halt and disturbs the giant scorpion sheltering in the undergrowth. It has a large stinger, and it doesn't hesitate to use it. Whether it acts in what it perceives as self-defense, or because your party looks like prey, it makes little practical difference.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak giant scorpion for the encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use one scorpion swarm. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite giant scorpion for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Snakes (B1, B3). Snakes possess an unfortunate combination of traits: On the one hand, their coloration makes them hard to spot against the forest floor, but on the other hand they lash out if you get too close to them. This is what happens to your party. You may allow a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to realize that the front of the party formation is about to step on a snake. This should give them enough time to take evasive action, although you may consider that this simply means they aren't surprised when the snake lashes out.

Roll on Table 3.2.7 to determine the snake(s) encountered:

TABLE 3.2.7

Snakes – Forest

d8	ENCOUNTER
1-7	Viper
8	Rat Snake Swarm
9-10	Ball Python
11-12	Giant Anaconda

+4 to die roll in tropical forests

Viper (B1). Your party disturbs 1d8 vipers nesting in a shallow depression. It's too late to avoid an aggressive response from them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak viper swarm (B3) for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite viper swarm for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Rat Snake Swarm (B3). Your party stops to rest among undergrowth in which some rat snakes have sheltered. You may allow a DC 10 Perception check to notice the snakes before they get close enough to attack. Rat snakes are not venomous, but you don't want to get bitten by one all the same.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak rat snake swarm for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite rat snake swarm for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Ball Python (B1). Unlike vipers, ball pythons rely on squeezing their prey to death. This often involves dropping onto it from a nearby tree and coiling around it before it can react. You may have the snake make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC to determine whether they notice the ball python waiting for them to get within range.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use one elite ball python for the encounter.

Giant Anaconda (B1). If there is anything more daunting than running afoul of a ball python-sized constrictor, it is being targeted as food by a giant anaconda — and they can grow giant indeed in the jungle. One of these beasts targets one of your party members, confident that the rest won't be able to harm it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level ➤

is lower than 6, feel free to re-roll for a different snake encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use one weak giant anaconda for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 11, use one elite giant anaconda.

Treasure: It's quite possible that a giant constrictor snake has fed on humans or humanoids before and that the less perishable possessions remain in its digestive tract. If your party bothers to slit the snake open and root around inside, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of what they find.

Spider (B1, B2). A forest is full of spiders, everyone knows that. Your party comes across a large web spun between two trees. It may be an empty web, as in Table 3.6: Hampering Web, or it may be crawling with spiders — or it may be that just one very big and dangerous spider calls it home and hunting ground. Roll on Table 3.2.8 to determine what kind of spider your party encounters:

TABLE 3.2.8

Spider – Forest

d10	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Ether Spider
4-7	Hunting Spider
8	Ogre Spider
9-10	Spider Swarm
11-12	Dream Spiders

+1 to die roll in temperate forests

+2 to die roll in tropical forests

Ether Spider (B1). One ether spider literally appears out of nowhere to attack your party, having spotted them from its lair in the Ethereal Plane. Ether spiders are quite fearless, and they use their ability to jump back and forth between the Ethereal Plane and the Material Plane to conduct hit-and-run attacks, wearing the party down until they are all incapacitated or dead.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, use a weak ether spider for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use one elite ether spider for the encounter.

Hunting Spider (B1). Your party is confronted by one hunting spider in its web. ➤

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, there is one elite hunting spider present in the web for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Ogre Spider (B2). The web houses one very large spider, an ogre spider. It may not wait for someone from your party to get entangled in its web; instead it uses its web ranged weapon attack to immobilize anyone who gets within range.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-4, use a weak ogre spider for the encounter.

Spider Swarm (B1). The web houses 1d4 swarms of tiny spiders. All of them respond aggressively if something so much as touches their web.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3, use an encounter group of 1d6 spider swarms. If your party's average level is 4-5, use an encounter group of 1d4 elite spider swarms. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one elite spider swarm for each level in your party's average level.

Dream Spiders (B2). The web houses one dream spider in its native element. What makes a dream spider encounter particularly dangerous is that its venom suffuses its web, so that you don't even need physical contact with the spider itself to suffer from it. Treat a dream spider's web as a hampering Web hazard (see Table 3.6). Touching their web not only requires a Fortitude save against the poison, it also alerts the dream spider to the presence of prey.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3, use an encounter group of 1d4 dream spiders. If your party's average level is 4-5, use an encounter group of 1d4 elite dream spiders. If your party's average level is higher than 5, your party has stumbled upon a colony of one elite dream spider for each level in your party's average level.

Treasure. Ogre spiders may have trapped humanoid-sized victims in the past and left some of their valuables caught in their web. You may use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value if you wish.

Troll (B1). Who knows what brings a troll to this corner of the forest? What is certain is that it emerges from among the trees and demands a fee in order to let your party pass through territory that it considers its own. Perhaps it demands one of the party's pack animals as its

toll, or a suitable amount of coins. It fights rather than let anyone pass for free.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak troll for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use an encounter group of one elite troll for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level. If scaling the encounter calls for more than one troll, you may substitute two elite troll hounds (B2) for one troll. If the encounter calls for more than two trolls, you may also substitute one troll king (B1) for two trolls.

Treasure: The troll's racket has worked well enough in the past: Its victims pay one way or another. If your party defeats the troll in its lair, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Undead (B1, B2). Forests are places of gloom and mystery as well as natural beauty. If your party encounters undead in the forest, they have touched that dark mystery through the remnants of souls who died terrible deaths in a hostile wilderness, and whose rest has been disturbed by an evil whose source can no longer be traced. Roll on Table 3.2.9 to determine the undead abomination that greets your party:

TABLE 3.2.9

Undead – Forest

d20	ENCOUNTER
1	Banshee
2	Ghost
3-7	Ghoul/Ghast
8	Shadow
9-12	Skeletons
13-14	Specter
15-16	Wight
17	Wraith
18-20	Zombies

Banshee (B1). Assuming that elves are a part of your campaign world, it's a good bet that they live, or at least once lived in this forest. This banshee is a relic of evil deeds and tragic events from their history. Perhaps your party hears its forlorn wail from a distance, and they only confront it if they investigate. Or perhaps they stumble upon the banshee's domain, and in its madness and despair it demands that they hand over their valuables, particularly their jewelry. ➤

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 15, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 15-16, use a weak banshee for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 20, use one elite banshee.

Ghost (B1). Your party glimpses a ghost flitting between the trees — or perhaps it rears up at them suddenly out of the gloom. Almost certainly, the ghost commoner that your party encounters is the remnant of someone who died unhappily in the depths of the forest. Perhaps it perished from starvation or exposure, or it was slain by a monster or a wild animal. You may make this into a hostile encounter by having the ghost try to possess a member of your party so that it may resolve unfinished business from its former life. This may lead to a small sidequest for your party, depending on how willful you want to make this ghost.

Scaling the Encounter: Ghosts always work alone. However, if you wish to make a more challenging ghost encounter for a 10th level or higher party, use a ghost mage instead of a ghost commoner. Or you may freely substitute a ghost of your own design.

Ghoul/Ghast (B1). Living things die and decay in the forest all of the time. Some rotting things are touched by necromantic energy and become ghouls or ghasts. One ghoul approaches your party, driven by mindless hunger for their flesh.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 4-5, use one elite ghoul or one ghast for the encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use one elite ghast. If your party level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite ghoul for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level, or one elite ghast for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Shadow (B1). Jumping at shadows is a common reaction to traveling through the deep forest. However, sometimes a shadow is more than just a shadow — it's an undead creature! Without thinking or feeling, it attacks the nearest party member, eager to drain the life from another victim and create one more of its own kind.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak shadow for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use one elite shadow for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Skeletons (B1). Your party comes across 1d4+2 ➤

skeleton guards that were once human or humanoid. They're still equipped in the arms and armor they had at their demise. Perhaps they were explorers or adventurers. Perhaps they were soldiers killed in a skirmish. Perhaps they were adventurers or explorers ambushed by brigands — or perhaps they were bandits themselves, who were hunted down in the name of justice or revenge, or who fell out among themselves. In any event, they attack, driven by necromantic echoes of their battle lust or rage at their fate.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak skeleton guards. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite skeleton guard for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one skeletal champion for two elite skeleton guards.

Specter (B2). Your party comes upon one specter that was once someone who perished in the wilderness, but all connections to who and what it was in life no longer exist. Only blind hatred of the living drives it to attack your party on sight.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different undead encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak specter for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use one elite specter.

Wight (B1). Even in the dim light of the deep forest, it's hard to mistake the death's-head grin and demonic red eyes of a wight. It is the undead remnant of someone who died out here and received a hasty, improvised burial. Your party has stumbled upon the spot where it was interred, and it rises up to confront them.

The wight can have any one of a number of different backstories and motivations taken from its life. One possibility is that it was the leader of a bandit gang whose followers betrayed and killed him, and that it's looking to create spawn who will help it exact revenge. Or perhaps it was an adventurer stabbed in the back by his companions to create larger shares of the loot. Ultimately, it's up to you to decide what's going on with this wight and how it fits into your campaign world.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak wight for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite wight for each ➤

multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Wraith (B1). Your party has the misfortune to come across a wraith that was once someone who perished in the wilderness, and is now bound to the place of its doom. Perhaps they pass a hastily dug grave — you may require a DC 15 Perception check to notice that the ground has been disturbed in this way — or just a skeleton that has been picked clean by scavengers. Whatever the case, it takes out the resentment that it bore at the end of its life on your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, feel free to re-roll for a different undead encounter. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak wraith for the encounter. If your party's average level is 9-12, use one dread wraith (B2). If your party's average level is higher than 12, use one elite dread wraith.

Zombies (B1). Your party come across one plague zombie or 1d4 zombie shamblers that have been programmed to kill every living thing they encounter. The source of the necromancy that created these zombies is up to you. Perhaps they slipped the leash of their creator and they now wander mindlessly, looking for victims.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one plague zombie for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one zombie brute or one elite plague zombie for two plague zombies, or one zombie hulk for six plague zombies. If you want to create a large encounter for that "The Walking Dead" effect, freely substitute 1d4 zombie shamblers for one plague zombie.

Treasure: It's quite possible that ghosts and wraiths are encountered in or near the place where they died or were buried — in which case, the valuables they had on them are lying about somewhere. You may require a successful DC 15 Perception check to find them. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

With skeletons and zombies, they may have with them some remains of what they had on their person at the time of their death. Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Vampiric Mist (B2). Your party comes upon a boggy clearing from which a weird red mist rises. It's a vampiric mist, and it smells their blood. To it, their blood smells tasty.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak vampiric mist for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite vampiric mist for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Warg (B1). Your party crosses paths with one warg that has escaped from a pack kept by a local humanoid tribe, or otherwise gotten separated from them. Regardless of the reason, it is hungry and your party looks like food.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak warg for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one warg for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite warg for three wargs. If this encounter takes place in a sub-arctic zone, you may also freely substitute one winter wolf for two wargs or one elite winter wolf for two elite wargs.

Web Lurker (B1). A lone web lurker tries to ambush your party, attacking from behind once they have passed its hiding spot. Have it make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds, it gets to use its Web Trap ability to pin as many party members as possible, intending to close and finish off each one at leisure. If it fails, your party senses that something is trying to conceal its presence from them before they get within range.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak web lurker for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use one elite web lurker for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 11, you may use a tag-team of two elite web lurkers for the encounter group.

Treasure: You may consider that the web lurker jumps your party from its habitual spot, and that accumulated possessions from its previous victims lies scattered in the vicinity. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of what your party finds.

Will-o'-Wisp (B1). Your party comes upon a boggy little clearing and they see a luminous globe dancing and bobbing above the mire. If you want to add some spice to the encounter, consider that the will-o'-wisp tries to lure victims into a patch of quicksand to render them helpless. In this case, the will-o'-wisp restricts itself to a 50-foot diameter area at the center of the clearing. At the center of this area, the muck turns into a 20-foot diameter pit of quicksand. If the will-o'-wisp is not already directly above the quicksand when it is engaged in melee combat, it retreats until it is above the quicksand, thus forcing its attacker to step into it in order to continue the melee.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak will-o'-wisp for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an encounter group of one elite will-o'-wisp for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Treasure: Belongings from the will-o'-wisp's previous victims have been piling up here, with various valuables scattered in the muck. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Xill (B2). Your party crosses paths with one xill prowling the forest, looking to kidnap a host for its reproductive processes. Forested wilderness may seem like a target-poor environment for such an endeavor, but in such a remote place it is also unlikely to be caught in the act. Your party outnumbers it, but xills are confident that they can take most anyone and out here there won't be anyone to get in the way.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak xill for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use one elite xill for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Yeth Hound (B2). Evil humanoids like to keep these canine fiends, laboring under the impression that they are reliable companions, like domesticated wolves or dogs. They often find that yeth hounds have very different ideas about domestication. Your party crosses paths with one yeth hound that has terminated its arrangement with a nearby group of humanoids, perhaps after doing in one or more of them. Unfortunately for your party, it is now hungry without anyone to feed it, and they look like its next meal.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak yeth hound for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite yeth hound for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Shambler (B1). As your party hacks its way through the jungle, they may or may not realize that a shambler has spotted them as a possible food source. You may require your party to make a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to realize that the jumble of plant growth off to the side just moved.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak shambler for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an encounter group of one elite

shambler for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Treasure: Shamblers feed on the move, but their previous prey's less perishable possessions remain inside them. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of what spills out of its innards when it is slain.

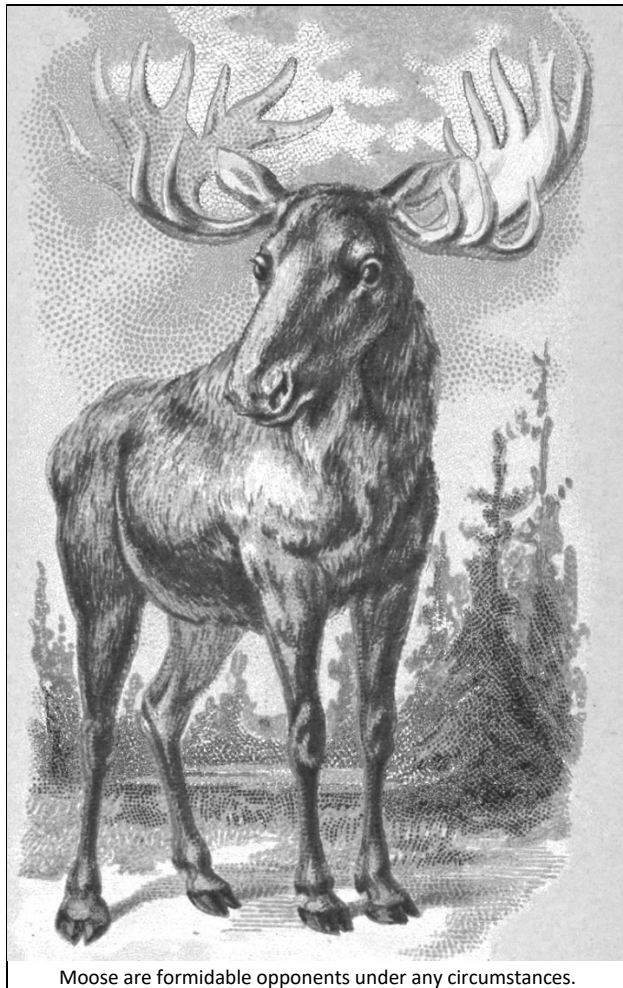
TABLE 3.3
Neutral Creatures - Forest

d100	ENCOUNTER
1-4	Moose
5-8	Bear
9-12	Badgers
13-16	Arboreal
17-20	Bats
21-22	Blink Dog
23-26	Boar
27-28	Centuar
29-31	Dog
32	Dragon
33-34	Dweomercat
35-37	Eagle
38-40	Elephant
41-42	Faerie Dragon
43-48	Fey
49-52	Fox
53-56	Hyena
57-61	Leshy
62-65	Lizard
66-69	Oppossum
70-73	Porcupine
74	Quetz Couatl
75-78	Rats
79-81	Rhinoceros
82-84	Raven
85-87	Skunk
88-90	Sloth
91-94	Weasel
95-99	Monkey
100-102	Pangolin
103-106	Gorilla

+2 to die roll if in a temperate forest
+6 to the die roll if in a tropical forest

Moose (B3). Your party spots a lone moose grazing among the trees. Even if your party does not behave in a threatening manner, there is a chance that it mistakes their actions and attack anyway. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that sets it off and it charges.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use one weak moose for the encounter. Otherwise, use a herd of one moose for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level for the encounter group.



Bear (B1, B2). Your party spots a bear prowling around for food. If they are resting, the bear comes sniffing around, drawn by their rations. If your party just wants to scare it off, require a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it succeeds, the bear takes the hint and lumbers away. If it fails, the bear charges them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak black bear (B2) for the encounter. If your party's average level is 2-3, use one black bear. If your party's average level is 4-6, use one grizzly bear (B1). If your party's average level is 7 or higher, use one cave

bear (B1). If your party's average level is higher than 9, use one elite cave bear.

Badger (B2). Your party comes across one badger sheltering in a hollow log, or the trunk of a dead tree, or just inside its burrow. When they get close enough, they see a pair of eyes like black marbles glinting in the gloom. Whether the badger attacks or not depends on whether it has any place to run, and whether your party behaves in a threatening manner.

You may have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone has made a false move that activates the badger's fight-or-flight response. If the badger has an escape route — deeper into the burrow, or the opposite end of a hollow log, it flees; otherwise it fights like a badger if it feels cornered.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3, use an encounter group of 1d4 badgers. If your party's average level is 4-5 use one giant badger for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one elite giant badger for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Arboreal (B1). In old forests, there are trees that have been touched by enchantments so ancient that humans have not observed or recorded them. They are part of the forest's weird, mysterious beauty.

Your party has some sort of physical contact with a huge tree. Perhaps someone stumbles over a root and falls heavily against it. Perhaps someone just leans against it to rest. Perhaps someone breaks off a branch, or carves a sigil into the trunk, or does some other casual mischief. Perhaps a familiar or an animal companion uses the tree for its own purposes. Whatever it is, the tree expresses its alarm.

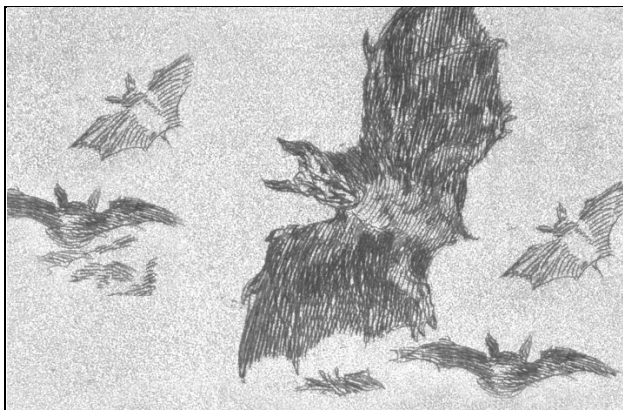
An arboreal is not necessarily hostile. If your party asks it for help, a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check wins it over. If your party includes someone visibly carrying an axe of some sort, the DC is 20. If the party has harmed the tree in any way, the DC is 25. Help from an arboreal includes providing knowledge about the immediate area, or even accompanying your party as an ally as long as this doesn't require leaving the forest.

However, arboreals instinctively react to open flame with hostility. Lighting a torch or starting campfire causes it to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak arboreal warden for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one arboreal warden for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute two arboreals

for three arboreal wardens, or one elite arboreal warden for two arboreal wardens. You may also substitute one arboreal regent for two arboreal wardens or one elite arboreal regent for three arboreal wardens as the group's leader.

Bats (B1). Bats that settle in the deep forest don't need a cave to make themselves at home. A large tree with foliage thick enough to block out the sun will do nicely. Your party passes under such a tree and they risk setting off a small colony of one vampire bat swarm. You may have your party make a DC 15 Survival or Nature check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that triggers the bats to attack.



Swarming bats can easily cause confusion and fear in the uninitiated.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one vampire bat swarm for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite vampire bat swarm for three vampire bat swarms. You may also freely substitute one giant bat for two vampire bat swarms and one elite giant bat for four vampire bat swarms.

Blink Dog (B2). Your party crosses paths with a dog with long ears and a wisp of fur hanging from its chin. It's not wandering aimlessly through the forest; it's a blink dog scouting on behalf of its pack as it roams the Material Plane to keep it safe from evil influences.

If it intuits that there are evil characters with bad intentions in your party, it keeps its distance and uses its innate spells to get away. Otherwise, anyone who is fluent in Sylvan can communicate with it, although it make take a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check to overcome its natural aloofness. A blink dog on a mission may provide your party with a sidequest as it asks them to help its pack. Alternately, a successful Diplomacy check (DC 15 or 20, depending on whether or not it diverts the blink dog from its purpose) by a good-aligned character in your party may persuade it to accompany them for a short while.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish, you may use a pack of blink dogs consisting of one for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

Boar (B1). Your party spots one wild boar rooting around the forest floor for food. Boar are popular targets for hunters. They'll fight back if attacked — indeed, the challenge they present is part of the appeal of hunting them. But they have also developed a fight-or-flight instinct, and if your party wishes to avoid a fight, have them make a DC 15 Survival or Nature group check to scare the boar off. If this check fails, the boar charges them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak boar for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one boar for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. If you prefer not to have a large herd of wild boar descend on your party, you may freely substitute one daeodon (B1) for two wild boar; one elite wild boar for three wild boar; or one elite daeodon for four wild boar.

Treasure: Boar meat is good eating for many folk. Perhaps a nearby butcher will pay 1 gp or thereabouts for a fresh carcass. The price might go up to 3 gp for a daeodon.

Centaur (B1). Your party crosses paths with a lone centaur from a tribe that claims this corner of the forest as its own. It is possible that it is a scout or a messenger acting on the tribe's behalf, but it is also possible that it has just been cast out of its former home, or it has decided of its own volition to strike out on its own and see the wider world. In the former case, it reacts to your party with caution or even suspicion, protective of its tribe and their territory. You may have your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: Your party wins over the centaur; it willingly joins your party as a friendly NPC, at least for a little while.

Success: It shares local knowledge to help your party, but little more.

Failure: Your party does not impress the centaur. It remains aloof and goes on its way.

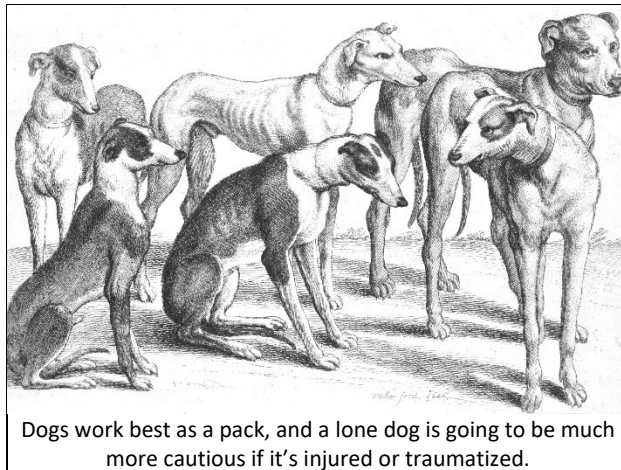
Critical Failure: Whatever your party says, it infuriates the centaur. It attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: It is up to you whether or not to scale up an encounter with centaurs. They are most often encountered alone, it is possible that as many as three or four centaurs might have split off from their tribe as a group. You may use an encounter group

consisting of 1d4 centaurs if your party's average level is lower than 10. If your party's average level is 10 or higher make them elite centaurs.

Treasure: Centaurs carry their valuables with them. Use the guidelines for pocket change in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value of their possessions.

Dog (B1). Your party comes across one hunting dog that has, evidently, slipped its leash. It may be anxious because it's separated from its pack and its master, or it may be perfectly content to wander on its own. Either way, it's conditioned to attack. If your party approaches it, have them make a DC 15 Nature check. If it fails, someone has made a false move, and it charges the nearest character.



It's an aggressive dog. But on the other hand, the fact that it's a hunting dog means that it belongs to someone. That someone probably lives in the area, and is probably a person of substance (i.e., someone who can afford to keep hunting dogs). Returning the lost dog could lead to a hefty reward.

Treat the hunting dog as an elite guard dog.

Bad Dog!

An encounter with a rabid dog is an idea lifted from *Found by the Way #9: Path to the Paladin Queen's Forest*. It seemed like an interesting niche encounter, but one that was bound to be unique — the royal forest is not overrun with rabid lost hunting dogs. The module suggests ignoring it if rolled again.

Similarly, this encounter receives a fairly low probability of occurring here — although, if your campaign world really is overrun with rabid dogs, feel free to change that.

If you want to make the encounter downright vicious, consider that the dog is rabid. You may have your party make a DC 15 Perception check to notice that it is foaming at the mouth, but there is no way to dissuade it from attacking the nearest character. If a rabid dog inflicts damage, use the rules covering rabies in the core rules to determine what happens next.

Even if you could subdue it somehow, a rabid hunting dog dies of the disease before you can return it to its owner. And, come to think of it, who would want a rabid dog returned to them, anyway?

Dragon (B1). Your party notices a large shape — almost large enough to blot out the sun — circling in the sky. It's a dragon on the prowl. To determine what kind of dragon roll on Table 3.3.1:

TABLE 3.3.1

Dragon – Forest

d12	ENCOUNTER
1	Black
2	Blue
3-5	Green
6	Red
7	White
8	Brass
9	Bronze
10	Copper
11	Gold
12	Silver

To determine its age, see *Scaling the Encounter*.

To be clear, this need not be a hostile encounter. The dragon is not defending its lair, so it may just be curious about your party. It may have more important things to do and decline to take notice of them at all. Or it may be hungry and on the hunt, or it's angry because your party has intruded on territory it claims as its own.

Scaling the Encounter: Because dragons get tougher with age, the age of the dragon encountered should depend on your party's average level — especially if this is going to be a hostile encounter. If your party's average level is lower than 11, they encounter a young dragon. If their average level is 11-15, they encounter an adult dragon. If their average level is higher than 15, they encounter an ancient dragon.

Dweomercat (B2). Before your party actually notices the dweomercat prowling nearby, any spell or effect that detects the presence of magic notifies them that something unusual is happening in the vicinity. If your party carries magic items or has ongoing enchantments cast on them, the dweomercat approaches them out of curiosity, sniffing at their magical auras as it goes. Ultimately, its goal is to feed on your party and absorb their primal energy.

However, it may be dissuaded from attacking by convincing it that prey with greater magical energy may be found elsewhere. This requires a successful DC 20 Deception or Diplomacy check. They may also try to bribe the dweomercat into leaving alone through the gift of a magic item. You may require your party to make a successful Diplomacy check, with the DC depending on the value of their offering. If the dweomercat attacks, distracting it by throwing it a magic item as if it was a chew toy might give them the chance to escape. This should require an Arcana check with the DC depending on the value of their offering.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party’s average level is 5-6, use a weak dweomercat for the encounter. If your party’s average level is higher than 10, use a pack of one elite dweomercat for each multiple of 11 in your party’s average level for the encounter group.

Eagles (B1). Roll on Table 3.3.2 to determine if your party is fortunate enough to be spotted by a giant eagle, or they come across ordinary eagles hunting for small animals:

TABLE 3.3.2	
Eagles – Forest	
d4	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Eagles
4	Giant Eagles

Eagles. Your party notices a convocation of 2d8 eagles wheeling above the tree line. If your party has a small animal kept as a pet or familiar, or food (travelers rations qualify) kept exposed, have the eagles make a DC 15 Perception check. If they succeed, they dive and try to snatch it up, attacking anyone who gets in their way.

Giant Eagle. On the other hand, your party may have the good fortune to enter territory patrolled by a giant eagle. If your party has predominantly good ➤

characters (or at least, no evil characters), the giant eagle follows it to the limit of its domain, providing a sort of combat air patrol for your party. If your party hails it (remember, giant eagles only understand Auran and Sylvan), it responds. Convincing it to do your party a service requires a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check. Unless your party consists entirely of good characters, a critical success is needed to gain its full cooperation.

Alternately, if you want to provide your party with a sidequest, the giant eagle tries to enlist them in dealing with some evil humanoids in its territory.

However, since it cannot speak, have your party make a DC 15 Nature check. If successful, that character understands that it wants them to follow it. Critical success indicates an educated guess that it wants help dealing with enemies.

Elephant (B1, B2). Your party comes across one elephant. It is always the case with elephants in the wild that avoiding a stampede requires some care. If your party wants to avoid a hostile encounter, require a DC 15 Survival or Nature check. If it fails someone makes a false move, triggering an attack.

Roll on Table 3.3.3 to determine the type of elephant encountered:

TABLE 3.3.3	
Elephant – Forest	
d8	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Mammoth (B1)
3	Anancus (B2)
4	Mastodon (B2)
5-8	Elephant (B1)

+1 to die roll if in a temperate forest
+2 to the die roll if in a tropical forest

Mammoth/Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is lower than 8, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party’s average level is 8-9, use one weak mammoth for the encounter. Otherwise, use a herd of one mammoth for each multiple of 10 in your party’s average level as the encounter group.

Anancus/Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is lower than 6, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party’s average level is 6-7, use ➤

one weak anancus for the encounter. Otherwise, use a herd of one anancus for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level as the encounter group.

Mastodon/Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 7, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 7-8, use one weak mastodon for the encounter. Otherwise, use a herd of one mastodon for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level as the encounter group.

Elephant/Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use one weak elephant for the encounter. Otherwise, use a herd of one elephant for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level as the encounter group.

Faerie Dragon (B1). A faerie dragon spots your party from its lair in the hollow of a tree. You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to notice some trinkets glistening from just inside the hollow, or that the undergrowth around the tree looks like it has been trimmed and sculpted. If they make nothing of it, the faerie dragon waits until they pass and then uses its euphoric breath on them, watching in amusement as they stumble about. Or it uses one of its spells to fool or dazzle your party and giggle at their discomfiture.

The rest is up to your party. As far as the faerie dragon is concerned, this is all just a bit of harmless fun. If your party responds by attacking it, it flees, using its abilities now to discourage pursuit. However, if your party takes this prank in the spirit in which it is given, the faerie dragon feels like it has found friends on whom it can play jokes with no offense taken, and it expresses its willingness to do them a service, or perhaps even join them as a friendly NPC.

Treasure: A faerie dragon is bound to keep some valuable objects in its lair. Use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value.

Fey (B1, B2, B3). Unlike the malicious fey described above, most fey creatures mean no harm. But they have agendas of their own that can work at cross-purposes with adventurers pursuing fortune and glory. To determine which fey creature your party comes across, roll on Table 3.3.4:

TABLE 3.3.4

Fey – Forest

d12	ENCOUNTER
1	Brownie
2	Harmona
3	Huldra
4	Korred
5	Leprechaun
6-7	Nymph, Dryad
8	Satyr
9-11	Sprite
12	Unicorn

Brownie (B2). Brownies are more commonly found in inhabited areas, but finding them in the wilderness is not unknown. For instance, if they lived in a community that met with disaster, they may have no choice to wander. One ragged-looking brownie in difficult straits tracks and spots your party. It waits for them to make a rest halt, at which point it tries to filch what it needs. If it's hungry, it takes all rations from one party member. If it's sick or injured, it looks for a *healing potion*. Have it make a Stealth check against the your party's highest Perception DC; or if it's night, against the highest Perception DC among those keeping watch.

If it succeeds, it takes what it wants without your party noticing. But it leaves behind something of greater value in return — a gemstone, or perhaps a *shortsword* +1. If it fails and your party catches it in the act, it is up to you as GM whether it flees or tries to plead its case.

Harmona (B3). Your party gets a rare glimpse of one of these powerful, but elusive fey. If they can figure out how to get its attention and win it over, it can provide them with helpful knowledge. Perhaps it even travels with them for a while as a friendly NPC. If someone in your party speaks Sylvan, you may have them make a DC 20 Diplomacy check (in addition to luring it with sweets) to convince the harmona to help them:

Critical Success: It is willing to travel with them as their long-term companion.

Success: It is willing to use its *detect magic* spell on their behalf and share local knowledge.

Failure: It flies off, refusing to help your party. ➤

Critical Failure: It takes such offense at whatever your party did or said that it might just attack them.

Scaling the Encounter: It's easy enough to avoid a hostile encounter with a harmona; just leave it alone. In that sense, your party's relative level should not matter. On the other hand, if your party wins over a harmona as an ally, it could make such short work of encounters that are properly scaled for a low-level party so that it steals their thunder. In this sense, you might want to re-roll for a different fey encounter if your party's average level is lower than 9, or use one weak harmona if their average level is 9-10. On the other hand, having such a capable ally might allow your party to defeat an enemy that would just be too difficult to handle without it.

Huldra (B3). Your party may find it startling to meet a lone woman in simple garb alone here in the wilderness without any sign of physical distress. If they think this is odd, wait until she turns her back to them and they see the cow's tail sticking out from under the hem of her skirt. Huldras are suspicious of strangers, but not necessarily hostile. It all depends on how the party behaves and appears. As a guardian of the forest she has to make a judgment on whether or not they mean harm to her territory. However, you may also allow your party to negotiate for the huldra's aid by making a DC 15 Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: She is willing to use her Manipulate Luck ability to help them.

Success: She is willing to share local knowledge.

Failure: She is not impressed with them. She turns her back and bids them, "Good day."

Critical Failure: She becomes angry or suspicious enough that she might attack.

Korred (B2). Your party comes upon a small mound that houses a cluster of rocks and one korred that makes its lair among them. It pops up from among the rocks and calls out to them to get off of his lawn and leave it alone. You may allow your party a DC 20 Diplomacy check to defuse the situation:

Critical Success: They win over the korred and it is willing to share resources or local knowledge.

Success: It remains wary. It snaps at your party, warning them to leave it alone, but it does not attack.

Failure: It attacks with its Hair Snare ability to ➤

incapacitate them or, failing that, it uses its Stone Stride ability to escape.

Critical Failure: It becomes angry enough to use lethal force.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak korred for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one korred for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute two elite korreds for three korreds.

Leprechaun (B2). One leprechaun taking its ease in the forest brightens at your party's approach. From its point of view, it's a chance to indulge in a harmless bit of fun to ease its boredom. Your party, however, may consider that they have been conned.

The details of the trick is left to you as GM, but a typical con goes like this: The leprechaun notices it a valuable item that someone in your party carries. It offers to exchange something of much greater value — a pot full of gp, for instance — for that item, with the catch being that the leprechaun has to lead them to it. When it feels that your party has let their guard down, it tries to distract them, steal the item, cast *invisibility* on itself, and escape. As a general rule, however, the leprechaun reappears after having a good laugh at their distress and returns the item, expecting that they will laugh along with it.

Scaling the Encounter: Leprechauns generally work alone, as it seems to be easier to gain victims' trust that way. However, you may use an encounter group of one elite leprechaun for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level, with a team of leprechauns creating multiple distractions while they filch a valuable item.

Nymph, Dryad (B1). Your party passes a tree inhabited by a dryad. If it suspects that your party means harm to the forest, it emerges from cover and confronts them, rather ironically breaking a branch from the tree to use as a bludgeon. It is then up to your party to convince it that they mean no harm if they want to avoid a hostile encounter. You may require a DC 15 Diplomacy check if you wish. Alternately, if you want to provide your party with a sidequest, the dryad tries to enlist them in defending the forest from a threat, whether it is a destructive monster, evil humanoids, or incursions from loggers or hunters.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 6-10, consider using use an elite dryad for the ➤

encounter. If your party's average level is 11-12, consider using a weak dryad queen (B1). If your party's average level is higher than 16, use an elite dryad queen.

Satyr (B1). Your party comes upon one bored satyr looking to party. Everyone hears a melody created by its Play the Pipes ability, set to either *charm* or *suggestion*, coming from the trees. Anyone affected by it forgets his or her purpose and joins the satyr, who now emerges into view, in dancing and reveling to the exclusion of any other activity.

If anyone in your party turns hostile, the satyr continues to play, but switches to either *fear* or *sleep* to give it the opportunity to retreat.

Sprites (B1, B3). Sprites are the quintessential fey creatures because of their diminutive size and their penchant for (mostly) harmless mischief. However, they do come in different varieties with some subtle differences between them. Roll on Table 3.3.5.1 to determine the manner of sprite that your party encounters:

TABLE 3.3.4.1

Sprites – Forest

d10	ENCOUNTER
1	Draxie (B3)
2-3	Grig (B1)
4	Melixie (B3)
5	Nyxtera (B3)
6-7	Pixie (b1)
8-10	Sprite (B1)

As a general rule, an encounter with a sprites involves them using their Innate Spells to trick your party for the sprites' own amusement. As minor exceptions to this rule, sprites may use their Luminous Fire ability to spark your party's curiosity and lead them on a wild goose chase, while pixies may use their pixie dust and draxies their breath weapon to beguile your party.

It is also worth noting that nykteras are less fun-loving than other sprites, and more righteous, though in a slightly warped sort of way. You may have your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check in dealing with them: ➤

Critical Success: The nykteras take a liking to your party. They offer to use their innate *heal* spells to help them.

Success: They offer protection while your party rests — and also food, which means sharing the staples of their diet, which parallels the diet of bats. Refusal of such an offer may set off their Wrath of Spurned Hospitality ability.

Failure: They remain suspicious of your party and ask them to leave.

Critical Failure: Was it something your party said? The nykteras attack.

Scaling the Encounter: Scaling an encounter with sprites just right is not a crucial matter, since they're not attacking your party to kill them. However, an encounter group of 1d4 if your party's average level is 1, or one elite of that kind for each level in your party's average level makes sense for sprites and nykteras. For melixies, use an encounter group of 1d4 if your party's average level is lower than 5; if your party's average level is 5 or higher use an encounter group of one elite melixie for each level in your party's average level. For grigs, use an encounter group of one for each level in your party's average level, and you may freely substitute one elite grig for three grigs. You may use one draxie or one pixie for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level, or one elite of that kind for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Unicorn (B1). One of these legendary beasts has staked out an unsullied corner of the forest for itself and defends the place's sanctity against all comers. It uses its innate spell casting to *detect alignment (good)*, and it makes a mental note of the results. However, even good characters who appear to be harming the forest in some way — chopping down a tree, or starting a campfire — rouse its suspicion.

A successful DC 15 Nature check by a good character who tries to interact with it, or a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check by anyone, helps turn the unicorn to your party's side:

Critical Success: The unicorn offers to help your party with its Innate Spells.

Success: Your party persuades it to help them with ➤

simpler things, like information about the local area or allowing them to rest in its domain, under its protection.

Failure: The unicorn refuses to aid your party.

Critical Failure: Something has gone so terribly wrong that the unicorn attacks. If killing a unicorn is a horrific act in your campaign world, then your party will just have to deal with the consequences.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 6, use one elite unicorn for the encounter.

Fox (B3). Foxes restrict their predation to small animals and insects, so they're not much of a danger to an adventuring party. However, they are sly creatures and a party camping for the night or taking a rest halt may lose something useful to them. A pack of 1d6 red foxes sniffs out that your party has something that they want — it may be an animal familiar small enough to eat, traveler's rations, medicinal herbs, or even just a shiny and attractive object. Have them make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC as they try to infiltrate their camp:

Critical Success: The foxes get in and out without your party noticing at all.

Success: They succeed in stealing something, but your party notices them on the way out.

Failure: Your party notices them before they can snag anything.

Critical Failure: Your party notices them before they can even approach.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3 use one elite red fox for the encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use one fading fox (B3). If your party's average level is higher than 5, use a pack of one fading fox for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Hyena (B1). Your party comes across a lone hyena scavenging a carcass. It looks up at them as they pass, instinctively concerned that something has come to steal the food source that it found fair and square. You may require a DC 15 Nature or Survival check if your party wishes to avoid a confrontation. If it fails, someone makes a false move that sets off the hyena.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one hyena for each level in your party's average level.

You may freely substitute one elite hyena for three hyenas. You may also freely substitute one hyaenodon (B1) for three hyenas and one elite hyaenodon for four hyenas.

Leshy (B1, B2, B3). The deep forest is as natural a home as these intelligent and ambulatory plants will find anywhere. Forests can maintain a diverse population of leshys, so it's not at all unusual to find a mixed group. See below for suggestions on determining the encounter group.

Despite the fact that they can move about, leshys do not wander. If you encounter them, it is because you have stumbled into a corner of the forest they have determined to defend. You may require that your party make a successful DC 15 Nature or Perception check to realize that what looks like jumbled ground cover has appendages and pairs of eyes that follow them. Leshys are not necessarily hostile; how they respond to your party depends on whether or they sense that your party is a threat to them and their home. If you wish, you may have your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check in dealing with the leshys:

Forest Nuisances

As a general rule, encounters with fey creatures from Table 3.3.4 are more about annoyance and flavor than anything else. Even if your players get a kick out of slaughtering sprites or kicking a satyr in the pan pipes, fey are not designed to put up a fight. Their special abilities do not mask predatory intent. They're about the entertainment value of a situation that creates hindrance without much hazard, and how do your players cope with that? If you don't want that sort of action in your campaign, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter.

Critical Success: The leshys like your party and let them rest here. If your party is attacked (by a pursuer, for instance), they fight alongside them as friendly NPCs.

Success: The leshys like your party well enough. They agree to help your party by using their *speak with plants* spell to glean useful knowledge from some trees who have lived here for a long time. They allow your party to stay here for one rest period, but no more.

Failure: The leshys makes a noise that ought to be interpreted as skepticism. They tell your party to move along.

Critical Failure: Whatever your party said or did, the leshys interpret it as hostile. They attack.

Scaling the Encounter: As trees and ground cover happily share the forest, so do different types of leshy. Construct the encounter group as you please, or according to the type of plant life that dominates in that particular area. Use one leaf leshy (B1) or vine leshy (B3) for each level in your party's average level, and you may freely substitute one elite leshy for three normal leshys. Also, you may freely substitute one flytrap leshy (B2) for 10 leaf and/or vine leshys.

Lizards (B1). While some lizards grow big enough to pose a threat, it's not certain (or perhaps even likely) that they will attack your party. Even giant lizards are content to feed on small animals. It may come down to whether or not they feel threatened, or if they have fed recently. Roll on Table 3.3.5 to determine the oversized lizard that your party encounters:

TABLE 3.3.5

Lizard – Forest

d4	ENCOUNTER
1-4	Gecko
5	Frilled Lizard
6	Monitor Lizard

+2 to the die roll if in a tropical forest

Gecko. Use the giant gecko as a catch-all for big lizards that your party might find climbing up or down a tree trunk. It's minding its own business for the most part. You may require your party to make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone in your party makes a false move that triggers an attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite giant gecko for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite giant chameleon (B2) for two elite giant geckos.

Frilled Lizard. When they are in a mood to hunt, giant frilled lizards are fearsome predators because of their size and strength. However, when they are not hungry it's not hard to deter them from attacking. If you party wishes to avoid an aggressive encounter, have them make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check:

Critical Success: They actually frighten off the lizard.

Success: The lizard isn't hungry and can't be bothered to attack.

Failure: They have succeeded in mildly irritating ►

the lizard. Have them make another skill check to determine the final result. Any degree of failure on this second check indicates a lizard attack.

Critical Failure: They have antagonized the lizard into attacking.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak giant frilled lizard for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use one elite giant frilled lizard.

Monitor Lizard. Monitor lizards eat voraciously, but all the same it's possible to deter them from attacking. If you party wishes to avoid an aggressive encounter, have them make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it succeeds, the monitor lizard ignores them. If it fails, the monitor lizard attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one elite giant monitor lizard for the encounter.

Opossum (B3). Opossums of normal size do not make an encounter of note, but when they grow big enough, they might. Normal opossums shy away from larger creatures, but giant opossums fight back if they feel threatened and they're large enough so that their claws leave a mark. Your party comes upon one giant opossum, either scampering across the forest floor or hanging from a tree branch sturdy enough to support its weight. You may have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone has made a false move that sets off the opossum and causes it to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a pack of one giant opossum for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level as the encounter group. You may freely substitute one khavgodon (B3) for four opossums.

Porcupine (B3). Porcupines are neither aggressive nor predatory and what armament they do have is mostly defensive in nature. However, giant porcupines are confident enough in their size that they can charge a creature perceived as a threat and force it to deal with the weapons it possesses. Your party comes across one of these giant porcupines as it scuttles across the forest floor or browses in the undergrowth. Have them make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that sets off the porcupine and causes it to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: Porcupines are mostly solitary creatures, but they sometimes forage in groups,

especially in winter. If you want to create a more challenging encounter, use a prickle of one giant porcupine for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite giant porcupine for three giant porcupines.

Quetz Couatl (B2). As far as your party goes, an encounter with a quetz couatl is probably best understood as a chance to help your party along when they're struggling. With its impressive size, spectacular coloration and ability to fly, its appearance is designed for a bit of divine intervention, and that's how you can use it. The quetz couatl may be acting on behalf of a good-aligned deity followed by a party member, or it may be following them of its own accord, waiting to step in when they seem to be at a dead end.

This assumes that your party is good-aligned or, at worst (from the quetz couatl's point of view) lawful neutral. If your party is predominantly evil, it may choose to hinder them instead. Perhaps it steps in to defend good-aligned creatures from your party.

Rats (B1). You find rats everywhere they can find food. 1d4 giant rats sniff out your party's food rations as they cross paths with each other, most likely when your party takes a rest stop among the trees and provides a stationary target. They don't attack party members who don't interfere with their basic mission of acquiring food. But unless they are stopped, they eventually account for all of your party's rations, making off with what they don't eat on the spot.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3, use one rat swarm (B1) for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite rat swarm for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.



Ravens are highly clever and are perfectly capable of luring a party off course with their repertoire of sounds.

Raven (B1). Ravens are not particularly dangerous, but they are natural mimics. Your party hears a noise that is

easily mistaken for something that demands attention — perhaps it sounds like a child's cries, a scream of distress, or noises made by a predator. If they investigate — and it's ultimately up to you as GM how far out of their way this takes them — they find it is a raven, nothing more.

Rhinoceros (B2). Your party interrupts one rhinoceros as it grazes on ground cover. If they're in a temperate or tropical forest, it's a rhinoceros; if they're in a boreal forest it's a woolly rhinoceros (B2). It is not aggressive — as a herbivore, it does not hunt for food. But if it feels threatened it becomes a dangerous foe. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that the rhinoceros interprets as a threat. It charges.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use one weak rhinoceros for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use a herd of one rhinoceros for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

For woolly rhinoceros, use a weak normal rhinoceros with the Cold Adaptation ability if your party's average level is lower than 4. If your party's average level is 4-5, use one weak woolly rhinoceros for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use a herd of one woolly rhinoceros for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

Skunk (B3). Your party stumbles upon a skunk lurking in the undergrowth. Have them make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that sets off the skunk and it directs its Spray Musk ability at the nearest party member.

Scaling the Encounter: Skunks are solitary creatures. If you wish to make the encounter more challenging (and stinkier) use an elite skunk for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 2, use one elite giant skunk (B3).

Sloth (B3). Your party comes across one three-toed sloth hanging from a branch low enough so that a medium-sized creature can reach it (and conversely, the sloth can reach down to the creature). Tree sloths are not aggressive, but they are wild animals and therefore capable of interpreting even benign actions as a threat. Have your party make a DC 10 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that inspires the sloth to make a rare attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If you want to make the encounter more of a challenge, use one elite three-toed sloth. If your party's average level is 3-4, you may use a weak megatherium (B3). If your party's average level is 5-8 use a normal megatherium. If your party's average level is

higher than 8 use one elite megatherium. Megatheriums are territorial and they will fight a perceived threat by an intruder, so set the DC for avoiding an attack to 15.

Weasels (B3). Someone at the front of your party's formation accidentally steps into a burrow housing enough weasels to cause trouble when they get angry and defend their home. You may allow your party a DC 10 Perception or Survival check to spot the burrow in time to avoid it or give warning to whomever is about to disturb it. The burrow houses a pack of 1d6 weasels.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish to make the encounter more challenging, use an encounter group of one elite weasel for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one megalictis (B3) for four elite giant weasels, or one elite megalictis for six elite giant weasels.

Treasure: There is a 10% chance that they are actually mink, and their pelts would be of some value to furriers — 1 gp for normal-sized mink, and 3 gp for a megalictis. You may require a successful DC 15 Nature check for your party to tell the difference between mink and weasels.



Monkeys. They want your stuff.

Monkey (B3). Monkeys are not incapable of aggression, but to larger creatures they are generally agents of mischief rather than aggressors. They know that they can use their agility to steal what they want from humans

and humanoids. It could be food, or even just a shiny and attractive object. One monkey tries to sneak up on your party while they camp for the night or take a rest halt. Have it make a Thievery check against your party's highest Perception DC:

Critical Success: The monkey gets in and out without your party noticing at all.

Success: It succeeds in stealing something, but your party notices it on the way out.

Failure: Your party notices it before it can snag anything.

Critical Failure: Your party notices it before it can even make a move.

Scaling the Encounter: If you want to create a more challenging encounter, use one elite monkey. If your party's average level is higher than 2, you may use a monkey swarm (B3) instead of a lone monkey, or an elite monkey swarm if your party's average level is higher than 5. It is hard, after all, to surpass the amusement value of a barrel full of monkeys.

Pangolin (B3). Pangolins have learned to be suspicious of humans and humanoids, since they have long been hunted for their scales as well as for food. When your party spots one giant pangolin tramping across the forest floor, it stops at the sight of them and assumes a defensive crouch. If your party wishes to avoid an attack, have them make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that sets off the pangolin and causes it to attack. If there are two or more party members within range of its Emit Musk ability the pangolin uses it, then uses its Roll Up ability if Emit Musk has no effect.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use one weak giant pangolin for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use one elite giant pangolin.

Gorilla (B1). Gorillas are not predatory, but they are intensely territorial. One gorilla considers your party an intruder, so it leaps down from the trees and makes a loud and angry display to establish its dominance. It does not fight unless attacked. However, you may have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that the gorilla interprets as a threat, which in turn causes it to attack.

Scaling the Encounter. Use a troop of one gorilla for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level as the encounter group. You may freely substitute one elite gorilla for two gorillas to keep the number of gorillas down and preserve the banana supply.

TABLE 3.4

Humanoids - Forest

d100	ENCOUNTER
1-11	Elves
12-16	Bugbear
17-20	Buso
21-24	Catfolk
25-27	Eunemvro
28-29	Giant
30-36	Gnoll
37-42	Gnomes
43-50	Goblins
51-54	Hag, Green
55-59	Hobgoblin
60-63	Kovintus
64-69	Ogre
70-77	Orc
78-81	Sabosan
82-85	Spriggan
86-89	Tengu
90-97	Werecreature
98-100	Boggard
101-103	Grippli
104-105	Serpentfolk

+5 to the die roll if in a tropical forest.

Elves. If there is a substantial elven population in this forest, crossing paths with some of them should come as no surprise, even if it comes without warning. Your party encounters a group of elves from a nearby elven community. A wide range of plausible possibilities covers their reason for being here. Perhaps they are just hunting or gathering. Perhaps they're patrolling, on the lookout for possible threats to their community. Perhaps they're a war party, acting on information that a hostile group of one of their traditional enemies, like orcs, is about. Perhaps they are pursuing a criminal, or looking for one of their own who has gone missing. Much should depend on what else is going on in this corner of your campaign world. Make it fit as closely as you like.

How the elves react to your party depends a lot on their mission and your party's composition. Obviously, a party with elves in it is more likely than not to receive friendly treatment. Conversely, they regard a party with traditional enemies of the elves with suspicion or even hostility. However, if your party establishes a rapport with this group, they may be willing to provide local lore. They may even ask for your party's help with their mission.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one elf poacher for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite elf poacher or two elf trackers for three elf poachers to keep down the size of the group. You may also substitute one elf hunter or priest for three elf poachers as the group's leader.

Bugbear (B1). Bugbears make their lairs in the deep forest, where they can come and go unseen. So it is not terribly remarkable that your party crosses paths with one. It may be on its way to terrorize settled areas outside the forest, or it may be stalking hunters, trappers or woodsmen. Forest elves are less popular targets, as they seem to scare less easily than humans, but bugbears also prey on elven settlements. Now that it has come upon your party, however, they look like as good a target as any. On the other hand, if it is unfamiliar with the area, it may try to coerce your party into sharing local knowledge.

Depending on the bugbear's motivations in this situation, you may have it make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds, it gets to use its Bushwhack ability against a party member.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one bugbear thug for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite bugbear thug or two bugbear tormentors for three bugbear thugs to keep down the size of the group.

Treasure: If more than one bugbear is present, you may decide that your party has stumbled upon their lair in a small clearing. In that case, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of their group assets.

Buso (B3). Have your party make a DC 15 Perception check. If it succeeds, they notice the cyclopean eye of a buso farmer peeking at them from the foliage of a nearby tree. If they fail, the buso gets the drop on them. It sees your party as food. It starts by throwing its javelins at them, then jumps down from the tree to finish them off.

Scaling the Encounter: If you want to run a more challenging encounter, use an encounter group of one buso farmer for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Catfolk (B1). Your party encounters one catfolk pouncer possessed with wanderlust and traveling the world, as is the habit with amurrans. Either their paths literally cross, or it hails them with a friendly greeting while lounging under a tree. It is eager to know what your party is doing here, but it has no ulterior motive than pure curiosity. It freely shares whatever knowledge it has.

A catfolk pouncer may make a useful NPC in the sort of encounters that low-level parties are likely to face. You may require your party to make a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check to convince it to travel a while in their company and share in the adventure. However, if your party is predominantly evil, a critical success is required.

Scaling the Encounter: The farther from catfolk's tropical homelands, the more likely you will find them traveling alone. If this encounter happens in a tropical forest, use an encounter group of 1d4 catfolk pouncers; otherwise, there is only one. If you want to raise the level of the encounter to make it worth the while of a higher-level party, use elite catfolk pouncers.

Eunemvro (B3). If your party comes upon one of these odd, extraplanar humanoids it is a good bet that there are undead nearby. Destroying undead is the main — if not sole — focus of eunemvro's existence, and this one is pursuing a lead on a group of undead creatures or a powerful undead, like a lich. Eunemvro are aloof and it rarely occurs to them to ask strangers for help, so it's not a given that it offers your party a sidequest to come along with it. In fact, it becomes hostile if it suspects that your party harbors someone who practices necromancy. However, it may be persuaded to accompany your party for a while if destroying undead are involved; you may require a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check.

Scaling the Encounter: If you suspect that the encounter will turn hostile, use a weak eunemvro for the encounter if your party's average level is lower than 5. Conversely, if your party's average level is higher than 8, use an encounter group of one elite eunemvro for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level.

Giant (B1, B2). Roll on Table 3.4.1 to determine the type of giant that your party encounters in the forest:

TABLE 3.4.1
Giant – Forest

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Taiga Giant
3	Hill Giant
4-8	Wood Giant

+1 to the die roll if in a temperate forest
+2 to the die roll if in a tropical forest

Taiga Giant (B2). Taiga giants roam boreal forests as well as the tundra. They feed on wild herd animals, but they also make no apology when taking livestock from farmers and herders. Your party crosses paths with one taiga giant. It has no particular interest in ►

attacking them, but it also refuses to let anyone stand in the way of what it wants to do.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 10, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 10-11, use one weak taiga giant for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 15, use one elite taiga giant for each multiple of 16 in your party's average level.

Hill Giant (B1). Hill giants sometimes come down from their lairs in nearby hills and mountains to raid settlements and rob other targets of opportunity. One hill giant spots your party as just such a target of opportunity until convinced otherwise.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use one weak hill giant for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use one elite hill giant for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Wood Giant (B2). If you didn't know any better, you might mistake a wood giant for an oversized fey creature. They share the commitment of many fey to preserve and defend forests from harm. It does not attack your party unless it believes them to be a menace to its home territory.

However, you may have your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check to see how the wood giant reacts (although you may reduce the DC to 10 for druids and rangers):

Critical Success: The wood giant takes you for a friend of the forest. It is willing to accompany you as a friendly NPC as long as it does not leave its territory.

Success: The giant is willing to use its *Speak with plants* and *Speak with animals* spells to help your party, as well as share resources and local knowledge.

Failure: The giant remains suspicious of your party. It refuses to help them.

Critical Failure: Somehow, whatever your party says or does just makes things worse. The giant attacks them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 3, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use one weak wood giant for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use one elite wood ►

giant for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Gnolls (B1). Your party crosses paths with one gnoll hunter picking its way through the forest. It's scouting for settlements with anything worth taking, or looking for isolated woodsmen or trappers to victimize. Keeping that in mind, it probably has more important things to do than hassle your party. However, it's quite possible that it will bully them for useful information and if it senses weakness it might even attack them despite being outnumbered.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak gnoll hunter for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one gnoll hunter for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may substitute one elite gnoll cultist and/or one gnoll sergeant for two gnoll hunters as the group's leaders. If you want to keep down the size of the encounter, you may freely substitute one elite gnoll hunter for two gnoll hunters.

If the gnoll group is relatively large this may be an actual raiding party. They may be on their way back from a successful raid, spattered with blood and taking with them captives whom they will sacrifice to their demon god. In either case, they ignore your party if your party declines to interfere with them, guided as they are by their primary purpose.

Treasure: If the gnolls are coming back from a successful raid, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the fruits of their labor.

Gnomes. Your party crosses paths with a small party of gnomes. They may be traders traveling between elven settlements, in which case the encounter group consists of 2d6 merchants and one guard for protection. Or they may be freelance mechanics who travel between settlements, looking to sell their services, in which case the encounter group consists of 2d4 apprentices accompanied by their master — use one smith as a stand-in for whatever you decide for their mechanical specialty. A third possibility is that they are traveling entertainers: 1d4 troubadours or a troupe of 1d4+2 acrobats.

The gnomes are not aggressive. It won't take much prompting to get them to trade with your party and share local knowledge. They probably hail from a gnome settlement elsewhere in the forest. They might even provide your party with a sidequest. As you can see, they travel with very little protection, so they might well ask your party to travel with them, the deep forest being more sinister than they'd thought. Perhaps they just had

a run-in with a monster that makes them particularly jumpy.

Treasure: If these gnomes are traveling merchants, they should carry trade goods and/or coins in addition to their pocket change. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Goblins (B1). Your party spots a group of 2d4 goblin warriors and it's likely that they're associated with a nearby lair — perhaps it is a clearing in the forest, or a small cave carved into a rise in the terrain. They may be patrolling their neighborhood, or they may be looking for raiding targets for their tribe. As small as they are, they're also mean and cocky. So it should come as no surprise when they treat your party as a target of opportunity.



Treasure can mean different things to different entities. Fairy tales are full of stories about golden locks of hair or songs or other ephemera holding value.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak goblin warriors. If your party's average level is 4-6, use an encounter group of 1d4 elite goblin warriors. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite goblin warrior for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one goblin commando (B1), goblin pyro (B1), or goblin dog (B1) for one elite goblin warrior or two goblin warriors. You may also substitute one goblin war chanter (B1) for one elite goblin warrior or two goblin warriors as the group's leader.

A large group of goblins is likely to be a raiding party on their way out. Or they may be a raiding party on their

way back, with loot and 1d6 human and/or humanoid captives. Consider that there is a 5% chance that any given captive is someone of consequence, who could provide your party with a significant reward for their safe return home. In either case, the encounter group has more important things to do than deal with your party. However, if your party finds a goblin lair, they fight to the death to defend it. In addition to the normal treasure found in the lair, there are 1d8 human and/or humanoid captives bound and eager for rescue

Treasure: If the encounter group is a returning raiding party, use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value.

Hag, Green (B1). Your party comes upon a boggy patch in the forest when it hears what sounds like the voice of a young woman crying for help. Upon inspection, they see her half-sunk into the mire, evidently struggling to get out. Unfortunately, it's really a green hag trying to lure them into a patch of quicksand-like bog. It looks forward to the pleasure of watching them struggle, then perish. If necessary, it will help the process along.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak green hag for the encounter. If your party's average level is 8-11, use one elite green hag. If your party's average level is higher than 11, use a coven of three green hags for the encounter group.

Treasure: This bog is the hag's lair, and it keeps trophies from its previous victims here. Use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value.

Hobgoblins (B1). Your party comes across a lone hobgoblin soldier. It may be patrolling the area near its lair — a heavily guarded clearing or a small stockade situated on barren, elevated ground — or it may be a courier shuttling back and forth between other hobgoblin settlements. If war is brewing in this corner of the world, hobgoblin mercenaries ought to have plenty of business. A sentry would want to know your party's business in being here, but otherwise it probably has more important business than attacking your party.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one hobgoblin soldier for each level in your party's average level. You may substitute one goblin dog (B1) for one hobgoblin soldier as long as goblin dogs do not outnumber hobgoblins. Also, you may freely substitute one elite hobgoblin soldier or one hobgoblin archer (B1) for four hobgoblin soldiers. You may substitute one hobgoblin general (B1) for six hobgoblin soldiers as the group's leader.

A large group of hobgoblins indicates that the winds of war are brewing — although ultimately, that sort of thing

should be determined by what else is going on in your campaign world. Unless your party has stumbled upon the hobgoblin lair, a large hobgoblin encounter group would be a war party on their way to or from the war zone. They have more important business than attacking your party; in fact, they might even size them up and try to recruit them to fill out the ranks.

Kovintus (B3). Kovintus in the forest live in treehouses or hollowed-out boles of great trees. Your party meets one kovintus geomancer as it takes a recreational stroll through the deep woods; or perhaps it is on its way to leave an offering for a local deity. If your party wishes to speak with it, have them make a DC 15 Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: The kovintus is willing to share its maps and use its primal spells for their benefit.

Success: It shares its maps, but offers no more.

Failure: It is wary of your party and it does not agree to help them at all.

Critical Failure: Your party angers the kovintus to the point where it attacks them.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish, you may use an encounter group of one elite kovintus geomancer for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Ogre (B1). Your party spots one ogre warrior out scouting the forest for potential raiding targets on behalf of its tribe. It is brutish enough and sufficiently confident in its powers to try to take them captive, or kill them outright if they resist.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak ogre warrior for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one ogre for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite ogre warrior for two ogre warriors, or three ogre gluttons (B1) for four ogre warriors. You may also substitute one ogre boss (B1) or one onidoshi (B2) for two ogre warriors as the group's leader.

Orcs (B1). If there are orcs in a forest, it's reasonable bet (though it's not the only possibility) that they're looking for elves and they carry bad intentions with them. A small group could be a scout party out to get the lay of the land, while a larger group would be an actual raiding party on its way to — or on its way back from — its target.

Your party crosses paths with 1d6 orc brutes. They're most likely a scout party, although they may already have found a vulnerable target small enough for a band of this size to raid. As brutal as they are, there's no guarantee

that they'll pay your party much attention. Their leader may look your party over and decide that they're not worth the bother. But they may also decide to interrogate your party for information about the surrounding area, and they'll easily resort to violence if your party is slow to cooperate. They are less likely to give your party a break if there are elves in it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak orc brutes. If your party's average level is 4-5, use an encounter group of 1d6 orc brutes. If your party's average level is higher than 5 use an encounter group of one orc warrior (B1) for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite orc warrior for two orc warriors. You may also substitute one orc warchief (B1) for one orc warrior as the group's leader.

Treasure: A large orc group is likely an actual raiding party, either headed to their target or on their way back from a successful attack. In the latter case, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of their plunder. Consider that there is also a 20% chance that the bandits have with them 1d4 captives. The identity of this captive is left to you as GM, as it should depend on local circumstances and fit into your campaign world.

Sabosan (B3). These horrific bat-humanoids prefer to hunt at night. So if you roll up this encounter during the day, you may want to save it for sunset or after dark. Or you can re-roll for another encounter; it's your call as GM. What is certain is that they feed voraciously on blood, and your party looks like it has enough to satisfy it. One sabosan emerges from the foliage of a nearby tree and makes a bee-line (or a bat-line, if you prefer) for the party formation.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak sabosan for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use an encounter group of one elite sabosan for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level.

Spriggan (B2). Your party has the misfortune to cross paths with one spriggan bully out hunting or foraging. However, it may be looking for tools of subterfuge rather than food — poisons or venomous animals, or it may be on its way to a meeting with a co-conspirator. These joyless mutant gnomes have malicious hearts, but they do not use violence without purpose. The spriggan bully regards your party with suspicion, but it need not attack them. It's playing a long game, and it might prefer to get useful information out of your party — or even try to enlist them as allies in a plot against another member of its tribe. Perhaps it wants to depose the current leader,

or perhaps it has a score to settle. Maybe it figures that your party can help, in exchange for sparing their lives.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one spriggan bully for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite spriggan bully for two spriggan bullies. You may also substitute one spriggan warlord for two spriggan bullies as the group's leader.

Tengu (B1). Given that these humanoid with crow-like features are widely distrusted, it's a safe bet that a tengu encountered in the wilderness is an outcast of some sort. Probably, it has been kicked out of a settlement on suspicion of being up to no good.

Your party crosses paths with one tengu sneak. It is not aggressive, but it may be desperate. So it resorts to the skills that got it into trouble in the first place. At your discretion, it flags down your party and strikes up a conversation, perhaps offering useful local knowledge to keep them distracted. You may have it make a Society check against the highest Intimidation DC in your party as it weighs the risks and rewards of trying to pick a pocket. Success indicates that it has decided to go for it — i.e., your party has failed to scare it off. It then targets the character with the lowest Intimidation DC.

Scaling the Encounter: It's almost unheard of to find a large group of tengu wandering the wilderness. However, if you want to create a more challenging encounter, use one elite tengu sneak for the encounter, or a group of one normal tengu sneak for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level. Half of them try to distract your party from the other half trying to pickpocket them.

Werecreature (B1, B2). To determine what manner of werebeast your party encounters, roll on Table 3.4.2:

TABLE 3.4.2	
Werecreature – Forest	
d8	ENCOUNTER
1	Werebear
2-3	Wereboar
4	Weretiger
5-8	Werewolf
All werecreatures assume their animal form if the encounter comes down to combat, although they may choose their hybrid form instead if they have access to a weapon.	
Werebear (B1). Your party comes across a ➤	

werebear that has claimed this corner of the forest as its domain. Perhaps it was once a druid, or a wandering ranger, or a hermit of some sort who volunteered for this fate to protect the forest. It is not automatically hostile to your party, especially if there are no evil characters present, and it may be willing to provide them with useful information about the surrounding area.

On the other hand, an encounter could create difficulties for your party if the werebear decides that one of the player characters would make a good apprentice (and successor to its self-appointed duties as the local guardian). Once it realizes that there is a druid or a ranger in your party, a light goes on in its head — and it won't take "No" for an answer.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 7, use an elite werebear for the encounter.

Treasure: Because they are territorial, your party may encounter a werebear in or near its lair. In that case, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of its treasure.

Wereboar (B2). A wereboar met by chance in the forest was most likely an unfortunate hunter who didn't realize that the boar at which he aimed his bow was really a lycanthrope. It goes about looking for victims to share its fate, hoping that a lone boar will lure an unwary hunter. A party of adventurers could offer it an even more attractive target — confident in its ability to take at least one of them and drive the others off, it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one wereboar for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite wereboar for three wereboars.

Weretiger (B2). Your party comes across a weretiger on the hunt, or just traveling from one place to another. If it's hungry, it may stalk and attack your party, though it is more likely to focus on driving off the party members and taking the pack animals than on hunting the party members themselves. Otherwise, it may assume human form and treat your party as fellow travelers, content to barter with them and exchange information about unknown places.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak weretiger for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use an encounter group of one elite weretiger for each ➤

multiple of 9 in your party's average level.

Werewolf (B1). A werewolf spots your party and cannot turn down the opportunity to claim more victims. However, it is clever enough to approach them in its human form, pretending to be a lost traveler, or a hunter or woodcutter in distress. Once your party gets close and drops its guard, it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak werewolf. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite werewolf for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Boggard (B1). It looks like an oversized frog walking on its hind legs — and wearing primitive armor — but it's really a boggard scout spying on your party from the rain forest's undergrowth. It's part of a small settlement of these vicious amphibian humanoids, and it's probably out foraging or on its way to spy on its neighbors. Marking down your party as unwelcome strangers, it tries to bully them into clearing off. Boggards that live in the jungle may be especially touchy; it is likely that they have emigrated from nearby wetlands (or been exiled from them) and they have yet to make themselves at home in the forest.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one boggard scout for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one boggard warrior for two boggard scouts; or one elite boggard scout for three boggard scouts; or one elite boggard warriors for six boggard scouts. You may also substitute one boggard swampseer for three boggard scouts or one elite boggard swampseer for eight boggard scouts as the group's leader.

Grippli (B2). The first glimpse that your party gets of one of these elusive gecko-like humanoids reveals little more than a pair of red-and-black eyes peering back at them through the foliage of a tree. It is a lone grippli scout, either patrolling the jungle or foraging for its community. Either way, it's suspicious of outsiders and protective of its community, which almost certainly lives nearby. You may use a DC 20 Diplomacy check to resolve the situation:

Critical Success: The grippli scout agrees to provide local knowledge. It also agrees to take your party to its settlement, where they may ask the elders for more aid.

Success: It agrees to provide local knowledge, but no more.

Failure: It will not attack, but it refuses to provide your party with any help and politely insists that they clear off.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline group of one gripli scout for each level in your party's average level. You may substitute one elite gripli scout for three gripli scouts. You may also substitute one giant dragonfly (B2) for four gripli scouts on the assumption that one especially gutsy gripli tamed it as its mount.

Serpentfolk (B2). If serpentfolk are part of your campaign world, consider that your party crosses paths with one representative of these rare but proud — some would say mad — humanoids. They meet one zyss serpentfolk out to bolster its settlement's workforce by capturing slaves. Even if it is outnumbered, the serpentfolk reckons that it can take a bunch of mere warmblooded humanoids.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one zyss serpentfolk for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute two aapoph serpentfolk or one elite zyss serpentfolk for three zyss serpentfolk; or one coil spy for two zyss serpentfolk; or one elite coil spy for four zyss serpentfolk. You may also substitute one bone prophet for four zyss serpentfolk as the group's leader.

TABLE 35
Humans - Forest

d20	ENCOUNTER
1	Adventurers
2-4	Bandits
5	Druid
6	Exiles
7	Explorers
8	Foresters
9	Fugitives
10-11	Gatherers
12	Hermit
13-15	Hunters
16-17	Trapper
18-20	Woodsman

Adventurers. Unless your party contains all of the adventurers in your campaign world, it's at least theoretically possible that they'll run into another adventuring party roaming this forest. Perhaps they're pursuing the same objective as your party. Perhaps they have a different mission, such as chasing down a rogue band of evil humanoids, or they're headed for a site that your party knows nothing about (like a dragon's lair or

ancient ruins said to hold lost treasures). Perhaps they're lost and starving, or wounded, or cursed.

How they react to your party depends on a variety of factors. Are they rivals pursuing the same goal? If not, perhaps this party is willing to share useful information. In fact, if your party is stuck and having a hard time advancing the storyline of your campaign, a friendly encounter like this can help steer them in the right direction. Differences in alignment may also shape how the two parties react to each other.

Composition of this adventuring party is up to you and can vary widely according to circumstance. A party plunging into the depths of a forest would be well-advised to have a ranger or a druid with them. An elf would also make sense as someone who knows forest lore. Conversely, a party that is struggling may be in a bad way precisely because it lacks the skill or knowledge that such characters possess.

Scaling the Encounter: Unless there is some possibility that this encounter turns hostile, the relative level of the party is mainly a matter of affect. A higher-level party might project self-confidence (or arrogance), while a beginning-level party might stumble about, unsure of themselves. If you're leaning towards a hostile encounter, however, consider that the total challenge level of the party should be your party's average level -2, more or less.

Bandits. A wilderness is not the most target-rich environment in which bandits can operate, but the forest offers them a place to hide. They may be able to get by picking on the locals, but doing so feels like scraping the bottom of the barrel to self-respecting brigands. In any event, an encounter with bandits in a sparsely inhabited forest likely means that your party finds them not far from their hiding place, and either on their way to or coming back from the nearest road or settled area (although a small group may simply be lookouts protecting the hideout).

They may not target your party, as adventurers are usually too well-armed and too hard to bully. But they'll make an exception if your party carries a conspicuous and obviously valuable treasure, or they outnumber your party by at least three to two. It's also possible that they assume that your party is a posse sent out after them — or that your party intends to rob them of what they took from others by force.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak bandits. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one bandit for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite bandit for two

bandits. You may also substitute one gang leader for three bandits as the group's leader.

Treasure: You may decide that your party has surprised the bandits in their lair. If so, use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value and contents. Do so also if you decide that the bandits encountered are on their way back from a successful raid. Consider that there is also a 20% chance that the bandits have with them a high-value captive whom they intend to ransom. The identity of this captive is left to you as GM, as it should depend on local circumstances and fit into your campaign world.

Druid. Your party crosses paths with one druid in his or her element. Druids in the wild may wander, with no fixed abode, but it's at least as likely that they choose to protect a patch of forest with fierce devotion. How druids react to your party depends almost entirely on whether or not they think your party represents a menace to the forest. A druid who is persuaded that your party's intentions are benign may be willing to provide local lore, cast spells to help them, or even join them as a friendly NPC as long as it does not involve leaving the forest.



Druids are influenced by the patch of forest they choose to defend.

Scaling the Encounter: Since there are no NPC templates for druids in the core rules, use a druid of your own design, or from another source. If you anticipate a hostile encounter, the druid's level should be equal to your party's level -2. If not, its level matters less as a matter of play balance, and it should fit whatever purpose you have in mind for the encounter.

Exiles. Your party encounters 1d6 humans or humanoids who could serve as a source of adventure hooks. From their appearance, they have obviously seen better days.

They have fled into the forest for any of a variety of reasons: perhaps they are royalty or nobility who have been usurped; perhaps the opposite is the case and they are failed usurpers on the run. Or perhaps they have gotten caught up in a blood feud in their homeland and that's why they fear for their lives. Whatever the circumstance, they have left their home for the deep forest because they need to hide.

No matter their reason for being here, they should offer your party an adventure hook of some sort. It may involve protecting the exiles from their real (or imagined) pursuers. It may involve returning to their former home and securing an important item that was left behind (a family heirloom, a badge of office), perhaps even helping them return home and force their way back into their former position of prominence. At the very least, exiles can provide your party with information about their former home territory, which in turn could be a key location in your campaign.

Use any NPC template you like for the exiles, depending on the backstory you assign them.

Explorers. Your party bumps into a small party driven by curiosity to discover the heretofore unknown — in this case, a forest wilderness mostly untouched by humans. The group consists of one chronicler and one guide, and 1d4 bodyguards. Perhaps they are here thanks to the sponsorship of an academy or a ruler eager to know more about the world, or perhaps the explorer is a wealthy eccentric who undertook this expedition on his or her own.

Foresters. Perhaps it turns out that this forest is owned by someone — it's royal land, or it belongs to local nobility. Your party comes across one forester, and what that person is doing here depends on which NPC template you choose to use. A poacher is a trespasser, here to hunt, or perhaps gather plants, without permission of the forest's owner. A tracker represents the other side of the law — an armed caretaker patrolling the forest on behalf of its owner, always on the alert for anyone who is not supposed to be there.

You may have your party make a DC 15 Perception check. If it succeeds, they spot the forester moving among the trees, glancing about, bow handy. If it fails, the forester is in a position to get the drop on them. It is likely that a tracker would demand to know who they are and that they state their business, while a poacher would be on edge about your party being out to catch trespassers. You may require a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check to defuse the situation, with critical failure setting off an attack.

Scaling the Encounter: Use an encounter group of one poacher for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level, or one forester for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level, depending on which option you choose. You may freely substitute one elite poacher for two poachers, or one elite forester for two foresters.

Fugitives. Your party crosses paths with 1d6 bedraggled humans or humanoids stumbling through the desert. They are unarmed, and they are barely clothed. At your discretion, they may have a manacle around one wrist, with the other manacle dangling on its chain. They're escaped prisoners who have fled into the deep forest. From whom they are fleeing and why they were imprisoned in the first place is up to you, and ought to depend on where in your campaign world this encounter takes place.

How the encounter plays out depends not only on how your party reacts, but on the state of mind you assign to the fugitives. On the one hand, it's hard to imagine that they went to the trouble of a jailbreak just to allow a bunch of strangers to take their freedom back from them. On the other hand, they might be desperate with thirst and ready to give up. Each of them has learned whip their freed manacle by the chain and wield it as a club.

Treat the fugitives as prisoners, but without weapons or armor.

Treasure: Fugitives have no treasure.

Gatherers. Your party comes across 1d4 gatherers collecting useful plants or fungi, either for food or medicine. Your party may surprise them, as they spend a lot of their time hunched over the forest floor or reaching up for leaves or tree fungi. They are not hostile — they're just laborers with specialized knowledge out doing their job. However, they may be persuaded to help your party with local lore and/or therapeutic concoctions made from whatever it is they're gathering (see *Treasure*). You may require a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check to win them over. They may also ask your party to help them if they have reason to believe that they are in danger — perhaps they had a close brush with monsters recently.

Treat the gatherers as farmers armed with sickles or daggers.

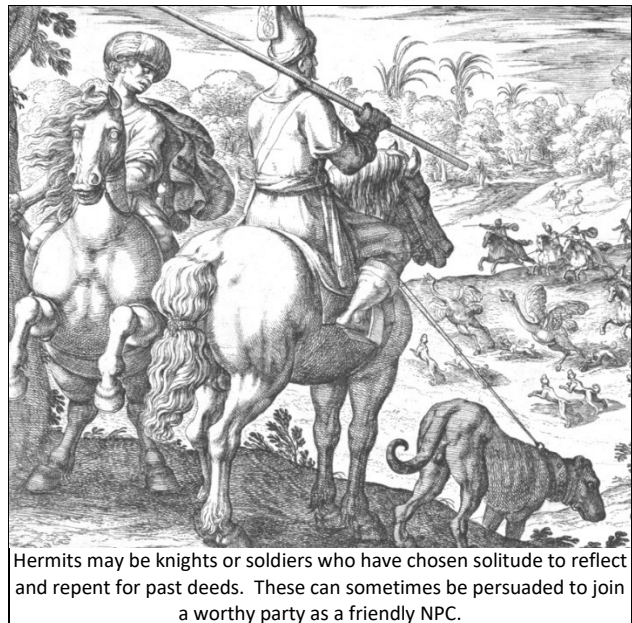
Treasure: In addition to treasure carried on their person (use the guidelines for pocket change in *How to Use This Book*), the gatherers have a small stash of helpful non-magical items made from herbs or fungi. One such item could be a poultice that heals hit points equal to the Medicine skill ranks of whomever applies it after it is kept in place for 24 hours. But that is just one possibility. Use

any such items that already exist in your campaign world. You can also consult "Narl's Herbal Remedies" in Ramen Sandwich Press' collection of new items, *Tome of the Utility Drawer, Volume I*.

Hermit. The deep forest is as good a destination as any for someone who has decided to withdraw from worldly cares, but that doesn't mean you can't be found. Your party stumbles upon a hermit in his or her abode — perhaps a bower in the lower limbs of a large tree, or a lean-to in a small clearing. One hermit lives here, devoted to a pure and simple life of contemplation. The hermit may be a divine spellcaster, for whom seclusion and meditation is a form of service to a deity. It may take a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check to get past the fact that your party has broken this seclusion, but the hermit may be willing to use divine spells to aid them.

Alternately, your party may have found a secular hermit — someone who, having been wounded by failure or grown weary of success, decided to retire completely from the world. Such a person won't have spells, but may have magic items, local lore, or even knowledge and personal connections from his or her former life that might help your party.

Yet another possibility is that this hermit is a retired adventurer or soldier, in the manner of knights in the Arthurian romances who became hermits to repent of lives spent fighting each other and dallying with married ladies. Hermits in this mold have discarded their fighting gear, but they may be persuaded to leave their seclusion and join your party as friendly NPCs.



Treat a religious hermit as a cultist, prophet or priest, but feel free to generate a higher-level divine spellcaster if you want to create a more spectacular effect with this

encounter. Treat a secular hermit as an NPC class of your choice, or use a character class and level of your choice. *Treasure:* Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine if the hermit has any magic items and/or valuable devotional items.

Hunter. Your party comes across one hunter picking his or her way through the trees, looking for game. The hunter may have set up a nearby encampment as a base of operations, but has probably come here from the nearest village or town.

Depending on your party's appearance, a hunter may act with caution, even suspicion at first. They understand that there are always strange folk about when you operate in a wilderness away from home. However, if your party is not hostile the hunter may be willing to help by trading goods and supplying food and local knowledge. You may have your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check to get on the hunter's good side.

Treat a hunter as an NPC from the forester class, with the size of the encounter group depending on which template you decide to use.

Scaling the Encounter: Use an encounter group of one forester for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one hunter or one elite foresters for two foresters.

Trappers. Your party comes across one fur trapper setting out traps. His or her presence here is pretty straightforward. A trapper has trading relationships with furriers in the nearest settlement, and also knows that animals are more easily found farther out in the wilderness. As long as your party does not interfere with the trapper's work, there should not be any conflict.

The trapper may provide your party with local lore and they may even give them material aid. You may require a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check for your party to establish that kind of rapport. Perhaps the trapper fears attack and tries to enlist your party as bodyguards. At your discretion, your party gets paid in pelts that they can sell at any settlement.

Treat the trapper as a poacher.

Scaling the Encounter: The encounter group consists of one poacher for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. Consider that a group of trappers might offer your party a business opportunity: They're on a roll and they reckon that if they keep at it a little longer they'll have more pelts than they can carry home. They offer to sell some of their pelts at half the going rate, which would allow your party to double their money by selling them to a furrier.

Woodsmen. Your party comes across 1d6 woodcutters who have ventured into the wilderness to gather raw materials for the nearest settlement. Their business here is mundane and they are likely to be more alarmed by the party interrupting them as they cut down trees than your party is startled by stumbling upon them. Perhaps the first sign of their presence is a tree falling on the party, as in Table 3.6: Falling Tree.

Aside from the uncertainty created by meeting complete strangers in a place where you don't expect to find them, an encounter with woodsmen is not necessarily hostile. You may require a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check to win them over. They can give your party information about the local area and they may be willing to trade. On the other hand, they do carry axes — greataxes for hewing trees, battleaxes and handaxes for more detailed work) — and they are prepared to defend themselves in case wild animals menace them.

Treat woodsmen as farmers, except that they carry weapons as noted above.

TABLE 3.6

Watch Out! - Forest

d20	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Did You Hear That?
3-7	Falling Branch
8-9	Falling Tree
10-12	Hampering Web
13-14	Loose Ground
15	Quicksand
16	Tracks
17-20	Tripping Hazard

Did You Hear That? Choose a party member to make a DC 15 Survival or Nature check. If it fails, that character believes that he or she has heard a noise made by a nearby creature or a dangerous natural phenomenon. Perhaps it is the growl of an angry bear or the howl of wolves. Or perhaps it is a noise made by an animal that is not present in the forest, like the howl of a yeti. If it succeeds, that party member realizes that this is an illusion, and the noise is either much farther away than it seems, or it is something else entirely.

If you wish, roll on Table 3.6.1 for guidance on what your party thinks it hears:

TABLE 3.6.1**Did You Hear That? – Forest**

d10	They Think They Hear...
1	Banshee wailing
2	Bear growling
3	Footsteps of a large group of humans or humanoids
4	Lion or other big cat growling
5	Voices speaking in Elvish
6	Voices speaking in Sylvan
7	Voices speaking in Orcish
8	Voices speaking in Undercommon
9	Wolves snarling
10	Wyvern screeching overhead

Falling Branch. Look out below! A high branch falls from a dead, diseased or injured tree as your party passes by. Whatever the cause, the branch is heavy enough, or it falls from high enough, to leave a dent. Determine the party member closest to the tree in question, or pick one at random. Treat the falling branch as a melee attack with a +0 bonus that causes 1d6 bludgeoning damage.

Falling Tree. Timber! The decayed remains of a dead tree topples over just as your party nears it. Choose the angle at which it falls onto them. Or roll 1d12 to determine the tree's bearing: 12 o'clock means that it is dead ahead; 1 o'clock means that its bearing is 30 degrees to the right; 6 o'clock means that it falls onto the party from directly behind, etc. The tree falls onto the party from that bearing. The trunk — the part heavy enough to cause damage — is 20 feet long. Anyone in the path of the trunk must make a successful DC 10 Reflex save to get out of the way. Anyone who fails takes 2d8 bludgeoning damage. Anyone who succeeds must move out of the spaces into which the tree falls; if this means moving into a space occupied by someone else, that character must make a successful DC 15 Reflex save to avoid a collision, or else take 1d4 bludgeoning damage and fall prone.

Hampering Web. There is a finely-woven spider's web between two trees right in your party's path, but there is no spider present. Your party may make a DC 15 Perception check to spot the web before someone at the front of the party formation walks right into it. Treat as a hampering web, as per the hazard description in the core rules. In addition, for each failed attempt to escape by the trapped character, there is a 10% chance, cumulative with each new attempt, that one spider swarm appears from out of hiding and enters the web from the top edge

to see what it caught this time (if your party's average level is 5 or higher, consider using an ogre spider).

Loose Ground. Your party reaches the crest of a rise from which they can get a good view of the surrounding area. However, a party member — choose one, or a character who wants to get a good look around may literally step forward as the best candidate — steps onto a patch of loose soil that gives way. Treat it as a treacherous scree hazard, except that the damage from falling is only 1d10. Whee!

Quicksand. In parts of the forest, so little sunlight penetrates that ground soaked by rain or natural flow never has a chance to dry out and the soil is so swampy that it behaves like quicksand — step into it, and you may never step back out. Your party stumbles into such a patch. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check to spot the quicksand before one party member in the front of the party formation steps right into it.

Tracks. Your party spots tracks that look like tracks that belong to a monster associated with treasure lairs. You may allow them a DC 15 Survival check to realize that they are very old, and they will not lead to anything useful. If it fails, they believe the tracks to be fresh, perhaps leading to an amusing (for you as GM, anyway) wild goose chase.

Tripping Hazard. Pick a party member at the front of the party formation. That character trips over an unseen obstacle — a tree root, or a half-buried log or rock, a thick growth of vines on the forest floor. He or she must make a successful DC 15 Reflex save to avoid a hard fall that causes 1d4 damage — and perhaps no small embarrassment in the eyes of the other party members.

Hearing Things?

The auditory illusions in Table 3.6.1 (and elsewhere in the book), as well as the raven encounter in Table 3.3, give you the opportunity to throw a shaggy dog story at your players. They're about messing with their heads, as opposed to messing them up. They're inspired by elements in our location module *Found by the Way #9: Path to the Paladin Queen's Forest*, which challenges a party with serious disorientation as it tries to navigate a dense forest. Whether or not you want to throw a challenge of this sort at your party is ultimately up to you as GM.

Into the Woods

Among the environments described in this book, forests come in second only to caverns (see Chapter 1) as

projections of the hidden corners of the human mind.
Some of those corners are not that fearful — unless you
really hate unicorns and sprites — but forest encounters
at their most impactful feel like they take place in a space
closed off from the rest of the world.





CHAPTER FOUR

Grasslands

What are Grasslands?

Grasslands occur at almost every latitude. Think of the Eurasian steppe, the prairies of North America, the savannas of equatorial Africa, the veldt of southern Africa. For that matter, The Shire would qualify as grasslands. What all of these places share is that they're mostly flat, and they're semi-arid — a technical term meaning that they're not as dry as deserts, but they also don't get enough rainfall to support forests. Hence, grasses and shrubs are the dominant forms of vegetation, and it's wet enough to support agriculture and plenty of farm animals.

However, the grasslands in this chapter are wilderness. Your party may find an isolated farmstead here and there. They may encounter a herd of livestock grazing or being driven to market. They may travel roads that link proper towns and villages. But a countryside uncluttered by signs of civilization separates those settlements, and here there is plenty of room for monsters and other hazards. Sure, it looks all serene and grassy now — just wait until you see what's hiding in the dip in the ground over there.

Note that some tables in this chapter require a die-roll modifier depending on climate zone.

What Do You Find in Grasslands?

When you determine that a random encounter is in order, roll on Table 4.1 to determine the category:

TABLE 4.1

Encounter Type - Grasslands

d20	CATEGORY
1-6	Aggressive Creatures (Table 4.2)
7-12	Neutral Creatures (Table 4.3)
13-16	Humanoids (Table 4.4)
17-18	Humans (Table 4.5)
19-20	Watch Out! (Table 4.6)

Then, roll on the appropriate table to determine the creature, person or thing encountered.

Grasslands tend to provide broad vistas with open sight lines. There may be undulations that block line of sight into a dip or hollow. But as a general rule, encounters begin with both sides spotting each other from a distance

(unless otherwise specified). This requires that either or both sides deliberately closes the range before combat begins, which probably allows either or both sides the chance to try to avoid a fight, if so desired.

TABLE 4.2

Aggressive Creatures - Grasslands

d100	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Gorgon
4-6	Yzobu
7-10	Ankhrav
11-13	Barghest
14-15	Basilisk
16-19	Bloodseekers
20-22	Bulette
23-27	Cat
28-29	Cathooi
30-33	Centipede
34-36	Chimera
37-38	Doprillu
39-42	Drake, Wyvern
43-45	Elemental, Mephit
46-48	Fey
49-51	Griffon
52-54	Leucrotta
55-57	Manticore
58	Mukadi
59-63	Plant
64-65	Roc
66-69	Scorpion
70-72	Slug
73-77	Snakes
78-80	Solifugid
81-83	Spider
84-87	Toad
88-92	Undead
93-95	Warg
96-99	Wolf
100	Xill
101-103	Yeth Hound
104-108	Chupacabra

+5 to die roll if in temperate grasslands

+8 to die roll if in tropical grasslands

Gorgon (B2). Gorgons find hot climates inhospitable because bright sunlight and hot air heat up their carapace of metallic plates too much for comfort. But

they can be found in sub-arctic montane plateaus or temperate plains.

Your party approaches a gorgon's lair — perhaps it is a small cave hollowed out of the side of a mound, or swale deep enough to provide shelter. Petrified chunks lie scattered about outside the lair. You may allow your party a DC 15 Survival check to realize that they're crumbs leftover from the gorgon's previous meals. The monster is, of course, quite happy to prey on your party and save them for later if it isn't hungry right now.

It's a bold move, but it is theoretically possible to wrangle a gorgon and use it as a mount, at least for a while. One large or two medium-size creatures must successfully grapple the gorgon using both hands. They must maintain the grapple for 10 consecutive turns. At that point, the gorgon stops struggling and acknowledges the wranglers as its master, at least temporarily. It allows them to ride it. However, getting the gorgon to obey a command requires a successful DC 27 Nature or Intimidation check:

Success: The gorgon obeys the command.

Failure: The gorgon ignores the command.

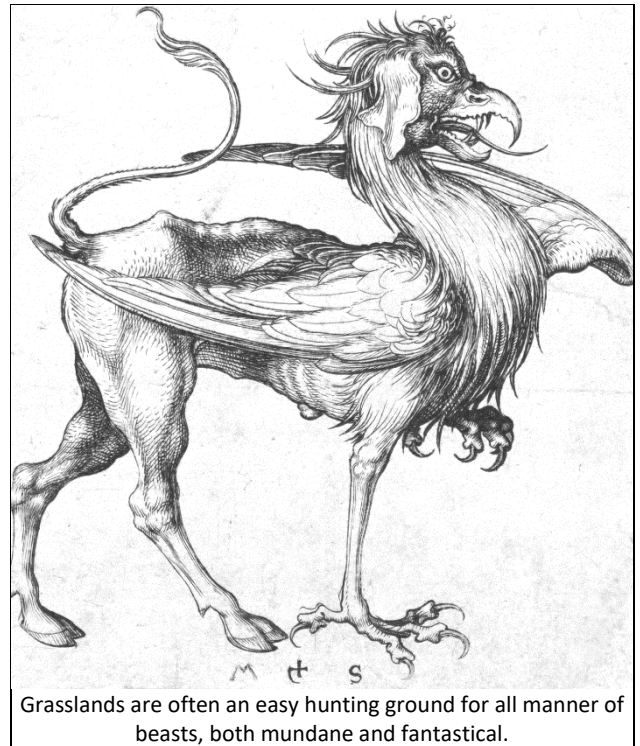
Critical Failure: The gorgon reasserts its independence. It refuses to acknowledge commands until it is successfully wrangled again. Furthermore, anyone who tries to issue it a command until it is successfully wrangled again must make a DC 27 Intimidation check, and if it fails the gorgon attacks that character.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-7, use one weak gorgon. If your party's average level is higher than 11, use one elite gorgon for each multiple of 12 in your party's average level.

Treasure: The lair contains scattered valuables belonging to the gorgon's previous victims. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Yzobu (B3). Your party crosses paths with one of these bad-tempered herd animals as it prowls the prairie. It may have escaped some hapless farmer's attempt to domesticate it, or it may just have gotten separated from a wild herd. In any event, it is aggressive and territorial enough to attack your party without much provocation. You may allow your party a DC 15 Nature or Survival check to calm it, but it requires a critical success to avoid an attack all together. Success simply means that your party has bought itself a little more time before the yzobu decides to charge.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a herd of one yzobu for each level in your party's average level as the encounter group. You may freely substitute one elite yzobu for three yzobu to keep down the encounter size.



Ankhrav (B1). Ankhravs are the bane of agricultural areas and pastures, where they find plenty of nice, juicy livestock on which to feast. The shrewd ones, however, can find enough prey in the wilderness to keep them fed. As your party passes overhead, one ankhrav in its tunnel mistakes your party for a herd of deer. It breaches the surface and attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak ankhrav for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite ankhrav for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Barghest (B1). You find barghests just about everywhere you find goblinoids — which is to say, you can cross paths with a barghest almost anywhere. In this particular situation, your party encounters a barghest disguising itself as a wolf to look less conspicuous while it roams the wilderness in search of prey. At a distance, it looks like a lone ordinary wolf, but once the barghest comes within striking distance of one party member it changes into its true form and attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use a weak barghest for the encounter. If your party's average level is 7-10, use a greater barghest (B1). If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an encounter

group of one elite greater barghest for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Basilisk (B1). Your party comes across a cluster of rocks or a deep swale that a basilisk has chosen for its lair. Because the basilisk doesn't have to go far from its sheltering place, this encounter is likely to start at relatively close range. However, you may allow your party a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to hear something stirring in that dip in the ground, or at least to intuit that something is there.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak basilisk for the encounter. If your party's average level is 8-11, use one elite basilisk. If your party's average level is higher than 11, they encounter two elite basilisks sharing a lair — or, if you wish, substitute one elite dracolisk (B2).

Treasure: The lair contains scattered valuables belonging to the basilisk's previous victims. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value. If there is more than one basilisk in the encounter, consider that basilisk eggs may also be present for the taking.

Bloodseekers (B1). Bloodseekers are a scourge of grasslands, where they find plenty of juicy herd animals on which to feed. 1d4 bloodseekers spot your party and either hone in on their pack animals, or they take the party members themselves for food sources. They swoop down and attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak bloodseekers. If your party's average level is 4-5, use 1d4 elite bloodseekers. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite bloodseeker for each level in your party's average level.

Bulette (B1). Bad luck — a landshark senses your party walking overhead and figures they're its next meal. To create a little drama, you may require a successful DC 15 Perception check to sense the ground rumbling as the bulette approaches.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 6, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use a weak bulette for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an encounter group of one elite bulette for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Treasure: Bulettes hunt on the move, so treasure that belonged to its previous victims is scattered far and wide. However, you may allow your party a DC 10 Survival

check to follow the trail back to its last kill. If successful, use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Cat (B1). "Cat" in this context refers to a variety of species of big cat — dangerous top predators in their native environment, not a small, domesticated fur ball that you might keep as a pet or a familiar. Your party comes across one of these hunting cats in either of two situations: Your party scares off a prey animal that it was stalking, or they come upon it while feeding and it suspects them of wanting to steal its kill. Either way, it's angry enough at your party to attack. Roll on Table 4.2.1 to determine the big cat that your party encounters:

TABLE 4.2.1	
Cat - Grasslands	
d10	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Smilodon
4-7	Leopard
8-10	Lion
11-12	Tiger
+1 to die roll if in a temperate forest	
+2 to die roll if in a tropical forest	
<i>Scaling the Encounter:</i> For smilodons, feel free to use a leopard instead if your party's average level is lower than 4. If your party's average level is 4-5, use one weak smilodon for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use a pack of one elite smilodon for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level as the encounter group.	
For leopards, use one weak leopard for the encounter if your party's average level is 1. If your party's average level is higher than 5, your party comes upon a leap of leopards feeding on a carcass, with one elite leopard for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.	
For lions, if your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak lion for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use a pride of one elite lion for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level as the encounter group.	
Tigers always hunt alone. If your party's average level is 1-3, use a weak tiger for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use an elite tiger.	

Cauthooj (B1). These weird emu-shaped predators that roam the grasslands must cope with the fact that prey

can spot predators from a distance. This is where their ability to manipulate other creatures comes in handy; they can dissuade their prey from fleeing, or even compel them to kill themselves. Your party hears a cauthooj's disturbing vocalizations from a distance. After that, what happens to them is up to them and their Will saving throws.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 10, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 10-11, use a weak cauthooj for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 15, use an elite cauthooj.

Centipede (B1, B2). Centipedes are not aggressive by nature, but the giants among them are so large and so voracious that they constantly need to feed, and their size allows them to deal with most creatures without fear. When your party crosses paths with 1d6 giant centipedes slithering through tall grass, the centipedes consider that live food has just been delivered to their door.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak giant centipedes. If your party's average level is 4-6, use one giant whiptail centipede (B2) for the encounter, or consider that your party has provoked the wrath of one giant centipede swarm (B1) hiding among the ground cover. If your party's average level is 7-8, use one elite giant whiptail centipede. If your party's average level is higher than 8, consider using the granddaddy among centipedes, one titan centipede (B2). If this location won't accommodate a creature that large, use an encounter group of one elite giant whiptail centipede for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level instead.



Chimeras are nearly impossible to domesticate. Those who try usually come to an untimely and tragic end.

Chimera (B1). Your party spots a winged monstrosity with three different animal heads circling above them. This can only mean one thing: A chimera has spotted them as potential prey. There is a small chance that it has

escaped servitude to another creature — you can't truly domesticate a chimera, you can only get it to cooperate for a while — but it is more likely just feral and hungry.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 6, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use a weak chimera for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an encounter group of one elite chimera for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Doprillu (B2). Your party crosses paths with one of these masked creatures because it is bored and it has gone abroad to look for a good fight. It spots your party as full of suitable candidates, so it plants itself firmly in their path and challenges one of them to a wrestling match. If your party is inclined to accept, then it is important to establish the terms of the contest. Those terms may be whatever you as GM choose; the doprillu will abide by them until its opponent cheats — in which case, it becomes sufficiently enraged to fight to the death, no holds barred.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 12, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 12-13 use a weak doprillu for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 18, use an elite doprillu.

Treasure: A doprillu may carry on its person some valuable items as trophies from its previous bouts. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value. If it loses its duel, it hands over one of its trophies — but if it wins, it demands something of real value from the character it vanquished. Anything less would be cheating, in its eyes.

Drake, Wyvern (B1). A wyvern has emerged from its lair in nearby hills to hunt and it spots your party from above. Though no more intelligent than other drakes, wyverns may act like evil dragons in toying with their victims, extracting tribute from them or humiliating them before destroying them. It may pause to taunt or extort your party before it attacks, just to get a reaction from them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak wyvern for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an encounter group of one elite wyvern for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Elemental, Mephit (B1, B2). These annoying little elementals have a habit of crossing over into the Material Plane, like ink bleeding through paper, and

making nuisances of themselves. They are not predatory, but they are very annoying and they interpret any attempt to brush them aside as an attack. Roll on Table 4.2.2 to determine the kind of mephit your party encounters:

TABLE 4.2.2
Mephits - Grasslands

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Air Mephit
3-5	Dust Mephit
6	Fire Mephit

Air Mephit (B1). Your party spots a thin vapor trail describing an apparently random pattern. It's an air mephit, drawn to the Material Plane when weather fronts clashed over the plains and created a storm. When it spots your party, it targets them for mischief and swoops down on them repeatedly, often uttering a piercing whine as it does so. It does not stop unless physically forced to do so, as it gets mindless amusement out of annoying your party.

Dust Mephit (B2). Your party finds one dust mephit blocking their path. It fixes them with a piercing gaze and declares that they are doomed (in either Auran or Terran, of course). The actual circumstances of your party do not matter. The mephit just knows that they're headed for a bad end. If your party tries to ignore it and move on, it follows them and refuses to let up. It doesn't like being ignored, and eventually it attacks them.

Fire Mephit (B1). Fire mephits find a chance to cross over from their native plane whenever fire sweeps the plains. Now that it's here, it draws endless amusement from the pain even a light touch inflicts on creatures of the Material Plane. It doesn't know when to stop, and when it discovers your party it won't stop until it is driven off.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite mephit for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Fey (B1, B2). It's easy to forget that not all fey are harmless. Their (usually) diminutive size and their eccentric appearance give them an advantage similar to that given to small dogs: Larger creatures interpret their aggression and malice as mere mischief and they don't take them seriously enough. Roll on Table 4.2.3 to determine the fey creature encountered:

TABLE 4.2.3
Aggressive Fey - Grasslands

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Gremlins
4-5	Grimstalker
6	Redcap

Gremlins (B1). These mean, mechanically-inclined fey set traps near their inconspicuous lairs and they enjoy taunting their victims. Your party comes across such a trap. Use a trap described in the core rulebooks appropriate to your party's average level, or use one of your own devising. You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to notice the gremlins hiding nearby among some rocks or in a swale. If they succeed, perhaps it is because one gremlin couldn't help giggling, or it jumped the gun on taunting the victim.

To determine the exact type of gremlin encountered, roll on Table 4.2.3.1. If you don't feel like running a horde of gremlins, skip Table 4.2.3.1 and just use jinkins for the encounter, scaled appropriately.

TABLE 4.2.3.1
Gremlins - Grasslands

d4	ENCOUNTER
1	Jinkin
2-4	Mitflit
5-6	Pugwumpi

Scaling the Encounter: For jinkins, use one jinkin for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite jinkin for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

For mitflits, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak mitflits. If your party's average level is 2-3, use 1d4 mitflits. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use one elite mitflit for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

For pugwumpi, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak pugwumpi. If your party's average level is 2-3, use 1d4 normal pugwumpi. If your party's average level is 4-5, use 1d4 elite pugwumpi. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an ➤

encounter group of one elite pugwumpi for each level in your party's average level.

Treasure: If the trap guards the gremlins' lair, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of their treasure.

Grimstalker (B2). Your party stumbles into a patch of wilderness claimed by a grimstalker. Their first hint might be a string of severed human or humanoid heads — its previous victims — decorating a clump of bushes. Or it might be the presence of an assassin vine that it has cultivated to stake out its territory (see Scaling the Encounter). In any event, the grimstalker soon arrives on the scene, perfectly content to kill first and ask questions later.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, feel free to re-roll for a different fey encounter. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak grimstalker for the encounter. If your party's average level is 8-10, use one elite grimstalker or add one assassin vine (B2) to the encounter group to serve as the grimstalker's tripwire. If your party's average level higher than 10, use an encounter group of one elite grimstalker for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Redcap (B1). These murderous fey kill just for the fun of it. When prowling the wilderness, they use folds in the ground, bushes or rocks to conceal themselves so they can ambush their victims. This gives them an advantage even if they are outnumbered.

One redcap spots your party. Have it make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds, it gets the drop and charges the character at the back of the party formation. If it fails, your party spots a small, wizened humanoid, with its pointed red cap the only giveaway to its true identity. It tries to play off meeting your party as an innocent chance encounter, but it keeps looking for an opportunity to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak redcap for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, a group of redcaps out for a spree — one elite redcap for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level — should make the encounter more challenging.

Griffon (B1). A griffon, roaming afield from its eyrie in nearby hills, spots your party and goes for one of their mounts or pack animals — or at least, it thinks it has spotted a mount or a pack animal.

If taming and training griffons is part of your campaign world, then no doubt griffon trainers would pay well for them. To subdue a griffon to the point where it can be bound and held captive, one large or two medium-size creatures must successfully grapple the griffon using both hands. They must maintain the grapple for 10 consecutive turns. At that point, the griffon stops struggling. How your party keeps it bound until it can be delivered is up to them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak griffon for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use a pack (flock?) of one elite griffon for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Insects (B1, B2). You may not think of insects as predatory, but they can be quite aggressive and cause trouble in their own way. That's what happens when you act without the capacity to think about the consequences. To make things worse, insects in the wilderness sometimes grow monstrosously large. Roll on Table 4.2.4 to determine the insects encountered:

TABLE 4.2.4

Insects - Grasslands

d12	ENCOUNTER
1-4	Ant
5-6	Beetle, Giant Stag
7	Cockroach
8-9	Fly
10	Tick
11-12	Wasps

Ant (B2). Your party is not looking through a magnifying glass; they really have come face-to-face with one human-sized ant. It's not a predator, but it is an omnivore that eats anything that seems like food and it is large enough to enforce its will. To it, your party looks like food.

Alternately, army ants are much smaller, but they come at you in a vicious, relentless swarm. If your party runs afoul of an army ant swarm (B2), it spots them (or more precisely, a food source somewhere among your party's belongings) during a rest halt ➤

or while they have camped for the night and attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak giant ant for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one army ant swarm for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite giant ant for one army ant swarm.

Beetle, Giant Stag (B1). Like giant ants, giant stag beetles are mindless omnivores that feed voraciously, and when you're that large, almost anything looks like it could make a meal, including your party.

However, a skilled handler may wrangle a giant stag beetle and use it as a beast of burden. One large or two medium-size creatures must successfully grapple the beetle. They must maintain the grapple for 6 consecutive turns. At that point, the beetle stops struggling and acknowledges the wranglers as its master.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use a weak giant stag beetle for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite giant stag beetle for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Cockroach (B2). You find cockroaches wherever they can scavenge off of creatures higher up the food chain. During a rest halt, one giant cockroach goes after your party's rations. It won't attack unless threatened, but it will eat everything up unless stopped.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite cockroach swarm (B2) for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Fly (B2). Baby giant flies feed on carcasses so that they grow up into big and strong giant flies. Your party comes upon the remains of... something... that has been almost entirely consumed by 1d4 giant maggots. They're still hungry and primitive instinct drives them to try to continue feeding on your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3 use an encounter group of 1d6 giant maggots. If your party's average level is higher than 3 use an encounter group of one giant fly (B2) for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. The flies have found a carcass into which to lay eggs, and they defend their spawning ground against a perceived threat. ➤

Tick (B2). Pick a party member at random. One giant tick pops out from the tall grass and tries to attach itself to that character so that it can feed.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite giant tick for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Wasp (B1). An abandoned structure, a lone tree, an overhang of rock — all of these places make suitable nesting grounds for giant wasps. You may allow your party a DC 15 Nature or Survival check to recognize that pendulous thing they just spotted as a giant wasp nest before they get close enough to set off the one giant wasp guarding it. But giant wasps are quick to anger and quick to sting.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak giant wasp for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 2, use an encounter group of one giant wasp for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level.

Alternately, if your mind recoils at the idea of giant wasps, you may use one weak wasp swarm for the encounter if your party's average level is 1-3. If your party's average level is 4-7, use one wasp swarm. If your party's average level is 8-11, use one elite wasp swarm.

Leucrotta (B2). Have the leucrotta make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds your party thinks they hear a plaintive cry, as if from a human or humanoid in distress. In this case, you may then allow them a DC 20 Nature check:

Critical Success: Your party knows for certain that it's a leucrotta faking it.

Success: Your party knows it's mimicry, not a real cry of distress.

Failure: Your party thinks it hears a cry for help in Common.

However, if the leucrotta fails its Stealth check, your party sees it trying to hide behind a rock. In any event, it's determined to prey upon them.

If you wish to run a more complicated encounter and give your party a sidequest, consider that the leucrotta is — or was — affiliated with a local band of gnolls. It may want to lure your party into the clutches of those gnolls, in which case it keeps using its Luring Cry ability until the

trap can be sprung. See Gnolls, below, for guidance on scaling the encounter. On the other hand, the leucrotta may have been expelled by the gnolls whom it thought it led and it may try to enlist your party's help in revenging itself upon them, in return for all the treasure in their lair. In this case, treat the leucrotta as a friendly NPC — at least until the offending gnolls are defeated.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is less than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak leucrotta for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an elite leucrotta. If your party's average level is higher than 15, consider using two elite leucrottas working in tandem.

Manticore (B1). Your party spots a large winged beast in the sky. It's a manticore on the hunt, and it spots your party just as they spot it. Once it gets close enough to launch its spikes, it may choose to toy with its prey just to watch them squirm. In this case, it demands some kind of bribe in exchange for sparing them — a bargain it will keep, if your party makes the right offer. A suitable offer might take the form of treasure or humiliating servitude that amuses it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for another encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak manticore for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an encounter group of one elite manticore for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Mukradi (B1). Fortunately for travelers, mukradi are few and far between, and they're large enough so that, on the open plain, you can spot them from a distance far enough to plot a way to avoid them before they get too close. With its tremorsense, you can be sure that the mukradi has an inkling of your party's presence.

Scaling the Encounter: A mukradi is a lot to handle for anything but a high-level party. If your party's average level is lower than 13, feel free to re-roll for another encounter. If your party's average level is 13-14, use a weak mukradi for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 20 use an elite mukradi for the encounter.

Plant (B2). Plants are not always your friend. Just because they cannot see, cannot speak and they can barely move, it doesn't mean that they cannot prey on whatever comes within their reach. Roll on Table 4.2.5 to determine the plant that is eager to disabuse your party of the notion that it is just a vegetable:

TABLE 4.2.5

Plant - Grasslands

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Assassin Vine
4-5	Mandragora
6	Viper Vine

Assassin Vine (B2). You may allow your party a DC 20 Perception or Survival check to notice that the unusually thick ground cover just twitched. If it fails, they don't realize that an assassin vine has used its tremorsense to spot them until they come within in its striking distance of its Grasping Foliage ability.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak assassin vine for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use a patch of one elite assassin vine for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level for the encounter group. In this case, locate the assassin vines so that they can strike from different angles.

Mandragora (B2). Your party comes across something that looks like a small deformed humanoid sticking up out of the ground. It strikes at the nearest arcane spellcaster, or if none is present, the character carrying the most potions and/or alchemical materials. It is hungry enough so that it will even consume the blood of a creature without any magic in it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak mandragora for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use a patch of one elite mandragora for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

Viper Vine (B2). Your party spots an enormous patch of ground cover. Unfortunately for them, it's a viper vine at rest and coiled like a snake. You may allow them a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to notice a flicker of motion that suggests that what they're approaching is no ordinary plant. Otherwise, the viper vine uses its tremorsense and Captivating Pollen ability as soon as someone in the party formation comes within range.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 11, feel free to re-roll for a different plant encounter. If your party's average level is 11-12, use one weak viper vine for the encounter. If your party's average level is above 16, use one elite viper vine. ➤

Treasure: Because these predatory plants are not migratory and only slightly mobile, they hunt more or less in their lairs. This means that your party might find the accumulated belongings of the plants' previous victims after defeating them. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Roc (B1). A roc encountered in the sky over the plains has roamed far afield from its mountain or hilltop eyrie in search of food. If anything, this means that it is less likely to be picky in its choice of prey. It may prefer a single big, juicy target, but in a pinch a bunch of smaller ones — like your party and its pack animals — will tide it over.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 7, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 7-8, use a weak roc for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 12 use an elite roc.

Scorpion (B1). Your party takes a rest halt by some rocks and disturbs the giant scorpion sheltering among them. It has a large stinger, and it doesn't hesitate to use it. Whether it acts in what it perceives as self-defense, or because your party looks like prey, it makes little practical difference.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak giant scorpion for the encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use one scorpion swarm. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite giant scorpion for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Slug (B2). Slugs may seem like unlikely predators, but the giants among them are large enough to consume livestock and humanoids and they're not particularly fussy about what they eat. As long as it's not desiccated, it's good enough for them. A giant slug approaches your party. Eventually, it will get within striking distance of them. Will it get the better of them and make a meal out of them? Run the encounter and see.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 6, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use one weak giant slug for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 11, use an encounter group of one elite giant slug for each multiple of 12 in your party's average level. Perhaps your party comes upon giant slugs mating, if they can bear such a sight.

Snakes (B1, B2, B3). As the old expression goes, a snake in the grass is dangerous indeed. It's so easy for them to

hide in the ground cover that you may not see them until it's too late to avoid them, and if they're venomous, well, that's just an extra serving of trouble heaped high on your plate. You may allow your party to make a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to realize that someone in the front of the march order is about to step on a snake. This should give them enough time to take evasive action, although you may consider that this simply means they aren't surprised when the snake lashes out.

Roll on Table 4.2.6 to determine the snake(s) encountered:

TABLE 4.2.6

Snakes - Grasslands

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Rat Snake Swarm
4	Giant Viper
5-6	Viper
7	Emperor Cobra

+1 to die roll if in temperate or tropical grasslands

Rat Snake Swarm (B3). Your party approaches a swale that conceals a swarm of rat snakes. You may allow them a DC 10 Perception check to notice the snakes before they step right into the snake pit. Rat snakes are not venomous, but you don't want to get bitten by one all the same.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak rat snake swarm for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite rat snake swarm for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Giant Viper (B1). A giant viper has a hard time finding places to hide, but it can conceal itself in tall (or even just tall-ish) grass. If they don't spot it in time, your party comes face-to-fangs with one giant viper looking for its next meal.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak giant viper for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite giant viper for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Viper (B1). As with the rat snake swarm, your party approaches a dip in the ground that conceals 1d6 vipers. If the Perception check to spot the snakes fails, the front of the party formation steps right into the snake pit. ➤

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak viper swarm (B3) for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite viper swarm for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Emperor Cobra (B2). The Perception check determines whether or not your party spots an emperor cobra before it rears up out of the grass and strikes.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, use one weak emperor cobra for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use a nest of one elite emperor cobra for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

Solifugid (B2). Like trap-door spiders, solifugids burrow into the ground, which provides excellent shelter and allows them to ambush their prey. Just don't call them spiders, since they only have six legs. You may require that your party make a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to spot a defect in the ground. If successful, you may then have them make a DC 15 Nature check to recognize it as the entrance to a giant solifugid lair. If the first check fails, they get their first hint that one giant solifugid has spotted them as prey when it emerges from its lair and charges them.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one giant solifugid for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite giant solifugid for three giant solifugids. Feel free to cap the encounter group size at six giant solifugid, as anything larger than that requires a lair so large that it probably qualifies as a fixed location — not so much a lair as a solifugid apartment complex.

Treasure. Also like trap-door spiders, solifugids prefer to drag their prey into their lairs to feed. Valuables belonging to their victims therefore remain in their lair. You may use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value if you wish.

Spider (B1, B2). In a mostly flat and wide-open environment like grasslands, there aren't many places for spiders to build the large webs that make them so hazardous in forests and underground spaces. But that's not to say that you won't find them here. Instead, they'll come at you from under a rock or a burrow when you have stopped to take a breather. Roll on Table 4.2.7 to determine what kind of spider could bite you when you're not looking:

TABLE 4.2.7

Spiders - Grasslands

d8	ENCOUNTER
1	Ether Spider
2-3	Giant Tarantula
4-6	Hunting Spider
7-8	Spider Swarm

Ether Spider (B1). One ether spider literally appears out of nowhere to attack your party, having spotted them from its lair in the Ethereal Plane. Ether spiders are quite fearless, and they use their ability to jump back and forth between the Ethereal Plane and the Material Plane to conduct hit-and-run attacks, wearing the party down until they are all incapacitated or dead.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, use a weak ether spider for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use one elite ether spider.

Giant Tarantula (B1). Tarantulas burrow into the ground and they either take whatever stumbles into their lair, or they emerge to ambush prey. As your party approaches, vibrations in the ground tell a giant tarantula that something juicy has come to its doorstep, and it jumps out and attacks. You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to notice a hole in the ground large enough to fit a large spider, and if successful, a DC 15 Nature check to realize that it's a tarantula burrow.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a hunting spider encounter instead. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak giant tarantula for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an encounter group of one elite giant tarantula for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Hunting Spider (B1). A hunting spider can represent either a web-spinning spider that has set up shop in a bush or between bushes, or a large trap-door spider with a burrow. It's up to you as GM what kind of encounter you want to set up.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is above 3, use a group of one elite hunting spider for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Spider Swarm (B1). A large web among some ➤

bushes houses 1d4 swarms of tiny spiders. All of them respond aggressively if something so much as touches their web.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3, use an encounter group of 1d4 spider swarms. If your party's average level is 4-5, use an encounter group of 1d4 elite spider swarms. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one elite spider swarm for each level in your party's average level.

Treasure. Larger spiders may have trapped humanoid-sized victims in the past and left some of their valuables caught in their lair. You may use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value if you wish.

Toad (B2). It may be hard to imagine a toad as a dangerous predator, but these are no ordinary toads. Giant toads are perfectly comfortable living away from water and any creature smaller than them looks like food. You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to spot one giant toad lurking in tall grass, waiting for something edible to come along. Success gives them time to react before they come within the toad's striking distance.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak giant toad for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use a knot of one elite giant toad for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Undead (B1, B2). The natural beauty of verdant grasslands and rolling plains can be deceptive. The undead can haunt any wilderness regardless of its scenic qualities. They may come from barrows and cairns that dot the landscape; or from the fallen in past battles both great and small; or those who perished far from home at the hand of beasts, monsters, or murderers and never received the proper rites. Roll on Table 4.2.8 to determine the undead abomination that greets your party:

TABLE 4.2.8

Undead - Grasslands

D1	ENCOUNTER
1	Ghost
2-3	Ghoul/Ghast
4	Revenant
5	Shadow
6-8	Skeleton
9	Wight
10	Wraith
11-12	Zombie

Ghost (B1). You may dangle in front of your party the possibility that they see a wisp of white smoke rising from the tall grass. But it's really a ghost. Almost certainly, it is the remnant of someone who died unhappily in the wilderness. Exposure, murder and monsters are all possible causes of its demise. Whatever the case, you may make this into a hostile encounter by having the ghost try to possess a member of your party so that it may resolve unfinished business from its former life.

Scaling the Encounter: Ghosts always work alone. However, if you wish to make a more challenging ghost encounter for a 10th level or higher party, use a ghost mage instead of a ghost commoner. Or you may freely substitute a ghost of your own design.

Ghoul/Ghoul (B1). Sometimes the remains of those who have died in the wilderness are touched by necromantic energy and become ghouls or ghastrs. One ghoul approaches your party, driven by mindless hunger for their flesh.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 4-5, use one elite ghoul or one ghast for the encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use one elite ghast. If your party level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite ghoul for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level, or one elite ghast for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Revenant (B2). Revenants have a specific motivation and a sharp focus for their hatred. Your party comes across the undead husk of someone who was murdered or left to die on the open plain. It's quite possible that this person was waylaid by bandits, or that the victim was the loser in a violent quarrel in a nearby agricultural community. It seeks revenge, but against the particular party it holds responsible for ending its natural life. Assuming that this is not ►

someone in your party, the revenant does not attack — in fact it might even provide your party with a sidequest if they can help the revenant locate the target of its vengeance.

Shadows (B1). Your party sees a shadow falling across the open plain. Then they realize that it doesn't belong to anyone! It's a creature in its own right, an insubstantial undead intent on draining the life from the living. It's not particularly at home here and shadows prefer darkness, where they can strike unseen. All the same, it attacks the nearest party member, eager to spawn one more of its own kind.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak shadow for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use one elite shadow for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Skeletons (B1). Your party comes upon 1d4+2 skeleton guards — undead created from remains that have been stripped of flesh by scavengers and the elements. They may be casualties from skirmishes involving bandits or nomads. They may be casualties left where they fell in a corner of an ancient battlefield. Or they may be what is left of adventurers or travelers who got stranded in the open without shelter and died of exposure. Driven by rage at their fate, they attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak skeleton guards. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite skeleton guard for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one skeletal champion for two elite skeleton guards.

Wight (B1). Your party comes upon a cairn that someone erected on the open plain. It sticks out like a lump from the mostly flat surrounding terrain, and it is up to you as the designer of this world whether or not it should be apparent who set it up, and whose remains it houses. However, it is sure that if your party gets close enough to inspect it, a wight rises out of it, angry that they have disturbed its rest.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak wight for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite wight for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Wraith (B1). There are plenty of ways to come to a ➤

bad end in the wilderness, and your party has the misfortune to come across a wraith that was once someone who perished in the open plain, and which is now bound to this part of it. Perhaps they pass an improvised grave, or just a half-buried skeleton. Whatever the case, it takes out the resentment that it bore at the end of its life on your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, feel free to re-roll for a different undead encounter. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak wraith for the encounter. If your party's average level is 9-12, use one dread wraith (B2). If your party's average level is higher than 12, use one elite dread wraith.

Zombie (B1). Your party come across one plague zombie or 1d4 zombie shamblers that have been programmed to kill every living thing they encounter. The source of the necromancy that created these zombies is up to you. Perhaps they slipped the leash of their creator and they now wander the open plain, mindlessly looking for victims.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one plague zombie for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one zombie brute or one elite plague zombie for two plague zombies, or one zombie hulk for six plague zombies. If you want to create a large encounter for that "The Walking Dead" effect, freely substitute 1d4 zombie shamblers for one plague zombie.

Treasure: It's quite possible that ghosts and wraiths are encountered in or near the place where they died or were buried — in which case, the valuables they had on them are lying about somewhere. You may require a successful DC 15 Perception check to find them. Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

With skeletons and zombies, they may have with them some remains of what they had on their person at the time of their death. Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Warg (B1). Your party crosses paths with one warg that has escaped from a pack kept by a local humanoid tribe, or otherwise gotten separated from them. Regardless of the reason, it is hungry and your party looks like food.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak warg for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one warg for each multiple

of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite warg for three wargs. If this encounter takes place in a sub-arctic zone, you may also freely substitute one winter wolf for two wargs or one elite winter wolf for two elite wargs.

Wolf (B1). Wolves of some sort live in grasslands at all latitudes — which makes sense, since the herd animals on which they prey live here as well. In this case, your party comes across one wolf, separated from its pack — or perhaps the last survivor of a pack. It's hungry enough to attack your party, regardless of the odds.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one wolf for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite wolf or one dire wolf for three wolves, or one elite dire wolf for six wolves.

Treasure: Furriers in your world may be willing to pay for wolf pelts. How much is ultimately up to you, but 1 gp is a reasonable baseline price for a normal wolf pelt and 2 gp for a dire wolf pelt. Dire wolf pelts are not necessarily more desirable, but they are larger and offer more fur to work with.

Xill (B2). Your party crosses paths with one xill roaming the plain, looking to kidnap a host for its reproductive processes. It's looking for lone travelers or herders who have dropped their guard. Your party outnumbers it, but xills are confident that they can take most anyone and out here there won't be anyone to get in the way.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak xill for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use one elite xill for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Yeth Hound (B2). Evil humanoids keep these canine fiends, laboring under the impression that they are reliable companions, like domesticated wolves or dogs. Yeth hounds have very different ideas about domestication. Your party crosses paths with one yeth hound that has ended its arrangement with a nearby group of humanoids. It is now hungry without anyone to feed it, and looking for its next meal.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak yeth hound for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite yeth hound for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Chupacabra (B2). Chupacabras lurk in wilderness from which they can reach agricultural areas, and in which they can find hapless travelers on whom to prey. Your

party comes upon one of these bloodsucking predators as it lurks in tall grass, waiting for targets of opportunity. Have it make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds, your party does not notice it until they are within range of its Pounce ability.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak chupacabra for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use a pack of one elite chupacabra for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level as the encounter group.

TABLE 4.3

Neutral Creatures - Grasslands

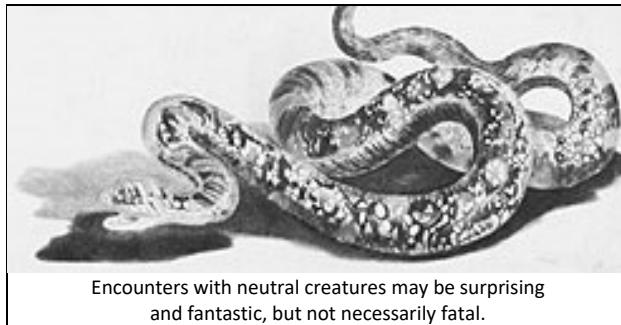
d100	ENCOUNTER
1-4	Moose
5-7	Bison
8-10	Bear
11-13	Badger
14-15	Blink Dog
16-19	Boar
20-21	Centaur
22-24	Dog
25	Dragon
26-28	Drainberry Bush
29-31	Eagle
32-34	Elephant
35-38	Fey
39-42	Fox
43-45	Hippogriff
46-51	Horses
52-55	Hyenas
56-58	Kangaroo
59-62	Leshy
63-65	Porcupine
66-69	Rats
70-72	Rhinoceros
73-76	Skunk
77-79	Sphinx
80-83	Sportlebore
84-88	Terror Bird
89-90	Thunderbird
91-94	Vultures
95-98	Weasels
99-104	Lizard
104-106	Quetz Couatl

+2 to die roll if in temperate grasslands.

+6 to die roll if in tropical grasslands.

Moose (B3). Your party spots a lone moose grazing on some tall grass. Even if your party does not behave in a threatening manner, there is a chance that it mistakes their actions and attacks. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that sets it off and it charges.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use one weak moose for the encounter. Otherwise, use a herd of one moose for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level as the encounter group.



Bison (B3). Bison are herd animals and not aggressive by nature, but their size and strength make them imposing creatures as they roam the plains. Your party crosses paths with a lone bison that has gotten separated from its herd. Even if your party does not behave in a threatening manner, there is a chance that it mistakes their actions and attacks. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that sets it off and it charges.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak bison for the encounter. Otherwise, use a herd of one bison for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level as the encounter group.

Bear (B1, B2). Your party spots a bear prowling around for food. If they are resting, the bear comes sniffing around, drawn by their rations. If your party just wants to scare it off, require a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it succeeds, the bear takes the hint and lumbers away. If it fails, the bear charges them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak black bear (B2) for the encounter. If your party's average level is 2-3, use one black bear. If your party's average level is 4-6, use one grizzly bear (B1). If your party's average level is 7 or higher, use one cave bear (B1). If your party's average level is higher than 9, use one elite cave bear.

Badger (B2). Your party comes across one badger out in the open. It spots your party, then darts for its nearby burrow. If your party investigates, they see one pair of eyes like black marbles glinting in the shadows. Have

your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone has made a false move that activates the badger's fight-or-flight response. The burrow only has one opening, so it feels cornered and fights like a badger.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3, use an encounter group of 1d4 badgers. If your party's average level is 4-5 use one giant badger for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one elite giant badger for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

Blink Dog (B2). Your party crosses paths with a dog with long ears and a wisp of fur hanging from its chin. It's not wandering aimlessly through the forest; it's a blink dog scouting on behalf of its pack as it roams the Material Plane to keep it safe from evil influences.

If it intuits that there are evil characters with bad intentions in your party, it keeps its distance and uses its innate spells to get away. Otherwise, anyone who is fluent in Sylvan can communicate with it, although it make take a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check to overcome its natural aloofness. A blink dog on a mission may provide your party with a sidequest as it asks them to help its pack. Alternately, a successful Diplomacy check (DC 15 or 20, depending on whether or not it diverts the blink dog from its purpose) by a good-aligned character in your party may persuade it to accompany them for a short while.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish, you may use a pack of blink dogs for the encounter group, consisting of one for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level.

Boar (B1). Your party spots one wild boar rooting around the forest floor for food. Boar are popular targets for hunters. They'll fight back if attacked — indeed, the challenge they present is part of the appeal of hunting them. But they have also developed a fight-or-flight instinct, and if your party wishes to avoid a fight, have them make a DC 15 Survival or Nature group check to scare the boar off. If this check fails, the boar charges them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak boar for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one boar for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. If you prefer not to have a large herd of wild boar descend on your party, you may freely substitute one daeodon (B1) for two wild boar; one elite wild boar for three wild boar; or one elite daeodon for four wild boar.

Treasure: Boar meat is good eating for many folk. Perhaps a nearby butcher will pay 1 gp for a fresh carcass. The price might go up to 3 gp for a daeodon.

Centaur (B1). Your party spots in the distance a lone figure, half-human and half-equine. It is possible that it is a scout or a messenger acting on the tribe’s behalf, but it is also possible that it has just been cast out of its former home, or it has decided of its own volition to strike out on its own and see the wider world. In the former case, it reacts to your party with caution or even suspicion, protective of its tribe and their territory. You may have your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: Your party wins over the centaur; it willingly joins your party as a friendly NPC, at least for a little while.

Success: It shares local knowledge to help your party, but little more.

Failure: Your party does not impress the centaur. It remains aloof and goes on its way.

Critical Failure: Whatever your party says, it infuriates the centaur. It attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: It is up to you whether or not to scale up an encounter with centaurs. While they are most often encountered alone, it is possible that as many as three or four centaurs might have split off from their tribe as a group. You may use an encounter group consisting of 1d4 centaurs if your party’s average level is less than 10; if your party’s average level is 10 or higher make them elite centaurs.

Treasure: Centaurs carry their valuables with them. Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value of their possessions.

Dog (B1). Your party comes across one dog that has, evidently, slipped its leash and lost its way home. It’s anxious because it’s separated from its master. If your party approaches it, require a DC 15 Nature check. If it fails, someone has made a false move, and it charges the nearest character.

Assuming that this a domesticated dog gone AWOL, it probably came from a nearby farmstead. Returning the lost dog could lead to a reward, as a working animal is a valuable resource to someone living out in the wilderness.

Treat the dog as an elite guard dog.

If you want to make the encounter downright vicious, consider that the dog is rabid. You may have your party make a DC 15 Perception check to notice that it is foaming at the mouth, but there is no way to dissuade it from attacking the nearest character. If a rabid dog

inflicts damage, use the rules covering rabies in the core rules to determine what happens next. Even if you could subdue it somehow, a rabid dog dies of the disease before you can return it to its owner. And, come to think of it, who would want a rabid dog returned to them, anyway?

Dragon (B1). Your party notices a large shape — almost large enough to blot out the sun — circling in the sky. It’s a dragon on the prowl. To determine what kind of dragon roll on Table 4.3.1:

TABLE 4.3.1	
Dragon - Grasslands	
d12	ENCOUNTER
1	Black
2	Blue
3	Green
4-5	Red
6	White
7	Brass
8	Bronze
9	Copper
10-11	Gold
12	Silver

To determine its age, see Scaling the Encounter.

To be clear, this need not be a hostile encounter. The dragon is not defending its lair, so it may just be curious about your party. It may have more important things to do and decline to take notice of them at all. Or it may be hungry and on the hunt, or it’s angry because your party has intruded on territory it claims as its own.

Scaling the Encounter: Because dragons get tougher with age, the age of the dragon encountered should depend on your party’s average level — especially if you decide that this is going to be a hostile encounter. If your party’s average level is lower than 11, they encounter a young dragon. If their average level is 11-15, they encounter an adult dragon. If their average level is higher than 15, they encounter an ancient dragon.

Drainberry Bush (B2). First contact with a drainberry bush can be an unnerving experience. At first glance, it looks like a bush with coils of roots above ground and red berries that look good enough to eat. However, the coils at the base of the plant are really vines that can reach

out, and if your party passes a drainberry bush and they're carrying something that it wants, it may reach out and communicate telepathically with them.

Similarly, if someone in your party tries to sample its berries, it insists (again, through telepathic communication) that it must be paid appropriately. Your party may attempt a DC 20 Diplomacy check to get it to come down off of its asking price. But if the result is critical failure, they insult the drain berry bush so badly that it just reaches out with its vines and tries to suck everyone's blood.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5 and you think your party might provoke the drainberry bush into attacking, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak drainberry bush for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an elite drainberry bush.

Treasure: A drainberry bush is bound to have money and treasure items hidden within its recesses. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Eagles (B1). Roll on Table 4.3.2 to determine if your party is fortunate enough to be spotted by a giant eagle, or they come across ordinary eagles hunting for small animals.

TABLE 4.3.2

Eagles - Grasslands

d4	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Eagles
4	Giant Eagle

Eagles. Your party notices a convection of 2d8 eagles wheeling overhead. If your party has a small animal kept as a pet or familiar, or food (travelers rations qualify) kept exposed, have the eagles make a DC 15 Perception check. If they succeed, they dive and try to snatch it up, attacking anyone who gets in their way.

Giant Eagle. On the other hand, your party may have the good fortune to enter territory patrolled by a giant eagle. If your party has predominantly good characters (or at least, no evil characters), the giant eagle follows it to the limit of its domain, providing a sort of combat air patrol for your party. If your party hails it (remember, giant eagles only understand Auran and Sylvan), it responds. Convincing it to do your party a service requires a successful DC 15 Diplomacy ➤

check. Unless your party consists entirely of good characters, a critical success is needed to gain its full cooperation.

Alternately, if you want to provide your party with a sidequest, the giant eagle tries to enlist them in dealing with some evil humanoids in its territory. However, since it cannot speak, have your party make a DC 15 Nature check. If successful, that character understands that it wants them to follow it. Critical success indicates an educated guess that it wants help dealing with enemies.

Elephant (B1, B2). Your party comes across one elephant and it is always the case with elephants in the wild that avoiding a stampede requires some care. If they want to avoid a hostile encounter, require a DC 15 Survival or Nature check. If it fails, someone has made a false move, triggering an attack.

Roll on Table 4.3.3 to determine the type of elephant encountered:

TABLE 4.3.3

Elephant - Grasslands

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Mammoth (B1)
3	Anancus (B2)
4	Mastodon (B2)
5-8	Elephant (B1)

+1 to die roll in temperate grasslands

+2 to die roll in tropical grasslands

Mammoth/Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 8, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 8-9, use one weak mammoth for the encounter. Otherwise, use a herd of one mammoth for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level as the encounter group.

Anancus/Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 6, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use one weak anancus for the encounter. Otherwise, use a herd of one anancus for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level as the encounter group.

Mastodon/Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 7, feel free to re-roll for ➤

a different encounter. If your party's average level is 7-8, use one weak mastodon for the encounter. Otherwise, use a herd of one mastodon for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level as the encounter group.

Elephant/Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use one weak elephant for the encounter. Otherwise, use a herd of one elephant for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level as the encounter group.

Fey (B1, B2, B3). Unlike the malicious fey described above, most fey creatures mean no harm. But they have agendas of their own that can work at cross-purposes with that of adventurers pursuing fortune and glory.

To determine which fey creature your party comes across, roll on Table 4.3.4:

TABLE 4.3.4

Fey - Grasslands

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Brownie
3	Harmona
4-6	Sprite

Brownie (B2). Brownies are more commonly found in inhabited areas, but finding them in the wilderness is not unknown. If there is a farmstead or other settlement nearby their presence may bleed over into the surrounding area. If they lived in a community that met with disaster, they may have no choice to wander. Your party is spotted and tracked by one brownie in difficult straits. It waits for your party to make a rest halt, at which point it tries to filch what it needs. If it's hungry, it takes all rations from one party member. If it's sick or injured, it looks for a *healing potion*. Have it make a Stealth check against the highest Perception DC in your party; or if it's night, against the highest Perception DC among those keeping watch.

If it succeeds, it takes what it wants without your party noticing. But it leaves behind something of greater value in return — a gemstone, or perhaps a *shortsword +1*. If it fails and your party catches it in the act, it is up to you as GM whether it flees or tries to plead its case. ➤

Harmona (B3). Your party gets a rare glimpse of one of these powerful, but elusive fey. If they can figure out how to get its attention and win it over, it can provide them with helpful knowledge. Perhaps it even travels with them for a while as a friendly NPC. If someone in your party speaks Sylvan, you may have them make a DC 20 Diplomacy check (in addition to luring it with sweets) to convince the harmona to help them:

Critical Success: It is willing to travel with them as their long-term companion.

Success: It is willing to use its *detect magic* spell on their behalf and share local knowledge.

Failure: It flies off, refusing to help your party.

Critical Failure: It takes such offense at whatever your party did or said that it might just attack them.

Scaling the Encounter: It's easy enough to avoid a hostile encounter with a harmona; just leave it alone. In that sense, your party's relative level should not matter. On the other hand, if your party wins over a harmona as an ally, it could make such short work of encounters that are properly scaled for a low-level party, so that it steals their thunder. In this sense, you might want to re-roll for a different fey encounter if your party's average level is lower than 9, or use one weak harmona if their average level is 9-10. On the other hand, having such a capable ally might allow your party to defeat an enemy that would just be too difficult to handle without it.

Sprites (B1, B2, B3). Sprites are the quintessential fey creatures because of their diminutive size and their penchant for (mostly) harmless mischief. However, they do come in different varieties with some subtle differences between them. Roll on Table 4.3.4.1 to determine the kind of sprite your party encounters:

TABLE 4.3.4.1

Sprites - Grasslands

d10	ENCOUNTER
1	Draxie (B3)
2-3	Grig (B1)
4	Melixie (B3)
5-7	Pixie (B1)
8-10	Sprite (B1)

➤

As a general rule, an encounter with sprites involves them using their Innate Spells to trick your party for the sprites' own amusement. As minor exceptions to this rule, sprites may use their Luminous Fire ability to spark your party's curiosity and lead them on a wild goose chase, while pixies may use their pixie dust and draxies their breath weapon to beguile your party.

Scaling the Encounter: Scaling an encounter with sprites just right is not a crucial matter, since they're not attacking your party to kill them. However, an encounter group of 1d4 if your party's average level is 1, or one elite of that kind for each level in your party's average level makes sense for sprites. For melixies, use an encounter group of 1d4 if your party's average level is lower than 5; if your party's average level is 5 or higher use an encounter group of one elite melixie for each level in your party's average level. For grigs, use an encounter group of one for each level in your party's average level, and you may freely substitute one elite grig for three grigs. You may use one draxie or one pixie for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level, or one elite of that kind for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Fox (B3). Foxes restrict their predation to small animals and insects, so they're not much of a danger to an adventuring party. However, they are sly creatures and a party camping for the night or taking a rest halt may lose something useful to them. A pack of 1d6 red foxes sniffs out that your party has something that they want — it may be an animal familiar small enough to eat, traveler's rations, medicinal herbs, or even just a shiny and attractive object. Have them make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC as they try to infiltrate their camp:

Critical Success: The foxes get in and out without your party noticing at all.

Success: They succeed in stealing something, but your party notices them on the way out.

Failure: Your party notice them before they can snag anything.

Critical Failure: Your party notices them before they can even make a move.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3 use one elite red fox for the encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use one fading fox (B3). If your party's average level is higher than 5, use a pack of one fading fox for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Hippogriff (B2). Your party sees a hippogriff circling overhead, looking for its next meal, or on the ground dealing with its prey. Hippogriffs are aggressive hunters and your party's pack animals make a tempting target, but the presence of armed humans and humanoids may deter them. Whether or not this is a hostile encounter is up to you.

Hippogriffs may be a kind of prey as well as predators. If hippogriffs are used as mounts in your world, it must follow that captive adults have value as breeding stock, and chicks captured from the wild also have value because they are still young enough to be tamed. To that end, you may allow your party a DC 20 Survival check to trace a path to the hippogriff's lair (likely to be sited atop a large rock or on a hilltop) after observing it for a while. If your party has someone capable of flight, reduce the DC to 15. To subdue an adult hippogriff to the point where it can be bound and held captive, it must be successfully grappled with both hands and kept in grappled condition for 10 consecutive rounds.

Scaling the Encounter: If you want to stage a hostile encounter and you need to make it more of a challenge, use a herd of one elite hippogriff for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

Horses (B1). Your party comes across a small herd of horses. The only questions are, how many of them are there, and do they belong to someone else? Horse encounters are unlikely to be hostile, although they may put up a fight if you try to wrangle them before they've been broken. Roll on Table 4.3.5 to determine the nature of the horse encounter:

TABLE 4.3.5

Horses - Grasslands

d10	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Riding Horses
4-7	Riding Ponies
8-9	War Horses
10	War Ponies

Riding Horses. Your party comes across 1d6 riding horses grazing, or moving at a walk. It's up to you ➤

to decide whether they're wild, or if they belong to someone — and if the latter, is their herder nearby (see Table 4.5)? Have they escaped from someone who would pay a reward for their return?

If they are wild, they can be wrangled. To wrangle a riding horse, it must be successfully grappled with both hands and kept in grappled condition for 6 consecutive rounds. At that point, it becomes docile and whoever grappled it may ride it or use it as a pack animal. Because of its size, two medium-size creatures may grapple with the same riding horse simultaneously, and as long as one of them maintains its grappled condition, this counts toward the requirement for wrangling it.

Riding Ponies. Instead of riding horses, your party comes upon 2d4 riding ponies. The same considerations about whether they are wild or astray from their owner apply. A wild riding pony may also be wrangled in the same manner as riding horses, although only one medium-size creature or two small-size creatures may try to wrangle it at any one time.

War Horses. Your party comes across 1d4 war horses. Whether their owners were killed in battle, or they just escaped from the stable, is up to you. If the former, they wear empty saddles. War horses do not need to be wrangled; they have been broken and disciplined, so they're used to working with human or humanoid riders. However, they're also trained fighters and if you don't approach them just right in a situation like this, they'll take you for the enemy and attack. If your party approaches the warhorses, require a DC 15 Nature check to avoid setting the horses off.

War Ponies. Instead of war horses, your party comes upon 2d4 war ponies. The same considerations apply to them as to war horses; they're just smaller, trained and kept to accommodate smaller riders.

Hyena (B1). Your party comes across a lone hyena scavenging a carcass. It looks up at them as they pass, instinctively concerned that something has come to steal the food source that it found fair and square. You may require a DC 15 Nature or Survival check if your party wishes to avoid a confrontation. If it fails, someone makes a false move that sets off the hyena.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one hyena for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite hyena for three hyenas. You may also freely substitute one hyaenodon

(B1) for three hyenas and one elite hyaenodon for four hyenas.

Kangaroo (B3). Kangaroos are not aggressive, but as with any wild animal how they respond to an encounter can seem unpredictable to a human or humanoid. If it had spotted your party at a distance, it would have hopped away. Now, it's too late. You may have your party make a DC 10 Nature or Survival check to avoid setting it off. Kangaroos may be basically peaceful creatures, but they have a mean kick when they decide to use it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-5, use a mob of 1d6 kangaroos for the encounter group. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one elite kangaroo for each level in your party's average level.

Leshy (B1, B2, B3). Open plains accommodate these intelligent and ambulatory plants just as well as lush forests, but a slightly different mix of them call grasslands their home. See below for suggestions on determining the encounter group.

Despite the fact that they can move about, leshys do not wander. If you encounter them, it is because you have stumbled into a patch of land they have determined to defend. You may require that your party make a successful DC 15 Nature or Perception check to realize that what looks like a jumble of vegetation has appendages and pairs of eyes that follow them. Leshys are not necessarily hostile; how they respond to your party depends on whether or they sense that your party is a threat to them and their home. If you wish, you may have your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check in dealing with the leshys:

Critical Success: The leshys like your party and let them rest here. If your party is attacked (by a pursuer, for instance), they fight alongside them as friendly NPCs.

Success: The leshys like your party well enough. They agree to help your party by using their *Speak with Plants* spell to glean useful knowledge from some trees who have lived here for a long time. They allow your party to stay here for one rest period, but no more.

Failure: The leshys makes a noise that ought to be interpreted as skepticism. They tell your party to move along.

Critical Failure: Whatever your party said or did, the leshys interprets it as hostile. They attack.

Scaling the Encounter: Construct the encounter group as you please, or according to the type of plant life that dominates in that particular area. Use a baseline encounter group of one vine leshy (B3) for each level in

your party's average level. You may freely substitute two gourd leshys (B1) and/or sunflower leshys (B2) for three vine leshys.

Lizard (B1, B2). Roll on Table 4.3.6 to determine the manner of reptile that faces your party:

TABLE 4.3.6

Lizard - Grasslands

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-4	Frilled Lizard
5-6	Shocker Lizard

Frilled Lizard (B1). When they are in a mood to hunt, giant frilled lizards are fearsome predators because their size, strength and speed give them considerable advantages on the open savannah. However, when they are not hungry it's not hard to deter them from attacking. If you party wishes to avoid an aggressive encounter, have them make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check:

Critical Success: They actually frighten off the lizard.

Success: The lizard isn't hungry and can't be bothered to attack.

Failure: They have succeeded in mildly irritating the lizard. Have them make another skill check to determine the final result. Any degree of failure on this second check indicates a lizard attack.

Critical Failure: They have antagonized the lizard into attacking.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 3-5, use one weak giant frilled lizard for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use one elite giant frilled lizard.

Shocker Lizard (B2). A lone shocker lizard flees at your party's approach, but a group of two or more may put up a fight. Have your party to make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone in your party makes a false move that triggers an attack. Zap!

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak shocker lizards. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use a pack of one shocker lizard for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level.

Porcupine (B3). Porcupines are neither aggressive nor predatory and what armament they do have is mostly defensive in nature. However, giant porcupines are confident enough in their size that they can charge a creature perceived as a threat and force it do deal with the weapons it possesses. Your party comes across one of these giant porcupines as it scuttles across the forest floor or browses in the undergrowth. Have them make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that sets off the porcupine and causes it to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: Porcupines are mostly solitary creatures, but they sometimes forage in groups, especially in winter. If you want to create a more challenging encounter, use a prickle of one giant porcupine for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite giant porcupine for three giant porcupines.

Rats (B1). There are rats in a pleasant and fertile environment: What a surprise. 1d4 giant rats sniff out your party's food rations as they cross paths with each other. They don't attack party members who don't interfere with their basic mission of acquiring food. But unless they are stopped, they eventually account for all of your party's rations, making off with what they don't eat on the spot.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3, use one rat swarm (B1) for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite rat swarm for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Rhinoceros (B2). Your party interrupts one rhinoceros as it grazes. If they're in a temperate or tropical zone, it's a rhinoceros; if they're in a sub-arctic zone it's a wooly rhinoceros (B2). It is not aggressive — as a herbivore, it does not hunt for food. But if it feels threatened it becomes a dangerous foe. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that the rhinoceros interprets as a threat. It charges.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use one weak rhinoceros for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use a herd of one rhinoceros for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

For wooly rhinoceros, use a weak normal rhinoceros with the Cold Adaptation ability if your party's average level is lower than 4. If your party's average level is 4-5, use one weak wooly rhinoceros for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use a herd of one wooly

rhinoceros for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

Skunk (B3). Your party stumbles upon a skunk lurking in the undergrowth. Have them make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that sets off the skunk and it directs its Spray Musk ability at the nearest party member.

Scaling the Encounter: Skunks are solitary creatures. If you wish to make the encounter more challenging (and stinkier) use an elite skunk for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 2, use one elite giant skunk (B3).

Sphinx (B1). Your party crosses paths with a wandering sphinx that has gone abroad in search of knowledge and adventure. It spots your party as a potential source of new lore and it attempts to strike up a conversation with them. An encounter with a sphinx is therefore more likely to be academic than combative, so it is up to you as GM how deeply you want to pursue it. It may try to trade lore for lore, or it may feel that it owes your party a favor if they can teach it something it did not know before. Alternately, if it intuits that it knows something that would be of value to your party, it challenges them to solve a riddle in exchange. This may be an opportunity to advance the storyline of your campaign if you feel that your players need a hint. Or the sphinx could offer them a sidequest, helping it find a source of obscure knowledge that is supposedly located somewhere around here.

Sportlebore (B2). Your party spots what looks like perfectly good traveler's rations scattered on the ground. It looks quite edible. It's up to them whether they want to claim it as their own under the legal precedent set by *Finders v. Losers*. Do they pass up a free lunch? However, if they eat it they discover to their cost that there was a sportlebore among the goodies.

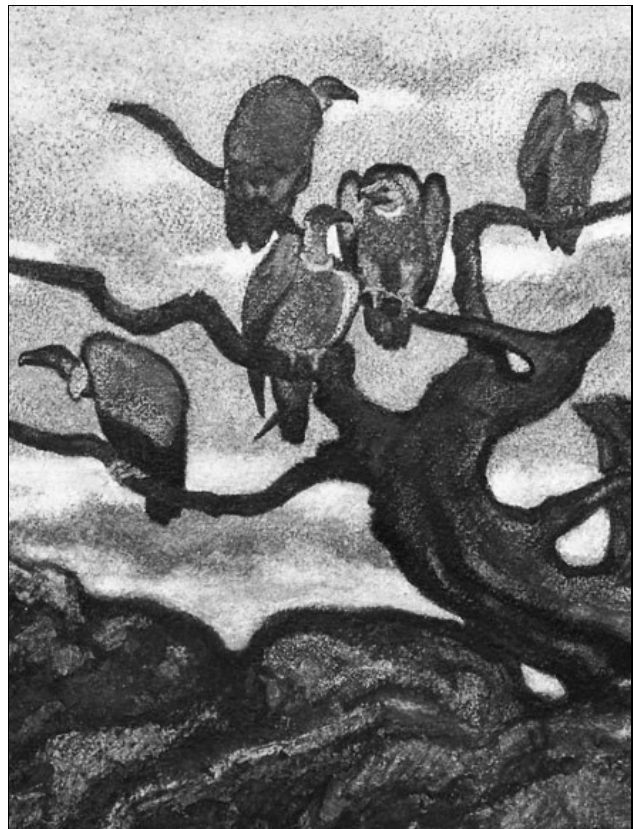
Scaling the Encounter: Eating a sportlebore may unleash a sportlebore swarm, which is probably a bit much to handle for a low-level party. If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak sportlebore swarm. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an elite sportlebore swarm.

Terror Bird (B3). These axe-beaked flightless birds are mean, but they're not as aggressive as their name suggests. Your party comes across one terror bird chasing down small animals across the plain. It doesn't like having its hunt interrupted, but it's not a sure thing that it attacks. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone has made a false move that angers the terror bird, which then charges the party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak terror bird for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one terror bird for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite terror bird for three terror birds.

Thunderbird (B2). Violent thunderstorms can come suddenly to the plains, but not all of them are the result of weather fronts clashing. Thunderbirds come down from their mountain eyries to demand obeisance from puny creatures who live in the lands below. They tend to react poorly when they do not receive the respect they feel that they deserve, and their wrath takes the form of a sudden storm.

You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to realize that the fast-moving storm cloud they see has an enormous living creature at its heart. It's a thunderbird on its way to punish a farming community that refuses to pay it tribute. If your party hails the thunderbird and tries to negotiate with it, you may require a DC 25 Diplomacy check to get it stay its wrath. If they fail, they have an opportunity for a quick sidequest, warning the thunderbird's target and earning their gratitude for giving them time to get out of the way.



If it's dead, they're going to find it. Any kind of carcass will do. Human, hippogriff, horse, a free lunch is a free lunch and vultures are the cleanup crew of the grasslands.

Vulture (B3). When your party spots what appears to be an oversized vulture picking at a carcass on the open plain, they might want to exercise some care. Ordinary vultures are mere scavengers and can be chased off without much trouble. However, a giant vulture is a different matter. Confident in its size and strength, it is prepared to defend its food source against all comers. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, a party member makes a false move that provokes the vulture to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak giant vulture for the encounter. Otherwise, use a flock of one giant vulture for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level as the encounter group. You may freely substitute one elite giant vulture for two giant vultures.

Weasels (B3). Someone at the front of your party's formation accidentally steps into a burrow housing enough weasels to cause trouble when they get angry and defend their home. You may allow your party a DC 10 Perception or Survival check to spot the burrow in time to avoid it or give warning to whomever is about to disturb it. The burrow houses a pack of 2d4 weasels.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish to make the encounter more challenging, use an encounter group of one elite weasel for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one megalictis (B3) for four elite giant weasels, or one elite megalictis for six elite giant weasels.

Treasure: There is a 10% chance that they are actually mink, and their pelts would be of some value to furriers — 1 gp for normal-sized mink, and 3 gp for a megalictis. You may require a successful DC 15 Nature check for your party to tell the difference between mink and weasels.

Quetz Couatl (B2). As far as your party goes, an encounter with a quetz couatl is probably best understood as a chance to help your party along when they're struggling. With its impressive size, spectacular coloration and ability to fly, its appearance is purpose-designed for a bit of divine intervention, and that's how you can use it. The quetz couatl may be acting on behalf of a good-aligned deity followed by a party member, or it may be following them of its own accord, waiting to step in when they seem to be at a dead end.

This assumes that your party is good-aligned or, at worst (from the quetz couatl's point of view) lawful neutral. If your party is predominantly evil, it may choose to hinder them instead. Perhaps it steps in to defend good-aligned creatures from your party.

TABLE 4.4

Humanoids - Grasslands

d100	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Athach
3-7	Bugbear
8-12	Catfolk
13-15	Eunemvro
16-19	Giant, Hill
20-27	Gnoll
28-35	Gnomes
36-45	Goblins
46-49	Hag, Green
50-59	Halflings
60-65	Hobgoblins
66-68	Kovintus
69-73	Ogre
74-83	Orcs
84-87	Ratfolk
88-91	Spriggan
92-95	Tengu
96-100	Werecreature

Athach (B2). Even from a distance, it's hard to miss these enormous brutes as they cross the open plain. Your party sees one athach on its way to terrorize an isolated settlement that it has identified as a target for its sadistic rampage. It has a purpose and a plan in mind, so it is unlikely to tarry on account of your party — but if your party decides to interfere with it, it won't hesitate to bat them aside with a backhand blow.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 10, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 10-11, use a weak athach for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 15, use an elite athach.

Bugbear (B1). Bugbears like to terrorize villages and isolated homesteads, so the bugbear with which your party crosses paths is most likely looking for such a place, or on its way to one that with which it is already familiar. Now that it has come upon your party, however, they look like as good a target as any as it lurks in the tall grass or behind a rock. On the other hand, if it is unfamiliar with the area, it may try to coerce your party into sharing local knowledge.

Depending on the bugbear's motivations in this situation, you may have it make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds, it gets to use its Bushwhack ability against a party member.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one bugbear thug for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite bugbear thug or two bugbear tormentors for three bugbear thugs to keep down the size of the group.

Catfolk (B1). Your party encounters one catfolk pouncer possessed with wanderlust and traveling the world, as is the habit with amurrans. Either their paths literally cross, or it hails them with a friendly greeting while resting against a rock. Or perhaps they surprise it while it is rooting around for silver grass. It is eager to know what your party is doing here, but it has no ulterior motive than pure curiosity. It freely shares whatever knowledge it has.

A catfolk pouncer may make a useful NPC in the sort of encounters that low-level parties are likely to face. You may require your party to make a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check to convince it to travel a while in their company and share in the adventure. However, if your party is predominantly evil, a critical success is required.

Scaling the Encounter: The farther from catfolk's tropical homelands, the more likely you will find them traveling alone. If this encounter happens in a savannah (i.e., a tropical grassland), use an encounter group of 1d4 catfolk pouncers; otherwise, there is only one. If you want to raise the level of the encounter to make it worth the while of a higher-level party, use elite catfolk pouncers.

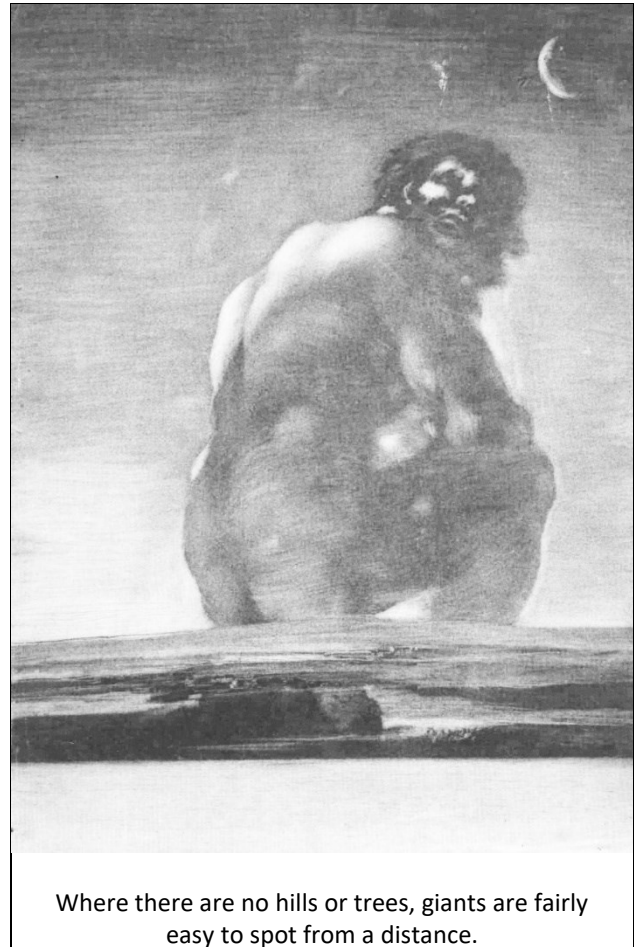
Eunemvro (B3). If your party comes upon one of these odd, extraplanar humanoids traversing the plains, it is a reasonable bet that credible information that the dead from an ancient battlefield have been raised through necromancy has drawn them here. Destroying undead is the main — if not sole — focus of eunemvro's existence. Eunemvro are aloof and it rarely occurs to them to ask strangers for help, so it's not a given that it offers your party a sidequest to come along with it. In fact, it becomes hostile if it suspects that your party harbors someone who practices necromancy. However, it may be persuaded to accompany your party for a while if destroying undead are involved; you may require a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check.

Scaling the Encounter: If you suspect that the encounter will turn hostile, use a weak eunemvro for the encounter if your party's average level is lower than 5. Conversely, if your party's average level is higher than 8, use an encounter group of one elite eunemvro for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level..

Giant, Hill (B1). In the plains, giants are not hard to spot from a distance. However, this doesn't stop hill giants from coming down from their lairs in nearby hills and

mountains to raid settlements and rob other targets of opportunity. One hill giant spots your party as someone with something worth robbing.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak hill giant for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an encounter group of one elite hill giant for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.



Where there are no hills or trees, giants are fairly easy to spot from a distance.

Gnolls (B1). Your party crosses paths with one gnoll hunter scouting for isolated homesteads with anything worth taking, or traders or travelers taking their chances in the wilderness. Your party is bound to be better armed than a suitable target of opportunity for the gnoll, so it probably has better important things to do than hassle them. However, it's quite possible that it will bully them for useful information and if it senses weakness it might even attack them despite being outnumbered.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak gnoll hunter for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one gnoll hunter for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may substitute one elite gnoll cultist and/or one gnoll

sergeant for two gnoll hunters as the group's leaders. If you want to keep down the size of the encounter, you may freely substitute one elite gnoll hunter for two gnoll hunters.

If the gnoll group is relatively large this may be an actual raiding party. They may be on their way back from a successful raid, spattered with blood and taking with them captives whom they will sacrifice to their demon god. In either case, they ignore your party if your party declines to interfere with them, guided as they are by their primary purpose.

Treasure: If the gnolls are coming back from a successful raid, use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the fruits of their labor.

Gnomes. Your party crosses paths with a small party of gnomes. They may be traders traveling between settlements, in which case the encounter group consists of 2d6 merchants and one guard for protection. Or they may be freelance mechanics who travel between settlements, looking to sell their services, in which case the encounter group consists of 2d4 apprentices accompanied by their master — use one smith as a stand-in for whatever you decide for their mechanical specialty. A third possibility is that they are traveling entertainers: 1d4 troubadours or a troupe of 1d4+2 acrobats.

The gnomes are not aggressive. It won't take much prompting to get them to trade with your party and share whatever lore they've collected. They can be an easy way to make sure your players get ahold of needed supplies. They might even provide your party with a sidequest. As you can see, they travel with very little protection, so they might well ask your party to travel with them. Perhaps they just had a run-in with a monster that makes them particularly jumpy.

Treasure: If these gnomes are traveling merchants, they should carry trade goods and/or coins in addition to their pocket change. Use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value.

Goblins (B1). Your party spots a group of 2d4 goblin warriors from a nearby lair — most likely a small cave carved into a rise in the terrain. They may be patrolling their neighborhood, or they may be looking for raiding targets for their tribe. As small as they are, they're also mean and cocky. So it should come as no surprise when they treat your party as a target of opportunity.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak goblin warriors. If your party's average level is 4-6, use an encounter group of 1d4 elite goblin warriors. If your party's average level

is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite goblin warrior for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one goblin commando (B1), goblin pyro (B1), or goblin dog (B1) for one elite goblin warrior or two goblin warriors. You may also substitute one goblin war chanter (B1) for one elite goblin warrior or two goblin warriors as the group's leader.

A large group of goblins is likely to be a raiding party on their way out. Or they may be a raiding party on their way back, with loot and 1d6 human and/or humanoid captives. Consider that there is a 5% chance that any given captive is someone of consequence, who could provide your party with a significant reward for their safe return home. In either case, the encounter group has more important things to do than deal with your party. However, if your party finds a goblin lair, they fight to the death to defend it. In addition to the normal treasure found in the lair, there are 1d8 human and/or humanoid captives bound and eager for rescue.

Treasure: If the encounter group is a returning raiding party, use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value.



Hags live on the fringes of the towns and settled areas that provide their victims, but they keep lairs out in the wilderness for when the townsfolk have had enough.

Hag, Green (B1). Green hags live beyond the fringes of the settled areas in which they most easily find victims, but only just so. They keep their lairs out in the wilderness, where they also ensnare unwary travelers. Your party comes upon one green hag in transit between the nearest settlement and its hiding place. Have your party make a DC 15 Perception check to determine whether they see the hag before it sees them. If it succeeds, they see the hag in its natural form, loping across the landscape. If it fails, the hag spots them first, and it has time to disguise itself as a young woman injured and in pain. As soon as one party member gets within its striking distance, it reveals its true form and attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak green hag for the encounter. If your party's average level is 8-11, use one elite green hag. If your party's average level is higher than 11, use a coven of three green hags for the encounter group.

Halflings. Your party crosses paths with a group of 1d10+2 halflings. They may be farmers from homesteads scattered in the wilderness, who have joined together to share a wagon and take their produce to market. It's up to you whether they're on their way to market, or on their way back, with their pony-drawn wagon being either full of foodstuffs or half-full of trade goods. In this case, treat them as farmers. There's no reason why they wouldn't be willing to trade with your party and share knowledge of the area. In fact, they might be willing to hire your party to escort them wherever they're going if they think that there are dangerous monsters about.

It's also possible that they're an adventuring party, 1d6+2 in number. In this case, treat one of them as an acolyte and the rest as guards. Treat them, too, as a potential source of useful information for your party. They're a good-natured lot, but if the subject of what they're up to arises, it should be clear to your party that these bold, but naive halflings have bitten off more than they can chew. If your party decides to tag along to keep them out of trouble, this creates a nice little sidequest for them.

Scaling the Encounter: If you want to run a more robust encounter with halfling adventurers, treat them as a prophet and poachers.

Hobgoblins (B1). Your party comes across a lone hobgoblin soldier. It may be patrolling the area near its lair — a heavily guarded clearing or a small stockade situated on barren, elevated ground — or it may be a courier shuttling back and forth between other hobgoblin settlements. It could also be a straggler hurrying to join its comrades at their mustering point. If war is brewing in this corner of the world, hobgoblin

mercenaries ought to have plenty of business. A sentry would want to know your party's business in being here, but otherwise it probably has more important business than attacking your party.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one hobgoblin soldier for each level in your party's average level. You may substitute one goblin dog (B1) for one hobgoblin soldier as long as goblin dogs do not outnumber hobgoblins. Also, you may freely substitute one elite hobgoblin soldier or one hobgoblin archer (B1) for four hobgoblin soldiers. You may substitute one hobgoblin general (B1) for six hobgoblin soldiers as the group's leader.

A large group of hobgoblins indicates that the winds of war are brewing — although ultimately, that sort of thing should be determined by what else is going on in your campaign world. Unless your party has stumbled upon the hobgoblin lair, a large hobgoblin encounter group would be a war party on their way to or from the war zone. They have more important business than attacking your party; in fact, they might even size them up and try to recruit them to fill out the ranks.

Also, consider that flat, open terrain offers the perfect environment for employing cavalry — in other words, warg mounts. Feel free to substitute one warg for one two hobgoblin soldiers. If you wish, you could use an encounter group with more wargs than hobgoblins; just consider that the hobgoblin cavalry have spare mounts. This is a common practice with cavalry of all sorts.

Kovintus (B3). Kovintus on the plains live in small dwellings burrowed into a natural rise in the terrain. Your party meets one kovintus geomancer as it takes a recreational stroll; or perhaps it is on its way to leave an offering for a local deity. If your party wishes to speak with it, have them make a DC 15 Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: The kovintus is willing to share its maps and use its primal spells for their benefit.

Success: It shares its maps, but offers no more.

Failure: It is wary of your party and it does not agree to help them at all.

Critical Failure: Your party angers the kovintus to the point where it attacks them.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish, you may use an encounter group of one elite kovintus geomancer for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Ogre (B1). Your party spots one ogre warrior out scouting for potential raiding targets on behalf of its

tribe. It is brutish enough and sufficiently confident in its powers to try to take them captive, or kill them outright if they resist.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak ogre warrior for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one ogre for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite ogre warrior for two ogre warriors, or three ogre gluttons (B1) for four ogre warriors. You may also substitute one ogre boss (B1) or one onidoshi (B2) for two ogre warriors as the group's leader.



Any ogre warrior traveling alone is going to be confident enough to tackle any party single-handedly.

Orcs (B1). Your party crosses paths with 1d6 orc brutes. They're most likely a scout party, although they may already have found a vulnerable target small enough for a band of this size to raid. As brutal as they are, there's no guarantee that they'll pay your party much attention. Their leader may look your party over and decide that they're not worth the bother. But they may also decide to interrogate your party for information about the surrounding area, and they'll easily resort to violence if your party is slow to cooperate.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak orc brutes. If your party's average level is 4-5, use an encounter group of 1d6 orc brutes. If your party's average level is higher than 5 use a baseline encounter group of one orc warrior (B1)

for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite orc warrior for two orc warriors. You may also substitute one orc warchief (B1) for one orc warrior as the group's leader.

Treasure: A large orc group is likely an actual raiding party, either headed to their target or on their way back from a successful attack. In the latter case, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of their plunder. Consider that there is also a 20% chance that the bandits have with them 1d4 captives. The identity of this captive is left to you as GM, as it should depend on local circumstances and fit into your campaign world.

Ratfolk (B1). If ysoki are part of your campaign world, consider that grasslands offer them the friendliest of wilderness environments. They find ample food in fertile flatlands and isolation from their enemies at the same time. They like to site their communities near trade routes that allow their merchants to do a little business with the wider world. Your party crosses paths with one ratfolk grenadier out scavenging for useful items.

Ratfolk are suspicious of outsiders, and upon spotting your party this lone grenadier might try to hide in tall grass. If you decide that it does so, have it make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds, it is concealed when it challenges them. If they can overcome its distrust — you may require a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check — it may be willing to share local knowledge and trade alchemical tools and ingredients.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak ratfolk grenadier. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one ratfolk grenadier for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite ratfolk grenadier for two ratfolk grenadiers.

If the group consists of four or more ratfolk, they have a cart full of trade goods and a draft animal and they're on their way to join a caravan. In this case, gaining their trust could result in a sidequest working for them as caravan guards.

Spriggan (B2). Your party has the misfortune to cross paths with one spriggan bully out hunting or foraging. However, it may be looking for tools of subterfuge rather than food — poisons or venomous animals, or it may be on its way to a meeting with a co-conspirator. These joyless mutant gnomes have malicious hearts, but they do not use violence without purpose. The spriggan bully regards your party with suspicion, but it need not attack them. It's playing a long game, and it might prefer to get useful information out of your party — or even try to enlist them as allies in a plot against another member of

its tribe. Perhaps it wants to depose the current leader, or perhaps it has a score to settle. Maybe it figures that your party can help, in exchange for sparing their lives.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one spriggan bully for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite spriggan bully for two spriggan bullies. You may also substitute one spriggan warlord for two spriggan bullies as the group's leader.

Tengu (B1). Given that these humanoids with crow-like features are widely distrusted, it's a safe bet that a tengu encountered on the road is an outcast of some sort. Probably, it has been kicked out of a settlement on suspicion of being up to no good.

Your party crosses paths with one tengu sneak. It is not aggressive, but it may be desperate. So it resorts to the skills that got it into trouble in the first place. At your discretion, it flags down your party and strikes up a conversation, perhaps offering useful local knowledge to keep them distracted. You may have it make a Society check against the highest Intimidation DC in your party as it weighs the risks and rewards of trying to pick a pocket. Success indicates that it has decided to go for it — i.e., your party has failed to scare it off. It then targets the character with the lowest Intimidation DC.

Scaling the Encounter: It's almost unheard of to find a large group of tengu wandering the wilderness. However, if you want to create a more challenging encounter, use one elite tengu sneak for the encounter, or a group of one normal tengu sneak for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level. Half of them try to distract your party from the other half trying to pickpocket them.

Werecreature (B1, B2). To determine what manner of werebeast your party encounters, roll on Table 4.4.1:

TABLE 4.4.1	
Werecreature - Grasslands	
d8	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Wereboar
4-5	Wererat
6-8	Werewolf

All werecreatures assume their animal form if the encounter comes down to combat, although they may choose their hybrid form instead if they have access to a weapon.

Wereboar (B2). A wereboar met by chance was ➤

most likely an unfortunate hunter who didn't realize that the boar at which he aimed his bow was really a lycanthrope. Or it might have been a herder who presented an isolated target. It goes about looking for victims to share its fate, hoping that a lone boar will lure someone into engaging with it. A party of adventurers could offer it an attractive target — confident in its ability to take at least one of them and drive the others off, it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one wereboar for each multiple of two in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite wereboar for three wereboars.

Wererat (B1). Rats are not much welcome in farm country. Your party comes across a wererat driven into the wilderness along with the rats with whom it kept company. Now, it dreams of revenge on the farmers or millers who defeated its companions. It hopes to create a party of wererats who will give them more than they can handle — and your party looks like it will make nice lycanthropes.

It appears to your party in its human form, pretending to be a traveler in distress who hopes to travel with your party for protection. It tries to slip toward the back of the party formation and waits for a time when everyone's back is turned to it. Alternately, if there are ratfolk nearby, it may approach your party in its hybrid form — essentially disguising itself as a relatively non-aggressive creature to lull them into dropping their guard. In this case, you may allow your party a DC 15 Nature or Survival check to see through the ruse; it doesn't work as often as one might think.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak wererat. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one elite wererat for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Werewolf (B1). A werewolf spots your party and cannot turn down the opportunity to claim more victims. However, it is clever enough to approach them in its human form, pretending to be a lost traveler in distress, or a peddler waylaid by bandits — any cover story that ought to evoke sympathy will do. Once your party gets close and drops its guard, it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak werewolf. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use one elite werewolf for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

TABLE 45

Humans - Grasslands

d20	ENCOUNTER
1	Adventurers
2-4	Bandits
5-7	Farmers
8	Gatherers
9-10	Herders
11	Hunters
12-14	Merchants
15-16	Military
17-18	Nomads
19-20	Pilgrims

Adventurers. Unless your party contains all of the adventurers in your campaign world, it's at least theoretically possible that they'll run into another adventuring party crossing the plains. Perhaps they're pursuing the same objective as your party. Perhaps they have a different mission; perhaps they're headed for a site that your party knows nothing about (like ancient ruins said to hold lost treasures). Perhaps they're lost and starving, or wounded, or cursed.

How they react to your party depends on a variety of factors. Are they rivals pursuing the same goal? If not, perhaps this party is willing to share useful information. In fact, if your party is stuck and having a hard time advancing the storyline of your campaign, a friendly encounter like this can help steer them in the right direction. Differences in alignment may also shape how the two parties react to each other.

Composition of this rival party is up to you and can vary according to circumstance. Any party in the wilderness would be well-advised to have someone accomplished in Survival, such as a ranger, with them. Conversely, a party that is struggling may be in a bad way precisely because no one is well-versed in Survival or Nature.

Scaling the Encounter: Unless there is some possibility that this encounter turns hostile, the relative level of the party is mainly a matter of affect. A higher-level party might project self-confidence and calm (or arrogance), while a beginning-level party might stumble about, unsure of themselves. If you're leaning towards a hostile encounter, however, consider that the total challenge level of the party should be your party's average level -2, more or less.

Bandits. Grasslands don't offer many places for a gang of bandits to shelter, but small caves and abandoned buildings may be found here and there. They can also get away with camping in the open, as long as they don't

stay in any one spot for too long. Besides, merchants and other travelers taking isolated country roads offer easy targets.

They may not target your party, as adventurers are usually too well-armed and too hard to bully. But they'll make an exception if your party carries a conspicuous and obviously valuable treasure, or they outnumber your party by at least three to two. It's also possible that they assume that your party is a posse sent out after them — or that your party intends to rob them of what they took from others by force.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak bandits. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one bandit for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite bandit for two bandits. You may also substitute one gang leader for three bandits as the group's leader.

Treasure: You may decide that your party has surprised the bandits in their lair. If so, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value and contents. Do so also if you decide that the bandits encountered are on their way back from a successful raid. Consider that there is also a 20% chance that the bandits have with them a high-value captive whom they intend to ransom. The identity of this captive is left to you as GM, as it should depend on local circumstances and fit into your campaign world.

Farmers. Your party crosses paths with 2d4 farmers and farm hands (treat them as farmers) from a nearby village or isolated farmstead traveling to or from market. They have a horse-drawn wagon; if they are going to market it's full of the fruits of their labor, and if they're returning from market they'll have household goods, tools and some extra coin with them.

The farmers are not hostile. They're used to seeing strangers as they travel on business. They're willing to trade as long as the exchange is fair; if your party wants to shortchange them it will take a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check. They may be rubes, but they're no fools. If your party has horses or mules available, they may even be interested in buying one on account of theirs being on its last legs, or just because they need another.

Gatherers. Your party comes across 1d4 gatherers collecting herbs and wild grasses, either for food or medicine. It's possible that your party surprises them, as they work hunched over and close to the ground. However, they are not hostile — they're just laborers with specialized knowledge out doing their job. They may be persuaded to help your party with local lore and/or

therapeutic concoctions made from whatever it is they're gathering (see *Treasure*). They may also ask your party to help them if they have reason to believe that they are in danger (perhaps they had a close brush with monsters recently).

Treat the gatherers as farmers armed with sickles or daggers.

Treasure: In addition to treasure carried on their person (use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value), the gatherers have a small stash of helpful non-magical items made from herbs or fungi. One such item could be a poultice that heals hit points equal to the Medicine skill ranks of whoever applies it after it is kept in place for 24 hours. But that is just one possibility. Use any such items that already exist in your campaign world. You can also consult "Narl's Herbal Remedies" in Ramen Sandwich Press' collection of new items, *Tome of the Utility Drawer, Volume I*.

Herders. Your party spots in the distance a herd of sheep, or goats, or some other livestock. There are 1d6 herders in their midst. They may be grazing the animals, or driving them to market. They are not hostile, and since they range far and wide by the nature of their work, they can provide your party with helpful local knowledge. They know all the nearby sources of water, the places where monsters are reputed to reside, gossip from any settlements in the area. They may even have specific knowledge that can help your party get where they want to go.

Treat herders as trackers, but without armor. They carry crooks or staves that they can wield two-handed as clubs.

Hunters. Your party comes across one hunter mounted on a riding horse looking for game among the herd animals that roam the grasslands. Unlike nomads (see below), this hunter comes from a settled people, and lives in the nearest village or town.

Depending on your party's appearance, a hunter may act with caution, even suspicion at first. Hunters understand that there are always strange folk about when you operate in a wilderness away from home. However, if your party is not hostile the hunter may be willing to help by trading goods and supplying food and local knowledge. You may have your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check to get on the hunter's good side.

Treat a hunter as an NPC from the forester class, with the size of the encounter group depending on which template you decide to use.

Scaling the Encounter: The encounter group consists of one forester for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one hunter or one elite foresters for two foresters.



Merchants often travel in groups with strings of beasts of burden both for sale and to carry their goods.

Merchants. If your party is playing it safe and sticking to roads or major trails, it's a reasonable bet that they share that route at some point with a caravan consisting of 2d6 merchants and 2d8 guards accompanying a string of horses, mules or other beasts of burden carrying trade goods.

As a natural first reaction to armed strangers, the caravan guards interpose themselves between your party and the pack animals. You may require a DC 15 Diplomacy check to convince them that your party means no harm. In turn, traveling merchants could help your party by selling them necessary items, exchanging hard money for treasure items or providing knowledge of just about anywhere in your campaign world (where is this caravan going, and where did it originate?). A caravan that is low on guards might offer to hire your party as additional security.

Treasure: Use the guidelines for pocket change in *How to Use This Book* to determine the total value of the caravaners' individual possessions. In addition, use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value of goods and/or hard money in the caravan.

Military. Flat, open ground and a relatively comfortable climate create a friendly environment for armies armed with pre-gunpowder weapons — especially armies with mounted soldiers. So if war is a part of your campaign world, your party could encounter an army or part of an army on its way to meet the enemy — or running away from the enemy.

An entire army on the march, or deployed for battle, can be seen from a long ways away in open terrain. However, they're certain to have more important things on their mind than dealing with a party of adventurers, so they're more useful for spectacle and flavor than a meaningful encounter.

A small group of soldiers is most likely a patrol, tasked with scouting ahead of the main army, or on its flanks. Their job is to locate the enemy and, conversely, to prevent enemy scouts from spotting their main force. They won't attack without reason to believe that your party is somehow connected to their enemy. However, they do stop your party to grill them for information, and possibly enlist their help with their mission. A larger group is most likely a unit of soldiers hurrying to join the main army — or running away from the fight.

Treat a typical, rank-and-file soldier as a guard. If mounted, the horse is a riding horse. Leaders should qualify as veterans or knights, and they get to ride warhorses if you want them on horseback.

Scaling the Encounter: As a rough guideline, the encounter group should consist of one guard for each level in your party's average level. You may substitute one watch officer for three guards and/or one captain of the guard for six guards to serve as the group's leader.

Nomads. The open spaces of the plains or steppes are the ideal environment for nomadic peoples who center their lives on herd animals. Whether such peoples live in your campaign world is up to you, but if they do your party comes across a group of 2d8 nomads mounted on riding horses. Despite having no fixed abode, they consider a wide stretch of the grasslands to be their territory and treat outsiders with suspicion. You may require a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check, ratcheted down to DC 10 if your party offers them gifts, to win over the nomads, who may then help your party by trading animals suitable as mounts or pack animals, or providing useful local knowledge about nearby settlements (settled peoples being their longstanding enemies), monster lairs, etc.

Treat one of the nomads — the leader of the group — as a tracker. Treat the rest as commoners who are armed and armored in same way as the leader.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish to stage a hostile encounter and need to increase the challenge, make the nomads elite if your party's average level is above 4.



Traveling groups are often accompanied by beasts of burden or other “professional” animals.

Pilgrims. The pantheon and nature of religious practice in your campaign world is up to you as the designer of that world. If it makes sense in that context, consider that your party crosses paths with a group of devotees traveling to (or perhaps from) a holy site. Perhaps they have a specific request to make of their deity (ending a drought or plague, curing someone of disease, etc.). Or perhaps it's just a ritual that their religion says they must perform regularly. Depending on how religions work in your world, perhaps their mission is to vandalize a shrine to a rival deity.

Their deity and alignment should dictate how they react to meeting your party. In any event, they are lightly armed at best and they may want to travel in your party's company for safety — especially if they know of a specific hazard in the area, like bandits or monsters. If friendly, they may also be willing to share local knowledge and trade with your party, or even share what divine magic capabilities they possess for your party's benefit.

Scaling the Encounter: Properly scaling the encounter may not matter unless you think that the encounter could turn hostile. In that case use baseline encounter group of one acolytes for level in your party's average level. You may substitute one prophet for two acolytes; or one zealot for four acolytes; or one priest for six acolytes.

Treasure: In addition to whatever treasure they carry on their person, pilgrims may carry with them an offering to their deity. At your discretion, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

TABLE 4.6

Watch Out! - Grasslands

d10	ENCOUNTER
1	Did You Hear That?
2-4	Hidden Hole
5-6	Loose Ground
7	Marshy Ground
8	Tracks
9	Tripping Hazard
10	Wind Gust

Did You Hear That? Choose a party member to make a DC 15 Survival or Nature check. If it fails, that character believes that he or she has heard a noise made by a nearby creature or a dangerous natural phenomenon carried on the wind. It can be as consequential as a dragon's roar in the distance, or as eerily intimate as a rattlesnake's rattle close by. A successful check means

that that party member realizes that this is an illusion; either it's not as close as it seems or it isn't real at all.

If you wish, roll on Table 4.6.1 for guidance on what your party thinks it hears:

TABLE 4.6.1	
Did you Hear That? - Grasslands	
d10	They Think They Hear...
1	Clash of Weapons
2	Dragon roaring overhead
3	Footsteps of a large group of humans of humanoids
4	Giant insects buzzing
5	Hoofbeats of horses or other herd animals
6	Rumbling from underground
7	Snake slithering through high grass
8	Voices speaking in Common
9	Voices speaking in Goblin
10	Wolves howling

Hidden Hole. Any given stretch of grasslands may be dotted with animal burrows. They're hard to spot, and it's easy to put your foot in one by accident. They may also weaken the ground above them, so that too much weight on it causes it to collapse underfoot. Have your party make a DC 15 Perception check to spot one that is right in their path in time to avoid it. Failure means that a party member in the front of party formation steps into it, with all of the hazards that come with an unexpected tumble. That party members suffers 1d6 falling damage, with a successful DC 15 Reflex save to halve the damage.

Loose Ground. The terrain undulates where your party is currently located, and they near the crest of a rise from which they can get a good view of the surrounding area. However, a party member — choose one, or a character who wants to get a good look around may literally step forward as the best candidate — steps onto a patch of loose soil that gives way. Treat it as a treacherous scree hazard, except that the damage from falling is only 1d10. Whee!

Marshy Ground. Your party comes upon a patch of ground where, for whatever reason, natural drainage patterns allow rainwater to pool, saturating the soil and turning it into muck. Have your party make a DC 15 Survival check to spot the quagmire before one party member in the front of the party formation steps right

into it. This doesn't behave like quicksand — there's no danger of drowning in it. But someone who steps into it is stuck up to the armpits and cannot get out without help. Pulling that character out requires a successful DC 15 Athletics check.

Tracks. Your party spots tracks that look like tracks that belong to a monster associated with treasure lairs. They may make a successful DC 15 Survival check to realize that they are very old, and they will not lead to anything useful. If it fails, they believe the tracks to be fresh, perhaps leading to an amusing (for you as GM, anyway) wild goose chase.

Tripping Hazard. Pick a party member at the front of the party formation. That character trips over an unseen obstacle — a rock sticking up out of the ground or a half-buried abandoned weapon or farm implement, for instance. He or she must make a successful Reflex save to avoid a hard fall that causes 1d4 damage — and perhaps no small embarrassment in the eyes of the other party members.

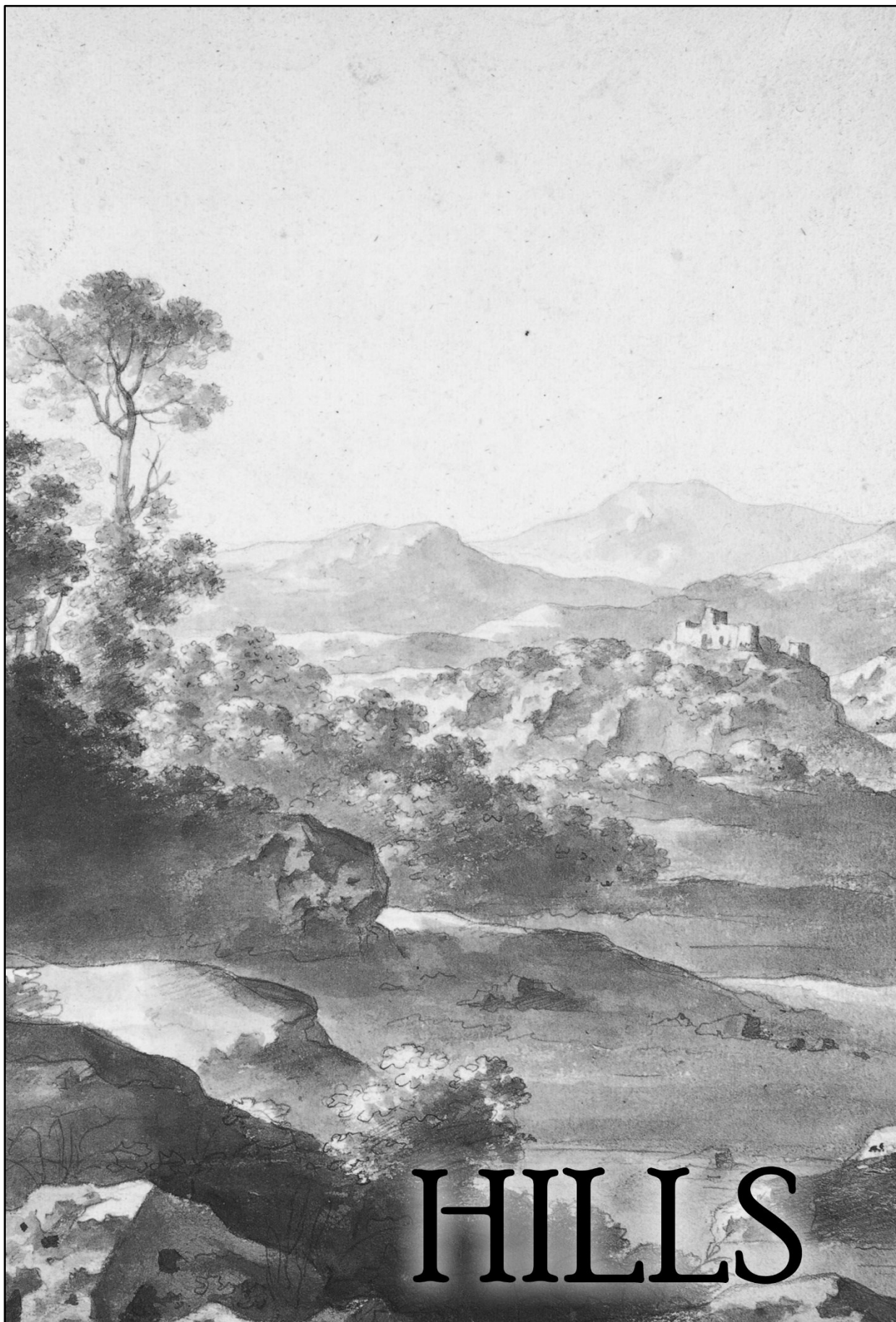
Wind Gust. A sudden gust of wind blows up and catches your party by surprise. If they have made camp for the night, their campfire is extinguished, forcing them to light another one. If they've already used all their wood and kindling, they'll have to go hunting in the dark for more. If they're carrying torches, they go out. If they're using lanterns, they may lose their grip (see below).

Regardless of whether it's day or night, any party member who is standing must make a DC 5 Strength check to avoid being knocked down. Anyone who is knocked down by the wind immediately loses grasp of anything held in hand. Fragile objects break when they are dropped. In addition, anyone who is knocked down while wearing his or her pack must make a DC 5 Reflex save to avoid the pack falling heavily so that anything containing liquid, such as canteens and potions, breaks and spills.

Clear Terrain

It's easy to think of grasslands as a kind of default setting. In a wargame, you'd probably call it clear terrain, the type that shows up blank on the map and costs the least movement points to cross. But grasslands are anything but boring, and you'll find as broad a range of beasts, humanoids and humans to encounter here as anywhere else. In that sense, they're anything but clear.





CHAPTER FIVE

Hills

What are Hills?

It feels odd to try to answer that question too closely. Instinctively, we all understand what hills are: They don't rise as high or as steeply as mountains, but they're anything but flat in the way that plains are flat. They're... you know... *hilly*. But pinning it down as a term of science with a precise definition gets tricky. Different authorities have different ideas about the point at which a hill becomes a mountain, and geographers have even used altitude above sea level instead of relative height to quantify the difference. Again, the most you can say for certain is that hills is that they're not plains, and they're not mountains.

Regardless, you'll know you're in hill country from the pull in your legs when you're walking up a hillside and the pull of gravity when you're going down the other side. Certain creatures favor hill country, and that also makes it distinctive. Many winged predators like to nest in the hills, both to gain vantage over the surrounding country, and to make their homes harder to find. Caves and hollows carved out of hillsides provide plenty of shelter for creatures that want it — as well as bandits, fugitives, hermits and other humans who don't want to be found. You can certainly find adventure if you head for the hills.

What Do You Find in Hills?

When you determine that a random encounter is in order, roll on Table 5.1 to determine the category:

TABLE 5.1

Encounter Type - Hills

d20	CATEGORY
1-5	Aggressive Creatures (Table 5.2)
6-11	Neutral Creatures (Table 5.3)
12-15	Humanoids (Table 5.4)
16-17	Humans (Table 5.5)
18-20	Watch Out! (Table 5.6)

Then, roll on the appropriate table to determine the creature, person or thing encountered.

The range at which an encounter starts should vary depending on local conditions. High ground, such as a hilltop or ridge, should give a commanding view of the surrounding area. Your party can spot potential foes

from a distance up there. On the other hand, undulations in the terrain and obstacles like boulders obstruct line of sight, so that your party may not see what they're up against until it's right up against them. This is especially true if someone or something is observing your party from higher ground without being seen itself, and it can remain concealed while closing the range.

TABLE 5.2

Aggressive Creatures - Hills

d100	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Ankhrav
4-5	Aurumvorax
6-7	Barghest
8-10	Basilisk
11-13	Bloodseekers
14-15	Cat, Leopard
19-21	Centipede
22-24	Chimera
25-27	Cyclops
28-29	Doprillu
30-32	Drake
33-34	Elemental, Earth
35-36	Elemental, Mephit
37-38	Ettin
39-40	Fey
41-42	Gorgon
43-44	Griffon
45	Grikkitog
48-52	Insects
53	Irlgaunt
54-56	Manticore
57-58	Medusa
59	Mukradi
6-61	Owlbear
62-64	Peryton
65-69	Plant
70-72	Roc
73-75	Scorpion
76-79	Snake
80-83	Spider
84-86	Troll
87-92	Undead
93-94	Warg
95-97	Wolf
98	Xill
99-100	Yeth Hound

Ankhrav (B1). These burrowing monstrosities are drawn to the more fertile hills and vales, where they can find wild herd animals that taste just as good as livestock. As your party passes overhead, an ankhrav in its tunnel mistakes your party for a herd of goats. It breaches the surface and attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak ankhrav for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite ankhrav for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Aurumvorax (B2). If there are precious metal deposits in these hills, your party may encounter one of these metal-consuming predators. It may have slipped the leash of dwarven miners who kept it as a guardian, or it may be native to this place. Either way, its first instinct is to attack your party. Either it views them as intruding on its turf, or it senses food — coins and other items made of precious metals — on them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 7, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 7-8, use a weak aurumvorax for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 12, use an encounter group of one elite aurumvorax for each multiple of 13 in your party's average level.

Barghest (B1). You find barghests just about everywhere you find goblinoids — which is to say, you can cross paths with a barghest almost anywhere. In this particular situation, your party encounters a barghest disguising itself as a wolf to look less conspicuous while it roams the wilderness in search of prey. It may seem odd to your party that a lone ordinary wolf charges them without fear, but once the barghest comes within striking distance of one party member it changes into its true form.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use a weak barghest for the encounter. If your party's average level is 7-10, use a greater barghest (B1). If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an encounter group of one elite greater barghest for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Basilisk (B1). Your party passes a hollow in a hillside. Unfortunately for hapless creatures that pass by it — or even worse, that try to shelter inside — it houses a basilisk. As your party passes, have them make a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to hear something stirring inside this little cave, or at least to intuit that something is there. If it succeeds, they can make out the dim outline of the basilisk's leftover previous victims.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak basilisk for the encounter. If your party's average level is 8-11, use one elite basilisk. If your party's average level is higher than 11, they encounter two elite basilisks sharing a lair — or, if you wish, substitute one elite dracolisk (B2).

Treasure: The lair contains scattered valuables belonging to the basilisk's previous victims. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value. If there is more than one basilisk in the encounter, consider that basilisk eggs may also be present for the taking.

Bloodseekers (B1). In hill country, bloodseekers can find caves in which to shelter, and out in the open they have no trouble finding juicy herd animals on which to feed. 1d4 bloodseekers spot your party and either hone in on their pack animals, or they take the party members themselves for food sources. They swoop down and attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak bloodseekers. If your party's average level is 4-5, use 1d4 elite bloodseekers. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite bloodseeker for each level in your party's average level.

But Where Are Its Spots?

You may have noticed by now that leopards appear a lot in this book. It's not that leopards as such occur so often and range so widely. But big cats are important predators in many different ecosystems and their taxonomy is so varied that, even in a collection as immense as the *Pathfinder Bestiaries*, corners are going to be cut and distinctions elided. Here, we use leopards as a catch-all for big cats like mountain lions and cougars, largely out of convenience but also to preserve the distinctiveness of lions and tigers.

Bulette (B1). Bad luck — a landshark senses your party walking overhead and figures they're its next meal. To create a little drama, you may require a successful DC 15 Perception check to sense the ground rumbling.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 6, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use a weak bulette for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an encounter group of one elite bulette for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Treasure: Bulettes hunt on the move, so treasure that belonged to its previous victims is scattered far and wide. However, you may allow your party a DC 10 Survival check to follow the trail back to its last kill. If successful, use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Cat, Leopard (B1). Use “leopard” as a catch-all for big cats that you might find in hill country, like cougars. Your party sees one such hunting cat feeding on a fresh kill — a wild goat, or some other suitable creature. Perhaps it has hunted an unfortunate human or humanoid. You may allow a DC 15 Perception check to determine if your party makes out what’s happening at a sufficient distance to steer clear, if they choose. Otherwise, the cat looks up at them with suspicion, not only unhappy that they have interrupted its meal, but determined that no one steals its kill.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is 1, use a weak leopard for the encounter. If your party’s average level is higher than 5, your party may come upon a leap of leopards feeding on a carcass, with one elite leopard for each multiple of 6 in your party’s average level.

Centipede (B1, B2). Centipedes are not aggressive by nature, but the giants among them are so large and so voracious that they constantly need to feed, and their size allows them to deal with most creatures without fear. When your party crosses paths with 1d6 giant centipedes sheltering among some rocks, the centipedes consider that live food has just been delivered to their door.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak giant centipedes. If your party’s average level is 4-6, use one giant whiptail centipede (B2) for the encounter, or consider that your party has provoked the wrath of one giant centipede swarm (B1) hiding among some rocks. If your party’s average level is 7-8, use one elite giant whiptail centipede. If your party’s average level is higher than 8, consider using the granddaddy among centipedes, one titan centipede (B2). If this location won’t accommodate a creature that large, use an encounter group of one elite giant whiptail centipede for each multiple of 8 in your party’s average level instead.

Chimera (B1). Your party spots a winged monstrosity with three different animal heads circling above them. This can only mean one thing: A chimera has spotted them as potential prey. As with many winged predators, chimeras like to make their lairs in hill country. There is a small chance that it has escaped servitude to another creature — you can’t truly domesticate a chimera, you

can only get it to cooperate for a while — but it is more likely just feral and hungry.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is lower than 6, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party’s average level is 6-7, use a weak chimera for the encounter. If your party’s average level is higher than 10, use an encounter group of one elite chimera for each multiple of 11 in your party’s average level.

Cyclops (B1). Your party sees a cyclops roaming the countryside, unconcerned about its lack of depth perception. It may be on its way to meet with another cyclops living on the next hill over, or it may be out to rustle herd animals to add to its flock. If you wish, it could be out grazing its flock or herd, in which case it’s accompanied by goats or sheep. In any event, it sees your party as prey — a delicacy, compared to eating goat or mutton all the time — and it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is lower than 4, use a weak cyclops for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one cyclops for each multiple of 5 in your party’s average level. You may freely substitute two elite cyclopeses for three cyclopeses. You may also substitute one great cyclops for two cyclopeses as the group’s leader.



There is a small chance that the chimera you encounter has recently escaped servitude, but that doesn’t mean it’s been domesticated in the slightest.

Doprillu (B2). Your party crosses paths with one of these masked creatures because it is bored and it has gone abroad to look for a good fight. It spots your party as full of suitable candidates, so it plants itself firmly in their path and challenges one of them to a wrestling match. If your party is inclined to accept, then it is important to establish the terms of the contest. Those terms may be whatever you as GM choose; the doprillu will abide by them until its opponent cheats — in which case, it becomes sufficiently enraged to fight to the death, no holds barred.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is lower than 12, feel free to re-roll for a different

encounter. If your party's average level is 12-13 use a weak doprillu for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 18, use an elite doprillu.

Treasure: A doprillu may carry on its person some valuable items as trophies from its previous bouts. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value. If it loses its duel, it hands over one of its trophies — but if it wins, it demands something of real value from the character it vanquished. Anything less would be cheating, in its eyes.

Drake (B1, B2). A few different varieties of these primitive dragons may be encountered in hill country. None of them are inclined to cut a hapless party of adventurers a break. Roll on Table 5.2.1 to determine the drake that your party encounters:

TABLE 5.2.1

Drake - Hills

d6	ENCOUNTER
1	Flame Drake
2-3	Shadow Drake
4-6	Wyvern

Flame Drake (B1). Flame drakes occasionally come down into the hills from the volcanic mountains that they favor. Your party may spot a flame drake in the sky as it prepares to use its Fireball Breath ability and light up a grassy hillside for its own amusement. Or you may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to spot the smoke from a brush fire in the distance.

Shadow Drake (B2). Shadow drakes are masters of mischief rather than terror, but they are no less troublesome than other drakes for all of that. They use any diminution of sunlight — whether from cloud cover, shadows falling along the hillside, dusk or nighttime — to steal valuables from the unsuspecting. One shadow drake tries to sneak up on your party. Have it make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC to sneak into their formation undetected. If it succeeds, it targets a particular character for pilfering. Have it make a Thievery check against that character's Perception DC:

Critical Success: It steals a valuable item small enough to grasp in its claws and gets clean away.

Success: It finagles the item but the party member with the highest Perception DC notices it before it can get clean away. ➤

Failure: Someone in your party notices it before it can steal anything.

Wyvern (B1). Though no more intelligent than other drakes, wyverns may act like evil dragons in toying with their victims, extracting tribute from them or humiliating them before destroying them. When a wyvern swoops down on your party, it may pause to taunt or extort your party before it attacks, just to get a reaction from them.

Scaling the Encounter: In the case of a wyvern or a flame drake encounter, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter if your party's average level is 1-2. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak drake for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an encounter group of one elite drake for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

In the case of a shadow drake encounter, if your party's average level is higher than 4, use an encounter group of one elite shadow dragon for each multiple of 5 in your party's average level.

Elemental, Earth (B1, B2, B3). Earth elementals may come to the Material Plane through arcane summoning. But they may also cross over on their own via a natural portal with the Plane of Earth. Hill country, especially where mines dig into the guts of the earth, would be a logical place for such a planar intersection.

The exact sensations and circumstances of the encounter depends on what manner of earth elemental your party encounters (see Scaling the Encounter). If it is intelligent enough to understand language, someone who knows Terran may try to interact with it. However, it is difficult to persuade an elemental to do something, and it should require a successful DC 20 (or thereabouts) Diplomacy check to do so. Otherwise, it's likely that the elemental will treat your party as an enemy; it bears an uncontrollable grudge against the Material Plane, whose residents are always trying to dominate elementals, or it is just on edge outside of its native plane.

Scaling the Encounter: One earth wisp (B3) should make a reasonable encounter for a beginning-level party. Otherwise, the elemental encountered should depend on your party's average level: one living boulder (B2) for a level 2 or higher party, one sod hound (B1) for a level 3 or higher party, one earthen destrier (B2) for a level 4 or higher party, one living landslide (B1) for a level 5 or higher party, one sand sentry (B2) for a level 6 or higher party, one xorn (B1) for a level 7 or higher party, one granite glyptodont (B2) for a level 8 or higher party, one

stone mauler (B1) for a level 9 or higher party, or one elemental avalanche (B1) for a level 11 or higher party.

Elemental, Mephit (B1, B2). These annoying little elementals have a habit of crossing over into the Material Plane, like ink bleeding through paper, and making nuisances of themselves. They are not predatory, but they are very annoying and they interpret any attempt to brush them aside as an attack. Hill country attracts various types of mephit. Roll on Table 5.2.2 to determine the kind of mephit your party encounters:

TABLE 5.2.2
Mephits - Hills

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Dust Mephit
3-5	Earth Mephit
6	Fire Mephit

Dust Mephit (B2). Your party finds one dust mephit blocking their path. It fixes them with a piercing gaze and declares that they are doomed (in either Auran or Terran, of course). The actual circumstances of your party do not matter. The mephit just knows that they're headed for a bad end. If your party tries to ignore it and move on, it follows them and refuses to let up. It doesn't like being ignored, and eventually it attacks them.

Earth Mephit (B1). Your party finds its path blocked by one earth mephit standing (or sitting, if you prefer) directly in its way. It refuses to move no matter what your party says or does to get it out of the way, and it attacks if your party tries to go around it.

Fire Mephit (B1). Fire mephits are drawn to the Material Plane by brush fires and sometimes they stick around after they burn out in anticipation of even more fun. If no more fires occur, however, they may take matters into their own hands out of aggravation. Your party comes across a fire mephit in a grumpy mood perched on a rock. Your party may or may not notice it shuddering in anger before it uses its breath weapon to try to set your party alight.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite mephit for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Ettin (B1). Thanks to the particular acoustics of this place and the rolling terrain, your party hears two loud voices before they can see their source. If they choose not to

avoid the ettin, it calls out to your party and demands that they help settle a dispute. It should be something that your party would find awkward or at least pointless to answer — for instance, if the flesh of a dwarf smith is more tender than that of a dwarf miner, thanks to the former's frequent exposure to fire. No matter what answer the party gives, one or both heads accuses them of unfairly favoring the other and the ettin attacks.

Alternately, the ettin stops short when it spots the party. It realizes that it's hungry after arguing with itself for such a long time, and your party looks tasty.

Scaling the Encounter: As amusing as ettins can be if you run the encounter with the right sense of humor, you should feel free to re-roll for a different encounter if your party's average level is 1-2. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak ettin for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use one elite ettin for the encounter.

Treasure: The ettin carries some coins in a pouch looped around its loincloth. Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Fey (B1, B2). It's easy to forget that not all fey are harmless. Their (usually) diminutive size and their eccentric appearance give them an advantage similar to that given to small dogs: Larger creatures interpret their aggression and malice as mere mischief and they don't take them seriously enough. Roll on Table 5.2.3 to determine the fey creature encountered:

TABLE 5.2.3
Aggressive Fey - Hills

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Gremlins
4	Grimstalker
5-6	Redcap

Gremlins (B1). These mean, mechanically-inclined fey set traps near their inconspicuous lairs and they enjoy taunting their victims. Your party comes across such a trap. Use a trap described in the core rulebooks appropriate to your party's average level, or use one of your own devising. You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to notice the gremlins hiding nearby among some rocks. If they succeed, perhaps it is because one gremlin couldn't help giggling, or jumped the gun on taunting the victim.

To determine the exact type of gremlin encountered, roll on Table 3.2.3.1: ➤

TABLE 5.2.3.1**Gremlins - Hills**

d6	ENCOUNTER
1	Jinkin
2-4	Mitflit
5-6	Pugwumpi

Scaling the Encounter: For jinkins, use one jinkin for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite jinkin for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. If you don't feel like running a horde of gremlins, skip Table 5.2.3.1 and just use jinkins for the encounter, scaled appropriately.

For mitflits, use a base encounter group of 1d4 mitflits. If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak mitflits. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite mitflit for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

For pugwumpi, use a base encounter group of 1d4 pugwumpi. If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak pugwumpi. If your party's average level is 4-5, use an encounter group of 1d4 elite pugwumpi. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite pugwumpi for each level in your party's average level.

Treasure: If the trap guards the gremlins' lair, use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value of their treasure.

Grimstalker (B2). Your party stumbles into a patch of wilderness claimed by a grimstalker. Their first hint might be a string of severed human or humanoid heads — its previous victims — decorating a clump of bushes. Or it might be the presence of an assassin vine that it has cultivated to stake out its territory (see *Scaling the Encounter*). In any event, the grimstalker soon arrives on the scene, perfectly content to kill first and ask questions later.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, feel free to re-roll for a different fey encounter. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak grimstalker for the encounter. If your party's average level is 8-10, use one elite grimstalker or add one assassin vine (B2) to the encounter group to serve ►

as the grimstalker's tripwire. If your party's average level higher than 10, use an encounter group of one elite grimstalker for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Redcap (B1). These murderous fey kill just for the fun of it. When prowling the wilderness, they use folds in the ground, bushes or rocks to conceal themselves so they can ambush their victims.

One redcap spots your party. Have it make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds, it gets the drop and charges the character at the back of the party formation. If it fails, your party spots a small, wizened humanoid, with its pointed red cap the only giveaway to its true identity. It tries to play off meeting your party as an innocent chance encounter, but it keeps looking for an opportunity to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak redcap for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, a group of redcaps out for a spree — one elite redcap for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level — should make the encounter more challenging.

Gorgon (B2). Your party approaches a gorgon's lair — perhaps it is a cluster of rocks, or a small hollow carved out of a hillside. Petrified chunks lie scattered about outside the lair; you may allow your party a DC 15 Survival check to realize that they're crumbs leftover from the gorgon's previous meals. The monster is, of course, quite happy to prey on your party, saving them for later if it isn't hungry at the moment.

It's a bold move, but it is theoretically possible to wrangle a gorgon and use it as a mount, at least for a while. One large or two medium-size creatures must successfully grapple the gorgon using both hands. They must maintain the grapple for 10 consecutive turns. At that point, the gorgon stops struggling and acknowledges the wranglers as its master, at least temporarily. It allows them to ride it. However, getting the gorgon to obey a command requires a successful DC 27 Nature or Intimidation check:

Success: The gorgon obeys the command.

Failure: The gorgon ignores the command.

Critical Failure: The gorgon reasserts its independence. It refuses to acknowledge commands until it is successfully wrangled again. Furthermore, anyone who tries to issue it a command until it is successfully wrangled again must

make a DC 27 Intimidation check, and if it fails the gorgon attacks that character.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party’s average level is 5-7, use one weak gorgon. If your party’s average level is higher than 11, use one elite gorgon for each multiple of 12 in your party’s average level.

Treasure: The lair contains scattered valuables belonging to the gorgon’s previous victims. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Griffon (B1). A griffon spots your party and goes for one of their mounts or pack animals — or at least, it thinks it has spotted a mount or a pack animal.

If taming and training griffons is part of your campaign world, then no doubt griffon trainers would pay well for them. To subdue a griffon to the point where it can be bound and held captive, one large or two medium-size creatures must successfully grapple the griffon using both hands. They must maintain the grapple for 10 consecutive turns. At that point, the griffon stops struggling. How your party keeps it bound until it can be delivered is up to them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is 1-3, use one weak griffon for the encounter. If your party’s average level is higher than 7, use a pack (flock?) of one elite griffon for each multiple of 8 in your party’s average level.

Grikkitog (B1). You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to notice that they’re approaching a boulder or large chunk of rubble with primitive facial features — what looks like a monstrous maw and eyes. If it fails, they don’t realize what’s waiting for them until they’re close enough for it to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is lower than 12, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party’s average level is 12-13, use one weak grikkilog for the encounter. If your party’s average level is higher than 17, use one elite grikkilog.

Harpy (B1). It is a thoroughly unsettling thing to hear a harpy’s song echoing among the hills, but it is strangely hard to resist it all the same. Harpies are not as common in hill country as they are in littoral areas, where they prey on sailors seduced by their siren call. But they still manage to find victims among herders and hapless travelers who come within the sound of their voice. Your party comes within range of a harpy’s bewitching voice, which emanates from nearby high ground. Whether or

not they can resist its dangerous charm is up to them and their Will saving throws.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is 1-2, use one weak harpy for the encounter. Otherwise, use a clan group of one harpy for each multiple of 5 in your party’s average level as the encounter group. You may freely substitute two elite harpies for three harpies. Whether or not they sing in harmony is up to you.

Treasure: By definition, a harpy’s perch is its lair, so it’s unlikely that this encounter takes place far from its home. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of the accumulated belongings from its earlier victims.

Insects (B1, B2). You may not think of insects as predatory, but they can be quite aggressive and cause trouble in their own way. That’s what happens when you act without the capacity to think about the consequences. To make things more troublesome, insects sometimes grow big up in the hills. Roll on Table 5.2.4 to determine the insects encountered:

TABLE 5.2.4	
Insects - Hills	
d12	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Ant
4-5	Beetle, Giant Stag
6	Cockroach
7-8	Fly
9-11	Tick
12	Wasps

Ant (B2). Your party is not looking through a magnifying glass; they really have come face-to-face with one human-sized ant. It’s not a predator, but it is an omnivore that eats anything that seems like food and it is large enough to enforce its will. To it, your party looks like food.

Alternately, army ants are much smaller, but they come at you in a vicious, relentless swarm. If your party runs afoul of an army ant swarm (B2), it spots them (or more precisely, a food source somewhere among your party’s belongings) during a rest halt or while they have camped for the night and attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is 1, use one weak giant ant for the encounter. If your party’s average level is higher than 5, use one army➤

ant swarm for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite giant ant for one army ant swarm.

Beetle, Giant Stag (B1). Like giant ants, giant stag beetles are mindless omnivores that feed voraciously, and when you're that large, almost anything — like your party — looks like it could make a meal.

However, a skilled handler may wrangle a giant stag beetle and use it as a beast of burden. One large or two medium-size creatures must successfully grapple the beetle. They must maintain the grapple for 6 consecutive turns. At that point, the beetle stops struggling and acknowledges the wranglers as its master.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use a weak giant stag beetle for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite giant stag beetle for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Cockroach (B2). You find cockroaches wherever they can scavenge off of creatures higher up the food chain. During a rest halt, one giant cockroach goes after your party's rations. It won't attack unless threatened, but it will eat everything up unless stopped.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite cockroach swarm (B2) for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Fly (B2). Baby giant flies feed on carcasses so that they grow up into big and strong giant flies. Your party comes upon the remains of... something... that has been almost entirely consumed by 1d4 giant maggots. They're still hungry and they're desperate enough to try to continue feeding on your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3 use an encounter group of 1d6 giant maggots. If your party's average level is higher than 3 use an encounter group of one giant fly (B2) for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. The flies have found a carcass into which to lay eggs, and they defend their spawning ground against a perceived threat.

Tick (B2). Pick a party member at random. While your party takes a rest halt near some rocks, one giant tick hiding among those rocks tries to attach itself to that character so that it can feed. ➤

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite giant tick for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Wasp (B1). A large rock with an overhang that provides generous shade seems at first like a good place to take a rest halt. However, one giant wasp got there first and as far as it's concerned, you're threatening its nest. You may allow your party a DC 20 Nature or Survival check to back away before setting it off, but giant wasps are quick to anger and quick to sting.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak giant wasp for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 2, use an encounter group of one giant wasp for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level.

Alternately, if your mind recoils at the idea of giant wasps, you may use one weak wasp swarm for the encounter if your party's average level is 1-3. If your party's average level is 4-7, use one wasp swarm. If your party's average level is 8-11, use one elite wasp swarm.

Irlgaunt (B2). One of these bizarre and deadly creatures has come down into the foothills from its mountain haunt to hunt. Here it looks for a canyon or ravine in which it can conceal itself, although a steep hillside will do. You may allow your party a DC 20 Perception or Survival check to notice one irlgaunt clinging to the canyon wall above them. How the irlgaunt attacks is up to you as GM; perhaps it tries to set off a landslide to cut off your party's escape, or perhaps it just drops down onto them without any ceremony.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 11, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 11-12, use a weak irlgaunt for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 16, use an elite irlgaunt.

Manticore (B1). Your party spots a large winged beast in the sky. It's a manticore on the hunt, and it spots your party just as they spot it. Once it gets close enough to launch its spikes, it may choose to toy with its prey just to watch them squirm. In this case, it demands some kind of bribe in exchange for sparing them — a bargain it will keep, if your party makes the right offer. A suitable offer might take the form of treasure or humiliating servitude that amuses it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for another encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak manticore for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an encounter group of one elite manticore for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Medusa (B1). It may be inconspicuous enough so that you may require a successful DC 10 Perception check to notice it, but they pass by what appears to be a realistic statue of a small animal. In fact, a medusa has made its lair among some rocks nearby, where it surrounds itself with the petrified remains of its victims. It decides that your party would supplement its existing collection nicely. If your party investigates, they'll find more and more such statues as they approach the actual lair.

Alternately, you may decide that the medusa makes its lair in a cave carved into the hillside. As your party passes, have them make a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to hear something stirring inside this little cave, or at least to intuit that something is there. If it succeeds, they can make out the dim outline of the medusa's leftover previous victims.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak medusa for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use one elite medusa for the encounter.

Treasure: The medusa's gaze petrifies flesh, but not valuables. To total up the bits and pieces that once belonged to its humanoid victims, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value

Mukradi (B1). Fortunately for travelers, mukradi are few and far between, and they're large enough so that even with restricted sightlines from rolling terrain you can spot them from a distance far enough to plot a way to avoid them before they get too close. With its tremorsense, you can be sure that the mukradi has an inkling of your party's presence.

Scaling the Encounter: A mukradi is a lot to handle for anything but a high-level party. If your party's average level is lower than 13, feel free to re-roll for another encounter. If your party's average level is 13-14, use a weak mukradi for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 20 use an elite mukradi.

Owlbear (B1). Your party hears a terrible shriek echo through the hillsides; you may require a DC 15 Nature check to recognize it as an owlbear's Bloodcurdling Screech ability. Shortly thereafter, one of these monstrous beasts comes bounding down the hill, eager to prey on your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak owlbear for the encounter. If your party's average level is 7-10, use one elite owlbear. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use a mated pair of elite owlbears for the encounter group.

Peryton (B2). Like many winged predators, perytons like to make their lair in higher ground, from which they can observe the surrounding countryside and also avoid detection by enemies. Unlike many winged predators, however, it does not hunt far afield. Rather than flying high overhead where its prey can spot it, it prefers to use its Mimic Shadow ability to sneak up on them. Your party strays close enough to a peryton's lair to get its attention. The peryton, of course, sees them as another set of hearts to collect.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak peryton for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use one elite peryton.

Plant (B2). Hill country is not as lush and fertile as the forest, or even the plains below, but generally speaking, vegetation takes root here without difficulty. However, plants are not always your friend. Just because they cannot see, cannot speak and they can barely move, it doesn't mean that they cannot prey on whatever comes within their reach. Roll on Table 5.2.5 to determine the plant that is eager to disabuse your party of the notion that it is just a vegetable:

TABLE 5.2.5	
Plant - Hills	
d6	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Assassin Vine
4-5	Mandragora
6	Viper Vine

Assassin Vine (B2). You may allow your party a DC 20 Perception or Survival check to notice that the unusually thick ground cover just twitched. If it fails, they don't realize that an assassin vine has used its tremorsense to spot them until they come within in its striking distance of its Grasping Foliage ability.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak assassin vine for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use a patch of one elite assassin vine for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level for the encounter group. In this case, locate the assassin vines so that they can strike from different angles. ➤

Mandragora (B2). Your party comes across something that looks like a small deformed humanoid sticking up out of the forest floor. You may allow your party a DC 15 Nature check to recognize it as a mandragora. It strikes at the nearest arcane spellcaster, or if none is present, the character carrying the most potions and/or alchemical materials. It is hungry enough so that it will even consume the blood of a creature without any magic in it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use one weak mandragora for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use a patch of one elite mandragora for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

Viper Vine (B2). Your party spots an enormous patch of ground cover. Unfortunately for them, it's a viper vine at rest and coiled like a snake. You may allow them a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to notice a flicker of motion that suggests that what they're approaching is no ordinary plant. Otherwise, the viper vine uses its tremorsense and Captivating Pollen ability as soon as someone in the party formation comes within range.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 11, feel free to re-roll for a different plant encounter. If your party's average level is 11-12, use one weak viper vine for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 16, use one elite viper vine.

Treasure: Because these predatory plants are not migratory and only slightly mobile, they hunt more or less in their lairs. This means that your party might find the accumulated belongings of the plants' previous victims after defeating them. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Roc (B1). The sky darkens for a moment. Your party looks up and sees a roc wheeling overhead. Even at such a height, it's large enough to block out the sun while it hunts. As to whether or not it tries to make your party into its next meal, see Scaling the Encounter.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 7, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 7-8, use a weak roc for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 12 use an elite roc.

Or you may choose to give your party a scare, just for effect. Since the roc probably makes its lair in nearby mountains, it has just begun its hunt and it feels that it can still pick and choose at this point. It swoops down on your party from a great height — close enough for them to look in the eyes of this gargantuan avian predator. Then it decides that your party is not worth its bother, and flies off.

Scorpion (B1). Your party takes a rest halt by some rocks and disturbs the giant scorpion sheltering among them. It has a large stinger, and it doesn't hesitate to use it. Whether it acts in it perceives as self-defense, or because your party looks like prey, it makes little practical difference.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak giant scorpion for the encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use one scorpion swarm. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite giant scorpion for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Snakes (B1, B3). In hill country as in the plains below, it's so easy for snakes to hide in the ground cover that you may not see them until it's too late to avoid them. If they're venomous, well, that's just an extra serving of trouble heaped high on your plate. You may allow your party to make a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to realize that someone in the front of the march order is about to step on a snake. This should give them enough time to take evasive action, although you may consider that this simply means they aren't surprised when the snake lashes out.

Roll on Table 5.2.6 to determine the snake(s) encountered:

TABLE 5.2.6

Snakes - Hills

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Rat Snake Swarm
4	Giant Viper
5-6	Viper

Rat Snake Swarm (B3). Your party approaches a dip in the ground that conceals a swarm of rat snakes. You may allow them a DC 10 Perception check to notice the snakes before they step right into the snake pit. Rat snakes are not venomous, but you don't want to get bitten by one all the same.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level ►

is 1, use one weak rat snake swarm for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite rat snake swarm for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Giant Viper (B1). A giant viper has a hard time finding places to hide, but it can conceal itself in tall (or even just tall-ish) grass. If they don't spot it in time, your party comes face-to-fangs with one giant viper looking for its next meal.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak giant viper for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite giant viper for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Viper (B1). As with the rat snake swarm, your party approaches a dip in the ground that conceals 1d6 vipers. If the Perception check to spot the snakes fails, the front of the party formation steps right into the snake pit.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak viper swarm (B3) for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite viper swarm for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Spiders (B1, B2). On a hillside where there are not a lot of trees, there aren't many places for spiders to build the large webs that make them so hazardous in forests and underground spaces. But that's not to say that you won't find them here. Instead, they'll come at you from under a rock or a burrow when you have stopped to take a breather. If it's a rocky hillside, it's also possible that two boulders are close enough together that spiders can build their web between them and offer a hazard similar to (though easier to spot than) a spider web that spans two tree trunks in a dense forest. Roll on Table 5.2.7 to determine what kind of spider could bite you when you're not looking:

TABLE 5.2.7

Spiders - Hills

d10	ENCOUNTER
1	Ether Spider
2-4	Giant Tarantula
5-8	Hunting Spider
9-10	Spider Swarm

➤

Ether Spider (B1). One ether spider literally appears out of nowhere to attack your party, having spotted them from its lair in the Ethereal Plane. Ether spiders are quite fearless, and they use their ability to jump back and forth between the Ethereal Plane and the Material Plane to conduct hit-and-run attacks, wearing the party down until they are all incapacitated or dead.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-4, use a weak ether spider for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use one elite ether spider for the encounter.

Giant Tarantula (B1). Tarantulas burrow into the ground and they either take whatever stumbles into their lair, or they emerge to ambush prey. As your party approaches, vibrations in the ground tell a giant tarantula that something juicy has come to its doorstep, and it jumps out and attacks. You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to notice a hole in the ground large enough to fit a large spider, and if successful, a DC 15 Nature check to realize that it's a tarantula burrow.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a hunting spider encounter instead. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak giant tarantula for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an encounter group of one elite giant tarantula for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Hunting Spider (B1). A hunting spider can represent either a web-spinning spider that has set up shop in a bush or between bushes, or a large trap-door spider with a burrow. It's up to you as GM, what kind of encounter you want to set up.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, there is one elite hunting spider for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level present in the web.

Spider Swarm (B1). A large web among some bushes houses 1d4 swarms of tiny spiders. All of them respond aggressively if something so much as touches their web.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3, use an encounter group of 1d4 spider swarms. If your party's average level is 4-5, use an encounter group of 1d4 elite spider swarms. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one elite spider ➤

swarm for each level in your party's average level.

Treasure. Larger spiders may have trapped humanoid-sized victims in the past and left some of their valuables caught in their lair. You may use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value if you wish.

Troll (B1). A troll haunts this hillside, preying on stray livestock and other animals. It also extracts a toll from intelligent creatures that enter into this territory that it claims for itself, and it doesn't mind killing and eating anyone who refuses. Your party passes a large rock that it uses for shelter. It steps out and confronts them and demands something from them before it lets them pass — perhaps one of their pack animals as its toll, or a suitable amount of coins. It fights rather than let anyone pass for free.



Trolls never let anyone pass by without some form of payment, be it treasure, livestock or a fight to the death.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak troll for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use an encounter group of one elite troll for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level. If scaling the encounter calls for more than one troll, you

may substitute two elite troll hounds (B2) for one troll. If the encounter calls for more than two trolls, you may also substitute one troll king (B1) for two trolls.

Treasure: The troll's racket has worked well enough in the past: Its victims pay one way or another. If your party defeats the troll in its lair, use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value.

Undead (B1, B2, B3). Whether the hills through which your party tramps are barren or verdant matters little to the undead. They may haunt any wilderness regardless of its scenic qualities. They may come from barrows and cairns that dot the landscape; or from the fallen in battles both great and small; or those who perished far from home at the hand of beasts, monsters, or murderers and never received the proper rites. Roll on Table 5.2.8 to determine the undead abomination that greets your party:

TABLE 5.2.8

Undead - Hills

d20	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Festrog
3	Ghost
4-6	Ghoul/Ghast
7	Shadows
8-11	Skeletons
12	Specter
13-15	Wight
16-17	Wraith
18-20	Zombies

Festrog (B3). A barren hillside far from civilization is as good a place as any to die from exposure, thirst or starvation. Encountering a festrog should not come as a complete surprise in hill country. Your party suddenly realizes that they are being followed by one festrog, going about on all fours as if stalking them.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one festrog for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite festrog for three festrogs. A pack of festrogs may use pack hunting tactics, spreading out and approaching from multiple angles to hem in your party.

Ghost (B1). That is no optical illusion; the ethereal form flitting across the hillside really is a ghost. It is most likely the remnant of someone who died a miserable death in the wilderness. Exposure, murder and monsters are all possible causes of its demise. ➤

Perhaps a predator got to this person, perhaps lack of shelter from the elements was the larger cause of death. Whatever the case, you may make this into a hostile encounter by having the ghost try to possess a member of your party so that it may resolve unfinished business from its former life.

Scaling the Encounter: Ghosts always work alone. However, if you wish to make a more challenging ghost encounter for a 10th level or higher party, use a ghost mage instead of a ghost commoner. Or you may freely substitute a ghost of your own design.

Ghouls/Ghasts (B1). Those who perish on a hillside in the wilderness and are left to rot may rise again as ghouls or ghasts. One ghoul approaches your party, driven by mindless hunger for their flesh.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 4-5, use one elite ghoul or one ghast for the encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use one elite ghast for the encounter. If your party level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite ghoul for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level, or one elite ghast for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Shadows (B1). In the gloom caused by higher ground blocking out the rising or setting sun, the dark shape flitting toward your party may seem like a trick that the mind plays with what the corner of the eye glimpses. But it's not an illusion, it's an insubstantial undead intent on draining the life from the living! It's not particularly at home here and shadows prefer darkness, where they can strike unseen. All the same, it attacks the nearest party member, eager to spawn one more of its own kind.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak shadow for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use one elite shadow for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Skeletons (B1). Your party comes upon 1d4+2 skeleton guards — undead created from remains that have been stripped of flesh by scavengers and the elements. They may have been murdered by bandits. They may be casualties left where they fell in a corner of an ancient battlefield. Or they may be what is left of adventurers or travelers who got stranded in the open without shelter and died of exposure. Driven by rage at their fate, they attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level ➤

is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak skeleton guards. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite skeleton guard for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one skeletal champion for two elite skeleton guards.

Specter (B2). Your party comes upon one specter that was once someone who perished in the wilderness, but all connections to who and what it was in life no longer exist. Only blind hatred of the living drives it to attack your party on sight.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different undead encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak specter for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use one elite specter.

Wight (B1). Your party comes upon a cairn that someone erected on a hilltop or the crest of a ridge. It is up to you as the designer of this world whether or not it should be apparent who set it up, and whose remains it houses. However, it is sure that if your party gets close enough to inspect it, a wight rises out of it, angry that they have disturbed its rest.

The wight can have any one of a number of different backstories and motivations taken from its life. One possibility is that it was the leader of a bandit gang whose followers betrayed and killed him, and that it's looking to create spawn who will help it exact revenge. Or perhaps it was an adventurer stabbed in the back by his companions to create larger shares of the loot. Ultimately, it's up to you to decide what's going on with this wight and how it fits into your campaign world.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak wight for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite wight for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Wraith (B1). There are plenty of ways to come to a bad end in the wilderness, and your party has the misfortune to come across a wraith that was once someone who perished in these remote hills, and which is now bound to this part of it. Perhaps they pass an improvised grave, or just a half-buried skeleton. Whatever the case, it takes out the resentment that it bore at the end of its life on your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level ➤

is 1-2, feel free to re-roll for a different undead encounter. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak wraith for the encounter. If your party's average level is 9-12, use one dread wraith (B2). If your party's average level is higher than 12, use one elite dread wraith.

Zombie (B1). Your party come across one plague zombie or 1d4 zombie shamblers that have been programmed to kill every living thing they encounter.. The source of the necromancy that created these zombies we leave to you. Perhaps they slipped the leash of their creator and they now wander the hills, mindlessly looking for victims.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one plague zombie for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one zombie brute or one elite plague zombie for two plague zombies, or one zombie hulk for six plague zombies. If you want to create a large encounter for that "The Walking Dead" effect, freely substitute 1d4 zombie shamblers for one plague zombie.

Treasure: It's quite possible that ghosts and wraiths are encountered in or near the place where they died or were buried — in which case, the valuables they had on them are lying about somewhere. You may require a successful DC 15 Perception check to find them. Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

With skeletons and zombies, they may have with them some remains of what they had on their person at the time of their death. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Warg (B1). Your party crosses paths with one warg that has escaped from a pack kept by a local humanoid tribe, or otherwise gotten separated from them. Regardless of the reason, it is hungry and your party looks like food.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak warg for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one warg for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite warg for three wargs. If this encounter takes place in a sub-arctic zone, you may also freely substitute one winter wolf for two wargs or one elite winter wolf for two elite wargs.

Wolf (B1). Wolves of some sort live in grasslands at all latitudes — which makes sense, since the herd animals on which they prey live here as well. In this case, your party comes across one wolf, separated from its pack —

or perhaps it is the last survivor of a pack. It's hungry enough to attack your party, regardless of the odds.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one wolf for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite wolf or one dire wolf for three wolves, or one elite dire wolf (B1) for six wolves.

Treasure: Furriers in your world may be willing to pay for wolf pelts. How much is ultimately up to you, but 1 gp is a reasonable baseline price for a normal wolf pelt and 2 gp for a dire wolf pelt. Dire wolf pelts are not necessarily more desirable, but they are larger and offer more fur to work with.



The larger the wolf, the larger the pelt. Furriers may pay more for dire wolf pelts based on size alone.

Xill (B2). Your party crosses paths with one xill roaming the hills, looking to kidnap a host for its reproductive processes. It's looking for lone travelers or herders who have dropped their guard. Your party outnumbers it, but xills are confident that they can take most anyone and out here there won't be anyone to get in the way.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak xill for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use one elite xill for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Yeth Hound (B2). Evil humanoids like to keep these canine fiends, laboring under the impression that they are reliable companions, like domesticated wolves or dogs. They often find that yeth hounds have very different ideas about domestication. Your party crosses paths with one yeth hound that has terminated its arrangement with a nearby group of humanoids, perhaps after doing in one or more of them. Unfortunately for your party, it is now hungry without anyone to feed it, and they look like its next meal.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak yeth hound for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite yeth hound for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

TABLE 5.3

Neutral Creatures - Hills

d100	ENCOUNTER
1-4	Badger
5-7	Moose
8-10	Bear
11-13	Bat
14-17	Blink Dog
18-21	Boar
22-24	Centaur
25-27	Dog
28-30	Dragon
31-33	Drainberry Bush
34-36	Eagle
37-41	Fey
42-45	Fox
46-49	Hippogriff
50-55	Horses
56-59	Hyena
60-63	Leshy
64-66	Pegasus
67-70	Porcupine
71-74	Ram
75-78	Rats
79-82	Skunk
83-85	Sphinx
86-88	Sportlebone
89-91	Thunderbird
92-96	Vulture
97-100	Weasels
101-108	Lizard
109-110	Quetz Couatl

+3 to die roll in temperate hills

+10 to die toll in tropical hills

Badger (B2). Your party comes across one badger out in the open. It spots your party, then darts for its nearby burrow. If your party investigates, they see one pair of eyes like black marbles glinting in the shadows. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone has made a false move that activates the badger's fight-or-flight response. The burrow only has one opening, so it feels cornered and fights like a badger.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3, use an encounter group of 1d4 badgers. If your party's average level is 4-5 use one giant badger for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one

elite giant badger for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

Moose (B3). Your party spots a lone moose grazing on the hillside. Even if your party does not behave in a threatening manner, there is a chance that it mistakes their actions and attacks. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that sets it off and it charges.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use one weak moose for the encounter. Otherwise, use a herd of one moose for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level for the encounter.

Bear (B1, B2). Your party spots a bear prowling around for food. If they are resting, the bear comes sniffing around, drawn by their rations. If your party just wants to scare it off, require a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it succeeds, the bear takes the hint and lumbers away. If it fails, the bear charges them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak black bear (B2) for the encounter. If your party's average level is 2-3, use one black bear. If your party's average level is 4-6, use one grizzly bear (B1). If your party's average level is 7 or higher, use one cave bear (B1). If your party's average level is higher than 9, use one elite cave bear.

Bats (B1). Even a small cave carved into a hillside provides an agreeable home to bats. If your party enters, they find a colony consisting of one swarm of vampire bats. If they approach the cave after sunset, they may even encounter the bats just outside as they go out to hunt. However, even though they're uncomfortably close to the bats' lair, it's possible to avoid setting them off. You may have your party make a DC 15 Survival or Nature check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that triggers the bats to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one vampire bat swarm for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite vampire bat swarm for three vampire bat swarms. You may also freely substitute one giant bat for two vampire bat swarms and one elite giant bat for four vampire bat swarms.

Blink Dog (B2). Your party crosses paths with a dog with long ears and a wisp of fur hanging from its chin. It's not wandering aimlessly; it's a blink dog scouting on behalf of its pack as it roams the Material Plane to keep it safe from evil influences.

If it intuits that there are evil characters with bad intentions in your party, it keeps its distance and uses its

innate spells to get away. Otherwise, anyone who is fluent in Sylvan can communicate with it, although it make take a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check to overcome its natural aloofness. A blink dog on a mission may provide your party with a sidequest as it asks them to help its pack. Alternately, a successful Diplomacy check (DC 15 or 20, depending on whether or not it diverts the blink dog from its purpose) by a good-aligned character in your party may persuade it to accompany them for a short while.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish, you may use a pack of blink dogs for the encounter group, consisting of one for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level.

Boar (B1). Your party spots one wild boar rooting around the hillside for food. Boar are popular targets for hunters. They'll fight back if attacked — indeed, the challenge they present is part of the appeal of hunting them. But they have also developed a fight-or-flight instinct, and if your party wishes to avoid a fight, have them make a DC 15 Survival or Nature group check to scare the boar off.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak boar for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one boar for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. If you prefer not to have a large herd of wild boar descend on your party, you may freely substitute one daeodon (B1) for two wild boar; one elite wild boar for three wild boar; or one elite daeodon for four wild boar.

Treasure: Boar meat is good eating for many folk. Perhaps a nearby butcher will pay 1 gp or thereabouts for a fresh carcass. The price might go up to 3 gp for a daeodon.

Centaur (B1). Your party crosses paths with a lone centaur from a tribe that considers these hills their territory. It is possible that it is a scout or a messenger acting on the tribe's behalf, but it is also possible that it has just been cast out of its former home, or it has decided of its own volition to strike out on its own and see the wider world. In the former case, it reacts to your party with caution or even suspicion, protective of its tribe and their domain. You may require a DC 15 Diplomacy check to ease its concern:

Critical Success: Your party wins over the centaur; it willingly joins your party as a friendly NPC, at least for a little while.

Success: It shares local knowledge to help your party, but little more.

Failure: Your party does not impress the centaur. It remains aloof and goes on its way.

Critical Failure: Whatever your party says, it infuriates the centaur. It attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: It is up to you whether or not to scale up an encounter with centaurs. They are most often encountered alone, it is possible that as many as three or four centaurs might have split off from their tribe as a group. You may use an encounter group consisting of 1d4 centaurs if your party's average level is less than 10; if your party's average level is 10 or higher make them elite centaurs.

Treasure: Centaurs carry their valuables with them. Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value of their possessions.



Even centaurs understand the value of pockets.

Dog (B1). Your party comes across one dog that has, evidently, slipped its leash and lost its way home. It's anxious because it's separated from its master. If your party approaches it, require a DC 15 Nature check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that sets it off, and it charges the nearest character.

Assuming that this a domesticated dog gone AWOL, it probably came from a nearby farmstead or a herder. Returning the lost dog could lead to a reward, as a working animal is a valuable resource to someone living out in the wilderness.

Treat the hunting dog as a guard dog.

If you want to make the encounter downright vicious, consider that the dog is rabid. You may have your party make a DC 15 Perception check to notice that it is foaming at the mouth, but there is no way to dissuade it from attacking the nearest character. If a rabid dog inflicts damage, use the rules covering rabies in the core rules to determine what happens next.

Even if you could subdue it somehow, a rabid hunting dog dies of the disease before you can return it to its owner. And, come to think of it, who would want a rabid dog returned to them, anyway?

Dragon (B1). Your party notices a shadow in the sky. It’s a dragon on the prowl. To determine what kind of dragon roll on Table 5.3.1:

TABLE 5.3.1

Dragon - Hills

D12	ENCOUNTER
1	Black
2-3	Blue
4	Green
5	Red
6	White
7	Brass
8	Bronze
9-10	Copper
11	Gold
12	Silver

To determine its age, see Scaling the Encounter.

To be clear, this need not be a hostile encounter. The dragon is not defending its lair, so it may just be curious about your party. It may have more important things to do and decline to take notice of them at all. Or it may be hungry and on the hunt, or it’s angry because your party has intruded on territory it claims as its own.

Scaling the Encounter: Because dragons get tougher with age, the age of the dragon encountered should depend on your party’s average level — especially if you decide that this is going to be a hostile encounter. If your party’s average level is lower than 11, they encounter a young dragon. If their average level is 11-15, they encounter an adult dragon. If their average level is higher than 15, they encounter an ancient dragon. ➤

Drainberry Bush (B2). First contact with a drainberry bush can be an unnerving experience. At first glance, it looks like a bush with coils of roots above ground and red berries that look good enough to eat. However, the coils at the base of the plant are really vines that can reach out, and if your party passes a drainberry bush and they’re carrying something that it wants, it may reach out and communicate telepathically with them.

Similarly, if someone in your party tries to sample its berries, it insists (again, through telepathic communication) that it must be paid appropriately. Your party may attempt a DC 20 Diplomacy check to get it to come down off of its asking price. But if the result is critical failure, they insult the drainberry bush so badly that it just reaches out with its vines and tries to suck everyone’s blood.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is less than 5 and you think your party might provoke the drainberry bush into attacking, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party’s average level is 5-6, use a weak drainberry bush for the encounter. If your party’s average level is higher than 10, use an elite drainberry bush.

Treasure: A drainberry bush is bound to have money and treasure items hidden within its recesses. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Eagles (B1). Roll on Table 5.3.2 to determine if your party is fortunate enough to be spotted by a giant eagle, or they come across ordinary eagles hunting for small animals.

TABLE 5.3.2

Eagles - Hills

d4	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Eagles
4	Giant Eagle

Eagles. Your party notices a convocation of 2d8 eagles wheeling overhead. If your party has a small animal kept as a pet or familiar, or food (travelers rations qualify) kept exposed, have the eagles make a DC 15 Perception check. If they succeed, they dive and try to snatch it up, attacking anyone who gets in their way.

Giant Eagle. On the other hand, your party may have the good fortune to enter territory patrolled by a giant eagle. If your party has predominantly good characters (or at least, no evil characters), the giant eagle ➤

follows it to the limit of its domain, providing a sort of combat air patrol for your party. If your party hails it (remember, giant eagles only understand Auran and Sylvan), it responds. Convincing it to do your party a service requires a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check. Unless your party consists entirely of good characters, a critical success is needed to gain its full cooperation.

Alternately, if you want to provide your party with a sidequest, the giant eagle tries to enlist them in dealing with some evil humanoids in its territory. However, since it cannot speak, you may require your party to make a successful DC 15 Nature check to understand that it wants them to follow it. Critical success indicates an educated guess that it wants help dealing with enemies.

Fey (B2, B3). Unlike the malicious fey described above, most fey creatures mean no harm. But they have agendas of their own that can work at cross-purposes with that of adventurers pursuing fortune and glory. To determine which fey creature your party comes across, roll on Table 5.3.3:

TABLE 5.3.3

Fey - Hills

d6	ENCOUNTER
1	Harmona
2-4	Korred
5-6	Nymph, Hesperid

Harmona (B3). Your party gets a rare glimpse of one of these powerful, but elusive fey. If they can figure out how to get its attention and win it over, it can provide them with helpful knowledge. Perhaps it even travels with them for a while as a friendly NPC. If someone in your party speaks Sylvan, you may have them make a DC 20 Diplomacy check (in addition to luring it with sweets) to convince the harmona to help them:

Critical Success: It is willing to travel with them as their long-term companion.

Success: It is willing to use its *detect magic* spell on their behalf and share local knowledge.

Failure: It flies off, refusing to help your party.

Critical Failure: It takes such offense at whatever ➤

your party did or said that it might just attack them.

Scaling the Encounter: It's easy enough to avoid a hostile encounter with a harmona; just leave it alone. In that sense, your party's relative level should not matter. On the other hand, if your party wins over a harmona as an ally, it could make such short work of encounters that are properly scaled for a low-level party, so that it steals their thunder. In this sense, you might want to re-roll for a different fey encounter if your party's average level is lower than 9, or use one weak harmona if their average level is 9-10. On the other hand, having such a capable ally might allow your party to defeat an enemy that would just be too difficult to handle without it.

Korred (B2). Your party comes upon a cluster of vegetation with an uneven scattering of rocks among it. One korred that makes its home here pops up from behind a rock and calls out to them to leave it and alone. You may allow your party a DC 20 Diplomacy check to defuse the situation:

Critical Success: They win over the korred and it is willing to share resources or local knowledge.

Success: It remains wary. It snaps at your party, warning them to leave it alone, but it does not attack.

Failure: It attacks with its Hair Snare ability to incapacitate them or, failing that, it uses its Stone Stride ability to escape.

Critical Failure: It becomes angry enough to use lethal force.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak korred for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one korred for each multiple of four in your party's average level. You may freely substitute two elite korreds for three korreds.

Nymph, Hesperid (B3). If your party finds itself in a canyon or an obscure valley among the hills, there is a chance that it is the domain of one of these nymphs who serve as keepers of the sunset. The hesperid appears to them as a humanoid figure glowing gold in the afternoon sun. However, it greets your party with a stern query about why they intrude on its domain.

How the encounter goes from there depends on your party. You may require them to make a DC 15 Diplomacy check: ➤

Critical Success: The hesperid is so pleased by your party that it offers to use one of its innate spells for their benefit and create one of its golden apples for them as a gift.

Success: It offers one of its spells, but not the golden apple.

Failure: It politely, but firmly asks your party to leave.

Critical Failure: Your party has angered it enough to attack them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 7, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter — but keep in mind that a hesperid encounter need not be hostile. If your party's average level is 7-8, use a weak hesperid. If your party's average level is higher than 14, use a hesperid queen.

Fox (B3). Foxes restrict their predation to small animals and insects, so they're not much of a danger to an adventuring party. However, they are sly creatures and a party camping for the night or taking a rest halt may lose something useful to them. A pack of 1d6 red foxes sniffs out that your party has something that they want — it may be an animal familiar small enough to eat, traveler's rations, medicinal herbs, or even just a shiny and attractive object. Have them make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC as they try to infiltrate their camp:

Critical Success: The foxes get in and out without your party noticing at all.

Success: They succeed in stealing something, but your party notices them on the way out.

Failure: Your party notices them before they can snag anything.

Critical Failure: Your party notices them before they can even make a move.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3 use one elite red fox for the encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use one fading fox (B3). If your party's average level is higher than 5, use a pack of one elite fading fox for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Hippogriff (B2). Your party sees a hippogriff circling overhead, looking for its next meal, or on the ground dealing with its prey. Hippogriffs are aggressive hunters

and your party's pack animals make a tempting target, but the presence of armed humans and humanoids may deter them. This does not have to be a hostile encounter.

Hippogriffs may be a kind of prey as well as predators. If hippogriffs are used as mounts in your world, it must follow that captive adults have value as breeding stock, and chicks captured from the wild also have value because they are still young enough to be tamed. To that end, you may allow your party a DC 20 Survival check to trace a path to the hippogriff's lair (likely to be sited atop a large rock or on a hilltop) after observing it for a while. If your party has someone capable of flight, reduce the DC to 15. To subdue an adult hippogriff to the point where it can be bound and held captive, it must be successfully grappled with both hands and kept in grappled condition for 10 consecutive rounds.

Scaling the Encounter: If you want to stage a hostile encounter and you need to make it more of a challenge, use a herd of one elite hippogriff for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

Horses (B1). Your party comes across a small herd of horses. They only questions are, how many of them are there, and do they belong to someone else? Horse encounters are unlikely to be hostile, although they may put up a fight if you try to wrangle them before they've been broken. Roll on Table 5.3.4 to determine the nature of the horse encounter:

TABLE 5.3.4

Horses - Hills

d4	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Riding Horses
3-7	Riding Ponies
8	War Horses
9-10	War Ponies

Riding Horses. Your party comes across 1d6 riding horses grazing, or moving at a walk. It's up to you to decide whether they're wild, or if they belong to someone — and if the latter, is their herder nearby (see Table 5.5) or have they escaped from someone who would pay a reward for their return?

If they are wild, they can be wrangled. To wrangle a riding horse, it must be successfully grappled with both hands and kept in grappled condition for 6 consecutive rounds. At that point, it becomes docile and whoever grappled it may ride it or use it as a pack animal. Because of its size, two medium-size creatures may grapple with the same riding horse ➤

simultaneously, and as long as one of them maintains its grappled condition, this counts toward the requirement for wrangling it.

Riding Ponies. Instead of riding horses, your party comes upon 2d4 riding ponies. The same considerations about whether they are wild or astray from their owner apply. A wild riding pony may also be wrangled in the same manner as riding horses, although only one medium-size creature or two small-size creatures may try to wrangle it at any one time.

War Horses. Your party comes across 1d4 war horses. Whether their owners were killed in battle, or they just escaped from the stable, is up to you. If the former, they wear empty saddles. War horses do not need to be wrangled; they have been broken and disciplined, so they're used to working with human or humanoid riders. However, they're also trained fighters and if you don't approach them just right in a situation like this, they'll take you for the enemy and attack. If your party approaches the warhorses, require a DC 15 Nature check to avoid setting the horses off.

War Ponies. Instead of war horses, your party comes upon 2d4 war ponies. The same considerations apply to them as to war horses; they're just smaller, trained and kept to accommodate smaller riders.

Hyena (B1). Your party comes across a lone hyena scavenging a carcass. It looks up at them as they pass, instinctively concerned that something has come to steal the food source that it found fair and square. You may require a DC 15 Nature or Survival check if your party wishes to avoid a confrontation. If it fails, someone makes a false move that sets off the hyena.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one hyena for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite hyena for three hyenas. You may also freely substitute one hyaenodon (B1) for three hyenas and one elite hyaenodon for four hyenas.

Leshy (B1, B2, B3). Hill country accommodates these intelligent and ambulatory plants just as well as lush forests, but the mix of leshys that you find here more resembles what you find in fertile plains. See below for suggestions on determining the encounter group.

Despite the fact that they can move about, leshys do not wander. If you encounter them, it is because you have stumbled into a patch of land they have determined to defend. You may require that your party make a

successful DC 15 Nature or Perception check to realize that what looks like a jumble of vegetation has appendages and pairs of eyes that follow them. Leshys are not necessarily hostile; how they respond to your party depends on whether or they sense that your party is a threat to them and their home. If you wish, you may have your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check in dealing with the leshys:

Critical Success: The leshys like your party and let them rest here. If your party is attacked (by a pursuer, for instance), they fight alongside them as friendly NPCs.

Success: The leshys like your party well enough. They agree to help your party by using their *speak with plants* spell to glean useful knowledge from lone trees and other large plants that have lived here for a long time. They allow your party to stay here for one rest period, but no more.

Failure: The leshys makes a noise that ought to be interpreted as skepticism. They tell your party to move along.

Critical Failure: Whatever your party said or did, the leshys interpret it as hostile. They attack.

Scaling the Encounter: Construct the encounter group as you please, or according to the type of plant life that dominates in that particular area. Use a baseline encounter group of one vine leshy (B3) for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute two gourd leshys (B1) and/or sunflower leshys (B2) for three vine leshys.

Pegasus (B1). Your party sees one pegasus wheeling overhead. It does not attack, even if it sees evil creatures. However, it may be flagged down by signaling or calling to it and making a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check. If your party can get the pegasus' attention, it may be persuaded to render some kind of aid to your party — such as taking a party member to a nearby location — with a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check. For good-aligned characters who can speak Celestial, Elvish or Sylvan the DC is 15.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 6, use a herd of one elite pegasus for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level for the encounter.

Porcupine (B3). Porcupines are neither aggressive nor predatory and what armament they do have is mostly defensive in nature. However, giant porcupines are confident enough in their size that they can charge a creature perceived as a threat and force it to deal with the weapons it possesses. Your party comes across one

of these giant porcupines as it scuttles along the hillside. Have them make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that sets off the porcupine and causes it to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: Porcupines are mostly solitary creatures, but they sometimes forage in groups, especially in winter. If you want to create a more challenging encounter, use a prickly of one giant porcupine for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite giant porcupine for three giant porcupines.

Ram (B3). You come across a flock of 3d6 wild sheep grazing the hillside. Of these, 40% (rounded up) are males, and rams are anything but docile if they feel threatened. You may have your party make a DC 15 Nature check. If it fails, someone in your party makes a false move that sets off the rams. They charge your party, while the females flee.

Treat the rams as ringhorn rams.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 5, the males are elite ringhorn rams.

Rats (B1). Even on relatively barren hillsides, rats can find enough food to justify living here. That's how they roll. But your party's presence gives them a welcome opportunity to feast. 1d4 giant rats sniff out your party's food rations as they cross paths with each other. They don't attack party members who don't interfere with their basic mission of acquiring food. But unless they are stopped, they eventually account for all of your party's rations, making off with what they don't eat on the spot.



Your party presents a not-to-be-missed opportunity for any colony of rats nearby.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3, use one rat swarm (B1) for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite rat swarm for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Skunk (B3). Your party notices a skunk peeking out at them from behind a rock. Have your party make a DC 15

Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that sets off the skunk and it directs its Spray Musk ability at the nearest party member.

Scaling the Encounter: Skunks are solitary creatures. If you wish to make the encounter more challenging (and stinkier) use an elite skunk for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 2, use one elite giant skunk (B3).

Sphinx (B1). Your party crosses paths with a wandering sphinx that has gone abroad in search of knowledge and adventure. It spots your party as a potential source of new lore and it attempts to strike up a conversation with them. An encounter with a sphinx is therefore more likely to be academic than combative, so it is up to you as GM how deeply you want to pursue it. It may try to trade lore for lore, or it may feel that it owes your party a favor if they can teach it something it did not know before. Alternately, if it intuits that it knows something that would be of value to your party, it challenges them to solve a riddle in exchange. This may be an opportunity to advance the storyline of your campaign if you feel that your players need a hint. Or the sphinx could offer them a sidequest, helping it find a source of obscure knowledge that is supposedly located somewhere around here.

Sportlebone (B2). Your party spots what looks like perfectly good traveler's rations scattered on the ground. It looks quite edible. It's up to them whether they want to claim it as their own under the legal precedent set by *Finders v. Losers*. Do they pass up a free lunch? However, if they eat it they discover to their cost that there was a sportlebone among the goodies.

Scaling the Encounter: Eating a sportlebone may unleash a sportlebone swarm, which is probably a bit much to handle for a low-level party. If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak sportlebone swarm. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an elite sportlebone swarm.

Thunderbird (B2). Violent thunderstorms can come suddenly to hill country, but not all of them are the result of weather fronts clashing. As rare as phoenixes and almost as powerful, thunderbirds come down from their mountain eyries to demand obeisance from puny creatures who live in the lands below. They tend to react poorly when they do not receive the respect they feel that they deserve, and their wrath takes the form of a sudden storm.

You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to realize that the fast-moving storm cloud they see has an enormous living creature at its heart. It's a thunderbird

on its way to punish a community of herders that refuses to pay it tribute. If your party hails the thunderbird and tries to negotiate with it, you may require a DC 25 Diplomacy check to get it stay its wrath. If they fail, they have an opportunity for a quick sidequest, warning the thunderbird's target and earning their gratitude for giving them time to get out of the way.

Vulture (B3). When your party spots what appears to be an oversized vulture picking at a carcass on the hillside, they might want to exercise some care. Ordinary vultures are mere scavengers and can be chased off without much trouble. However, a giant vulture is a different matter. Confident in its size and strength, it is prepared to defend its food source against all comers. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, a party member makes a false move that provokes the vulture to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak giant vulture for the encounter. Otherwise, use a flock of one giant vulture for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite giant vulture for two giant vultures.

Weasels (B3). Someone at the front of your party's formation accidentally steps into a burrow housing enough weasels to cause trouble when they get angry and defend their home. You may allow your party a DC 10 Perception or Survival check to spot the burrow in time to avoid it or give warning to whomever is about to disturb it. The burrow houses a pack of 2d4 weasels.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish to make the encounter more challenging, use an encounter group of one elite weasel for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one megalictis (B3) for four elite giant weasels, or one elite megalictis for six elite giant weasels.

Treasure: There is a 10% chance that they are actually mink, and their pelts would be of some value to furriers — 1 gp for normal-sized mink, and 3 gp for a megalictis. You may require a successful DC 15 Nature check for your party to tell the difference between mink and weasels.



Lizards can be found in almost every type of terrain but in the desert they have the perfect conditions to grow larger than your party might expect.

Lizard (B1, B2). Roll on Table 5.3.5 to determine the manner of reptile that faces your party:

TABLE 5.3.5

Lizard - Hills

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-4	Giant Gecko
5-6	Shocker Lizard

Giant Gecko (B1). Oversized lizards in hill country fight back if they feel threatened, but they are typically not aggressive. Use the giant gecko as a catch-all for big lizards found up in the hills. Your party spots one lizard sunning itself on a rock. It's minding its own business for the most part. You may require your party to make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If they fail, someone in your party makes a false move that triggers an attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite giant gecko for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite giant chameleon (B2) for two elite giant geckos.

Shocker Lizard (B2). A lone shocker lizard flees at your party's approach, but a group of two or more may put up a fight. Have your party to make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone in your party makes a false move that triggers an attack. Zap!

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak shocker lizards. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use a pack of one shocker lizard for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level.

Quetz Couatl (B2). As far as your party goes, an encounter with a quetz couatl is probably best understood as a chance to help your party along when they're struggling. With its impressive size, spectacular coloration and ability to fly, its appearance is purpose-designed for a bit of divine intervention, and that's how you can use it. The quetz couatl may be acting on behalf of a good-aligned deity followed by a party member, or it may be following them of its own accord, waiting to step in when they seem to be at a dead end.

This assumes that your party is good-aligned or, at worst (from the quetz couatl's point of view) lawful neutral. If your party is predominantly evil, it may choose to hinder them instead. Perhaps it steps in to defend good-aligned creatures from your party.

TABLE 5.4

Humanoids - Hills

d100	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Bugbear
4-7	Catfolk
8-15	Dwarves
16-17	Eunemvro
18-23	Giant
24-29	Gnolls
30-35	Gnomes
36-43	Goblins
44-50	Halflings
51-56	Hobgoblins
57-63	Kobolds
64-66	Kovintus
67-72	Ogre
73-80	Orcs
81-84	Planar Scion, Oread
85-87	Spriggan
88-91	Strix
92-95	Tengu
96-100	Werecreature

Bugbear (B1). Bugbears like to terrorize villages and isolated homesteads, so the bugbear with which your party crosses paths is most likely looking for such a place, or on its way to one that with which it is already familiar. Now that it has come upon your party, however, they look like as good a target as any as it lurks behind a rock or uses changes in the elevation to conceal its movements. On the other hand, if it is unfamiliar with the area, it may try to coerce your party into sharing local lore.

Depending on the bugbear's motivations in this situation, you may have it make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds, it gets to use its Bushwhack ability against a party member.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one bugbear thug for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite bugbear thug or two bugbear tormentors for three bugbear thugs to keep down the size of the group. If more than one bugbear is present, you may decide that your party has stumbled upon their lair in a small clearing. In that case, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of their group assets.

Catfolk (B1). Your party encounters one catfolk pouncer roaming the hillsides. As with many amurrans, wanderlust drives it to travel the world. Either their paths literally cross, or the catfolk hails them, momentarily distracted from lounging and gazing up at the sky. It is eager to know what your party is doing here, but it has no ulterior motive than pure curiosity. It freely shares whatever knowledge it has.

A catfolk pouncer may make a useful NPC in the sort of encounters that low-level parties are likely to face. You may allow your party a DC 10 Diplomacy check to convince it to travel a while in their company and share in the adventure. However, if your party is predominantly evil, a critical success is required.

Scaling the Encounter: The farther from catfolk's tropical homelands, the more likely you will find them traveling alone. If this encounter happens in a tropical zone, use an encounter group of 1d4 catfolk pouncers; otherwise, there is only one. If you want to raise the level of the encounter to make it worth the while of a higher-level party, use elite catfolk pouncers.

Dwarves. Hill country is home turf for dwarves, especially if there are veins of precious or industrial metal running through the hills. Mining and metalworking is what dwarves do; it's their thing. The possibilities for why you would run into a small group of dwarves in hill country while they are abroad from one of their mining or industrial settlements vary according to the full range of the activities and functions of those settlements. They might be miners exploring for new veins, or workers shuttling from one mine to another. Or they might be out looking for firewood to keep the forges working. Or they might be taking loads of ore from a nearby mine for smelting. Or they might be a war party on the alert because there are orcs or goblinoids about.

Unless your party includes any such enemies, dwarves are unlikely to treat them with hostility. It's much more likely that they freely share their local knowledge and even material help — you may require that your party make a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check in the latter case. You may also use an encounter with dwarves to provide your party with a sidequest, with the dwarves trying to enlist them in defending their colony against external threats.

Scaling the Encounter: A dwarf work party group consists of 2d8 miners plus 1d4 guards. You may substitute one guard and one acolyte for 1d4 guards. A war party consists of 2d8 guards and one acolyte. In all cases, the guards are armed with battleaxes. If you anticipate that this will be a hostile encounter, you may use a group consisting of one guard and one archer sentry (armed with light crossbow instead of longbow) for each multiple

of 5 in your party's average level, and if your party's average level is higher than 10 add one captain of the guard as the leader.

Heigh Ho, Heigh Ho?

As the guidelines for scaling the encounter suggest, you are more likely to find large populations of dwarves in the hills (and also in the mountains, but that is a matter for Chapter 7). Mines and other settlements should be fixed locations, not random encounters, of course. But it's more likely than not that dwarves that your party meets by chance are affiliated with one such population center.

However, population density brings certain hazards in a dangerous world. You have more to defend, and it becomes more worthwhile for someone to try to take it from you. Plus, your enemies have little doubt about where to find you. There is security in numbers, but also insecurity. So the dwarves your party meets in hill country might actually need their help more urgently than those they meet in areas where dwarves blend into the background. If anything, they are more likely to offer your party a sidequest, promising weapons or even ingots of precious metal in exchange for their help in dealing with monsters or other enemies.

Eunemvro (B3). If your party comes upon one of these odd, extraplanar humanoids it is a good bet that there are undead nearby. Destroying undead is the main — if not sole — focus of eunemvro's existence, and this one is pursuing a lead on a group of undead creatures or a powerful undead, like a lich. Eunemvro are aloof and it rarely occurs to them to ask strangers for help, so it's not a given that it offers your party a sidequest to come along with it. In fact, it becomes hostile if it suspects that your party harbors someone who practices necromancy. However, it may be persuaded to accompany your party for a while if destroying undead are involved; you may require a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check.

Scaling the Encounter: If you suspect that the encounter will turn hostile, use a weak eunemvro for the encounter if your party's average level is lower than 5. Conversely, if your party's average level is higher than 8, use an encounter group of one elite eunemvro for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level.

Giant (B1, B3). Hill country is closer than any other environment, with possible exception of mountains, to giants' home turf. Hill giants and cave giants find plenty of caves and hollows gouged out of hillsides and fire giants find defensible high ground for their strongholds.

A giant lair, where you find a group of giants who will defend their home to the death, is a significant location and should be planned, not random. However, you shouldn't be surprised to find giants, alone or in small groups, away from their lairs and going about their business. To determine the giant encountered, roll on Table 5.4.1:

TABLE 5.4.1

Giant - Hills

d8	ENCOUNTER
1	Cave Giant
2	Fire Giant
3-6	Hill Giant
7-8	Stone Giant

Cave Giant (B3). Too violent for even their giant cousins to put up with them, cave giants find plenty of places to hole up in hill country. Sometimes they go about to raid and forage, or they're just looking for a fight with intruders on what they claim as their territory. Your party comes across one cave giant in such a mood.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak cave giant for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one elite cave giant for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Fire Giant (B1). Your party crosses paths with one fire giant that has descended from its stronghold in search of iron and raw steel from which they forge the tools of war, or to collect tribute from lands that they have conquered. This fire giant is not necessarily hostile to your party. If it is abroad on business, it has better things to do than pick a fight with them. However, it may judge whether or not they'd be useful as slaves — especially dwarves, whom fire giants value as miners and smiths. They also value gnomes for their mechanical skill. At your discretion, it may decide to take your party captive, forcing them to either come along quietly or fight for their freedom. If they choose the latter, the giant tries to incapacitate those it thinks useful rather than kill them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 8, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 8-9, use a weak fire giant for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 13, use a team of one elite fire giant for each multiple of 14 in your party's ➤

average level.

Hill Giant (B1). Your party crosses paths with one hill giant looking for a homestead or an isolated village that it can raid. Or perhaps it is on an errand to another lair of hill giants, or just out for a casual stroll. Your party is not its first choice for terrorizing and robbing, but they will do. It tries to bully your party into giving over all of their possessions, and if they refuse the giant is quite willing to bash as many heads as it must.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak hill giant for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one elite hill giant for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Stone Giant (B1). Stone giants find isolated quarries and carve mines into hillsides, where they prefer going about their business in peace and quiet. Your party crosses paths with one stone giant, who has left its lair to explore for another quarry site, or to meet with clients interested in using stone giants' legendary skill for their own purposes. The stone giant is not interested in fighting, but persuading it to help your party means overcoming its decided lack of interest one way or another. Consider that it requires a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 6, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 11, use an encounter group of one elite stone giant for each multiple of 12 in your party's average level.

Gnolls (B1). Your party crosses paths with one gnoll scouting for isolated homesteads with anything worth taking, or herders or travelers taking their chances in the wilderness. Your party is bound to be better armed than a suitable target of opportunity for the gnoll, so it probably has better important things to do than hassle them. However, it's quite possible that it will bully them for useful information and if it senses weakness it might even attack them despite being outnumbered.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak gnoll hunter for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one gnoll hunter for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may substitute one elite gnoll cultist and/or one gnoll sergeant for two gnoll hunters as the group's leaders. If you want to keep down the size of the encounter, you

may freely substitute one elite gnoll hunter for two gnoll hunters.

If the gnoll group is relatively large this may be an actual raiding party. They may be on their way back from a successful raid, spattered with blood and taking with them captives whom they will sacrifice to their demon god. In either case, they ignore your party if your party declines to interfere with them, guided as they are by their primary purpose.

Treasure: If the gnolls are coming back from a successful raid, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the fruits of their labor.

The (Relatively) Gentle Giant

It may strike you as odd to classify giants as something other than aggressive creatures. Giants are enemies, right? Those of us who started with *Dungeons & Dragons* back in the day remember Gary Gygax's classic "G" series of adventure modules, so we know how it works: You fight giants as a warm-up act for the drow and eventually, Lolth herself. Seems like a logical progression.

But in fact, *Dungeons & Dragons* has always treated giants more subtly than that, and at least one species of giant has always been good-aligned. *Pathfinder* follows that tradition. Hill giants — always the lumpenproletariat of giant-kind — and cave giants default to plunder and killing, but other giants may have something else in mind when you approach them. They are intelligent beings who, like humans and most humanoids, are capable of a wide range of reactions to strangers like your party, including simple curiosity, social calculation, pure indifference and at least some degree of geniality, as well as violence.

Gnomes. Your party crosses paths with a small party of gnomes. They may be traders traveling between settlements, in which case the encounter group consists of 2d6 merchants and one guard for protection. Or they may be freelance mechanics who travel between settlements, looking to sell their services, in which case the encounter group consists of 2d4 apprentices accompanied by their master — use one smith as a stand-in for whatever you decide for their mechanical specialty. A third possibility is that they are traveling entertainers: 1d4 troubadours or a troupe of 1d4+2 acrobats.

The gnomes are not aggressive. It won't take much prompting to get them to trade with your party and

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one hobgoblin soldier for each level in your party's average level. You may substitute one goblin dog (B1) for one hobgoblin soldier as long as goblin dogs do not outnumber hobgoblins. Also, you may freely substitute one elite hobgoblin soldier or one hobgoblin archer (B1) for four hobgoblin soldiers. You may substitute one hobgoblin general (B1) for six hobgoblin soldiers as the group's leader.

A large group of hobgoblins indicates that the winds of war are brewing — although ultimately, that sort of thing should be determined by what else is going on in your campaign world. Unless your party has stumbled upon the hobgoblin lair, a large hobgoblin encounter group would be a war party on their way to or from the war zone. They have more important business than attacking your party; in fact, they might even size them up and try to recruit them to fill out the ranks.

Kobolds (B1). These nasty little reptilian humanoids prefer to live underground, but they can get by in hillside caves. They subsist in hill country through the usual way — raiding and plundering anyone weaker than them. Interestingly enough, they are at best beta predators in the more familiar (to them) ecosystem of underground caverns, but out in the open they find settled communities of folk who offer soft targets in that they aren't hardened by constant fighting with their neighbors.

Since kobolds react poorly to sunlight, your party most likely encounters them at night, or by entering a cave that they occupy (in which case, there is a trap of your choice guarding the entrance). There are 2d4 kobold warriors. To them, your party looks like a suitable target of opportunity — a relatively small group that has stuff worth taking. They fan out to try to surround your party and attack from more than one angle.

With a large encounter group, it's possible that your party has stumbled upon the kobolds' lair. In this case, all entrances should have a trap of your choice (see Table 1.6: Traps) associated with it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak kobold warriors. If your party's average level is 4-6, use an encounter group of 1d4 elite kobold warriors. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one kobold scout for each level in your party's average level. You may substitute one kobold dragon mage (B1) for three kobold warriors as the group's leader.

Kovintus (B3). Here, kovintus live in small dwellings burrowed into hillsides. Your party meets one kovintus geomancer as it takes a recreational stroll; or perhaps it

is on its way to leave an offering for a local deity. If your party wishes to speak with it, have them make a DC 15 Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: The kovintus is willing to share its maps and use its primal spells for their benefit.

Success: It shares its maps, but offers no more.

Failure: It is wary of your party and it does not agree to help them at all.

Critical Failure: Your party angers the kovintus to the point where it attacks them.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish, you may use an encounter group of one elite kovintus geomancer for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Ogre (B1). Your party spots one ogre warrior out scouting for potential raiding targets on behalf of its tribe. It is brutish enough and sufficiently confident in its powers to try to take them captive, or kill them outright if they resist.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak ogre warrior for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one ogre for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite ogre warrior for two ogre warriors, or three ogre gluttons (B1) for four ogre warriors. You may also substitute one ogre boss (B1) or one onidoshi (B2) for two ogre warriors as the group's leader.

Orcs (B1). Your party crosses paths with 1d6 orc brutes. They're most likely a scout party, although they may already have found a vulnerable target small enough for a band of this size to raid. As brutal as they are, there's no guarantee that they'll pay your party much attention. Their leader may look your party over and decide that they're not worth the bother. But they may also decide to interrogate your party for information about the surrounding area, and they'll easily resort to violence if your party is slow to cooperate. They are less likely to give your party a break if there are dwarves in it — there are plenty of dwarves up in the hills, and orcs are used to killing them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak orc brutes. If your party's average level is 4-5, use an encounter group of 1d6 orc brutes. If your party's average level is higher than 5 use a baseline encounter group of one orc warrior (B1) for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite orc warrior for two orc warriors. You may also substitute one orc warchief (B1) for one orc warrior as the group's leader.

Treasure: A large orc group is likely an actual raiding party, either headed to their target or on their way back from a successful attack. In the latter case, use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value of their plunder. Consider that there is also a 20% chance that the bandits have with them 1d4 captives. The identity of this captive is left to you as GM, as it should depend on local circumstances and fit into your campaign world.

Planar Scion, Oread (B2). Your party notices what looks like an animated statue plodding its way up (or down, or across) the hillside. It is, in fact, an oread guard — a being whose ancestry mixes mortal flesh with elemental earth. It has come to these hills because instinct has convinced it that somewhere here is a place of great mystical or divine significance, and that its destiny is to live and die as its defender. It is, however, vague on the details and whether such a place actually exists here is up to you as the designer of this world. With some reluctance, it hails your party and asks them for help in finding its destination. What happens from there is up to them, and whether it turns out to be a wild geomancy chase is up to you as GM.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, you may use a party of one elite oread guard for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level as the encounter group.

Spriggan (B2). Your party has the misfortune to cross paths with one spriggan bully out hunting or foraging. However, it may be looking for tools of subterfuge rather than food — poisons or venomous animals, or it may be on its way to a meeting with a co-conspirator. These joyless mutant gnomes have malicious hearts, but they do not use violence without purpose. The spriggan bully regards your party with suspicion, but it need not attack them. It's playing a long game, and it might prefer to get useful information out of your party — or even try to enlist them as allies in a plot against another member of its tribe. Perhaps it wants to depose the current leader, or perhaps it has a score to settle. Maybe it figures that your party can help, in exchange for sparing their lives.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one spriggan bully for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite spriggan bully for two spriggan bullies. You may also substitute one spriggan warlord for two spriggan bullies as the group's leader.

Strix (B3). Marked distrust of humans characterizes these winged humanoid. So if humans make up a significant portion of your party, they could be in for an argument when one strix kinmate pops up onto a boulder and blocks their path through a canyon or other terrain

feature. It's from a tribe that has come down from the strix's typical home area up in the mountains, perhaps to establish an outpost for the tribe — or, perhaps, because it was cast out.

If your party responds with violence, this could set up hostile encounters with other members of the tribe later on, as your party forges onward. Or they could try to talk their way out of it — a DC 15 Diplomacy check should do:

Critical Success: The strix grudgingly allows your party to proceed.

Success: It allows them to pass only on condition that they leave a hostage or some other assurance of their good conduct while in the strix tribe's territory. If they don't intend to come back this way, the strix escorts them, bow drawn.

Failure: It stands its ground but does not fight unless attacked.

Critical Failure: Whatever your party said, it came out very, very wrong. The strix attacks immediately.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one strix kinmate for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite strix kinmate for two strix kinmates.



Tengu (B1). Given that these humanoids with crow-like features are widely distrusted, it's safe bet that a tengu encountered up in the hills is an outcast of some sort. Probably, it has been kicked out of a settlement on suspicion of being up to no good.

Your party crosses paths with one tengu sneak. It is not aggressive, but it may be desperate. So it resorts to the skills that got it into trouble in the first place. At your discretion, it flags down your party and strikes up a conversation, perhaps offering useful local knowledge to keep them distracted. You may have it make a Society check against the highest Intimidation DC in your party as it weighs the risks and rewards of trying to pick a pocket. If it succeeds, the tengu has decided to go for it — i.e.,

your party has failed to scare it off. It then targets the character with the lowest Intimidation DC.

Scaling the Encounter: It's almost unheard of to find a large group of tengu wandering the wilderness. However, if you want to create a more challenging encounter, use one elite tengu sneak for the encounter, or a group of one normal tengu sneak for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level. Half of them try to distract your party from the other half trying to pickpocket them.

Werecreature (B1, B2). To determine what manner of werebeast your party encounters, roll on Table 5.4.2:

TABLE 5.4.2
Werecreature - Hills

d6	ENCOUNTER
1	Werebear
2-3	Wereboar
4-6	Werewolf

All werecreatures assume their animal form if the encounter comes down to combat, although they may choose their hybrid form instead if they have access to a weapon.

Werebear (B1). Your party comes across a werebear that has claimed a hilltop as its domain. Perhaps it was once a druid, or a wandering ranger, or a hermit of some sort who volunteered for this fate. It is not automatically hostile to your party, especially if there are no evil characters present, and it may be willing to provide them with useful information about the surrounding area.

On the other hand, an encounter could create difficulties for your party if the werebear decides that one of the player characters would make a good apprentice (and successor to its self-appointed duties as the local guardian). Once it realizes that there is a druid or a ranger in your party, a light goes on in its head — and it won't take "No" for an answer.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 7, use one elite werebear for the encounter.

Treasure: Because they are territorial, your party may encounter a werebear in or near its lair. In that case, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of its treasure.

Wereboar (B2). A wereboar met by chance was ➤

most likely an unfortunate hunter who didn't realize that the boar at which he aimed his bow was really a lycanthrope. Or it might have been a herder who presented an isolated target. It goes about looking for victims to share its fate, hoping that a lone boar will lure someone into engaging with it. A party of adventurers could offer it an attractive target — confident in its ability to take at least one of them and drive the others off, it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one wereboar for each multiple of two in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite wereboar for three wereboars.

Werewolf (B1). A werewolf spots your party and cannot turn down the opportunity to claim more victims. However, it is clever enough to approach them in its human form, pretending to be a lost traveler in distress, or a peddler waylaid by bandits — any cover story that ought to evoke sympathy will do. Once your party gets close and drops its guard, it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak werewolf. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use one elite werewolf for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.



When attacked, most werecreatures automatically shift to their full animal form, unless they have a weapon to hand that they intend to use.

TABLE 55**Humans - Hills**

d20	ENCOUNTER
1	Adventurers
2-4	Bandits
5	Exiles
6	Explorers
7-8	Farmers
9	Fugitives
10	Gatherers
11-12	Herders
13	Hermit
14	Hunters
15	Military
16-17	Miners
18	Pilgrims
19-20	Traders

Adventurers. Unless your party contains all of the adventurers in your campaign world, it's at least theoretically possible that they'll run into another adventuring party as they work their way through hill country. Perhaps they're pursuing the same objective as your party. Perhaps they have a different mission; perhaps they're headed for a site that your party knows nothing about (like ancient ruins said to hold lost treasures). Perhaps they're lost and starving, or wounded, or cursed.

How they react to your party depends on a variety of factors. Are they rivals pursuing the same goal? If not, perhaps this party is willing to share useful information. In fact, if your party is stuck and having a hard time advancing the storyline of your campaign, a friendly encounter like this can help steer them in the right direction. Differences in alignment may also shape how the two parties react to each other.

Composition of this rival party is up to you and can vary according to circumstance. Any party in the wilderness would be well-advised to have someone accomplished in Survival, such as a ranger, with them. Conversely, a party that is struggling may be in a bad way precisely because no one is well-versed in Survival or Nature.

Scaling the Encounter: Unless there is some possibility that this encounter turns hostile, the relative level of the party is mainly a matter of affect. A higher-level party might project self-confidence and calm (or arrogance), while a beginning-level party might stumble about, unsure of themselves. If you're leaning towards a hostile encounter, however, consider that the total challenge

level of the party should be your party's average level -2, more or less.

Bandits. Hill country offers bandits hillside caves in which to hide and ridge lines and hilltops where they can put up strongholds and observe the surrounding country. Your party crosses paths with a group of bandits coming down from the hills, or on their way back up after successfully hitting a merchant caravan in the flatlands below. Alternately, they may have spotted your party from the high ground and they come down to confront them, fanning out among rocks and vegetation to conceal their movements and get the drop. Even though a party of adventurers like yours is better-armed than their typical target, it's not out of the question that the bandits attack. It's possible that they assume that your party is a posse sent out after them — or that your party intends to rob them of what they took from others by force.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak bandits. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one bandit for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite bandit for two bandits. You may also substitute one gang leader for three bandits as the group's leader.

Treasure: You may decide that your party has surprised the bandits in their lair. If so, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value and contents. Do so also if you decide that the bandits encountered are on their way back from a successful raid. Consider that there is also a 20% chance that the bandits have with them a high-value captive whom they intend to ransom. The identity of this captive is left to you as GM, as it should depend on local circumstances and fit into your campaign world.

Exiles. Your party encounters 1d6 humans or humanoids who could serve as a source of adventure hooks. From their appearance, they have obviously seen better days. They have fled up into these uninhabited hills for any of a variety of reasons: perhaps they are royalty or nobility who have been usurped; perhaps the opposite is the case and they are failed usurpers on the run. Or perhaps they have gotten caught up in a blood feud in their homeland and that's why they fear for their lives. Whatever the circumstance, they left their home to head for the hills because they need to hide.

No matter their reason for being here, they should offer your party an adventure hook of some sort. It may involve protecting the exiles from their real (or imagined) pursuers. It may involve returning to their former home and securing an important item that was left behind (a family heirloom, a badge of office), perhaps even helping them return home and force their way back into their

former position of prominence. At the very least, exiles can provide your party with information about their former home territory, which in turn could be a key location in your campaign.

Use any NPC template you like for the exiles, depending on the backstory you assign them.

Explorers. Your party bumps into a small party driven by human curiosity to explore and map these forbidding hills. The group consists of one chronicler and one guide, and 1d4 bodyguards. Perhaps they are here thanks to the sponsorship of a ruler or noble who has heard rumors that precious metals and gemstones can be found out here, or an academy looking for a lost civilization. Perhaps the explorer is a wealthy eccentric who undertook this expedition on his or her own.

This encounter is not likely to be hostile. Explorers are open and curious, despite the fact that the hills hide any number of hazards. Instead, you may treat this as an opportunity for your party to receive some help from a knowledgeable stranger — the explorer is likely to have excellent maps of nearby areas (and knowledge of those areas) and is willing to share them. Conversely, an expedition that has been in the field for a while may be running short on supplies — not just cartography supplies, but fresh water — and would pay well if your party can provide help. Also, if your party is in the mood for a sidequest, an explorer may offer one: If the expedition is headed into particularly dangerous territory, it may want additional guards to keep it safe.

Farmers. Your party crosses paths with 2d4 farmers and farm hands (treat them as farmers) from a nearby isolated farmstead traveling to or from market. They have a horse-drawn wagon; if they are going to market it's full of the fruits of their labor, and if they're returning from market they'll have household goods, tools and some extra coin with them.



Farmers are often either headed to, or returning from, market and their needs and ability to trade will depend on from which direction the party encounters them.

The farmers are not hostile. They're used to seeing strangers as they travel on business. They're willing to trade as long as the exchange is fair; if your party wants to shortchange them it will take a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check. They may be rubes, but they're no fools. If your party has horses or mules available, they may even be interested in buying one on account of theirs being on its last legs, or just because they need another.

Fugitives. Your party crosses paths with 1d6 bedraggled humans or humanoids picking their way up, down or along the hillside. They are unarmed, and they are barely clothed. At your discretion, they may have a manacle around one wrist, with the other manacle dangling on its chain. They're escaped prisoners who have fled into the hills. From whom they are fleeing and why they were imprisoned in the first place is up to you, and ought to depend on where in your campaign world this encounter takes place.

How the encounter plays out depends entirely on how your party reacts, but one thing on which you may rely is that these fugitives did not go to the trouble of a jailbreak just to allow a bunch of strangers to take their freedom back from them. Each of them has learned whip their freed manacle by the chain and wield it as a club.

Treat the fugitives as prisoners, but without weapons or armor.

Treasure: Fugitives have no treasure.

Gatherers. Your party comes across 1d4 gatherers collecting herbs and wild grasses, either for food or medicine. It's possible that your party surprises them, as they work hunched over and close to the ground. However, they are not hostile — they're just laborers with specialized knowledge out doing their job. They may be persuaded to help your party with local lore and/or therapeutic concoctions made from whatever it is they're gathering (see *Treasure*). They may also ask your party to help them if they have reason to believe that they are in danger (perhaps they had a close brush with monsters recently).

Treat the gatherers as farmers armed with sickles or daggers.

Treasure: In addition to treasure carried on their person (use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value), the gatherers have a small stash of helpful non-magical items made from herbs or fungi. One such item could be a poultice that heals hit points equal to the Medicine skill ranks of whoever applies it after it is kept in place for 24 hours. But that is just one possibility. Use any such items that already exist in your campaign

world. You can also consult “Narl’s Herbal Remedies” in Ramen Sandwich Press’ collection of new items, *Tome of the Utility Drawer, Volume I*.



Herders are rarely hostile and are often associated with a nearby settlement.

Herders. Your party spots in the distance a herd of sheep, or goats, or some other livestock. There are 1d6 herders in their midst. They may be grazing the animals, or driving them to market. They are not hostile, and since they range far and wide by the nature of their work, they can provide your party with helpful local knowledge. They know all the nearby sources of water and the places where monsters are reputed to reside. They may even have specific knowledge that can help your party get where they want to go.

Treat herders as trackers, but without the weapons and armor. They carry crooks or staves that they can wield two-handed as clubs, but they wear no armor.

Hermit. Remote hill country — and the more rugged, the better — makes convivial surroundings for someone who has decided to withdraw from worldly cares. But that doesn’t mean you can’t be found. Your party stumbles upon a hermit in his or her abode — a small cave, or a lean-to or abandoned building on a hilltop. One hermit lives here, devoted to a pure and simple life of contemplation. The hermit may be a divine spellcaster, for whom seclusion and meditation is a form of service to a deity. It may take a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check to get past the fact that your party has broken this seclusion, but the hermit may be willing to use divine spells to aid them.

Alternately, your party may have found a secular hermit — someone who, having been wounded by failure or grown weary of success, decided to retire completely from the world. Such a person won’t have divine spells, but may have magic items, local lore, or even knowledge and personal connections from his or her past life that might help your party.

Yet another possibility is that this hermit is a retired adventurer or soldier, in the manner of knights in the Arthurian romances who became hermits to repent of lives spent fighting each other and dallying with married women. Hermits in this mold have discarded their fighting gear, but they may be persuaded to leave their seclusion and join your party as friendly NPCs.

Treat a religious hermit as a cultist, prophet or priest, but feel free to generate a higher-level divine spellcaster if you want to create a more spectacular effect with this encounter. Treat a secular hermit as an NPC class of your choice, or use a character class and level of your choice.

Treasure: Use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine if the hermit has any magic items and/or valuable devotional items.

Hunter. Your party comes across one hunter looking for game. Depending on your party’s appearance, a hunter may act with caution, even suspicion at first. Hunters understand that there are always strange folk about when you operate in a wilderness away from home. However, if your party is not hostile the hunter may be willing to help by trading goods and supplying food and local knowledge. You may have your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check to get on the hunter’s good side.

Treat a hunter as a NPC from the forester class, with the size of the encounter group depending on which template you decide to use.

Scaling the Encounter: Use an encounter group of one forester for each multiple of 4 in your party’s average level. You may freely substitute one hunter or one elite foresters for two foresters.

Military. Hill country is not as conducive to maneuvering armies as open plains, but by no means is it safe from war. A hilltop or a ridge line is a perfect place to put up a fortress. The high ground is a perfect place, ideal for making a defensive stand. Rugged, remote hillsides dotted with caves also provide irregular warriors with excellent shelter. If war is a part of your campaign world, your party could encounter an army or part of an army on its way to meet the enemy — or running away from the enemy.

An entire army on the march or deployed for battle is certain to have more important things on their mind than dealing with a party of adventurers. So they’re more useful for spectacle and flavor than a challenging encounter. For an actual encounter, your party more likely comes across a small group of soldiers tasked with scouting ahead of the main army, or on its flanks. Their job is to locate the enemy and, conversely, to prevent enemy scouts from spotting their main force. They won’t

attack your party without reason to believe that your party is somehow connected to their enemy. However, they do stop your party to grill them for information, and possibly enlist their help with their mission. A larger group is most likely a unit of soldiers hurrying to join the main army — or running away from the fight.

Treat a typical, rank-and-file soldier as a guard. If mounted, the horse is a riding horse. Leaders should qualify as veterans or knights, and they get to ride warhorses if you want them on horseback.

Scaling the Encounter: As a rough guideline, the encounter group should consist of one guard for each level in your party's average level. You may substitute one watch officer for three guards and/or one captain of the guard for six guards to serve as the group's leader.

Miners. Your party crosses paths with a small group of 1d10 miners looking for a fresh source of metals or raw gemstones. If there is a mining colony nearby, they might well be an offshoot from it.

This is not likely a hostile encounter. Instead, the miners could have local knowledge that your party finds useful, as well as torches, lamp oil, rope and other supplies for exploring underground. They might also want your party to serve as armed escort, having realized a little too late that the hills shelter dangerous creatures. In fact, if you want to stage a situation in which your party has the chance to rescue them from their foolhardiness, roll on Table 5.2 for an additional encounter.

Pilgrims. The pantheon and nature of religious practice in your campaign world is up to you as the designer of that world. If it makes sense in that context, consider that your party crosses paths with a group of devotees traveling to (or perhaps from) a holy site. Perhaps they have a specific request to make of their deity (ending a drought or plague, curing someone of disease, etc.). Or perhaps it's just a ritual that their religion says they must perform regularly. Depending on how religions work in your world, perhaps their mission is to vandalize a shrine to a rival deity.

Their deity and alignment should dictate how they react to meeting your party. In any event, they are lightly armed at best and they may want to travel in your party's company for safety — especially if they know of a specific hazard in the area, like bandits or monsters. If friendly, they may also be willing to share local knowledge and trade with your party, or even share what divine magic capabilities they possess for your party's benefit.

Scaling the Encounter. Properly scaling the encounter may not matter unless you think that the encounter

could turn hostile. In that case use baseline encounter group of one acolyte for level in your party's average level. You may substitute one prophet for two acolytes; or one zealot for four acolytes; or one priest for six acolytes.

Treasure: In addition to whatever treasure they carry on their person, pilgrims may carry with them an offering to their deity. At your discretion, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.



Pilgrims in your game world may be very different from the kinds of pilgrims you might encounter in the real world.

Traders. Hill country is too rugged for large merchant caravans. However, your party may cross paths with small-time merchants who go from village to village with a modest selection of basic goods — 1d4 of them with a horse-drawn cart. They're happy to do business with your party. Consider that full range of basic items described in the core rulebooks could be available; assortment and quantity at your discretion as GM.

Peddlers are naturally sociable, and as travelers they are willing to share lore and stories picked up during their wanderings. They're a good device for providing your party with information about distant places as well as nearby locations. They may also be interested in traveling with your party for as long as they can, wanting protection from monsters and/or bandits.

Treat traders as merchants.

Treasure: Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the total value of the peddlers' individual possessions. In addition, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of their goods and/or hard money.

TABLE 5.6

Watch Out! - Hills

d20	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Falling Rocks
3	Flash Flood
4-5	Hidden Hole
6-8	Loose Ground
9	The Hills are Alive
10	Tracks
11	Tripping Hazard
12	Wind Gust

Falling Rock. A large rock higher up the hillside comes loose. Gravity does the rest. It tumbles onto a random party member. The rock causes 1d8 bludgeoning damage, but a successful DC 15 Reflex save halves the damage, rounded down.

Flash Flood. A sudden rainstorm provides the water, which rushes downhill and creates a flash flood. Unless your players make it a point that their characters are keeping to higher ground, they pass by a gully or creek that serves as a natural channel for water flowing downhill. The sudden cascade may sweep up one or more party member. Treat this as a perilous flash flood.

Hidden Hole. The hillside beneath the feet of a party member at the front of the party formation gives way. It's a hole in the ground — perhaps an animal burrow that is easily stepped in by accident, or it's so extensive that it weakens the ground above it and too much weight on it causes it to collapse underfoot. Have your party make a DC 15 Perception check to spot one that is right in their path in time to avoid it. Failure means that a party member steps into it, with all of the hazards that come with an unexpected tumble. That party members suffers 1d6 damage. A successful DC 15 Reflex save halves the damage.

Loose Ground. Your party reaches the crest of a rise from which they can get a good view of the surrounding area. However, a party member — choose one, or a character who wants to get a good look around may literally step forward as the best candidate — steps onto a patch of loose soil that gives way. Treat it as a treacherous scree

hazard, except that the damage from falling is only 1d10. Whee!

The Hills Are Alive. Choose a party member to make a DC 15 Survival or Nature check. If it fails, that character believes that he or she has heard a noise made by creature or a dangerous natural phenomenon. It can be as consequential as a dragon's roar in the distance, or as eerily intimate as a rattlesnake's rattle close by. If it succeeds, that party member realizes that this is an illusion; either it's not as close as it seems or it isn't real at all.

If you wish, roll on Table 5.6.1 for guidance on what your party thinks it hears:

TABLE 5.6.1

The Hills Are Alive - Hills

d10	ENCOUNTER
1	Crash of rocks tumbling down the hillside
2	Dragon roaring overhead
3	Ettin arguing with itself
4	Griffon screeching
5	Hoofbeats of horses or other herd animals
6	Human or humanoid cry of distress
7	Picks smashing against rock
8	Voices speaking in Dwarven
9	Voices speaking in Giant
10	Wolves howling

Tracks. Your party spots tracks that look like tracks that belong to a monster associated with treasure lairs. They may make a successful DC 15 Survival check to realize that they are very old, and they will not lead to anything useful. If it fails, they believe the tracks to be fresh, perhaps leading to an amusing (for you as GM, anyway) wild goose chase.

Tripping Hazard. Pick a party member at the front of the party formation. That character trips over an unseen obstacle — a rock sticking up out of the ground or a half-buried abandoned weapon, for instance. He or she must make a successful DC 10 Reflex save to avoid a hard fall that causes 1d6 damage — and perhaps no small embarrassment in the eyes of the other party members.

Wind Gust. The winds that whip around in hilly country blow up and catch your party by surprise. If they have

made camp for the night, their campfire is extinguished, forcing them to light another one. If they've already used all their wood and kindling, they'll have to go hunting in the dark for more. If they're carrying torches, they go out. If they're using lanterns, they may lose their grip (see below).



Even a well-known path can have hazards that will slow a party down.

Regardless of whether it's day or night, any party member who is standing must make a DC 5 Strength check to avoid being knocked down. Anyone who is knocked down by the wind immediately loses grasp of anything held in hand. Fragile objects break when they are dropped. In addition, anyone who is knocked down while wearing his or her pack must make a DC 5 Reflex save to avoid the pack falling heavily so that anything containing liquid, such as canteens and potions, breaking and spilling.

Up One Side and Down the Other

Hill country can offer places to graze a herd as well as mine for mithral. It can offer places to make a homestead as well as places to hide from enemies. But all such places share creatures (and folk) who can adapt to the uneven ground and rough terrain — a characteristic that creates a distinctive range of possible encounters.



LITTORAL

CHAPTER SIX

Littoral

What is Littoral?

You can think of littoral as a transitional space between dry land and a large body of water — the ocean, a major river, a major lake. It's shoreline or a riverbank and the adjacent area. This may seem limited in extent; it's not a vast desert or plain, or a deep forest. But littoral is an environment unto itself. It is here that you find creatures who are comfortable both on land and in water. The transition between dry land and deep water — where the water is shallow enough so that you can wade into it — makes this the only place where you can encounter aquatic creatures while remaining within a quick sprint of land.

This chapter assumes that your party is traveling at or in the vicinity of the water's edge, or along a river. The terrain is mostly flat, except where the land slopes down to the water, and how steep is the gradient depends on local conditions. Therefore, line of sight varies according to differences in elevation and possible blocking terrain features, but for the most part it should be possible to spot other creatures at a distance. In humanoid and human encounters (Tables 6.4 and 6.5) the encounter group may be aboard some kind of vessel when your party spots them, or not, at your discretion as GM.

What Do You Find in Littoral?

When you determine that a random encounter is in order, roll on Table 6.1 to determine the category:

TABLE 6.1

Encounter Type - Littoral

d20	CATEGORY
1-6	Aggressive Creatures (Table 6.2)
7-12	Neutral Creatures (Table 6.3)
13-15	Humanoids (Table 6.4)
16-17	Humans (Table 6.5)
18-20	Watch Out (Table 6.6)

Then, roll on the appropriate table to determine the creature, person or thing encountered.

TABLE 6.2

Aggressive Creatures - Littoral

d100	CATEGORY
1-4	Ahuizotl
5-6	Barghest
7-8	Basilisk
9-12	Bunyip
13-14	Centipede
15-16	Chimera
17-18	Chuul
19-21	Drake
22	Elasmosaurus
23-25	Elemental
26-28	Elemental, Mephit
29-31	Eurypterid
32-35	Fey
36-37	Galvo
38-39	Griffon
40-42	Grindylow
43-46	Harpy
47-49	Hydra
50-51	Incutilis
52-56	Insects
57-59	Jellyfish
60-61	Manticore
62-63	Medusa
64-66	Mudwretch
67-70	Ooze
71-73	Peluda
74-77	Piranha Swarm
78-79	Quopopak
80-81	Roc
82-84	Scorpion
85-88	Snakes
89-92	Troll
93-98	Undead
99	Xill
100-103	Crocodile

+3 to the die roll if in temperate and tropical littoral

Ahuizotl (B2). Your party hears what sounds like a cry of distress coming from out on the water. They can't see the source, however. You may allow them a DC 20 Nature check to realize that it's not a human or humanoid voice, but an imitation. In fact, the source of the noise is an ahuizotl, hidden by the lip of the shore or the riverbank with just its head sticking out of the water.

It's a tried and true formula by which these weird beasts lure their prey.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak ahuizotl for the encounter. If your party's average level is 9-12, use one elite ahuizotl. If your party's average level is higher than 12, consider using two elite ahuizotls — one to spring the trap, and one to set the bait and then pile in once the trap is sprung.

Barghest (B1). You find barghests just about everywhere you find goblinoids — which is to say, you can cross paths with a barghest almost anywhere. In this particular situation, your party encounters a barghest disguising itself as a wolf to look less conspicuous while it roams the wilderness in search of prey. It may seem odd to your party that a lone ordinary wolf charges them without fear, but once the barghest comes within striking distance of one party member it changes into its true form.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use a weak barghest for the encounter. If your party's average level is 7-10, use a greater barghest (B1) for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use one elite greater barghest for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Basilisk (B1). Your party passes a small cave or hollow carved into the ground that rises from the water's edge. A basilisk makes its lair here — as your party finds out if they so much as poke their heads inside. You may allow them a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to hear something stirring from within, or at least to intuit that something is there.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak basilisk for the encounter. If your party's average level is 8-11, use one elite basilisk. If your party's average level is higher than 11, they encounter two elite basilisks sharing a lair — or, if you wish, substitute one elite dracolisk (B2).

Treasure: The lair contains scattered valuables belonging to the basilisk's previous victims. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value. If there is more than one basilisk in the encounter, consider that basilisk eggs may also be present for the taking.

Bunyip (B1). While traveling along the shore, your party stumbles into the hunting ground of a bunyip. These amphibious predators restrict their diet to small animals, but they are intensely territorial and they don't take kindly to intruders. You may allow your party to hear the

bunyip's Roar ability before they spot it, to give them some warning of what they're about to confront.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak bunyip for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one bunyip for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute two elite bunyips for one bunyip.

Either Fish, or Fowl, or Both

Visualizing littoral encounters presents a challenge in that not every creature described here is land-based. Some are aquatic or amphibious, and an encounter may require that your party be in the water, or at least by the water's edge. A piranha swarm isn't going to take a chunk out of you as long as you stay on dry land. Also, amphibious capability is a matter of degree. For instance: Yes, both crocodiles and octopi can leave the water. But an octopus won't go nearly as far up the beach to have at your party as a croc.

As the GM, it's up to you how to handle these fine distinctions, whether you want to hold aquatic or amphibious encounters for when your party puts themselves in the right position for them; or decide, in the absence of any contrary declarations from your players, that they have put themselves in an appropriate situation; or to re-roll for a more realistic encounter. You may also decide to ram it through regardless of plausibility and have that octopus climb a palm tree to get at a party member, or they meet an ogre frolicking in the water while fording a river. It's your world and your campaign.

Centipede (B1, B2). Centipedes are not aggressive by nature, but the giants among them are so large and so voracious that they constantly need to feed, and their size allows them to deal with most creatures without fear. When your party crosses paths with 1d6 giant centipedes looking for food in tall grass near the water's edge, the centipedes consider that live food has just been delivered to their door.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak giant centipedes. If your party's average level is 4-6, use one giant whiptail centipede (B2) for the encounter, or consider that your party has provoked the wrath of one giant centipede swarm (B1) hiding among some rocks. If your party's average level is 7-8, use one elite giant whiptail centipede. If your party's average level is higher than 8, consider using the granddaddy among centipedes, one titan centipede (B2). If this location won't accommodate

a creature that large, use an encounter group of one elite giant whiptail centipede for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level instead.

Chimera (B1). Your party spots a winged monstrosity with three different animal heads circling above them. This can only mean one thing: A chimera has spotted them as potential prey. There is a small chance that it has escaped servitude to another creature — you can't truly domesticate a chimera, you can only get it to cooperate for a while — but it is more likely just feral and hungry.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 6, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use a weak chimera for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an encounter group of one elite chimera for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

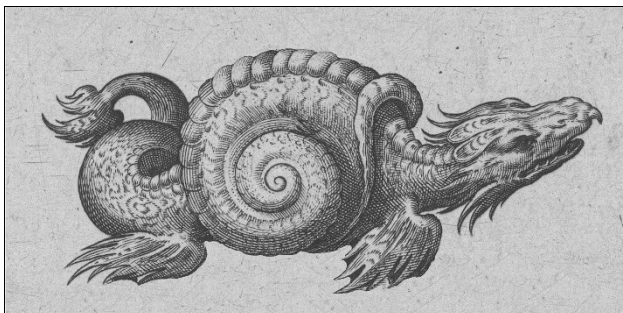
Chuul (B1). You may allow your party a DC 20 Nature or Survival check to intuit that something distinctly unpleasant lurks beneath the water nearby:

Critical Success: They realize that it is a predator waiting to ambush them.

Success: They get the uneasy feeling that something bad is about to happen, but nothing more specific.

Failure: They don't realize that danger lurks nearby until the chuul's tentacles lash at them from beneath the water's surface.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use one weak chuul for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an encounter group of one elite chuul for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.



These draconic cousins can cause serious trouble for an unprepared adventuring party.

Drake (B1, B2). Two different kinds of drake hunt by the water's edge, and which one your party encounters

depends on whether they are traveling near salt water or fresh water. Sea drakes (B2) haunt ocean coastlines, swooping down from their roosts on seaside cliffs. River drakes (B1), on the other hand, hunt by rivers or lakes. Both are aggressive predators who would just as soon prey on humans and humanoids as fish and aquatic mammals.

Scaling the Encounter: A sea drake may be too much to handle if your party's average level is 1-3. Feel free to re-roll for a different encounter in this case. Otherwise, use one weak sea drake if your party's average level is 4-5, or one elite sea drake if your party's average level is higher than 9.

A river drake encounter group may have as many as one river drake for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level; you may freely substitute one elite river drake for two river drakes.

Elasmosaurus (B2). These huge aquatic predators prefer to remain in the hidden parts of the world. But some roam in search of prey and come to coasts where they hunt humans and humanoids, as well as other creatures that inhabit littoral areas. Perhaps your party comes upon an elasmosaurus terrorizing fisherfolk or shellfish divers in an isolated spot. Or perhaps your party is actually traveling through one of those lost parts of the world that these beasts call home and surprises it. Either way, your party looks like food to it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak elasmosaurus for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an encounter group of one elite elasmosaurus for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Elemental (B1, B2, B3). If most or all of your party is in the water, a water elemental rears up next to them. If most or all of your party is on land, the ground beside them resolves itself into an earth elemental. In either case, the elemental being is disturbed by its proximity to an alien element. It's an unhappy camper, and it lashes out at your party.

Earth Elemental/Scaling the Encounter. One earth wisp (B3) should make a reasonable encounter for a beginning-level party. Otherwise, the elemental encountered should depend on your party's average level: one living boulder (B2) for a level 2 or higher party, one sod hound (B1) for a level 3 or higher party, one earthen destrier (B2) for a level 4 or higher party, one living landslide (B1) for a level 5 or higher party, one sand sentry (B2) for a level 6 or higher party, one xorn (B1) for a level 7 or higher party, one granite glyptodont (B2) for

a level 8 or higher party, one stone mauler (B1) for a level 9 or higher party, or one elemental avalanche (B1) for a level 11 or higher party.

Water Elemental/Scaling the Encounter. One water wisp (B3) should make a reasonable encounter for a beginning-level party. Otherwise, the elemental encountered should depend on your party's average level: one icicle snake (B2) for a level 2 or higher party, one brine shark (B1) for a level 3 or higher party, one mist stalker (B2) for a level 4 or higher party, one living waterfall (B1) for a level 5 or higher party, one blizzardborn (B2) for a level 6 or higher party, one quatoid (B1) for a level 7 or higher party, one tidal master (B1) for a level 9 or higher party, one ice wyrm (B2) for a level 10 or higher party, or one elemental tsunami (B1) for a level 11 or higher party.

Elemental, Mephit (B1, B2). These annoying little elementals have a habit of crossing over into the Material Plane, like ink bleeding through paper, and making nuisances of themselves. They are not predatory, but they are very annoying and they interpret any attempt to brush them aside as an attack. Littoral areas attract various types of mephit. Roll on Table 6.2.1 to determine the kind of mephit your party encounters:

TABLE 6.2.1

Mephit - Littoral

d6	ENCOUNTER
1	Ice Mephit
2-3	Dust Mephit
4	Ooze Mephit
5-7	Water Mephit

+1 to die roll if in tropical littoral

Ice Mephit (B2). Ice mephits are most often found in sub-arctic areas, where the cold suits them. You may allow your party a DC 20 Perception of Survival check to sense that something underwater has been following your party as it travels at the water's edge. If it succeeds, they are not surprised when one ice mephit crashes through the surface and starts ranting at them in Aquan or Auran. In fact, it has been observing them for a while. Finally, it can no longer contain itself, and it unburdens itself of all of the faults and shortcomings that it perceives in your party. Of course, the problem is that once the ice mephit gets wound up, it won't wind down and your party cannot get it to stop by walking away or otherwise ignoring it.

Dust Mephit (B2). If your party is on land, they find one dust mephit blocking their path. It fixes them ➤

with a piercing gaze and declares that they are doomed (in either Auran or Terran, of course). The actual circumstances of your party do not matter. The mephit just knows that they're headed for a bad end. If your party tries to ignore it and move on, it follows them and refuses to let up. It doesn't like being ignored, and eventually it attacks them.

Ooze Mephit (B2). Your party passes one ooze mephit lounging in a tide pool or muddy patch right by the water's edge. It begs your party (in Aquan or Terran, of course) for a handout, whether a valuable item or a service of some kind, and it shifts from wheedling to violence if it doesn't get what it wants.

Water Mephit (B1). Water mephits feel equally at home in salt or fresh water. As elemental creatures, it's all water to them. One water mephit spots your party as it lurks just beneath the surface and it decides to have a little fun at their expense. The prank can take the form of squirting water at them while remaining submerged — if someone approaches to find out the source, it just encourages the mephit to keep teasing them. Or it pops up from the water just to shout abuse at them, then ducks under to remain hidden. It sounds harmless enough, but like all mephits, it won't stop until forced to do so.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite mephit for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Eurypterid (B3). A swarm of 2d4 common eurypterids spots your party as prey while roaming the shore or riverbank for food. They're hungry, so they attack without hesitation.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 2, use an encounter group of one elite common eurypterid for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one spiny eurypterid for five elite common eurypterids.

Treasure: If eurypterid is considered a delicacy in your world, a fresh kill would be worth selling to a fish monger in the next settlement. The price is ultimately up to you, but 2 gp for a common eurypterid and 10 for a spiny eurypterid would seem to make sense.

Fey (B1, B2). It's easy to forget that not all fey are harmless. Their (usually) diminutive size and their eccentric appearance give them an advantage similar to that given to small dogs: Larger creatures interpret their

aggression and malice as mere mischief and they don't take them seriously enough. Roll on Table 6.2.2 to determine the fey creature encountered:

TABLE 6.2.2

Aggressive Fey - Littoral

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Culdewen
3-4	Kelpie
5	Redcap
6	Rusalka

Culdewen (B2). Your party spots what looks like a harmless — because unusually diminutive — old man rowing a boat or poling a raft close to shore. Best not to get too close, though, because it's really a culdewen and as such, it's a skilled and voracious hunter of living things. If your party comes within its striking distance, it becomes excited and targets the nearest party member as its prey.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use one weak culdewen for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an encounter group of one elite culdewen for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Kelpie (B2). These shapechanging predatory fey should appear to your party in a form that would tempt at least one party member to come in for a closer look. This is, of course, the kelpie using its Captivating Lure ability.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use a weak kelpie for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use one elite kelpie.

Redcap (B1). These murderous fey kill just for the fun of it. When prowling the shore, they use changes in elevation and any sort of cover to conceal themselves so they can strike from ambush.

One redcap spots your party. Have it make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds, it gets the drop and charges the character at the back of the party formation. If it fails, your party spots a small, wizened humanoid, with its pointed red cap the only giveaway to its true identity. It tries to play off meeting your party as a chance encounter, but it keeps looking for an opportunity to attack. ➤

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak redcap for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, a group of redcaps out for a spree — one elite redcap for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level — should make the encounter more challenging.

Rusalka (B2). Rusalka are not violent, but they are predatory and aggressive. They do not kill but they most certainly enjoy enslaving victims and treating them like toys. It prefers to remain at least partially concealed by a steep riverbank while it uses its Beckoning Call ability on unwary victims.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 10, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 10-11, use a weak rusalka for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 15, use one elite rusalka.

Galvo (B3). It's never a good sign when you come upon a creature that constantly crackles with electricity. Your party's first hint that there's a galvo in the vicinity might be the sight of dead fish floating near the water's edge. Though galvos kill to eat, their electrical field kills indiscriminately, so sometimes there are leftovers. However, that won't stop a galvo from targeting your party. At your discretion, it may use a steep river bank or shoreline to conceal itself until it is within striking distance.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is less than 7, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 7-8, use a weak galvo for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 12, use an encounter group of one elite galvo for each multiple of 12 in your party's average level.

Griffon (B1). A griffon, roaming afield from its eyrie in higher ground, spots your party and goes for one of their mounts or pack animals — or at least, it thinks it has spotted a mount or a pack animal.

If taming and training griffons is part of your campaign world, then no doubt griffon trainers would pay well for them. To subdue a griffon to the point where it can be bound and held captive, one large or two medium-size creatures must successfully grapple the griffon using both hands. They must maintain the grapple for 10 consecutive turns. At that point, the griffon stops struggling. How your party keeps it bound until it can be delivered is up to them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak griffon for the encounter. If your party's

average level is higher than 7, use a pack (flock?) of one elite griffon for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Grindylow (B2). Your party comes across a hunting party of 1d4+1 grindylows sloshing their way through shallow water. They view your party with suspicion. To them, this patch of littoral is a valuable hunting ground that they have gotten used to exploiting, or they intend to exploit it in the near future. Either way, they want your party out of here, so they attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use weak grindylows for the encounter group. If your party's average level is 4-5, use 1d6+2 grindylows. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite grindylow for each level in your party's average level.

Harpy (B1). Harpies like to perch on coastal cliffs that overlook rocks, jagged reefs and other such hazards close to shore. They enjoy luring in hapless sailors with their songs and watching them founder, and then preying on them when they're helpless. Your party approaches a harpy's perch and hears its siren song.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak harpy for the encounter. Otherwise, use a clan group of one harpy for each multiple of 5 in your party's average level as the encounter group. You may freely substitute two elite harpies for three harpies. Whether or not they sing in harmony is up to you.

Treasure: By definition, a harpy's perch is its lair, so it's unlikely that this encounter takes place far from its home. Use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value of the accumulated belongings from its earlier victims.

Hydra (B1). As your party takes a relaxing stroll by the shore, they see monstrous reptilian heads rear up out of the water. They have come across one hydra that has come close to shore to hunt. Your party looks as edible to it as any aquatic creature.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak hydra for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, you may use an encounter group of one elite hydra for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Incutilis (B3). As disquieting as it is to see one of these nautilus-like aberrations propel itself through the water at some hapless swimmer, they look downright nightmarish when they come onto land looking for victims. Your party comes across one incutilis in one of a

variety of ways: A party member is in the water for some reason and the incutilis hones in and attacks a vulnerable target of opportunity. Or your party is on land near the water's edge and the incutilis decides that controlling one party member will amuse it to the expense of everyone else involved. A third possibility is that your party happens onto the scene when the incutilis is seizing control of some poor soul — a dockhand or an NPC of the seafarer or explorer type makes a plausible candidate — thus giving them the chance to effect a rescue.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak incutilis for the encounter. Otherwise, you may use a baseline encounter group of one incutilis for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite incutilis for three incutilises.

Insects (B2). You may not think of insects as predatory, but they can be quite aggressive and cause trouble in their own way. That's what happens when you act without the capacity to think about the consequences. To make things worse, insects in the wilderness sometimes grow monstrously large. Roll on Table 6.2.3 to determine the insects encountered:

TABLE 6.2.3

Insects - Littoral

d20	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Ant
3	Cockroach
4-10	Dragonfly
11-12	Fly
13-18	Mosquito
19-20	Tick

Ant (B2). Your party is not looking through a magnifying glass; they really have come face-to-face with a human-sized ant near the water's edge. It's not a predator, but it is an omnivore that eats anything that seems like food and it is large enough to enforce its will in a way that can look like predation. To it, your party looks like food.

Alternately, army ants are much smaller, but they come at you in a vicious, relentless swarm. If your party runs afoul of an army ant swarm (B2), it spots them (or more precisely, a food source somewhere among your party's belongings) during a rest halt or while they have camped for the night and attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak giant ant for the encounter. If your ➤

party's average level is higher than 5, use one army ant swarm for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite giant ant for one army ant swarm.

Cockroach (B2). You find cockroaches wherever they can scavenge off of creatures higher up the food chain. During a rest halt, one giant cockroach goes after your party's rations. It won't attack unless threatened, but it will eat everything up unless stopped.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite cockroach swarm (B2) for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Dragonfly (B2). Like mosquitos, dragonflies need fresh water in order to reproduce. So it should come as no surprise if your party encounters dragonflies near a lake or a river. It may surprise them, however, to find dragonflies large enough to feed on a party of adventurers.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak dragonfly nymph for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite giant dragonfly (B2) for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level. These are adults defending eggs that they just laid in the water.

Fly (B2). Baby giant flies feed on carcasses so that they grow up into big and strong giant flies. Your party comes upon the remains of something that was probably once a large fish or aquatic mammal. It has been consumed almost entirely by 1d4 giant maggots. They're still hungry and primitive instinct drives them to try to continue feeding on your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3 use an encounter group of 1d4 giant maggots. If your party's average level is higher than 3 use an encounter group of one giant fly (B2) for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. The flies have found a carcass into which to lay eggs, and they defend their spawning ground against a perceived threat.

Mosquito (B2). A common complaint about living in littoral areas is that there is enough standing water about to support a healthy mosquito population during warm weather months. One fen mosquito swarm sets about your party. They want nutritious blood and they won't be swatted away. ➤

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak fen mosquito swarm for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one fen mosquito swarm for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite fen mosquito swarm or one giant mosquito for two fen mosquito swarms.

Tick (B2). Pick a party member at random. One giant tick pops out from tall grass near the shore or riverbank and tries to attach itself to that character so that it can feed.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite giant tick for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Jellyfish (B2). Anyone wading in shallow salt water may run afoul of jellyfish. The jellyfish mentioned here are mindless, but this means they instinctively attack anything that gets near them on the off chance that they're prey. If your party is in shallow water, they run afoul of a fire jellyfish swarm. If they're swimming or in a boat farther off shore, they encounter a giant jellyfish that might even reach up into the boat and attack the occupants.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak fire jellyfish swarm for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, you may use an encounter group of one elite fire jellyfish swarm or elite giant jellyfish (B2) for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level. Feel free to combine the two — it's *Nideria Rex*!

Manticore (B1). Your party spots a large winged beast in the sky. It's a manticore on the hunt, and it spots your party just as they spot it. Once it gets close enough to launch its spikes, it may choose to toy with its prey just to watch them squirm. In this case, it demands some kind of bribe in exchange for sparing them — a bargain it will keep, if your party makes the right offer. A suitable offer might take the form of treasure or humiliating servitude that amuses it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for another encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak manticore for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an encounter group of one elite manticore for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Medusa (B1). As they walk along the shore your party approaches a seaside cave or a hollow in the riverbank in which a medusa makes its lair. As they reach the cave mouth, you may have them make a DC 15 Perception check to notice what looks like statues of animals and even humans and humanoids in the gloom. The medusa then spots your party and decides that they would supplement its existing collection nicely.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak medusa for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use one elite medusa for the encounter.

Treasure: The medusa's gaze petrifies flesh, but not valuables. To total up the bits and pieces that once belonged to its humanoid victims, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Mudwretch (B2). These elemental creatures spawn and dwell in muddy patches by large bodies of water. The moisture replenishes their life energy, of course — but blood does so more efficiently than water. Your party comes upon one such mudwretch in need of sustenance, and to it they look like walking energy drinks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak mudwretch for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one mudwretch for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite mudwretch for three mudwretches.

Ooze (B2, B3). Tide pools at low tide and muddy riverbanks and lakeshores where water constantly laps against land and then draws back make fertile environment for oozes. Roll on Table 6.2.4 to determine the slimy thing into which your party sinks its feet:

TABLE 6.2.4

Ooze - Littoral

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Amoeba Swarm
3-5	Giant Amoeba
6	Globster

Amoeba Swarm (B2). Have the amoeba swarm make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds, it looks like a granulated pool of slime mixed in with the shallow water, and they don't realize it's a living thing until they're close enough for it to strike. In any event, it attacks without thinking. ➤

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite amoeba swarm for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Giant Amoeba (B2). A single giant amoeba is smaller than an amoeba swarm and harder to spot. But it behaves in the same mindless and voracious way and it's easy to mistake it for a translucent puddle of slime. Handle the encounter the same as an amoeba swarm (see above).

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite giant amoeba for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Globster (B3). Your party comes upon a mess of degraded organic material washed up onto land. It's an appalling sight, even to hardened adventurers like your party. It looks like a jumble of parts from dead aquatic creatures. And indeed, that's what it is — but it is also a living thing and a relentless predator. It instinctively sizes up your party as food.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, feel free to use an amoeba encounter instead. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak globster for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use an encounter group of one elite globster for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level.

Peluda (B2). Your party may realize that they have entered the territory of a peluda by the trampled vegetation, toppled trees and remains of the creature's victims scattered like garbage. The peluda itself lurks beneath the lip of the riverbank or the lake shore; perhaps your party only hears its raspy, draconic breathing. It waits for the right moment to attack them. Unlike true dragons, the peluda is not intelligent enough to suss out your party's reasons for intruding on its domain. However, you may allow your party a DC 29 Diplomacy or Intimidation check to talk their way out of a confrontation by playing on the beast's innate insecurity when faced with more powerful creatures.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 8, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 8-9, use a weak peluda for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 13, use one elite peluda.

Treasure: Peludas have rather eccentric dietary practices. They like to eat coins and gems in the belief that it makes

them stronger. They don't digest them, so if your party guts a slain peluda, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of the contents.

Piranha Swarm (B3). If some or all of your party wades into a river or large lake, one piranha swarm sees their next meal and attacks. You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to notice a school of fish with sharp teeth close to shore.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak piranha swarm for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use one elite piranha swarm for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level. That's a whole lot of nasty little fish, but then again, this is the wilderness.

Quoppopak (B2). Nothing quite breaks up a pleasant sojourn along the shore like the sight of a quoppopak rearing up at the water's edge, looking to feed. In the moment, it's of little consolation that these terrible beasts are out of their element when they breach the surface. They hunt for amusement as well as food, and at the moment your party looks both fun and delicious to it.

Scaling the Encounter: Quoppopak are fearsome opponents. If your party's average level is lower than 9, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 9-10, use a weak quoppopak for the encounter. If your party's average is higher than 14, use an encounter group of one elite quoppopak for each multiple of 15 in your party's average level.

Roc (B1). A roc has roamed far afield from its mountain or hilltop eyrie in search of food. It's no pelican and it's out for bigger prey than fish, but coasts and rivers offer plenty of suitable targets. If anything, the roc has learned that someone on a boat or a raft has nowhere to run and nowhere to hide from a powerful aerial predator, so riverine merchants and other such travelers are easy pickings. When it spots your party, they look pretty tasty, too, so it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 7, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 7-8, use a weak roc for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 12 use an elite roc.

Scorpion (B1). Your party takes a rest halt and disturbs a giant scorpion exploring the riverbank or shore. It has a large stinger, and it doesn't hesitate to use it. Whether it acts in what it perceives as self-defense, or because your party looks like prey, it makes little practical difference.

Alternately, you may use this encounter to allow your party to witness a riverside encounter between one giant

scorpion and one giant frog (B2). They see the two creatures go to the water's edge. The scorpion gets up on the frog's back and the frog jumps into the water, keeping the scorpion above the surface. Halfway across the river, the scorpion stings the frog, dealing it a mortal blow, and they both sink, never to be seen again — unless your party intercedes. If they somehow rescue the giant frog, it follows them out of gratitude; treat it as a familiar or friendly NPC.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak giant scorpion for the encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use one scorpion swarm. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite giant scorpion for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Snakes (B1, B2, B3). There are snake species that live in or near salt water or fresh water, so leaving the land is no guarantee that you'll escape them. Whether your party is ashore or in shallow water, you may allow them a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to realize that they're about to disturb a snake or swarm of snakes. This should give them enough time to take evasive action, although you may consider that this simply means they aren't surprised when the snake lashes out.

In the tropics, your party may have the dubious pleasure of meeting a giant constrictor. Roll on Table 6.2.5 to determine the snake(s) encountered:

TABLE 6.2.5	
Snakes - Littoral	
d6	ENCOUNTER
1-4	Rat Snake Swarm
5-6	Viper
7-8	Giant Anaconda
9	Sea Snake
+3 to die roll if in tropical littoral	
Rat Snake Swarm (B3). You may allow your party a DC 10 Perception check to notice that someone at the front of the party formation is about to step into a shallow depression filled with rat snakes. Critical success allows your party to avoid contact with them, if that is what they want. Success allows them to stop short and get ready before the snakes lash out at them. Rat snakes are not venomous, but you don't want to get bitten by one all the same.	
<i>Scaling the Encounter:</i> If your party's average level is 1, use one weak rat snake swarm for the encounter. ➤	

If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite rat snake swarm for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Viper (B1). As with the rat snake swarm, your party approaches a dip in the ground that conceals 1d4 vipers. Failing the Perception check to spot the snakes means that the front of the party formation steps right into the snake pit.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak viper swarm (B3) for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite viper swarm for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Giant Anaconda (B1). These beastly constrictors prefer jungles and tropical swamps, but overall they're comfortable in and around water. One giant anaconda observes your party while lurking in mud and shallow water and targets one party member for consumption, confident that the rest won't be able to harm it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 6, feel free to re-roll for a different snake encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use one weak giant anaconda for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 11, use one elite giant anaconda.

Sea Snake (B2). While at the water's edge, your party draws the attention of one of these venomous aquatic snakes that lurk in shallow salt water. It lashes out — most likely because it prefers to get in the first strike when it has been disturbed, but it is also possible that it sees that one party member could make a meal for the rest of its swarm.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3, use a small swarm of 1d4 sea snakes for the encounter group. If your party's average level is 4-5, use an encounter group of 1d4 elite sea snakes. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite sea snake for each level in your party's average level.

Treasure: It's quite possible that a giant constrictor snake has fed on humans or humanoids before and that the less perishable possessions remain in its digestive tract. If your party bothers to slit the snake open and root around inside, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of what they find.

Troll (B1). It's less common to find a troll by the ocean or a lake, but the river's edge is its natural domain. If there is no bridge nearby for the troll to guard, consider that your party has found a natural ford that the monster has staked out as its own. It demands one of the party's pack animals as its toll, or a suitable amount of coins. It fights rather than let anyone pass for free. It refuses to believe that your party is not interested in crossing, so it attacks them even if they do not want to get to the other side.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak troll for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use an encounter group of one elite troll for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level. If scaling the encounter calls for more than one troll, you may substitute two elite troll hounds (B2) for one troll. If the encounter calls for more than two trolls, you may also substitute one troll king (B1) for two trolls.

Treasure: The troll's racket has worked well enough in the past: Its victims pay one way or another. If your party defeats the troll in its lair, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Undead (B1, B2). Littoral areas are by no means immune to haunting by the undead. Water gives life, but it can also take life and receive the dead. Roll on Table 6.2.6 to determine the undead abomination that greets your party:

TABLE 6.2.6

Undead - Littoral

d20	ENCOUNTER
1-4	Draugr
5	Ghost
6-10	Ghoul/Ghast
11	Revenant
12	Shadow
13-17	Skeleton
18	Wraith
19-20	Zombie

Draugr (B2). Draugrs usually rise from those lost at sea, but there is nothing particular about salt water that gives rise to the necromancy that creates them. Sailors can just as easily come to grief in rivers and lakes and remerge as draugrs. It may unnerve your party to see a draugr come onto the shore, enraged at its fate and eager to kill any living thing it ➤

encounters, but it should not surprise them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak draugr for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one draugr for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. All ashore that's going ashore! You may freely substitute one elite draugr for three draugrs.

Ghost (B1). That is no optical illusion; the ethereal form floating in the air at the water's edge really is a ghost. It is most likely the remnant of someone who drowned or died some other miserable death far from home. Whatever the case, you may make this into a hostile encounter by having the ghost try to possess a member of your party so that it may resolve unfinished business from its former life.

Scaling the Encounter: Ghosts always work alone. However, if you wish to make a more challenging ghost encounter for a 10th level or higher party, use a ghost mage instead of a ghost commoner. Or you may freely substitute a ghost of your own design.

Ghoul/Ghast (B1). Death by water — or death by the water — produces rotting corpses that can re-animate as ghouls or ghastrs. One ghoul approaches your party, driven by mindless hunger for their flesh.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 4-5, use one elite ghoul or one ghast for the encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use one elite ghast for the encounter. If your party level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite ghoul for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level, or one elite ghast for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Revenant (B2). Unlike many forms of undead, revenants have a specific motivation and a sharp focus for their hatred. Your party comes across the undead husk of someone who was forcibly drowned and washed up on shore, or otherwise met their end at the hands of another by the water's edge. It seeks revenge, but against the particular party it holds responsible for ending its natural life. Assuming that this is not someone in your party, the revenant does not attack — in fact it might even provide your party with a sidequest if they can help the revenant locate the target of its vengeance.

Shadows (B1). Walking in the shade of a riverbank or passing by a coastal cave, your party glimpses a shadow in the gloom out of the corner of the eye. But it's not an illusion, it's a creature in its own right, ➤

an insubstantial undead intent on draining the life from the living. It's not particularly at home here and shadows prefer darkness, where they can strike unseen. All the same, it attacks the nearest party member, eager to spawn one more of its own kind.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak shadow for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use one elite shadow for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Skeletons (B1). Your party comes upon 1d4+2 skeleton guards — undead created from remains from which the flesh has rotted away. Perhaps they were soldiers killed defending a river crossing (or trying to force one), or storming ashore. Perhaps they were adventurers or explorers ambushed by brigands — or perhaps they were pirates themselves, who were hunted down in the name of justice or revenge, or who fell out among themselves. Driven by rage at their fate, they attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak skeleton guards. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite skeleton guard for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one skeletal champion for two elite skeleton guards.

Wraith (B1). There are plenty of ways to come to a bad end in the wilderness, and your party has the misfortune to come across a wraith that was once someone who perished near the water's edge, and which is now bound to this part of it. Perhaps they pass an improvised grave, or just a half-buried skeleton. Whatever the case, it takes out the resentment that it bore at the end of its life on your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, feel free to re-roll for a different undead encounter. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak wraith for the encounter. If your party's average level is 9-12, use one dread wraith (B2). If your party's average level is higher than 12, use one elite dread wraith.

Zombie (B1). Your party come across one plague zombie or 1d4 zombie shamblers that have been programmed to kill every living thing they encounter. The source of the necromancy that created these zombies we leave to you. Perhaps they slipped the leash of their creator and they now wander the ➤

land, mindlessly looking for victims.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one plague zombie for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one zombie brute or one elite plague zombie for two plague zombies, or one zombie hulk for six plague zombies. If you want to create a large encounter for that "The Walking Dead" effect, freely substitute 1d4 zombie shamblers for one plague zombie.

Treasure: It's quite possible that ghosts and wraiths are encountered in or near the place where they died or were buried — in which case, the valuables they had on them are lying about somewhere. You may require a successful DC 15 Perception to find them. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

With skeletons and zombies, they may have with them some remains of what they had on their person at the time of their death. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Xill (B2). Your party crosses paths with one xill traveling a waterway or lurking on a seacoast, looking to kidnap a host for its reproductive processes. It's looking for lone travelers or merchants who have dropped their guard. Your party outnumbers it, but xills are confident that they can take most anyone and out here there won't be anyone to get in the way.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak xill for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use one elite xill for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Crocodile (B1). Traveling along the shore, your party has the misfortune to come across one crocodile. It may just be sunning itself on land, or it may be prowling for food. Either way, as soon as it spots your party, it realizes that it's hungry and it attacks. They're simple creatures, so it's as simple as that.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a bask of one crocodile for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level for the baseline encounter group. You may freely substitute one elite crocodile for three crocodiles or one deinonychus (B1) for four crocodiles.

TABLE 6.3

Neutral Creatures - Littoral

d100	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Bear
4-7	Blink Dog
8-13	Bog Strider
14-19	Crabs
20-21	Dragon
22-25	Eagle
26-29	Eel
30-36	Fey
37-40	Genie, Marid
41-45	Hippocampus
46-51	Hippopotamus
52-56	Horses
57-61	Leshy, Seaweed
62-65	Octopus
66-69	Rats
70-73	Ray
74-78	Reefclaw
79-82	Sportlebore
83-86	Squid
87-90	Tiddalik
91-95	Turtle
96-99	Vulture
100-105	Coral Capuchin

+5 to the die roll if in tropical littoral

Bear (B1). This is only something you will see by fresh water — a rapidly flowing river, or a lake — but grizzly bears have a taste for fish, and they know how to bat them out of the water. It's quite a sight even in a world filled with magic and monsters, but grizzlies don't like to be interrupted when they're acquiring food. Catching fish requires concentration, and the distraction throws their *chi*. If your party wants to avoid a confrontation with an irritated grizzly bear, require a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it succeeds, the bear ignores them. If it fails, the bear charges them in a rage.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak grizzly bear for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use one elite grizzly bear.

Blink Dog (B2). Your party spots a dog with long ears and a wisp of fur hanging from its chin following the shoreline or water course. But this is no stray escaped from a nearby settlement; it's a blink dog scouting on behalf of its pack as it roams the Material Plane, defending it from evil influences.

If it intuits that there are evil characters with bad intentions in your party, it keeps its distance and uses its innate spells to get away. Otherwise, anyone who is fluent in Sylvan can communicate with it, although it make take a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check to overcome its natural aloofness. A blink dog on a mission may provide your party with a sidequest as it asks them to help its pack. A successful Diplomacy check (DC 15 or 20, depending on whether or not it diverts the blink dog from its purpose) by a good-aligned character may persuade it to accompany your party for a short while.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish, you may use a pack of blink dogs for the encounter group, consisting of one for each multiple of 3 in your party’s average level.

Bog Strider (B2). Your party comes across one of these insect-like creatures on the hunt, padding along the surface of the water at a good clip. It spots your party, stops and speaks to them in Aquan. Its intention and state of mind are up to you as GM, but it’s possible that it’s asking for any leads on where it can find prey animals — or that it’s upset because your party scared off its quarry.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is 1, use one weak bog strider for the encounter. Otherwise, an encounter group of one bog strider for each multiple of 2 in your party’s average level. You may freely substitute one elite bog strider for three bog striders.

With a hunting party of multiple bog striders, consider that your party encounters only one initially, with the others out of sight but on call through its wavesense tremor tapping. Surprise!

Crabs (B3). While dipping their toes into the water, or even strolling at the water’s edge, a spectacular (if not alarming) sight greets your party: a mass of motley mollusk shells apparently moving on their own power. It’s really a hermit crab swarm. They attack only if they feel threatened, so have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. Failure means that a party member has made a false move that sets the crabs’ pincers snapping.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is 1-3, use a weak hermit crab swarm for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one hermit crab swarm for each multiple of 4 in your party’s average level. You may substitute one giant hermit crab for one hermit crab swarm, or one elite giant hermit crab for 3 hermit crab swarms.

Dragon (B1, B2). Your party notices a shadow on the water. It’s made by something looming in the sky above:

a dragon on the prowl. To determine what kind of dragon roll on Table 6.3.1:

TABLE 6.3.1	
Dragon - Littoral	
d12	ENCOUNTER
1	Black (B1)
2	Blue (B1)
3	Green (B1)
4	Red (B1)
6	Brass (B1)
7-8	Bronze (B1)
9	Copper (B1)
10	Gold (B1)
11	Silver (B1)
12	Brine (B2)

To determine its age, see *Scaling the Encounter*.

To be clear, this need not be a hostile encounter. The dragon is not defending its lair, so it may just be curious about your party. It may have more important things to do and decline to take notice of them at all. Or it may be hungry and on the hunt, or it’s angry because your party has intruded on territory it claims as its own.

Scaling the Encounter: Because dragons get tougher with age, the age of the dragon encountered should depend on your party’s average level — especially if you decide that this is going to be a hostile encounter. If your party’s average level is lower than 11, they encounter a young dragon. If their average level is 11-15, they encounter an adult dragon. If their average level is higher than 15, they encounter an ancient dragon.



There are not many predators willing to take on a dragon, even a very young one.

Eagles (B1). Roll on Table 6.3.2 to determine if your party is fortunate enough to be spotted by a giant eagle, or they come across ordinary eagles hunting for small animals.

TABLE 6.3.2

Eagles - Littoral

d4	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Eagles
4	Giant Eagle

Eagles. Your party notices a convocation of 2d8 eagles wheeling overhead. If your party has a small animal kept as a pet or familiar, or food (travelers rations qualify) kept exposed, have the eagles make a DC 15 Perception check. If they succeed, they dive and try to snatch it up, attacking anyone who gets in their way.

Giant Eagle. On the other hand, your party may have the good fortune to enter territory patrolled by a giant eagle. If your party has predominantly good characters (or at least, no evil characters), the giant eagle follows it to the limit of its domain, providing a sort of combat air patrol for your party. If your party hails it (remember, giant eagles only understand Auran and Sylvan), it responds. Convincing it to do your party a service requires a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check. Unless your party consists entirely of good characters, a critical success is needed to gain its full cooperation.

Alternately, if you want to provide your party with a sidequest, the giant eagle tries to enlist them in dealing with some evil humanoids in its territory. However, since it cannot speak, you may require your party to make a successful DC 15 Nature check to understand that it wants them to follow it. Critical success indicates an educated guess that it wants help dealing with enemies.

Eels (B1). Electric eels live in freshwater, so if you care about this kind of verisimilitude and this encounter takes place by the ocean, you may want to re-roll for another encounter, or substitute a giant moray eel encounter if it makes sense (see below). One or more of your party members wades into shallow water, where an electric eel just might mistake it for a predator that needs to be persuaded to go away. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check to avoid making a false move that alarms this very shocking fish.

If this encounter takes place in tropical waters — either fresh or salt — you may substitute one moray eel if you wish, as long as your party's average level is above 2.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite electric eel for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

With moray eels, use one weak giant moray eel if your party's average level is 3-4. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use one elite giant moray eel for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level.

Fey (B1, B2). Unlike the malicious fey described above, most fey creatures mean no harm. But they have agendas of their own that can work at cross-purposes with that of adventurers pursuing fortune and glory. To determine which fey creature your party comes across, roll on Table 6.3.3:

TABLE 6.3.3

Fey - Littoral

d10	ENCOUNTER
1	Grodair
2-3	Nereid
4-7	Nixie
8-10	Nymph, Naiad

Grodair (B2). Your party spots one of these weird, amphibious fey on land as it migrates in search of a friendlier place to live. It's full of water and ready to roll. It may try to communicate with your party in one of its native tongues, full of questions about the general area and where might be a good place to create a lake — i.e., make a new home for itself. It's not hostile, although it may get frustrated if no one in your party understands Aquan or Sylvan. If your party has any kind of dealing with the grodair, you may have them make a DC 15 Diplomacy check just to see if they get a critical failure — in which case someone has done or said something to set it off, and it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 8, use an elite grodair for the encounter.

Nereid (B2). Nereids live in and travel among lakes and rivers. They prefer solitude, so when your party comes across one wading near the shore, it regards them with suspicion. You may have your party make a DC 20 Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: They win over the nereid. It is willing to use its spells to help them. It may even be willing to travel with them for a while.

Success: It is willing to share local knowledge with ➤

them. It may give them a sidequest and ask them to deal with a local rusalka.

Failure: It politely, but firmly requests that they leave it alone.

Critical Failure: Somehow, they triggered it into treating them as a threat. It attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: Although this need not be a hostile encounter, feel free to re-roll for a different fey encounter if your party's average level is lower than 8. If your party's average level is 8-9, use a weak nereid for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 13, use an elite nereid.

Nixie (B2). These guardians of watercourses and bodies of water prefer to remain hidden until they have cause to reveal themselves to strangers. A nixie watches your party as they enter its domain. Have it make a DC 15 Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds, they will not know it's there until it chooses to reveal itself and demands that they state their business. At this point, you may have your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: The nixie takes kindly to them and offers to use its Grant Desire ability to help them.

Success: They convince it that they mean no harm.

Failure: For whatever reason, it remains cold to your party and warns them to clear off.

Critical Failure: Your party has thrown up all kinds of red flags, and it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one nixie for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite nixie for four nixies.

Nymph, Naiad (B1). Naiads normally watch over small bodies of fresh water, but they may take care of a part of a larger body of water — a section of a lake, or a particular stretch of a river. How a naiad reacts to your party depends on whether or not they seem likely to despoil the water through physical or magical corruption. It may offer your party a sidequest by asking for their help in heading off an imminent danger to the river or lake. Or you may have your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: They have befriended the naiad. It ➤

is willing to use its spells to help them.

Success: It is willing to share local information with them.

Failure: It remains wary of your party and asks them to leave.

Critical Failure: Your party said or did something so uncouth that the naiad attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-4, use an elite naiad for the encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak naiad queen (B1). If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an elite naiad queen.

Frogs (B2). Frogs are not aggressive predators, but even so an amphibian's got to eat — and the larger the frog, the bigger its prey. When your party wanders along the lake shore or riverbank, they draw the attention of one giant frog. If any party member is small or smaller, or there is a familiar or other animal companion present, the frogs lash out instinctively and the first frog to stick out its tongue tries to swallow it. They leave alone anyone of medium or larger size.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite giant frog for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. That should scale the encounter for higher-level parties without capsizing the lily pads from too many humanoid-sized frogs crowding onto them.

Genie, Marid (B1). Your party has what may be the good fortune to cross paths with a marid shahzada bored enough to come to the Material Plane. Here, it wanders watercourses in search of amusement. It hails your party and gives them a challenge: Amuse me and I will reward you! If your party agrees, have them make a Performance check with a DC that should vary according to whether the marid has high or low standards:

Critical Success: They delight the marid so much that it will even travel with your party as a friendly NPC for a while, as long as it doesn't have to leave the water.

Success: It is willing to use one of its spells or other abilities to help them.

Failure: It is not much amused and haughtily dismisses them from its presence.

Critical Failure: They have offended the marid to the point where it uses one of its abilities against them, though not with lethal intent.

Scaling the Encounter: There is little chance that a marid encounter results in a fight to the death, but if your party's average level is lower than 7, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 7-8, use a weak marid for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 12, use an elite marid.

Treasure: Marids carry traveling money worthy of their status. Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Hippocampi (B2). Your party spots these colorful aquatic steeds half-submerged in shallow water, grazing on kelp or some other water-based plant. Hippocampi are not aggressive by any means, and they can be tamed to serve as aquatic mounts. To subdue a hippocampus, it must be successfully grappled with both hands and kept in grappled condition for 6 consecutive rounds. At that point, it becomes docile and whomever grappled it may ride it or use it as a pack animal. Because of its size, two medium-size creatures may grapple with the same hippocampi simultaneously, and as long as one of them maintains its grappled condition, this counts toward the requirement for wrangling it.

However, if your party tries to approach hippocampi with the intent to wrangle them, have your party make a DC 15 Nature check:

Success: They show no signs of alarm.

Failure: They take alarm and flee to deeper water.

Critical Failure: They take such alarm that they attack the first party member to enter the water.

Scaling the Encounter: Hippocampi are herd creatures. Use a baseline encounter group of one hippocampus for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite hippocampus for four hippocampi.

Hippopotamus (B2). Hippopotami are not predators, but they are bad-tempered and they get aggressive if they don't like the looks of you. Your party comes upon one hippopotamus lolling in a muddy riverbank or lakeshore. Have them make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, they set it off, and it charges them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 3-4, use one weak hippopotamus for the encounter. Otherwise, use a herd of one hippopotamus for each multiple of 5 in your party's average level as the encounter group. You may freely substitute one behemoth hippopotamus for two hippopotami.

Horses (B1). Your party comes across a small herd of horses that have wandered down to the riverbank or shoreline. It's only natural that they should go to a source of water, regardless of whether or not you could make them drink it. The only questions are, how many of them are there, and do they belong to someone else? Horse encounters are unlikely to be hostile, although they may put up a fight if you try to wrangle them before they've been broken. Roll on Table 6.3.3 to determine the nature of the horse encounter:

TABLE 6.3.3

Horses - Littoral

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Riding Horses
3-4	Riding Ponies
5	War Horses
6	War Ponies

Riding Horses. Your party comes across 1d6 riding horses grazing, or moving at a walk. It's up to you to decide whether they're wild, or if they belong to someone who would pay a reward for their return.

If they are wild, they can be wrangled. To wrangle a riding horse, it must be successfully grappled with both hands and kept in grappled condition for 6 consecutive rounds. At that point, it becomes docile and whoever grappled it may ride it or use it as a pack animal. Because of its size, two medium-size creatures may grapple with the same riding horse simultaneously, and as long as one of them maintains its grappled condition, this counts toward the requirement for wrangling it.

Riding Ponies. Instead of riding horses, your party comes upon 2d4 riding ponies. The same considerations about whether they are wild or astray from their owner apply. A wild riding pony may also be wrangled in the same manner as riding horses, although only one medium-size creature or two small-size creatures may try to wrangle it at any one time.

War Horses. Your party comes across 1d4 war horses. Whether their owners were killed in battle, or they just escaped from the stable, is up to you. If the former, they wear empty saddles. War horses do not need to be wrangled; they have been broken and disciplined, so they're used to working with human or humanoid riders. However, they're also trained fighters and if you don't approach them just right in a situation like this, they'll take you for the enemy ➤

and attack. If your party approaches the warhorses, require a DC 15 Nature check to avoid setting the horses off.

War Ponies. Instead of war horses, your party comes upon 2d4 war ponies. The same considerations apply to them as to war horses; they're just smaller, trained and kept to accommodate smaller riders.

Leshy, Seaweed (B3). Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Perception check to realize that what looks like a large clump of seaweed has appendages and a pair of eyes that follows them. Seaweed leshys are not necessarily hostile; how this one responds to your party depends on whether or not it senses that your party is a threat. You may have your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check. If it succeeds, the leshy may help your party in some way — perhaps by providing local knowledge or providing a safe place to rest. It is also possible that it has scavenged something from a nearby shipwreck that someone in a coastal community would find valuable, and it would be willing to trade it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak seaweed leshy for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one seaweed leshy for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite seaweed leshy for two seaweed leshys.

Octopus (B2). Octopi are not aggressive, but they are curious and they express it ways that can be uncomfortable for the object of their interest. While wading into a tide pool, river or lake, your party catches the attention of one blue-ringed octopus. You may have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check to somehow convince it that they are uninteresting and better left alone. Otherwise, it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-5, use an encounter group of 1d6 blue-ringed octopi. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one elite blue-ringed octopus for each level in your party's average level. If this produces a more numerous group of octopi than you'd care to run, you may freely substitute one elite reef octopus for four elite blue-ringed octopi.

Rats (B1). Even if they haven't just fled a sinking ship, you find rats in coastal areas and riversides. Some species of rats spend enough time in freshwater so that they're practically amphibious, so even if you go out onto the water you won't escape them. 1d4 giant rats sniff out your party's food rations as they cross paths with each other. They don't attack party members who don't interfere with their basic mission of acquiring food. But

unless they are stopped, they eventually account for all of your party's rations, making off with what they don't eat on the spot.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3, use one rat swarm (B1) for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite rat swarm for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Reefclaw (B1). Your party spots one of these crustacean-like creatures waiting in ambush among some reeds, or partially submerged at the water's edge. It isn't looking for prey as large as anyone in your party, so it presents no immediate threat to them unless they attack it — or unless they make a false move that it interprets as threatening. To this end, you may have your party make a DC 10 Nature or Diplomacy (since reefclaws can understand Common) check. If it fails, they have, unfortunately, convinced it that they're an imminent threat.

Also, a reefclaw encounter is worth including here in case there are any ethical or moral questions in your world surrounding the hunting and eating of reefclaws. If your party has the chance to hunt a pricey — because largely forbidden — delicacy, what course do they choose?

Scaling the Encounter: Use a base encounter group of one reefclaw for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite reefclaw for four reefclaws.

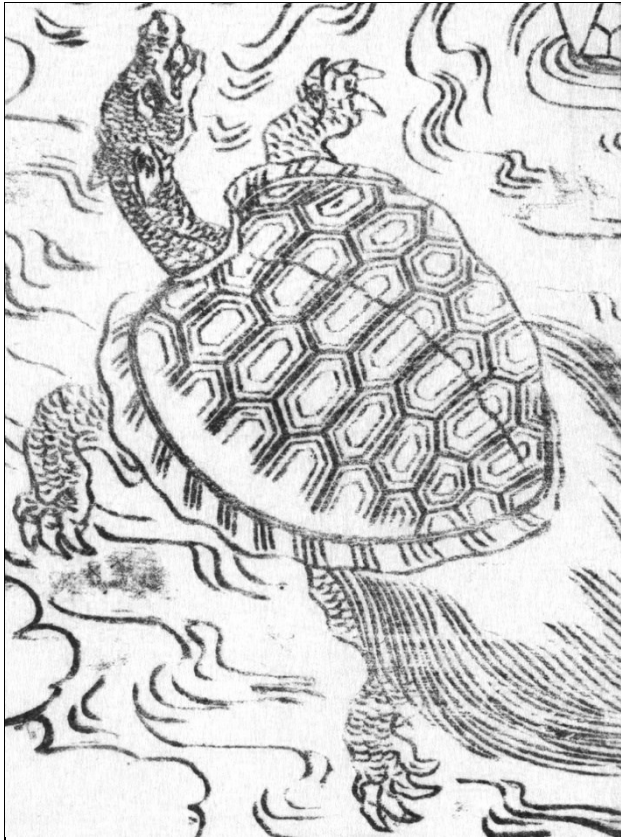
Sportlebore (B2). Your party spots what looks like perfectly good traveler's rations scattered on the ground. It looks quite edible. It's up to them whether they want to claim it as their own under the legal precedent set by *Finders v. Losers*. Do they pass up a free lunch? However, if they eat it they discover to their cost that there was a sportlebore among the goodies.

Scaling the Encounter: Eating a sportlebore may unleash a sportlebore swarm, which is probably a bit much to handle for a low-level party. If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak sportlebore swarm. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an elite sportlebore swarm.

Tiddalik (B3). It should come as no surprise if your party sees one of these monstrous amphibians near a major body of fresh water. Although they cross the land, draining streams and ponds wherever they go, they needs must be drawn to rivers and lakes the same way any animal goes wherever there is the most food. They might even see the water level go down as the beast slakes its thirst, much to the detriment of those who rely

on the waters for some aspect of their livelihood. The tiddalik may be pursued by angry settlers whose entire water supply it has consumed. What your party chooses to do about it, if anything, is up to them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 7, use a weak tiddalik for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use one elite tiddalik.



These turtles are mean and bitey even on a good day.

Turtle (B2). While making their way at the water's edge, your party stumbles upon a bale of 1d4+2 snapping turtles. They're small, but they're bad-tempered and the business end of their bite is not a pleasant experience. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check to avoid setting off a swarm attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak snapping turtles. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite snapping turtle for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one giant snapping turtle for nine snapping turtles.

Vulture (B3). When your party spots what appears to be an oversized vulture picking at dead fish or the remains of a larger aquatic creature washed ashore, they might want to exercise some care. Ordinary vultures are mere

scavengers and can be chased off without much trouble. However, a giant vulture is a different matter. Confident in its size and strength, it is prepared to defend its food source against all comers. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, a party member has made a false move that persuades the vulture to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak giant vulture for the encounter. Otherwise, use a flock of one giant vulture for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite giant vulture for two giant vultures.

Ray (B2). Rays have a habit of concealing themselves, but sometimes they do so rather too effectively for the good of all concerned. If your party is wading in shallow water, have them make a DC 20 Nature or Perception check to notice part of a stingray sticking up through the sand or mud. If it fails, they don't see it and someone either steps on it or too close to it for comfort and it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: Rays are mostly solitary creatures. If your party's average level is higher than 2, use an elite stingray for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an elite manta ray.

Coral Capuchin (B3). Your party should keep their wits about them; they have caught the attention of one coral capuchin from a nearby colony. These winged amphibians have no desire to harm anyone, but they don't hesitate to filch anything that seems useful or attractive. It may follow your party for a while, looking for an opening to get close enough to swipe something, or it may try to befriend your party and get them to drop their guard. If and when the coral capuchin decides to make its move, have it make a Thievery check against your party's highest Perception DC:

Critical Success: The coral capuchin gets in and out without your party noticing at all.

Success: It succeeds in stealing something, but your party notices it on the way out.

Failure: Your party notices it before it can filch anything.

Critical Failure: Your party notices it before it can even make a move.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one coral capuchin for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite coral capuchin for four coral capuchins. A group of coral capuchins likely divides the labor, with some distracting your party while the others go for the goodies.

TABLE 6.4

Humanoids - Littoral

d100	ENCOUNTER
1-6	Azarketi
7-13	Boggard
14-18	Bugbear
19-29	Elves
30-32	Eunemvro
33-38	Geniekin, Undine
39-42	Giant, Storm
43-48	Gnolls
49-55	Goblins
56-60	Hag, Sea
61-64	Hobgoblins
65-71	Lizardfolk
72-77	Locathah
78-81	Ogre
82-87	Orcs
88-93	Ratfolk
94-98	Sea Devil
99-100	Werecreature
101-105	Cecaelia

+5 to die roll if tropical littoral

Azarketi (B3). Azarketi mostly keep to their native territories in the deep ocean, but a few of them explore the wider world and interact with land-based communities. Your party crosses paths with one such azarketi explorer that has established a relationship with one or more land-based communities. Depending on what else is going on in this corner of your campaign world, it may ask your party for information on what is going on in the area, or it may be willing to provide your party with such information. It might also offer your party a sidequest, if the settlement with which it has ties faces a threat from monsters or some other menace.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one azarketi explorer for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite azarketi explorer for three azarketi explorers.

Boggard (B1). Boggards like to stick to swamps and marshes. But when food is hard to find, they range farther afield. Your party crosses paths with one boggard scout looking for new hunting grounds. It may be ferociously hungry, or it may be more devious — hoping that discovering a new source will give it a higher status with the boggards back home. How it reacts to your party may depend on its motivation. Is it looking for a

quick score by robbing your party of its valuables, or does it try to ply them for useful local information?

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one boggard scout for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one boggard warrior for two boggard scouts; or one elite boggard scout for three boggard scouts; or one elite boggard warrior for four boggard scouts. You may also substitute one boggard swampseer for three boggard scouts or one elite boggard swampseer for five boggard scouts as the group's leader.

Bugbear (B1). Coastal and riverside communities make inviting targets for bugbears. For that matter, they enjoy victimizing merchants, fishermen — anyone who plies the waters. Your party crosses paths with one bugbear looking for potential victims, or on its way to a place where it knows where it can find them. Now that it has come upon your party, however, they look like as good a target as any as it lurks in the reeds or behind the cover offered by a steep river bank. On the other hand, if it is unfamiliar with the area, it may try to coerce your party into sharing local lore.

Have the bugbear makes a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds, it gets to use its Bushwhack ability against a party member.

Scaling the Encounter: The baseline encounter group consists of one bugbear thug for each multiple of 3, or one bugbear tormentor for each multiple of 4, in your party's average level. If more than one bugbear is present, you may decide that your party has stumbled upon their lair in a small coastal cave. In that case, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of their group assets.

Elves. Your party encounters 2d6 elves from a nearby settlement of mariners. This close to land, they are traveling in boats or on rafts. If your party is by a river or lake, they may be traders going about their business. Or they may be explorers familiarizing themselves with the river system. By the ocean, your party may find mariners making a short hop along the sea coast — or they may be survivors of a wreck crawling ashore!

Seafaring elves are more open to outsiders than their kin who live deep in the forest. But even still, they'll feel more comfortable with a party with fellow elves in it. Conversely, they regard a party with traditional enemies of their ancestry in it with suspicion or even hostility. If your party establishes a rapport with this group, they may be willing to provide local lore and trade. Shipwreck victims may have a tale to tell of nearby danger, whether there be jagged reefs, storms or monsters. They may also offer your party a sidequest by asking for protection

against the hazards of the wild, or specific enemies that they know to be about.

Treat the elves as belonging to NPC template that best fits their occupation. A group of traders should be composed of merchants and guards in equal proportion. A group of explorers should have one chronicler and one guide, with the rest as dockhands. A group of mariners should consist of dockhands (i.e., common sailors) with one navigator or bosun as their officer.

Eunemvro (B3). Your party comes upon one of these odd, extraplanar humanoids hunting undead spawned from those who have drowned. It may be acting on specific information about the presence of undead, or it may be patrolling, based on the knowledge that death by water is not uncommon. Eunemvro are aloof and it rarely occurs to them to ask strangers for help, so it's not a given that it offers your party a sidequest to come along with it. In fact, it becomes hostile if it suspects that your party harbors someone who practices necromancy. However, it may be persuaded to accompany your party for a while if destroying undead are involved; you may require a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check.



If you have no undead among your party, eunemvro will pose no threat and on rare occasions may be willing to work together.

Scaling the Encounter: If you suspect that the encounter will turn hostile, use a weak eunemvro for the encounter if your party's average level is lower than 5. Conversely, if your party's average level is higher than 8, use an encounter group of one elite eunemvro for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level.

Giant, Storm (B1). Your party has somehow stumbled upon a storm giant living a hermit's life by the ocean or lakeshore. A storm giant is not aggressive or predatory, but once it is aware of your party's presence it will not let them get away without stating their business. You may have your party make a DC 20 Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: They have won over the giant, and it is willing to gift them something from its treasure, or at least trade for something valuable.

Success: It is at least willing to share some useful knowledge, whether it is local or from faraway, or even a vision of the future (don't ask, as there are some things that a storm giant just knows).

Failure: The giant is not impressed. It dismisses your party from its presence.

Critical Failure: They have angered the giant. They won't like a storm giant when it's angry.

Scaling the Encounter: As long as the encounter remains peaceful, scaling the encounter won't matter much. If your low-level party makes a critical failure in treating with the giant, have it rage and drive them off rather than kill them; for instance, it aims its Lightning Blade ability to strike the ground close to a party member, etc.

To play it safe, you may re-roll for a different encounter if your party's average level is lower than 11, or use a weak storm giant if their average level is 11-12. If their average level is higher than 16, use an elite storm giant.

Goblins (B1). Goblins may make their lairs in seaside caves, and certainly they find coastal and riverside communities suitable targets for raiding. Isolated fisherfolk and shellfish divers are also common targets, as are riverine merchants traveling without proper guard. Your party crosses paths with a raiding party of 2d4 goblin warriors. They may stop to pry information out of them about possible targets, but they are also mean and cocky enough to spot your party as a target of opportunity and attack them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak goblin warriors. If your party's average level is 4-6, use an encounter group of 1d4 elite goblin warriors. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite goblin warrior for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one goblin commando (B1), goblin pyro (B1), or goblin dog (B1) for one elite goblin warrior or two goblin warriors. You may also substitute one goblin war chanter (B1) for one elite goblin warrior or two goblin warriors as the group's leader.

A large group of goblins is likely to be a raiding party on their way out. Or they may be a raiding party on their way back, with loot and 1d6 human and/or humanoid captives. Consider that there is a 5% chance that any given captive is someone of consequence, who could provide your party with a significant reward for their safe return home. In either case, the encounter group has

more important things to do than deal with your party. However, if your party finds a goblin lair, they fight to the death to defend it. In addition to the normal treasure found in the lair, there are 1d8 human and/or humanoid captives bound and eager for rescue.

Treasure: If the encounter group is a returning raiding party, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Hag, Sea (B1). Your party crosses paths with one humanoid that looks like it has spent way too much time soaking in a kelp bed. There's no concealing the fact that it's a sea hag on its way to or from the coastal cave in which it makes its lair. It may have little time for your party if you decide that the hag is on its way to meet someone on whom it has used its Sea Hag's Bargain ability. But it may also size up your party and decide that it wants to use that ability on a party member. Or, you may decide that it has just taken a child from a nearby coastal village and swapped in a changeling — in which case, the chance to rescue the child might be hard for adventuring heroes to turn down.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak sea hag for the encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use one elite sea hag. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use a coven of three sea hags for the encounter group.



The life of a hobgoblin revolves around conflict.

Hobgoblins (B1). Hobgoblins are not naturally drawn to water, but watercourses and shorelines are natural focal points for military activity. So if there is a war going on in this corner of your campaign world, your party should not be too surprised when they cross paths with one hobgoblin soldier. It's probably from a tribe of mercenaries that has made camp on nearby high ground — a cliff overlooking the sea or river, for instance. Since it is alone, it may be a scout, or a courier shuttling back and forth between its tribe and their client. It could also be a straggler hurrying to join its comrades at their mustering point. A small group of hobgoblins might be

guarding a river crossing or a coastal lookout. They're interested in whether your party is friend or foe, but they are not interested in attacking them just for the sake of doing so. In fact, if there is a hobgoblin general present (see Scaling the Encounter) it might even size them up and try to recruit them to fill out the ranks.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one hobgoblin soldier for each level in your party's average level. You may substitute one goblin dog (B1) for one hobgoblin soldier as long as goblin dogs do not outnumber hobgoblins. Also, you may freely substitute one elite hobgoblin soldier or one hobgoblin archer (B1) for four hobgoblin soldiers. You may substitute one hobgoblin general (B1) for six hobgoblin soldiers as the group's leader.

A large group of hobgoblins indicates that the winds of war are brewing — although ultimately, that sort of thing should be determined by what else is going on in your campaign world. Unless your party has stumbled upon the hobgoblin lair, a large hobgoblin encounter group would be a war party on their way to or from the war zone. They have more important business than attacking your party. In fact, they might even size them up and try to recruit them to fill out the ranks.

Lizardfolk (B1). Your party has entered the territory of a lizardfolk tribe based in a nearby seaside cave or patch of swampy ground by a lake or river. A patrol from that tribe spots your party. Lizardfolk are not innately aggressive or predatory, but they are deeply suspicious of outsiders and protective of their territory and, by extension, their young. Defusing a confrontation with them — even a purely accidental one — may require some delicacy. You may have your party make a DC 25 Diplomacy check (DC 15 if someone speaks Draconic or Iruxi):

Critical Success: The lizardfolk extend their hospitality.

Success: They lower their weapons and let your party go on their way.

Failure: They stand their ground. Your party may turn back, but the lizardfolk refuse to let them pass.

Critical Failure: They attack.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one lizardfolk defender (B1) or lizardfolk scout (B1) for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite of either type for four of either type. You may also substitute one lizardfolk stargazer (B1) for two lizardfolk defenders or lizardfolk scouts, or one elite stargazer for six defenders or scouts, as the group's leader.

Locathah (B3). Locathah rarely venture up rivers and into lakes, so your party is most likely to encounter them near the ocean. A locathah met farther from the ocean than the mouth of a river is exploring, looking for new trade contacts with land-dwellers. In any event, when your party crosses paths with one locathah hunter it is likely looking to trade, offering pearls and valuables scavenged from shipwrecks for ceramics and metal tools and weapons. It might also provide a sidequest by sharing knowledge of a nearby shipwreck — nobody to rescue, alas, but nobody has claimed the cargo, either.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak locathah hunter for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one locathah hunter for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite locathah hunter for two locathah hunters.

Ogre (B1). Your party spots one ogre warrior out scouting for potential raiding targets on behalf of its tribe. It is brutish enough and sufficiently confident in its powers to try to take them captive, or kill them outright if they resist.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak ogre warrior for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one ogre for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite ogre warrior for two ogre warriors, or three ogre gluttons (B1) for four ogre warriors. You may also substitute one ogre boss (B1) or one onidoshi (B2) for two ogre warriors as the group's leader.



Ogres are supremely confident in their ability to capture or kill a party at will and won't hesitate to attack if it suits them.

Orcs (B1). Your party crosses paths with 1d6 orc brutes. They're most likely a scout party, although they may already have found a vulnerable target small enough for a band of this size to raid. As brutal as they are, there's no guarantee that they'll pay your party much attention. Their leader may look your party over and decide that

they're not worth the bother. But they may also decide to interrogate your party for information about the surrounding area, and they'll easily resort to violence if your party is slow to cooperate. They are less likely to give your party a break if there are elves in it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak orc brutes. If your party's average level is 4-5, use an encounter group of 1d6 orc brutes. If your party's average level is higher than 5 use a baseline encounter group of one orc warrior (B1) for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite orc warrior for two orc warriors. You may also substitute one orc warchief (B1) for one orc warrior as the group's leader.

Treasure: If the orcs are coming back from a successful raid, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of their plunder. Consider that there is also a 20% chance that the bandits have with them 1d4 captives. The identity of this captive is left to you as GM, as it should depend on local circumstances and fit into your campaign world.

Planar Scion, Undine (B2). Your party may notice in the distance what looks like a village of boats, but they actually encounter one undine hydromancer who has come ashore from this ship-town in search of firewood and materials for repairing the boats. It sees no reason to get aggressive with your party. In fact, it is more likely to ask for leads on where it can get what it's looking for. If your party can give it a little help, it may be willing to return the favor. At this point you may have your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check. If it succeeds, the undine is willing to use one of its spells to aid them.

Scaling the Encounter: An undine encounter is unlikely to turn hostile, but if you want to scale up the encounter use a landing party of undine: one undine hydromancer for each level in your party's average level, and you may freely substitute one elite undine hydromancer for three undine hydromancers.

Ratfolk (B1). Your party crosses paths with one ratfolk grenadier out scavenging for useful items. It's from a nearby ysoki settlement, located close enough to riverine or ocean-going trade routes to suit their merchants, but far enough away from anyone who would persecute them — and ratfolk always feel like they have a lot of persecutors.

Upon spotting you this lone grenadier tries to hide in the reeds and challenge your party from concealment. If they can overcome its distrust — you may require a DC 20 Diplomacy check — it may be willing to share local knowledge and trade alchemical tools and ingredients.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak ratfolk grenadier. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one ratfolk grenadier for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite ratfolk grenadier for two ratfolk grenadiers.

If the group consists of four or more ratfolk, they have a cart full of trade goods and a draft animal and they're on their way to join a caravan. In this case, gaining their trust could result in a sidequest working for them as caravan guards.

Sea Devil (B1). Sea devils make their lairs deep beneath the surface of the waters, so when they come ashore to raid coastal and riverside settlements, it inevitably seems to their victims that they arrive from out of nowhere. So it seems to your party also when they see one sea devil scout rise out of the water and come ashore. The scout just wants to get the lay of the land and orient itself. At worst, it tries to bully your party into providing local knowledge. A larger group of sea devils has a target and plunder in mind. It's entirely possible that they view your party as a good target of opportunity.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak sea devil scout for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one sea devil scout for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one sea devil brute (B1) for two sea devil scouts; or one elite sea devil scout for three sea devil scouts; or one elite sea devil brutes for four sea devil scouts. You may also substitute one sea devil baron (B1) for three sea devil scouts as the group's leader.

Werecreature (B1, B2). To determine what manner of werebeast your party encounters, roll on Table 6.4.1:

TABLE 6.4.1	
Werecreature - Littoral	
d6	ENCOUNTER
1	Wereboar
2-3	Wererat
4-6	Werewolf

All werecreatures assume their animal form if the encounter comes down to combat, although they may choose their hybrid form instead if they have access to a weapon.

Wereboar (B2). A wereboar met by chance was most likely an unfortunate hunter who didn't realize that the boar at which he aimed his bow was really a ➤

lycanthrope. Or it might have been a herder who presented an isolated target. It goes about looking for victims to share its fate, hoping that a lone boar will lure someone into engaging with it. A party of adventurers could offer it an attractive target — confident in its ability to take at least one of them and drive the others off, it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one wereboar for each multiple of two in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite wereboar for three wereboars.

Wererat (B1). It's not hard to find rats in coastal areas where food is plentiful, but they're not much welcome among the folk who live there. Your party comes across a wererat driven into the wilderness along with the rats with whom it kept company. Now, it dreams of revenge on its persecutors. It hopes to create a party of wererats who will give them more than they can handle — and your party looks like it will make nice lycanthropes.

It appears to your party in its human form, pretending to be a traveler in distress who hopes to travel with your party for protection. It tries to slip toward the back of the march order and waits for a time when everyone's back is turned to it. Alternately, if there are ratfolk nearby, it may approach your party in its hybrid form — essentially disguising itself as a relatively non-aggressive creature to lull them into dropping their guard. In this case, you may allow your party a DC 15 Nature or Survival check to see through the ruse; it doesn't work as often as one might think.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak wererat. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one elite wererat for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Werewolf (B1). A werewolf spots your party and cannot turn down the opportunity to claim more victims. However, it is clever enough to approach them in its human form, pretending to be a lost traveler in distress, or a peddler waylaid by bandits — any cover story that ought to evoke sympathy will do. Once your party gets close and drops its guard, it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak werewolf. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use one elite werewolf for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Cecaelia (B3). Seeing a creature with the upper body of a human and the lower body of an octopus as it lopes along the shore is a disquieting sight. However, noting that it is laden with gear and trade goods may be reassuring — if it is monstrous, at least it also seems practical. In fact, your party encounters one cecaelia trapper that has come ashore to trade for what its tribe cannot make for themselves. However, cecaelias are also notoriously quick to anger, making negotiating with them a delicate process.

This cecaelia trapper hails your party, either to trade with them or just to ask for local information. You may have your party make a DC 20 Diplomacy check:

Success: They have gotten on its good side, and it is willing to trade with them and/or provide them with useful information.

Failure: They have irritated it, and it responds by arguing with them, or even trying to bully them.

Critical Failure: They have triggered it into attacking.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, use a weak cecaelia trapper for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one cecaelia trapper for each multiple of 5 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite cecaelia trapper for two cecaelia trappers.

TABLE 65

Humans - Littoral

d20	ENCOUNTER
1	Adventurers
2-3	Divers
4	Exiles
5	Explorers
6-7	Fishermen
8	Fugitives
9-10	Merchants
11-12	Military
13	Pilgrims
14-16	Pirates
17-18	Sailors
19-20	Smugglers

Adventurers. Unless your party contains all of the adventurers in your campaign world, it's at least theoretically possible that they'll run into another adventuring party following the river course or shoreline. Perhaps they're pursuing the same objective as your party. Perhaps they have a different mission; perhaps

they're headed for a site that your party knows nothing about (like ancient ruins said to hold lost treasures). Perhaps they're lost and starving, or wounded, or cursed.

How they react to your party depends on a variety of factors. Are they rivals pursuing the same goal? If not, perhaps this party is willing to share useful information. In fact, if your party is stuck and having a hard time advancing the storyline of your campaign, a friendly encounter like this can help steer them in the right direction. Differences in alignment may also shape how the two parties react to each other.

Composition of this rival party is up to you and can vary according to circumstance. Any party in the wilderness would be well-advised to have someone accomplished in Survival, such as a ranger, with them. Conversely, a party that is struggling may be in a bad way precisely because no one is well-versed in Survival or Nature.

Scaling the Encounter: Unless there is some possibility that this encounter turns hostile, the relative level of the party is mainly a matter of affect. A higher-level party might project self-confidence and calm (or arrogance), while a beginning-level party might stumble about, unsure of themselves. If you're leaning towards a hostile encounter, however, consider that the level of the party should be your party's average level -2, more or less.

Divers. Your party comes across 1d4 divers who collect shellfish (or just gather them in shallows at low tide). They work this spot regularly, so they can provide your party with local knowledge. They may ask your party to protect them if there are monsters, bandits or personal enemies about. They may be humble folk harvesting for their own subsistence — or they may be collecting raw pearls, in which case they have more than their own lives to protect. They can reward your party with pearls, which your party could then sell at a settlement for one-fourth the price that a finished pearl would command in your campaign world.

Treat divers as dockhands who carry long knives (treat as short swords) for prying open shellfish.

Exiles. Your party encounters 1d6 humans or humanoids who could serve as a source of adventure hooks. From their appearance, they have obviously seen better days. They have come to the river's edge looking for transportation to someplace safer, or to the coast because the ocean blocks them from fleeing any further from their troubles. They can have any of a variety of backstories: perhaps they are royalty or nobility who have been usurped; perhaps the opposite is the case and they are failed usurpers on the run. Or perhaps they have gotten caught up in a blood feud in their homeland and that's why they fear for their lives.

No matter their reason for being here, they should offer your party an adventure hook of some sort. It may involve protecting the exiles from their real (or imagined) pursuers. It may involve returning to their former home and securing an important item that was left behind (a family heirloom, a badge of office), perhaps even helping them return home and force their way back into their former position of prominence. At the very least, exiles can provide your party with information about their former home territory, which in turn could be a key location in your campaign.

Use any NPC template you like for the exiles, depending on the backstory you assign them.

Explorers. Your party bumps into a small human party, driven by the curiosity that characterizes their kind, to map and describe a seacoast or river system that has been mostly untouched by human hands. The group consists of one chronicler and one guide, and 1d4 bodyguards. Perhaps they are here thanks to the sponsorship of an academy or a ruler eager to know more about the world, or perhaps the explorer is a wealthy eccentric who undertook this expedition on his or her own.

Such an encounter is not likely to be hostile. Explorers are open and curious, despite the fact that uncharted watercourses present many hazards, both on and out of the water. Instead, you may treat this as an opportunity for your party to receive some help from a knowledgeable stranger — the explorer is likely to have excellent maps of nearby areas (and knowledge of those areas) and is willing to share them. Conversely, an expedition that has been in the field for a while may be running short on cartography supplies and other necessities and may be willing to pay well if your party can help supply what they lack. Also, if your party is in the mood for a sidequest, an explorer may offer one: If the expedition is headed into particularly dangerous territory, it may need additional guards to keep it safe.

Fishermen. Your party comes across a 1d6 anglers engaged in their occupation. If by a river, they're set on the bank with their lines in the water. If by the ocean or a large lake, they're by their boats and either on the way out onto the water or returning with their catch. If returning with fish in hand, they're willing to sell fish from their catch for half of what a tavern meal would cost — the hitch being, of course, that you have to clean and smoke or cook it yourself before it goes bad. With just bit of coaxing, they're also happy to provide your party with local knowledge, including tales of monsters in the water nearby and of course, stories of the one that got away.

Treat fishermen as dockhands.

Fugitives. Your party crosses paths with 1d6 bedraggled people stumbling along the shore or riverbank, or perhaps trying to ford the river at a place that may or may not be suited to the task. They look to be in less-than-optimal shape, but they're moving as fast as they can manage. Most, if not all of them have a manacle around one wrist, with the other manacle dangling on its chain. They're escaped prisoners who have made it to the coast, where they hope to hitch a ride or steal a boat and go somewhere far away. From whom they are fleeing and why they were imprisoned in the first place is up to you, and ought to depend on where in your campaign world this encounter takes place.

How the encounter plays out depends entirely on how your party reacts, but one thing on which you may rely is that these fugitives did not go to the trouble of a jailbreak just to allow a bunch of strangers to take their freedom back from them. Each of them has learned whip their freed manacle by the chain and wield it as a club.

Treat the fugitives as bandits, but without weapons or armor.

Treasure: Fugitives have no treasure.

Heavy Traffic Leaving Town

It may seem like this chapter describes a lot of human activity, considering that it's supposed to be talking about wilderness. That's a fair point. But areas close to water, even if it's saltwater, offer places to go and things to do even away from settlements. As with grasslands, people want to live here, so even between population centers you find them traveling between towns and villages, and engaging in activities that support those settlements. Note how many of the human activities described in Table 6.5 involve gathering or transporting food or wealth — or preying on the people engaged in these activities.

Merchants. Your party spots some merchants moving their goods by raft or boat (if on a river or lake) or by ship (if on the ocean). If the latter, they would only come within hailing distance of your party while ashore looking for fresh water or provisions. The group consists of 2d6 merchants and 2d8 guards. Traveling merchants could help your party by selling them necessary items, exchanging hard money for treasure items or providing knowledge of just about anywhere in your campaign world. Where are they going, and from whence did they sail? They may also be interested in hiring your party as additional guards if they fear pirates.

Treasure: Use the guidelines for pocket change in *How to Use This Book* to determine the total value of the caravaners' individual possessions. In addition, use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value of goods and/or hard money on board.



Moving troops and personnel is far easier over water, whether it be rivers or sea.

Military. Littoral areas are bound to play an important role in a world plagued by war. Rivers are useful lines of defense, and for invaders and defenders alike control of rivers and river crossings are crucial for moving armies and their supplies. An army marching along a river that it controls can be supplied by accompanying boats and rafts, which reduces the need for draft animals and their fodder. An enemy with ships can invade from across the ocean, making it important to defend seacoasts. So if war is a part of your campaign world, your party could encounter part of an army tasked with securing access to the sea or an important waterway.

An entire army on the march, or deployed for battle, can be seen from a long ways away in flat coastal terrain. However, they're certain to have more important things on their mind than dealing with a party of adventurers, so they're more useful for spectacle and flavor than a challenging encounter.

For an actual encounter, a small group of soldiers is most likely a patrol, tasked with scouting ahead of the main army. Their job is to locate the enemy and, conversely, to prevent enemy scouts from spotting their main force. They might also be a detachment guarding a ford, a bridge or a coastal lookout. They won't attack your party without reason to believe that your party is somehow connected to their enemy. However, they do stop your party to grill them for information, and possibly enlist their help with their mission. A larger group is most likely a unit of soldiers hurrying to join the main army.

Treat a typical, rank-and-file soldier as a guard. If mounted, the horse is a riding horse. Leaders should qualify as veterans or knights, and they get to ride warhorses if you want them on horseback.

Scaling the Encounter: As a rough guideline, the encounter group should consist of two guards for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may substitute one watch officer for three guards and/or one captain of the guard for six guards to serve as the group's leader.

Pilgrims. The pantheon and nature of religious practice in your campaign world is up to you as the designer of that world. If it makes sense in that context, consider that your party crosses paths with a group of devotees traveling to (or perhaps from) a holy site, whether the site is associated with a body of water or they're just using the river or coastline for navigation. Perhaps they have a specific request to make of their deity (ending a drought or plague, curing someone of disease, etc.) and they bring an offering, or perhaps it's just a ritual that their religion says they must perform regularly. Depending on how religions work in your world, perhaps their mission is to vandalize a shrine to a rival deity.

Their deity and alignment should dictate how they react to meeting your party. Cultists in a littoral area may be algholthu worshippers who see your party as potential captives whom they can offer to an aboleth or ridileth for enslavement. In any event, pilgrims are lightly armed and they may want to travel in your party's company for safety — especially if they know of a specific hazard in the area, like bandits or monsters. If friendly, they may also be willing to share local knowledge and trade with your party, or even share what divine magic capabilities they possess for your party's benefit.

Scaling the Encounter. Properly scaling the encounter may not matter unless you think that the encounter could turn hostile. In that case use an encounter group of two acolytes for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may substitute one prophet for two acolytes; or one zealot for four acolytes; or one priest for six acolytes.

Treasure: In addition to whatever treasure they carry on their person, pilgrims may carry with them an offering to their deity. At your discretion, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Pirates. Your party comes across a band of pirates working the river or coast. Perhaps they have come ashore to sort through their ill-gotten gains. Seaside caves and other obscure places near a large body of water make excellent bases of operation for them, so it's possible that they'll have their lair nearby. Even though a party of adventurers like yours is better-armed than their typical target, it's not out of the question that they'll attack. They're bound to be suspicious of strangers, especially if they have plunder with them. They may think that your party is a posse sent out after them — or that they're out to rob them of what they robbed from others. Add peg legs, eyepatches, parrots on the shoulder and exclamations of "Aarrgh, mateys!" at your discretion.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average lower than 4, use an encounter group of 1d4+1 weak pirates. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one pirate for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may substitute one ship captain for three pirates as the group's leader.

Treasure: If your party finds the pirates' hideout, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value and contents. Do so also if you decide that the pirates encountered are laden with booty from a successful raid. Consider that there is also a 20% chance that the bandits have with them a high-value captive whom they intend to ransom. The identity of this captive is left to you as GM, as it should depend on local circumstances and fit into your campaign world.

Sailors. Your party comes across 2d6 sailors come ashore. Why they have chosen to come ashore far from port is another question. Perhaps they're a shore party looking for food and fresh water. Or perhaps they were kicked off their ship by mutineers or pirates. Perhaps they survived a shipwreck and they barely made it to shore, half-drowned but still alive.

In any case, they could have a reason to deal with your party, perhaps even hand them a sidequest. Being mariners, of course they have a tale to tell of adventures in faraway places, and it might even have some truth to it. If they're a shore party, they'd be willing to trade for supplies and local knowledge — at the very least, they'll supply a free ride to a port on their ship's itinerary. If they're victims of mutiny or piracy, your party has the choice of hunting down the villains for a reward or a finder's fee on recovered treasure. If they're shipwreck survivors, they're grateful for any aid they receive and

they give your party the chance to salvage the wreck and earn even more gratitude if there are more survivors still fighting for their lives at the wreck site. [Side note: Ramen Sandwich Press' location module Found by the Way #2: *Path to The Gnome's Argosy* describes just such a mini-adventure.]

Treat ordinary crew members as dockhands. However, at least one member of the group should be an officer — a navigator or a bosun will do.

Smugglers. Smugglers working in the wilderness have to balance the pros and the cons. On one hand, they're far from any place they could fence their contraband goods. But on the other hand, they can count on doing business unobserved. All the same, your party discovers a gang of smugglers in the process of loading or unloading their boats.

The smugglers draw their weapons in alarm at having been made, but it's not a given that they attack your party on sight. They may try to play it off and pretend that they're not doing anything illegal. They may try to bribe your party into forgetting what they just saw. They may try to bully your party into silence. In any event, if your party decides to leave them alone, the smugglers may still try to tail your party until they are well out of the area, to make sure that the keep silent — thus setting up possible encounters for later in the campaign.

Treat smugglers as bandits equipped only with shortwords.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak bandits. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one bandit for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite bandit for two bandits. You may also substitute one gang leader for three bandits as the group's leader.



Ground changes constantly as it is eroded by weather and the feet of passing travelers. Anyone can make a misstep, even your party's pack animals.

TABLE 6.6

Watch Out! - Littoral

d12	ENCOUNTER
1	Did You Hear That?
2-3	Loose Ground
4-5	Message in a Bottle
6-7	Quicksand
8	Surf is Up
9	Tracks
10-11	Tripping Hazard
12	Wind Gust

Did You Hear That? Choose a party member to make a DC 15 Survival or Nature check. If it fails, that character believes that he or she has heard a noise made by creature or a dangerous natural phenomenon. It can be as consequential as a hydra's roar in the distance, or as eerily intimate as muttering in Orcish coming from behind those rocks. If it is successful, that party member realizes that this is an illusion, and the noise is either much farther away than it seems, or it is something else entirely.

If you wish, roll on Table 6.6.1 for guidance on what your party thinks it hears:

TABLE 6.6.1

Did You Hear That? – Littoral

d10	ENCOUNTER
1	Boat or raft's timbers creaking
2	Harpy's song
3	Hoofbeats or horses or other herd animals
4	Human or humanoid screaming, water splashing
5	Large toad croaking
6	Loud crash of something breaching the surface of the water
7	Roc screeching overhead
8	Voices speaking in Aquan
9	Voices speaking in Common
10	Voices speaking in Elven

Loose Ground. Your party reaches the crest of a riverbank or other steep slope. However, a party member — choose one, or a character who wants to get a good look around may literally step forward as the best

candidate — steps onto a patch of loose soil. It gives way. Treat it as a treacherous scree hazard, except that the damage from falling is only 1d10. Wheel!

Message in a Bottle. It need not be a literal message in a bottle, but it is an item washed ashore that can lead your party into a sidequest, or advance the narrative of the campaign. Table 6.6.2 suggests some possibilities, but feel free to gin up something that makes sense for that place and point in time in your campaign:

TABLE 6.6.2

Message in a Bottle - Littoral

d8	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Debris
3	Magic!
4-5	News from Abroad
6	Personal Message
7	Plea for Help
8	Remains

Debris. Not a message in a bottle *per se*, but some kind of object that has washed up on shore. Maybe it is something that would fetch a reward or be resold for a handsome price in the nearest settlement, like the decorative figurehead from a wrecked ship. Or it could be as mundane as the trunk of a tree knocked over in the last storm.

Magic! Shazam! The water-tight bottle contains a potion or scroll, intact and ready to use. Choose an oil, potion or scroll of a level equal to your party's average level and go from there. Of course, in order to remain absolutely water-tight, the bottle should be stoppered so that it's hard to get open again. Require a DC 10 Athletics check to open it. Smashing the bottle ruins the item inside.

News From Abroad. You could use this as a chance to convey information about what's going on elsewhere in your campaign world. The reason why someone would put it on a scrap of paper, put it in a bottle and cast it adrift may remain obscure; the information itself is what's important.

Personal Message. An authentic message in a bottle, one that is personal and sentimental in nature. It was sent from someone far away to someone also far away — or perhaps, to no one in particular. It might have some significance to someone in a nearby settlement, or it might be a red herring. ➤

Plea for Help. An authentic message in a bottle, cast upon the waters by a shipwreck victim stranded too far from land to just swim for it. It could be a sidequest for your party — it's up to you as GM whether or not it provides a good idea of where it came from, or whether your party finds it too late to help the sender.

Remains. Your party discovers what is left of a human or humanoid gone missing from a nearby settlement. The news is a big deal there, and it could earn gratitude from the locals — or it could make your party as welcome as tends to be the case with bearers of bad news. If you don't want to present your party with mouldering remains, an identifying personal item, like an engraved ring, will suffice.

Quicksand. By the water's edge, the ocean, or the river, or the lake washes over the shore and leaves more water behind than you see at first glance. In patches, the soil is so saturated that it behaves like quicksand — step into it, and you may never step back out. Your party stumbles into such a patch. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check to spot the quicksand before someone in the front of the party formation steps right into it.

Surf is Up. It's not a tidal wave, but water crashing forcefully against the shore catches your party by surprise at the water's edge. Have each party member make a DC 10 Reflex to avoid getting soaked. For anyone who fails, all sources of illumination held in hand, like torches or lanterns, are snuffed out. Water damage may, at your discretion, ruin documents like maps and letters, and other items that don't appreciate being doused (like rations).

Tracks. Your party spots tracks that look like tracks that belong to a monster associated with treasure lairs. They may make a successful DC 15 Survival check to realize that they are very old, and they will not lead to anything useful. If it fails, they believe the tracks to be fresh, perhaps leading to an amusing (for you as GM, anyway) wild goose chase.

Tripping Hazard. Pick a party member at the front of the party formation. That character trips over an unseen obstacle — a root protruding from sandy soil, a half-buried log or some half-hidden driftwood. He or she must make a successful DC 10 Reflex save to avoid a hard fall that causes 1d4 damage — and perhaps no small embarrassment in the eyes of the other party members.

Wind Gust. As your party walks along the shore, a sudden gust of wind catches them by surprise and creates an opportunity for catastrophe by critical failure.

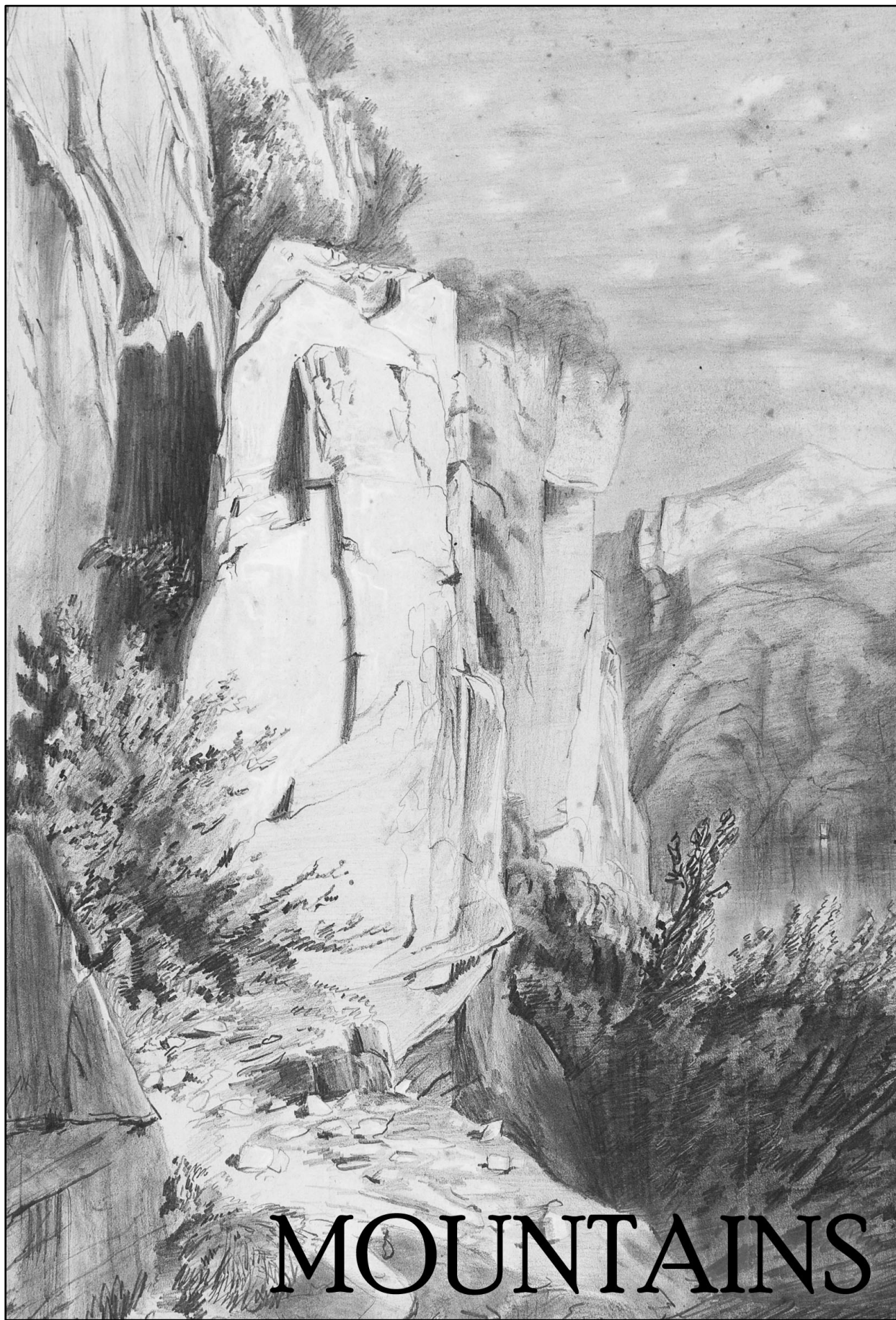
Whether it blows onshore or offshore is up to you. Any party member who is standing must make a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid being knocked down. Everyone who rolls critical failure is knocked down by the wind and immediately loses grasp of anything held in hand. Fragile objects break when they are dropped. In addition, anyone who is knocked down while wearing a pack must make a DC 15 Acrobatics check; on a critical failure the pack falls so heavily that at least some of its contents spill out. If it's an offshore wind (i.e., coming from inland), there is a chance that anything dropped can get carried into the water and drift away. At your discretion, this may be an object of some importance, like a map, or simply a useful mundane item, like rations.

A Tale of a Fateful Trip...

When running your party through a littoral environment, keep in mind whether it's saltwater or freshwater nearby, because that can affect whether or not it makes sense for some creatures to show up.

Also, littoral includes the proverbial deserted island as well as long ocean coastlines, lakeshores and the banks of rivers. If your campaign involves your party washing up on such a place, treat it as littoral, at least until they get well inland. Just remember that the water they just came from is not fit to drink — they'll have to go inland to find some.





CHAPTER SEVEN

Mountains

What are Mountains?

Chapter 5 took you up into the hills, so what makes Chapter 7 different? What distinguishes mountains from hills? Apparently, not even geographers can agree on a universal set of distinctions that separate the mountains from the hills. For the purposes of this book, it's a matter of relative elevation and the effect of elevation on terrain and wildlife. Hills and mountains may be contiguous, but mountains rise above the hills and the higher elevation creates an environment that is colder, windier and overall more hostile to life. Caradhras and the Misty Mountains in Middle Earth are mountains; they are not hills. You have to be hardy to live here, hence the relatively slender selection of creatures that your party is likely to encounter.

What Do You Find in Mountains?

When you determine that a random encounter is in order, roll on Table 7.1 to determine the category:

TABLE 7.1

Encounter Type - Mountains

d20	CATEGORY
1-8	Aggressive Creatures (Table 7.2)
9-14	Neutral Creatures (Table 7.3)
15-16	Humanoids (Table 7.4)
17	Humans (Table 7.5)
18-20	Watch Out! (Table 7.6)

Then, roll on the appropriate table to determine the creature, person or thing encountered.

The distance at which an encounter takes place varies in the mountains. You can have a nice, clear line of sight to the other end of a mountain pass or a clear view of whatever is coming up the mountainside behind you. On the other hand, a sharp turn in a pass, or a large boulder, or a crag on the mountain above you can hide an encounter group until the last moment.

Steep slopes and rugged terrain characterize mountains, so encounters usually take place with one side or the other having some advantage from occupying higher ground. It's relatively easy to strike from ambush if you're above your target and you can hide from their view. Even where the ground is relatively flat, there are

bound to be obstructions that restrict line of sight, such as mountainsides rising on either side of a pass.

TABLE 7.2

Aggressive Creatures - Mountains

d100	ENCOUNTER
1-4	Aurumvorax
5-8	Cat, Leopard
9-11	Centipede
12-16	Chimera
17-20	Cyclops
21-24	Drake
25-28	Elemental
29-33	Elemental, Mephit
34-37	Ettin
38-41	Griffon
42-44	Grikkito
45-49	Insects
50-52	Irlgaunt
53-57	Manticore
58-62	Peryton
63-67	Roc
68-72	Spiders
73-77	Troll
78-82	Undead
83-86	Wolves
87-91	Yeti
92-95	Yzobu
96-100	Zetogeki

Aurumvorax (B2). If there are precious metal deposits in these mountains, your party may encounter one of these metal-consuming predators. It may have slipped the leash of dwarven miners who kept it as a guardian, or it may be native to this place. Either way, its first instinct is to attack your party. Either it views them as intruding on its turf, or it senses food — coins and other items made of precious metals — on them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 7, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 7-8, use a weak aurumvorax for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 12, use an encounter group of one elite aurumvorax for each multiple of 13 in your party's average level.

Cat, Leopard (B1). As your party passes a boulder or a rocky outcropping, have them make a DC 15 Perception check for your party to notice a lone mountain lion

crouched and ready to pounce. It's used to hunting what few herd animals live up in the mountains, but your party will do. Failure means that they don't spot it before it springs its ambush.

Treat mountain lions as leopards.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak leopard for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one elite leopard.

Ow, My Eye!

Book IX of *The Odyssey* tells us rather vaguely that cyclops are creatures of the hills and mountains. But Polyphemos, Odysseus' good buddy whose fate suggests that having only one eye is something of an evolutionary disadvantage, lives in a seaside cave — at sea level, pretty much, and in what this book would call littoral.

However, the notion that cyclops live up in the hills and mountains took root in the Greek tradition. Later writers — including Euripides — link cyclops with Mt. Etna and the volcanic Aeolian Islands. So this book follows this particular strand of Greek literary tradition. After all, if you can't trust Euripides, who can you trust?

Centipede (B1, B2). Centipedes are not aggressive by nature, but the giants among them are so large and so voracious that they constantly need to feed, and their size allows them to deal with most creatures without fear. When your party crosses paths with 1d6 giant centipedes sheltering among some rocks, the centipedes consider that live food has just been delivered to their door.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak giant centipedes. If your party's average level is 4-6, use one giant whiptail centipede (B2) for the encounter. If your party's average level is 7-8, use one elite giant whiptail centipede for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use an encounter group of one elite giant whiptail centipede for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level instead.

Chimera (B1). Your party spots a winged monstrosity with three different animal heads circling above them. This can only mean one thing: A chimera has spotted them as potential prey. As with many winged predators, chimeras like to make their lairs in the mountains, where they have plenty of elbow room (or wingspan room?) and a vantage point for viewing the lands below. There is

a small chance that it has escaped servitude to another creature — you can't truly domesticate a chimera, you can only get it to cooperate for a while — but it is more likely just feral and hungry.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 6, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use a weak chimera for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an encounter group of one elite chimera for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Cyclops (B1). Your party sees a cyclops roaming the mountainside, unconcerned about its lack of depth perception. It may be on its way to meet with another cyclops, or it may be collecting goats to add to its meager herd. It could be out grazing its herd, in which case it's accompanied by 2d6 goats. In any event, it sees your party as prey — a delicacy, compared to eating goat all the time — and it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak cyclops for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one cyclops for each multiple of 5 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute two elite cyclopeses for three cyclopeses. You may also substitute one great cyclops for two cyclopeses as the group's leader.

Drake (B1). A few different varieties of these primitive dragons live and hunt in the mountains. None of them are inclined to cut a hapless party of adventurers a break. Roll on Table 7.2.1 to determine the drake that your party encounters:

TABLE 7.2.1

Drake - Mountains

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Flame Drake
3-4	Frost Drake
5-6	Wyvern

Flame Drake (B1). Flame drakes prefer to hang around volcanoes, but whether they find the heat they crave in an open volcanic crater or near magma that is still below the surface, it's more or less the same to them. If there are no volcanoes nearby, assume that the flame drake overhead preparing to use its Fireball Breath ability is either ranging far afield from its home or it makes its lair beneath the surface near a magma-filled crevasse. Either way, it's bored enough to light up your party just for fun. ➤

Frost Drake (B1). Those vapor trails that your party sees in the sky come from a frost drake's exhaled breath. It's on its home turf in the high mountains. It knows that pickings are often slim in this unforgiving environment, and it decides that your party makes suitable prey — attacking them will, at least, save it the trouble of looking farther afield.

Wyvern (B1). Though no more intelligent than other drakes, wyverns may act like evil dragons in toying with their victims, extracting tribute from them or humiliating them before destroying them. When a wyvern swoops down on your party, it may pause to taunt or extort your party before it attacks, just to get a reaction from them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's level is 5-6, use a weak drake for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, you may use an encounter group of one elite drake for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Elemental (B1, B2, B3). Here, in these remote places where the earth thrusts up into the sky with fire roaring deep in its belly, it should come as no surprise to find elementals that reflect the natural energies of the mountains. Your party crosses paths with an elemental — either because it was summoned to the Material Plane and then abandoned or because, here in the remote mountains, a natural portal between its native plane and the Material Plane exists. Use the local terrain to guide you in choosing the elemental, or roll on Table 7.2.2:

TABLE 7.2.2

Elemental -Mountains

d10	ENCOUNTER
1-4	Air Elemental
5-8	Earth Elemental
9-10	Fire Elemental

The exact sensations and circumstances of the encounter depends on what manner of elemental your party encounters (see *Scaling the Encounter*). If it is intelligent enough to understand language, someone who knows the elemental's native language may try to interact with it. However, it is difficult to persuade an elemental to do something, and it should require a successful DC 20 (or thereabouts) Diplomacy check to do so. Otherwise, it's likely that the ➤

elemental will treat your party as an enemy; it bears an uncontrollable grudge against the Material Plane, whose residents are always trying to dominate elementals, or it is just on edge outside of its native plane.

Air Elemental/Scaling the Encounter. The bitter winds and frigid temperatures make a traveler in the mountains aware of the air as a thing. Sometimes, the air is actually an elemental living thing.

One air wisp (B3) should make a reasonable encounter for a beginning-level party. Otherwise, the elemental encountered should depend on your party's average level: one spark bat (B2) for a level 2 or higher party, one zephyr hawk (B1) for a level 3 or higher party, one living thunderclap (B2) for a level 4 or higher party, one living whirlwind (B1) for a level 5 or higher party, one belker (B2) for a level 6 or higher party, one invisible stalker (B1) for a level 7 or higher party, one storm lord (B1) for a level 9 or higher party, one melody of the wind for a level 10 or higher party, or one elemental hurricane (B1) for a level 11 or higher party.

Earth Elemental/Scaling the Encounter. A barren mountainside can look utterly lifeless. It's nothing but naked rock, too high up in a place too cold to support life. However, the rock itself may be a creature from the Elemental Plane of Earth.

One earth wisp (B3) should make a reasonable encounter for a beginning-level party. Otherwise, the elemental encountered should depend on your party's average level: one living boulder (B2) for a level 2 or higher party, one sod hound (B1) for a level 3 or higher party, one earthen destrier (B2) for a level 4 or higher party, one living landslide (B1) for a level 5 or higher party, one sand sentry (B2) for a level 6 or higher party, one xorn (B1) for a level 7 or higher party, one granite glyptodont (B2) for a level 8 or higher party, one stone mauler (B1) for a level 9 or higher party, or one elemental avalanche (B1) for a level 11 or higher party.

Fire Elemental/Scaling the Encounter. On a cold, wind-swept mountainside, it's easy to forget that without heat moving the earth below, mountains would not exist. Volcanism and other geological processes may open up gaps between the Material Plane and the Elemental Plane of Fire through which fire elementals can emerge.

One fire wisp (B3) should make a reasonable encounter for a beginning-level party. Otherwise, ➤

the elemental encountered should depend on your party's average level: one ember fox (B2) for a level 2 or higher party, one cinder rat (B1) for a level 3 or higher party, one filth fire (B2) for a level 4 or higher party, one living wildfire (B1) for a level 5 or higher party, one striding fire (B2) for a level 6 or higher party, one salamander (B1) for a level 7 or higher party, one magma scorpion (B2) for a level 8 or higher party, one firewurm (B1) for a level 9 or higher party, or one elemental inferno (B1) for a level 11 or higher party.

Elemental, Mephit (B1, B2). These annoying little elementals have a habit of crossing over into the Material Plane, like ink bleeding through paper, and making nuisances of themselves. They are not predatory, but they are very annoying and they interpret any attempt to brush them aside as an attack. Mountains attract various types of mephit. Roll on Table 7.2.3 to determine the kind of mephit your party encounters:

TABLE 7.2.3

Mephit -Mountains

d20	ENCOUNTER
1-5	Air Mephit
6-7	Dust Mephit
8-12	Earth Mephit
13-15	Fire Mephit
16-18	Ice Mephit
19-20	Steam Mephit

Air Mephit (B1). Your party spots a wisp of vapor describing an apparently random pattern in the thin mountain air. It's an air mephit. When it spots your party, it targets them for mischief and swoops down on them repeatedly, often uttering a piercing whine as it does so. It does not stop unless physically forced to do so, as it gets mindless amusement out of annoying your party.

Dust Mephit (B2). Your party finds one dust mephit blocking their path. It fixes them with a piercing gaze and declares that they are doomed (in either Auran or Terran, of course). The actual circumstances of your party do not matter. The mephit just knows that they're headed for a bad end. If your party tries to ignore it and move on, it follows them and refuses to let up. It doesn't like being ignored, and eventually it attacks them. ➤

Earth Mephit (B1). Your party finds its path blocked by one earth mephit standing (or sitting, if you prefer) directly in its way. This can cause an impasse if it's blocking a narrow mountain path. It refuses to move no matter what your party says or does to get it out of the way, and it attacks if your party tries to go around it.

Fire Mephit (B1). A fire mephit has been drawn to this area by volcanism, either present or traces from it in the distant past. Unless your party is traveling very close to an active volcano, however, the fire mephit has grown bored and it tries to set fire to your party to amuse itself. Even if your party is close to an active volcano, it attacks your party — it's overstimulated and hyperactive rather than bored.

Ice Mephit (B2). The elemental opposites of fire mephits but alike in temperament, ice mephits torment creatures of the Material Plane for no reason other than their own amusement. They occur mainly at high altitudes where it rarely (if ever) thaws, and it's so boring that when one ice mephit spots your party, it attacks them out of sheer ennui.

Steam Mephit (B2). Hydrothermal activity — hot springs, for example — draw steam mephits, who relish collisions between fire and water. However, they are also aggressive and bossy. One steam mephit spots your party and it tries to cow them into becoming its personal servants, barking orders to do as it tells them. It refuses to stop even if your party tries to ignore it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite mephit for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Ettin (B1). Your party hears two loud voices resonating in a mountain pass or bouncing off the mountainside. Your party must make a successful DC 15 Nature check to recognize that it's an ettin arguing with itself. If they choose not to avoid the ettin, it calls out to your party and demands that they help settle a dispute. It should be something that your party would find awkward or at least pointless to answer — for instance, whether or not the other head has breath that smells worse than that of a red dragon. No matter what answer the party gives, one or both heads accuses them of unfairly favoring the other and the ettin attacks.

Alternately, the ettin stops short when it spots the party. It realizes that it's hungry after arguing with itself for such a long time, and your party looks tasty.

Scaling the Encounter: As amusing as ettins can be if you run the encounter with the right sense of humor, you should feel free to re-roll for a different encounter if your party's average level is 1-2. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak ettin for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use one elite ettin for the encounter.

Treasure: The ettin carries some coins in a pouch looped around its loincloth. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Griffon (B1). A griffon spots your party and goes for one of their mounts or pack animals — or at least, it thinks it has spotted a mount or a pack animal.

If taming and training griffons is part of your campaign world, then no doubt griffon trainers would pay well for them. To subdue a griffon to the point where it can be bound and held captive, one large or two medium-size creatures must successfully grapple the griffon using both hands. They must maintain the grapple for 10 consecutive turns. At that point, the griffon stops struggling. How your party keeps it bound until it can be delivered is up to them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak griffon for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use a pack (flock?) of one elite griffon for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Grikkitog (B1). You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to notice that they're approaching a boulder or large chunk of rubble with primitive facial features — what looks like a monstrous maw and eyes. If it fails, they don't realize what's waiting for them until they're close enough for it to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 12, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 12-13, use one weak grikkito for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 17, use one elite grikkito.

Insects (B1, B2). You may not think of insects as predatory, but they can be quite aggressive and cause trouble in their own way. That's what happens when you act without the capacity to think about the consequences. To make things more troublesome, insects sometimes grow big up in isolation such as the mountains provide. Roll on Table 7.2.4 to determine the insects encountered:

TABLE 7.2.4
Insects -Mountains

d10	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Ant
3-6	Beetle, Giant Stag
7-8	Cockroach
9-10	Tick

Ant (B2). Your party is not looking through a magnifying glass; they really have come face-to-face with one human-sized ant. It's not a predator, but it is an omnivore that eats anything that seems like food and it is large enough to enforce its will. To it, your party looks like food.

Alternately, army ants are much smaller, but they come at you in a vicious, relentless swarm. If your party runs afoul of an army ant swarm (B2), it spots them (or more precisely, a food source somewhere among your party's belongings) during a rest halt or while they have camped for the night and attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak giant ant for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one army ant swarm for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite giant ant for one army ant swarm.

Beetle, Giant Stag (B1). Like giant ants, giant stag beetles are mindless omnivores that feed voraciously, and when you're that large, almost anything — like your party — looks like it could make a meal.

However, a skilled handler may wrangle a giant stag beetle and use it as a beast of burden. One large or two medium-size creatures must successfully grapple the beetle. They must maintain the grapple for 6 consecutive turns. At that point, the beetle stops struggling and acknowledges the wranglers as its master.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use a weak giant stag beetle for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite giant stag beetle for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Cockroach (B2). You find cockroaches wherever they can scavenge off of creatures higher up the food chain. During a rest halt, one giant cockroach goes after your party's rations. It won't attack unless ➤

threatened, but it will eat everything up unless stopped.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite cockroach swarm (B2) for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Tick (B2). Pick a party member at random. While your party takes a rest halt near some rocks, one giant tick hiding among those rocks tries to attach itself to that character so that it can feed.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite giant tick for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Irlgaunt (B2). Unfortunately for unwary travelers, these bizarre predators are quite at home in the mountains, where they can effectively make a pass impassible. You may have your party make a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to notice one irlgaunt clinging to the sheer mountainside above them. However the irlgaunt attacks is up to you as GM; perhaps it tries to set off a landslide to cut off your party's escape, or perhaps it just drops down onto them without any ceremony.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 11, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 11-12, use a weak irlgaunt for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 16, use an elite irlgaunt.

Manticore (B1). Your party spots a large winged beast in the sky. It's a manticore on the hunt, and it spots your party just as they spot it. Once it gets close enough to launch its spikes, it may choose to toy with its prey just to watch them squirm. In this case, it demands some kind of bribe in exchange for sparing them — a bargain it will keep, if your party makes the right offer. A suitable offer might take the form of treasure or humiliating servitude that amuses it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for another encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak manticore for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an encounter group of one elite manticore for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Peryton (B2). Like many winged predators, perytons like to make their lair in higher ground, from which they can observe the surrounding countryside and also avoid detection by enemies. Unlike many winged predators,

however, it does not hunt far afield. Rather than flying high overhead where its prey can spot it, it prefers to use its Mimic Shadow ability to sneak up on them. Your party strays close enough to a peryton's lair to get its attention. The peryton, of course, sees them as another set of hearts to collect.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak peryton for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use one elite peryton.

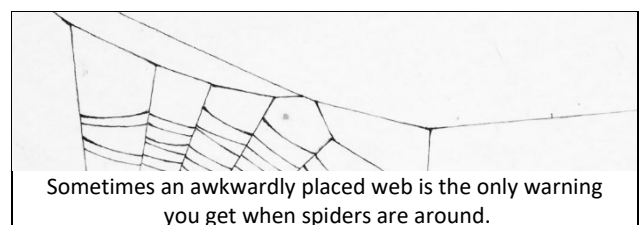
Roc (B1). Your party spots — or perhaps more accurately, it has been spotted by — a roc on the hunt. It's quite at home up here in the mountains and it knows the ins and outs of the terrain, so there is no hiding from it. One of these enormous aerial predators swoops down, blotting out the sky as it descends. As to whether or not it tries to make your party into its next meal, see *Scaling the Encounter*.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 7, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 7-8, use a weak roc for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 12 use an elite roc.

Or you may choose to give your party a scare, just for effect. Since the roc probably makes its lair nearby, it has just begun its hunt and it feels that it can still pick and choose at this point. It swoops down on your party from a great height — close enough for them to look in the eyes of this gargantuan avian predator. Then it decides that your party is not worth its bother, and flies off.

Treasure: Rocs are most at home at higher elevations, so its lair may not be far away. Your party won't be able to find it by tracking in the conventional sense, but they may be able to intuit its location. You may allow your party a DC 20 Survival check to figure out its location. If they find it, they also find belongings from the roc's victims. Use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value.

Spiders (B1, B2). It gets a little chilly up in the mountains for the comfort of most spiders, but they cope with it by taking shelter, weaving their webs between rocks or inside caves where they are sheltered from the wind. Roll on Table 7.2.5 to determine what kind of spider your party encounters:



Sometimes an awkwardly placed web is the only warning you get when spiders are around.

TABLE 7.25**Spiders -Mountains**

d8	ENCOUNTER
1	Ether Spider
2-4	Hunting Spider
5-6	Ogre Spider
7-8	Spider Swarm

Ether Spider (B1). One ether spider literally appears out of nowhere to attack your party, having spotted them from its lair in the Ethereal Plane. Ether spiders are quite fearless, and they use their ability to jump back and forth between the Ethereal Plane and the Material Plane to conduct hit-and-run attacks, wearing the party down until they are all incapacitated or dead.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, use one weak ether spider for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use one elite ether spider for the encounter.

Hunting Spider (B1). A hunting spider can represent either a web-spinning spider that has set up shop between rocks, or a large trap-door spider that has found a crevice into which it can squeeze. It's up to you as GM, what kind of encounter you want to set up.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, there is one elite hunting spider for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level present in the web.

Ogre Spider (B2). The fresh mountain air must be good for some spiders, because they can grow pretty big up here. The web houses one giant spider. It may not wait for someone from your party to get entangled in its web; instead it uses its web ranged weapon attack to immobilize anyone who gets within range.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-4, use a weak ogre spider for the encounter.

Spider Swarm (B1). A large web between some rocks houses 1d4 swarms of tiny spiders. All of them respond aggressively if something so much as touches their web.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3, use an encounter group of 1d4 spider swarms. If your party's average level is 4-5, use an encounter ➤

group of 1d4 elite spider swarms. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one elite spider swarm for each level in your party's average level.

Treasure. Larger spiders may have trapped humanoid-sized victims in the past and left some of their valuables caught in their lair. You may use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value if you wish.

Troll (B2). It gets a little cold at this elevation for a troll's liking, but frost trolls cope with the environment reasonably well and a narrow pass or trail up the mountain presents the perfect opportunity to extort struggling travelers. One frost troll confronts your party and demands something from them before it lets them pass — perhaps one of their pack animals is its toll, or a suitable amount of coins. It fights rather than let anyone pass for free.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use a weak troll for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite frost troll for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level.

Treasure: The frost troll's racket has worked well enough in the past: Its victims pay one way or another. If your party defeats the frost troll in its lair, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of the hoard.



Narrow passes and trails are a prime opportunity for trolls to charge a toll to travelers on the move. Whether or not the party chooses to pay or fight is up to them.

Undead (B1, B2, B3). Spend enough time in the mountains, and you will find evidence of those who died without proper rites and that may be kept restless by necromantic forces: travelers who perished in the cold or were buried by avalanches, soldiers killed in skirmishes in remote mountain passes, those who were killed by monsters and other predators that haunt these perilous heights. Roll on Table 7.2.6 to determine the undead abomination that greets your party:

TABLE 7.2.6

Undead- Mountains

d20	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Festrog
4	Ghost
5-7	Ghoul/Ghast
8-9	Shadows
10-12	Skeletons
13	Specter
14-16	Wight
17-18	Wraith
19-20	Zombies

Festrog (B3). A barren mountain far from civilization is as good a place as any to die from exposure, thirst or starvation. Encountering a festrog should not come as a complete surprise up here. Your party suddenly realizes that they are being followed by one festrog, going about on all fours as if stalking them.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one festrog for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite festrog for three festrogs. A pack of festrogs may use pack hunting tactics, spreading out and approaching from multiple angles to hem in your party.

Ghost (B1). That is no optical illusion; the ethereal form flitting across the barren ground really is a ghost. It is most likely the remnant of someone who died a miserable death in the wilderness. Exposure, murder and monsters are all possible causes of its demise. Perhaps a predator got to this person, perhaps lack of shelter from the elements was the larger cause of death. Whatever the case, you may make this into a hostile encounter by having the ghost try to possess a member of your party so that it may resolve unfinished business from its former life.

Scaling the Encounter: Ghosts always work alone. However, if you wish to make a more challenging ➤

ghost encounter for a 10th level or higher party, use a ghost mage instead of a ghost commoner. Or you may freely substitute a ghost of your own design.

Ghouls/Ghasts (B1). The remains of those who perished in the mountains, preserved by the cold, may rise again as ghouls or ghasts. One ghoul approaches your party, driven by mindless hunger for their flesh.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 4-5, use one elite ghoul or one ghast for the encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use one elite ghast for the encounter. If your party level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite ghoul for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level, or one elite ghast for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Shadows (B1). In a gloomy ravine or mountain pass where sheer rock walls block out the sun, the dark shape flitting toward your party may seem like a trick that the mind plays with what the corner of the eye glimpses. But it's not an illusion, it's an insubstantial undead intent on draining the life from the living! It attacks the nearest party member, eager to spawn one more of its own kind.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak shadow for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use one elite shadow for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Skeletons (B1). Your party comes upon 1d4+2 skeleton guards — undead created from remains that have been stripped of flesh by scavengers and the elements. They may have been slaughtered by predators or murdered in an unwitnessed quarrel. They may be soldiers left where they fell when they fled up the mountain or defended a pass to the last man. Or they may be what is left of adventurers or travelers who got stranded in the open without shelter and died of exposure. Driven by rage at their fate, they attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak skeleton guards. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite skeleton guard for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one skeletal champion for two elite skeleton guards.

Specter (B2). Your party comes upon one specter that was once someone who perished in the wilderness, ➤

but all connections to who and what it was in life no longer exist. Only blind hatred of the living drives it to attack your party on sight.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different undead encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak specter for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use one elite specter.

Wight (B1). Your party comes upon an improvised cairn. It is up to you as the designer of this world whether or not it should be apparent who set it up, and whose remains it houses. However, it is sure that if your party gets close enough to inspect it, a wight rises out of it, angry that they have disturbed its rest.

The wight can have any one of a number of different backstories and motivations taken from its life. One possibility is that it was a fugitive who fled into the mountains and died of exposure, and that it's looking to create spawn who will help it exact revenge. Or perhaps it was an adventurer stabbed in the back by his companions to create larger shares of the loot. Ultimately, it's up to you to decide what's going on with this wight and how it fits into your campaign world.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak wight for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite wight for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Wraith (B1). There are plenty of ways to come to a bad end on a mountain, and your party has the misfortune to come across a wraith that was once someone who perished up here, and which is now bound to this part of it. Perhaps they pass an improvised grave, or just a skeleton partially buried by rocks. Whatever the case, it takes out the resentment that it bore at the end of its life on your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, feel free to re-roll for a different undead encounter. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak wraith for the encounter. If your party's average level is 9-12, use one dread wraith (B2). If your party's average level is higher than 12, use one elite dread wraith.

Zombie (B1). Your party come across one plague zombie or 1d4 zombie shamblers that have been programmed to kill every living thing they encounter. The source of the necromancy that created these ➤

zombies we leave to you. Perhaps they slipped the leash of their creator and they now wander the mountain, mindlessly looking for victims.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one plague zombie for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one zombie brute or one elite plague zombie for two plague zombies, or one zombie hulk for six plague zombies. If you want to create a large encounter for that "The Walking Dead" effect, freely substitute 1d4 zombie shamblers for one plague zombie.

Treasure: It's quite possible that ghosts and wraiths are encountered in or near the place where they died or were buried — in which case, the valuables they had on them are lying about somewhere. You may require a successful DC 15 Perception check to find them. Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

With skeletons and zombies, they may have with them some remains of what they had on their person at the time of their death. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Wolf (B1). Your party comes across one wolf, separated from its pack — or perhaps the last survivor of a pack. It's sometimes hard to come by food up in the mountains, so it's hungry enough to attack your party, regardless of the odds.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one wolf for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite wolf or one dire wolf for three wolves, or one elite dire wolf (B1) for six wolves.

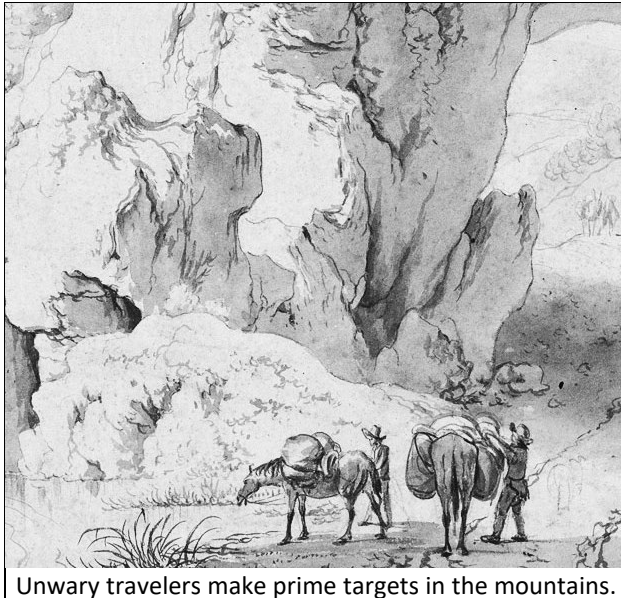
Treasure: Furriers in your world may be willing to pay for wolf pelts. How much is ultimately up to you, but 1 gp is a reasonable baseline price for a normal wolf pelt and 2 gp for a dire wolf pelt. Dire wolf pelts are not necessarily more desirable, but they are larger and offer more fur to work with.

Yeti (B1). The rest of the world remains all but oblivious to the fact that yeti live in tribes and have a culture of their own, nor is it aware that they serve as guardians against extraplanar horrors that might emerge from remote places. The world knows of yeti through their outcasts, those that have gone mad from extended contact with other worlds. Yeti outcasts are ferocious when hungry and on the prowl, so they attack as soon as they identify a suitable target. Your party crosses paths with one yeti in just such a humor. It uses its Vanish

ability to try to strike from ambush and make the most of its Grisly Arrival ability.

Conversely, you may decide to give your party an exceedingly rare glimpse of yeti as guardians of the Material Plane. The yeti may be an emissary from a tribe guarding a contact point with another plane. It's looking for help with their task, as the danger from that contact may be rising beyond their ability to handle it. Such an encounter would come with its own challenges, however, as yeti only speak Aklo.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak yeti for the encounter. Otherwise, use a tribe of one yeti for each multiple of 5 in your party's average level as the encounter group. You may freely substitute one elite yeti for two yeti.



Unwary travelers make prime targets in the mountains.

Yzobu (B3). Your party crosses paths with one of these bad-tempered herd animals that has somehow separated from its herd. In any event, it is aggressive and territorial enough to attack your party without much provocation. You may allow your party a DC 15 Nature or Survival check to calm it, but it requires a critical success to avoid an attack all together. Success simply means that your party has bought itself a little more time before the yzobu decides what to do.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a herd of one yzobu for each level in your party's average level as the encounter group. You may freely substitute one elite yzobu for three yzobu to keep down the encounter size.

Zetogeki (B3). These bad-tempered reptiles feel most at home around volcanism, but they are known to wander

through the mountains and make unwary travelers feel the brunt of their ill nature. One zetogeki spots your party from higher ground. Since everything looks like a threat to it, it attacks, curling into a ball and intentionally throwing itself downhill at your party.

Scaling the Encounter: A zetogeki is rather a lot to roll down a mountainside at a low-level party. If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use a weak zetogeki for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 11, use an elite zetogeki.

TABLE 7.3

Neutral Creatures - Mountains

d20	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Ape, Gorilla
3-4	Bear
5	Blink Dog
6	Dragon
7-8	Eagle
9-10	Hippogriff
11-12	Moose
13	Pegasus
14-15	Ram
16	Rats
17	Tatzlwurm
18	Thunderbird
19-20	Wolliped

Ape, Gorilla (B1). Your party crosses paths with one mountain ape, spotted at the opposite end of a pass, or perhaps perched on a ledge above your party. It is not necessarily hostile, but it does make an aggressive display to try to warn them off. Whether or not it attacks depends on your party's actions. You may have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, a party member makes a false move that provokes the ape, and it attacks.

Treat mountain apes as gorillas.

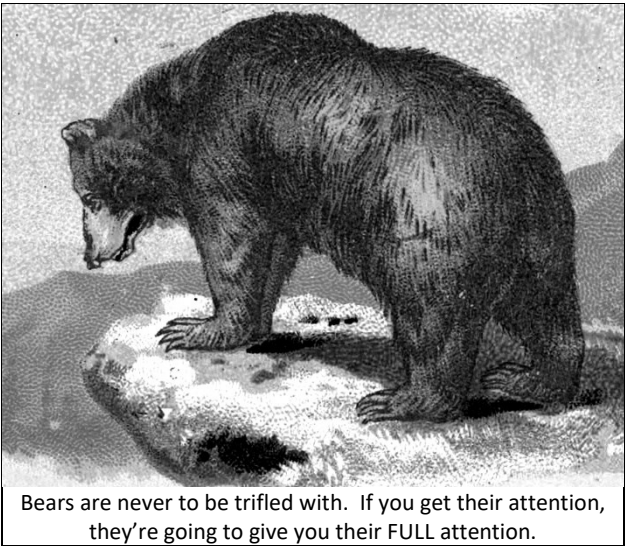
Scaling the Encounter. If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak gorilla for the encounter. Otherwise, use a troop of one gorilla for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level as the encounter group. You may freely substitute one elite gorilla for two gorillas. You may also substitute one megaprimatus for two gorillas or one elite megaprimatus for three gorillas as a veritable King Kong, the leader of the troop.

Bear (B1, B2). Your party takes shelter in a mountain cave, only to find that a bear has beaten them to it. If it is

winter, the bear is hibernating. It sleeps on as long as your party makes a successful DC 15 Stealth check to avoid disturbing it. If it wakes up, the bear awakens in a foul mood and attacks.

Alternately, the bear is abroad from its cave lair and hunting for food. The smell of your party’s travelers’ rations draw its attention. To scare it off, have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it succeeds, the bear takes the hint and lumbers away. If it fails, the bear stands its ground. If your party does not retreat it charges them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is 1, use one weak black bear (B2) for the encounter. If your party’s average level is 2-3, use one black bear. If your party’s average level is 4-6, use one grizzly bear (B1). If your party’s average level is 7 or higher, use one cave bear (B1). If your party’s average level is higher than 9, use one elite cave bear.



Blink Dog (B2). Your party crosses paths with a dog with long ears and a wisp of fur hanging from its chin. It’s not wandering the mountainside aimlessly; it’s a blink dog scouting on behalf of its pack as it roams the Material Plane, defending it from evil influences.

If it intuits that there are evil characters with bad intentions in your party, it keeps its distance and uses its innate spells to get away. Otherwise, anyone who is fluent in Sylvan can communicate with it, although it make take a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check to overcome its natural aloofness. A blink dog on a mission may provide your party with a sidequest as it asks them to help its pack. A successful Diplomacy check (DC 15 or 20, depending on whether or not it diverts the blink dog from its purpose) by a good-aligned character may persuade it to accompany your party for a short while.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish, you may use a pack of blink dogs for the encounter group, consisting of one for each multiple of 3 in your party’s average level.

Dragon (B1, B2). Your party notices a shadow in the sky. It’s a dragon on the prowl. To determine what kind of dragon roll on Table 7.3.1:

TABLE 7.3.1	
Dragon - Mountains	
d12	ENCOUNTER
1	Black (B1)
2	Blue (B2)
3	Green (B1)
4-5	Red (B1)
6	White (B1)
7	Brass (B1)
8	Bronze (B1)
9	Copper (B1)
10	Gold (B1)
11	Silver (B1)
12	Magma (B2)

To determine its age, see *Scaling the Encounter*, below.

To be clear, this need not be a hostile encounter. The dragon is not defending its lair, so — being a highly intelligent creature — it may just be curious about your party. It may have more important things to do and decline to take notice of them at all. Or it may be hungry and on the hunt, or it’s angry because your party has intruded on territory it claims as its own.

Scaling the Encounter: Because dragons get tougher with age, the age of the dragon encountered should depend on your party’s average level — especially if you decide that this is going to be a hostile encounter. If your party’s average level is lower than 11, they encounter a young dragon. If their average level is 11-15, they encounter an adult dragon. If their average level is higher than 15, they encounter an ancient dragon.

Eagles (B1). Roll on Table 7.3.2 to determine if your party is fortunate enough to be spotted by a giant eagle, or they come across ordinary eagles hunting for small animals.

TABLE 7.3.2**Eagles - Mountains**

d4	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Eagles
4	Giant Eagle

Eagles. Your party notices a convocation of 2d8 eagles wheeling overhead. If your party has a small animal kept as a pet or familiar, or food (travelers rations qualify) kept exposed, have the eagles make a DC 15 Perception check. If they succeed, they dive and try to snatch it, attacking anyone who gets in their way.

Giant Eagle. On the other hand, your party may have the good fortune to enter territory patrolled by a giant eagle. If your party has predominantly good characters (or at least, no evil characters), the giant eagle follows it to the limit of its domain, providing a sort of combat air patrol for your party. If your party hails it (remember, giant eagles only understand Auran and Sylvan), it responds. Convincing it to do your party a service requires a DC 15 Diplomacy check. Unless your party consists entirely of good characters, a critical success is needed to gain its full cooperation.

Alternately, if you want to provide your party with a sidequest, the giant eagle tries to enlist them in dealing with some evil humanoids in its territory. However, since it cannot speak, you may require your party to make a successful DC 15 Nature check to understand that it wants them to follow it. Critical success indicates an educated guess that it wants help dealing with enemies.

Hippogriff (B2). Your party sees a hippogriff circling overhead, looking for its next meal, or on the ground dealing with its prey. Hippogriffs are aggressive hunters and your party's pack animals make a tempting target, but the presence of armed humans and humanoids may deter them. Whether or not this is a hostile encounter is up to you.

Hippogriffs may be a kind of prey as well as predators. If hippogriffs are used as mounts in your world, it must follow that captive adults have value as breeding stock, and chicks captured from the wild also have value because they are still young enough to be tamed. To that end, you may allow your party a DC 20 Survival check to trace a path to the hippogriff's lair (likely to be sited atop a large rock or on a hilltop) after observing it for a while. If your party has someone capable of flight, reduce the DC to 15. To subdue an adult hippogriff to the point where it can be bound and held captive, it must be

successfully grappled with both hands and kept in grappled condition for 10 consecutive rounds.

Scaling the Encounter: If you want to stage a hostile encounter and you need to make it more of a challenge, use a herd of one elite hippogriff for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

Moose (B3). Your party spots a lone moose grazing on the mountainside. Even if your party does not behave in a threatening manner, there is a chance that it mistakes their actions and attacks. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that sets it off and it charges.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use one weak moose for the encounter. Otherwise, use a herd of one moose for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level for the encounter.

Pegasus (B1). Your party sees one pegasus wheeling overhead. It does not attack, even if it sees evil creatures. However, it may be flagged down by signaling or calling to it and making a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check. If your party can get the pegasus' attention, it may be persuaded to render some kind of aid to your party — such as taking a party member to a nearby location — with a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check. For good-aligned characters who can speak Celestial, Elvish or Sylvan the DC is 15.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 6, use a herd of one elite pegasus for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level for the encounter.

Ram (B3). You come across a flock of 2d6 wild sheep grazing the mountainside for what they can find there. Of these, 40% (rounded down) are males, and rams are anything but docile if they feel threatened. You may have your party make a DC 15 Nature check. Failure means that someone in your party has made a false move that sets off the rams. They charge your party, while the females flee.

Treat the rams as rosethorn rams.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 5, the males are elite rosethorn rams.

Rats (B1). Even in relatively barren mountainous country, rats can find enough food to justify living here. That's how they roll. Your party's presence presents them with a welcome opportunity to feast. 1d4 giant rats sniff out your party's food rations as they cross paths with each other. They don't attack party members who don't interfere with their basic mission of acquiring food. But unless they are stopped, they eventually account for all

of your party’s rations, making off with what they don’t eat on the spot.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is 2-3, use one rat swarm (B1) for the encounter. If your party’s average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite rat swarm for each multiple of 4 in your party’s average level.

Tatzlwurm (B2). Your party crosses paths with one of these small, semi-intelligent dragons. If it is winter, they have probably stumbled upon a space in which it has chosen to hibernate. In this case, they can do as they please as long as they make successful DC 18 Stealth checks. Failure wakes it up. Tatzlwyrms don’t like being woken up any more than any other hibernating creature, and it attacks.

Otherwise, your party may encounter it while it is running an errand for its true dragon master. In this case, it may be nervous and stressed, and it may want nothing to do with strangers. Of course, this also assumes that there is a true dragon in the general area.

In any event, you may have your party make a DC 15 Survival check; characters that speak Draconic may use Diplomacy instead:

Critical Success (Draconic speaker only): The tatzlwurm recognizes your party as a potential master, and it offers to serve them at the right price.

Success: It is willing to share information about its master and the local area.

Failure: It wants nothing to do with your party and brushes them off.

Critical Failure: Someone has made a false move to set it off, and it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is higher than 3, you may use an encounter group of one elite tatzlwurm for each multiple of 4 in your party’s average level.

Thunderbird (B2). Thunderbirds make their lairs in mountainous terrain — a fact that may help explain the capricious weather one often encounters in mountains. However, meeting a thunderbird up here does not mean finding it lounging at home in its lazy clothes. Even close to home, thunderbirds find mountain villages for which the threat of a sudden, violent blizzard is enough to gain their submission.

You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to realize that the fast-moving storm cloud they see has an

enormous living creature at its heart. It’s a thunderbird on its way to punish a community of herders that refuses to pay it tribute. If your party hails the thunderbird and tries to negotiate with it, you may require a DC 25 Diplomacy check to get it stay its wrath. If they fail, they have an opportunity for a quick sidequest, warning the thunderbird’s target and earning their gratitude for giving them time to get out of the way.

Wolliped (B3). Your party notices one of these eight-legged herd animals — they’re hard to overlook, even in a world where wondrous creatures are commonplace. Most likely, it belongs to a domesticated herd and it has somehow gotten separated from its herder, who would no doubt be grateful for its return. Wollipeds are not aggressive, but their Regurgitated Wrath ability comes as a nasty surprise when they think they need to defend themselves. If your party approaches it, have them make a DC 15 Nature check:

Success: The wolliped allows them to approach and lead it away.

Failure: It flees at their approach.

Critical Failure: The closest party member gets a face full of Regurgitated Wrath.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is 1-2 use a weak wolliped for the encounter. Otherwise, use a herd of one wolliped for each multiple of 3 in your party’s average level as the encounter group. You may freely substitute one elite wolliped for two wollipeds.

TABLE 7.4
Humanoids - Mountains

d10	ENCOUNTER
1	Catfolk
2-5	Dwarves
6-8	Giant
9-10	Goblins
11	Hobgoblins
12	Jorogumo
13	Kovintus
14-15	Ogre
16-17	Orcs
18-19	Strix
20	Werecreature

Catfolk (B1). Your party encounters one catfolk pouncer roaming the mountains. As with many amurrans, wanderlust drives it to travel the world. Either their paths literally cross, or the catfolk hails them, momentarily

distracted from lounging and gazing up at the sky. It is eager to know what your party is doing here, but it has no ulterior motive than pure curiosity. It freely shares whatever knowledge it has.

A catfolk pouncer may make a useful NPC in the sort of encounters that low-level parties are likely to face. You may allow your party a DC 10 Diplomacy check to convince it to travel a while in their company and share in the adventure. However, if your party is predominantly evil, a critical success is required.

Scaling the Encounter: If you want to raise the level of the encounter to make it worth the while of a higher-level party, use one elite catfolk pouncer.

Dwarves. One shouldn't be surprised to encounter dwarves in the mountains. They're hardy enough to survive in a cold and barren place, and they know how to build strongholds that can keep them safe up here.



Dwarves are not immediately hostile and are far more interested in their mines and tunnels than in capturing an adventuring party.

Your party crosses paths with a small group of dwarves. Their purpose in going abroad from their mine or stronghold is up to you as GM. They might be exploring

for new veins, or miners shuttling from one mine to another. Or they might be out looking for firewood to keep the forges working. Or they might be taking loads of ore from a nearby mine for smelting — in which case, they have with them an equal number of riding ponies as pack animals. Or they might be a war party on the alert because there are orcs or other enemy humanoids about — in which case, treat them as guards armed with battleaxes.

In any event, they could offer your party a sidequest, offering weapons or even ingots of precious metal in exchange for their help in dealing with monsters or other enemies.

Scaling the Encounter: A dwarf work party consists of 2d8 miners plus 1d4 guards, or one guard and one acolyte. A war party consists of 2d8 guards and one acolyte. In all cases, the guards are armed with battleaxes. If you anticipate that this will be a hostile encounter, you may use a group consisting of one guard and one archer sentry (armed with light crossbow instead of longbow) for each multiple of 5 in your party's average level, and if your party's average level is higher than 10 add one captain of the guard as the leader.

Giant (B1, B3). It's giants aplenty up here in the mountain; more than any other kind of terrain, it is here where they feel most at home. A giant lair, where you find a group of giants who will defend their home to the death, is a significant location and should be planned, not random. However, you shouldn't be surprised to find giants, alone or in small groups, away from their lairs and going about their business. To determine the giant encountered, roll on Table 7.4.1:

TABLE 7.4.1

Giant - Mountains

d20	ENCOUNTER
1	Cloud Giant
2-5	Fire Giant
6-9	Frost Giant
10-14	Hill Giant
15-16	Shadow Giant
17-20	Stone Giant

Even one giant, of any kind, by itself makes for a fearsome encounter for a low-level party. If this is the case, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter.

Conversely, if you want to make the encounter ➤

more challenging, you may give the giant an animal companion of a level no more than half of the giant's level. In other words, that fire giant is out walking its pet hell hound, or the cloud giant is letting its griffon have some exercise.

Cloud Giant (B1). Cloud giants are enigmatic and erratic compared to the rest of giant-kind. All of them live in remote locations and many choose to remain recluses — strangers are pointedly unwelcome. However, besides their physical appearance, little else unites them. Their outlook and motivations can vary widely, and therefore how the encounter goes depends on what you determine for this cloud giant's basic nature. The one thing on which you may be sure in all cases is that a cloud giant views itself as a lord among giants, much less among puny creatures such as your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 9, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 14, use an elite cloud giant.

Fire Giant (B1). Your party crosses paths with one fire giant that has descended from its stronghold in search of the iron and raw steel from which they forge the tools of war, or to collect tribute from lands that they have conquered. This fire giant is not necessarily hostile to your party. If it is abroad on business, it has better things to do than pick a fight with them. However, it may judge whether or not they'd be useful as slaves — especially dwarves, whom fire giants value as miners and smiths. They also value gnomes for their mechanical skill. At your discretion, it may decide to take your party captive, forcing them to either come along quietly or fight for their freedom. If they choose the latter, the giant tries to incapacitate those it thinks useful rather than kill them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 8, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 8-9, use a weak fire giant for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 13, use a team of one elite fire giant for each multiple of 14 in your party's average level for the encounter.

Frost Giant (B1). Frost giants are the warriors of the mountains, even compared to other giants. When they venture forth from their mountain strongholds in search of conquest and plunder, they mean business. Your party crosses paths with one frost giant acting ➤

as a scout for its clan, or as a messenger on its way to another frost giant clan. Unless your party can persuade it that they mean no harm, it takes them as a potential enemy that must be eliminated, even it's just to be on the safe side. You may allow your party a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check to talk their way out of a fight.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 7, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 7-8, use a weak frost giant for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 12, use a team of one elite frost giant for each multiple of 13 in your party's average level as the encounter group.

Hill Giant (B1). Your party crosses paths with one hill giant lumbering across the mountainside. It may be part of a clan that lives at a higher altitude than most hill giants, or it may be a thrall of a more powerful giant lord that lives in the area. In the latter case, it is out hunting or running some petty errand for its master, and it reverts to a surly mood when out of its lord's earshot. Hill giants inspire terror among smaller humanoids when they venture into lowlands, but up here in the mountains they're the lumpenproles of giant-kind. It tries to bully your party into giving over all of their possessions, and if they refuse the giant is quite willing to bash as many heads as it must.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak hill giant for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one elite hill giant for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Shadow Giant (B2). Normally, shadow giants are reclusive, but your party has the misfortune of crossing paths with one as it goes about looking for captives to be sacrificed to its dark deity. You may allow your party a DC 25 Diplomacy check — or a Performance check, if a bard has a tale to tell of your party's martial prowess — to convince it that they are worthy of its respect, and no mere fodder for religious rituals. If it succeeds, the giant allows them to go on their way. If it fails, the giant tries to take them captive anyway.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 11, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 11-12, use a weak shadow giant for the encounter. If your party's average level is above 16, use an elite shadow giant. ➤

Stone Giant (B1). Stone giants are very much at home in the mountains, where a clan of them can work a mine or a quarry without being disturbed. However, other stone giants work for more powerful giants as servants or hired help, wanted for their grasp of mining and masonry. Your party crosses paths with one stone giant, who has left its lair to explore for another quarry site, or to meet with clients interested in using the stone giants' legendary skill for their own purposes. The stone giant is not interested in fighting your party, but persuading it to help them means overcoming its lack of interest one way or another. Consider that it requires a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 6, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 11, use an encounter group of one elite stone giant for each multiple of 12 in your party's average level.

Goblins (B1). Your party crosses paths with a small group of goblins from a tribe based in a nearby mountain cave. They may be on their way to the lands below to look for raiding targets, or they may be patrolling the vicinity of their lair to make sure nobody sneaks up on them. Either way, they don't expect to find your party here and they react with suspicion. They interrogate your party about their identity and their business. You may allow your party a DC 15 Diplomacy check to convince the goblins that they're no enemy. If it fails, they attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak goblin warriors. If your party's average level is 4-6, use an encounter group of 1d4 elite goblin warriors. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite goblin warrior for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one goblin commando (B1), goblin pyro (B1), or goblin dog (B1) for one elite goblin warrior or two goblin warriors. You may also substitute one goblin war chanter (B1) for one elite goblin warrior or two goblin warriors as the group's leader.

A large group of goblins is likely to be a raiding party on their way out. Or they may be a raiding party on their way back, with loot and 1d6 human and/or humanoid captives. Consider that there is a 5% chance that any given captive is someone of consequence, who could provide your party with a significant reward for their safe return home. In either case, the encounter group has more important things to do than deal with your party. However, if your party finds a goblin lair, they fight to the death to defend it. In addition to the normal treasure

found in the lair, there are 1d8 human and/or humanoid captives bound and eager for rescue.

Treasure: If the encounter group is a returning raiding party, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Hobgoblins (B1). Mountainous country provides hobgoblin tribes that live by war a good place to hole up in between campaigns. Safe within their strongholds, they can refit without fear of being attacked. Your party encounters a hobgoblin soldier abroad from its tribe's fort, either on patrol or running a message to a potential client or another hobgoblin tribe. Alternately, if there is a war going on, perhaps it's scouting enemy positions. Perhaps it needs to find out if the enemy is holding a nearby mountain pass in strength?

In either case, the hobgoblin is suspicious of your party — are they friend or foe? It interrogates them closely. It lets them go if convinced your party is not a foe, but you may require a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check from your party to make it so.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one hobgoblin soldier for each level in your party's average level. You may substitute one goblin dog (B1) for one hobgoblin soldier as long as goblin dogs do not outnumber hobgoblins. Also, you may freely substitute one elite hobgoblin soldier or one hobgoblin archer (B1) for four hobgoblin soldiers. You may substitute one hobgoblin general (B1) for six hobgoblin soldiers as the group's leader.

A large group of hobgoblins indicates that the winds of war are brewing — although ultimately, that sort of thing should be determined by what else is going on in your campaign world. A large hobgoblin encounter group would be a war party on their way to or from the war zone, or tasked with defending a position like a mountain pass. In any event, they have more important business than attacking your party; in fact, they might even size them up and try to recruit them to fill out the ranks.

Jorogumo (B3). Well might your party wonder why there is a human wearing fine clothes, apparently clean and fresh, here in a rugged mountain pass, alone and apropos of nothing. Well, guess what? It's a jorogumo! This ought to become apparent as soon as it sprouts large spider legs from its back and attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: In addition to being horrifying, a jorogumo is an awful lot to handle for a lower-level party. If your party's average level is lower than 11, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 11-12, use a weak jorogumo for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 16, use one elite jorogumo.

Kovintus (B3). Here, kovintus live in mountain caves that they alter to make them more palatable. Your party meets one kovintus geomancer as it takes a recreational stroll; or perhaps it is on its way to leave an offering for a local deity. If your party wishes to speak with it, have them make a DC 15 Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: The kovintus is willing to share its maps and use its primal spells for their benefit.

Success: It shares its maps, but offers no more.

Failure: It is wary of your party and it does not agree to help them at all.

Critical Failure: Your party angers the kovintus to the point where it attacks them.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish, you may use an encounter group of one elite kovintus geomancer for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Ogre (B1). Your party spots one ogre warrior out scouting for potential raiding targets on behalf of its tribe. It may be looking for targets of opportunity among local herders and miners. It is brutish enough and sufficiently confident in its powers to try to take them captive, or kill them outright if they resist.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak ogre warrior for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one ogre for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite ogre warrior for two ogre warriors, or three ogre gluttons (B1) for four ogre warriors. You may also substitute one ogre boss (B1) or one onidoshi (B2) for two ogre warriors as the group's leader.

Orcs (B1). Your party crosses paths with 1d6 orc brutes. They're most likely a scout party, although they may already have found a vulnerable target small enough for a band of this size to raid. As brutal as they are, there's no guarantee that they'll pay your party much attention. Their leader may look your party over and decide that they're not worth the bother. But they may also decide to interrogate your party for information about the surrounding area, and they'll easily resort to violence if your party is slow to cooperate. They are less likely to give your party a break if there are dwarves in it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak orc brutes. If your party's average level is 4-5, use an encounter group of 1d6 orc brutes. If your party's average level is higher than 5 use a baseline encounter group of one orc warrior (B1) for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite orc warrior for two orc

warriors. You may also substitute one orc warchief (B1) for one orc warrior as the group's leader.

Treasure: A large orc group is likely an actual raiding party, either headed to their target or on their way back from a successful attack. In the latter case, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of their plunder. Consider that there is also a 20% chance that the bandits have with them 1d4 captives. The identity of this captive is left to you as GM, as it should depend on local circumstances and fit into your campaign world.

Strix (B3). Marked distrust of humans characterizes these winged humanoids, so if humans make up a significant portion of your party, they could be in for an argument when one strix kinmate stops them from traversing a mountain pass or confronts them from higher ground.

If your party responds with violence, this could set up hostile encounters with other members of the tribe later on, as your party forges onward. Or they could try to talk their way out of it — a DC 15 Diplomacy check should do:

Critical Success: The strix grudgingly allows your party to proceed.

Success: It allows them to pass only on condition that they leave a hostage or some other assurance of their good conduct while in the strix tribe's territory. If they don't intend to come back this way, the strix escorts them, bow drawn.

Failure: It stands its ground but does not fight unless attacked.

Critical Failure: Whatever your party said, it came out very, very wrong. The strix attacks immediately.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one strix kinmate for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite strix kinmate for two strix kinmates.

Werecreature (B1, B3). To determine what manner of werebeast your party encounters, roll on Table 7.4.2:

TABLE 7.4.2	
Werecreature - Mountains	
d6	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Werebat
4	Werebear
5-6	Werewolf

All werecreatures assume their animal form if the encounter comes down to combat, although they may choose their hybrid form instead if they have access to a weapon.

Werebat (B3). Mountain caves are natural habitats for werebats, just as they are for bats. A lone werebat in its animal form, out and about looking to add population to its colony, spots your party as potential fellow werebats. It changes into its hybrid form and attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak werebat for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one elite werebat for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Werebear (B1). Your party comes across a werebear that has claimed this part of the mountain as its domain. Perhaps it was once a wandering ranger, an explorer, or a hermit of some sort who volunteered for this fate. It is not automatically hostile to your party, especially if there are no evil characters present, and it may be willing to provide them with useful information about the surrounding area.

On the other hand, an encounter could create difficulties for your party if the werebear decides that one of the player characters would make a good apprentice (and successor to its self-appointed duties as the local guardian). Once it realizes that there is a druid or a ranger in your party, a light goes on in its head — and it won't take "No" for an answer.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 7, use one elite werebear for the encounter.

Werewolf (B1). Werewolves haunt even the high mountains. One spots your party and cannot turn down the opportunity to claim more victims. However, it is clever enough to approach them in its human form, pretending to be a lost traveler or a hunter in distress. Once your party gets close and drops its guard, it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak werewolf. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use one elite werewolf for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.



Your mountains might be littered with small hamlets and villages that make encounters with other humans a regular occurrence.

TABLE 75

Humans - Mountains

d12	ENCOUNTER
1	Adventurers
2-3	Bandits
4	Explorers
5	Fugitives
6	Hermit
7	Hunters
8	Military
9-10	Miners
11-12	Pilgrims

Adventurers. Unless your party contains all of the adventurers in your campaign world, it's at least theoretically possible that they'll run into another adventuring party as they cross the mountains. Perhaps they're pursuing the same objective as your party. Perhaps they have a different mission; perhaps they're headed for a site that your party knows nothing about (like ancient ruins said to hold lost treasures). Perhaps they're lost and starving, or wounded, or cursed.

How they react to your party depends on a variety of factors. Are they rivals pursuing the same goal? If not, perhaps this party is willing to share useful information. In fact, if your party is stuck and having a hard time advancing the storyline of your campaign, a friendly encounter like this can help steer them in the right direction. Differences in alignment may also shape how the two parties react to each other.

Composition of this rival party is up to you and can vary according to circumstance. Any party in the wilderness would be well-advised to have someone accomplished in Survival, such as a ranger, with them. Conversely, a party that is struggling may be in a bad way precisely because no one is well-versed in Survival or Nature.

Scaling the Encounter: Unless there is some possibility that this encounter turns hostile, the relative level of the party is mainly a matter of affect. A higher-level party might project self-confidence and calm (or arrogance), while a beginning-level party might stumble about, unsure of themselves. If you're leaning towards a hostile encounter, however, consider that the total challenge level of the party should be your party's average level -2, more or less.

Bandits. As with so many other aspects of banditry, setting up a hideout high in the mountains is a matter of tradeoffs. On the one hand, bandits know that anyone chasing after them will need a lot of skill and determination to find them in such a rugged and remote place. On the other hand, there aren't a lot of targets handy, so there is a lot of traveling and a lot of snow.

If your party runs into a group of bandits in the mountains, a small group of them may be lookouts perched on a rock ledge or boulder. A large group is probably on its way down the mountain to look for targets, or on their way back from hitting up caravans and villages below (in which case, they probably figure they're home free at this point). They're surprised to run into your party, and even though adventurers are better-armed than their typical target, it's not out of the question that they attack. It's possible that they assume that your party is a posse sent out after them, but if they're outbound from their lair they may figure that targeting your party beats a long trek to find a more lucrative target.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak bandits. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one bandit for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite bandit for two bandits. You may also substitute one gang leader for three bandits as the group's leader.

Treasure: You may decide that your party has surprised the bandits in their lair. If so, use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value and contents. Do so also if you decide that the bandits encountered are on their way back from a successful raid. Consider that there is also a 20% chance that the bandits have with them a high-value captive whom they intend to ransom. The identity of this captive is left to you as GM, as it should depend on local circumstances and fit into your campaign world.

Explorers. Your party crosses paths with a small human party who appear to be well-bundled up against the mountain cold and properly equipped to deal with snow, ice and difficult terrain. The group consists of one chronicler and one guide, and 1d4 bearers carrying

supplies (treat them as dockhands). They may be explorers driven by curiosity to map a mountain about which little is known, or they be climbers who see themselves as conquering the mountain just for its own sake.

Such an encounter is not likely to be hostile. Instead, you may treat this as an opportunity for your party to receive some help from a knowledgeable stranger — the explorer is likely to have excellent maps of nearby areas (and knowledge of those areas) and is willing to share them. Conversely, an expedition that has been in the field for a while may be running short on rope, pitons, cartography supplies or other necessities and may be willing to pay well if your party can help supply what they lack. Also, if your party is in the mood for a sidequest, an explorer may offer one: If the expedition is headed into particularly dangerous territory, it may need additional guards to keep it safe.

Fugitives. Your party crosses paths with 1d4 bedraggled humans or humanoids stumbling along the mountainside. They're entirely under-dressed for the weather at this altitude and they look haggard and half-starved, but they're moving quickly. Most, if not all of them have a manacle around one wrist, with the other manacle dangling on its chain. They're escaped prisoners who have fled all the way up into the mountains. From whom they are fleeing and why they were imprisoned in the first place is up to you, and ought to depend on where in your campaign world this encounter takes place, but they're probably desperate to come all the way up here.



Explorers are wanderers with a purpose, looking to map new lands and bring back treasures. Think of them as adventurers with a more intellectual focus.

How the encounter plays out depends entirely on how your party reacts, but one thing on which you may rely is that these fugitives did not go to the trouble of a jailbreak just to allow a bunch of strangers to take their freedom back from them. Each of them has learned whip their freed manacle by the chain and wield it as a club.

Treat the fugitives as bandits, but without weapons or armor.

Treasure: Fugitives have no treasure.

Hermit. A high mountain cave is an excellent destination (perfect, except for the weather) for someone who has decided to withdraw from worldly cares, but that doesn't mean you can't be found. Your party stumbles upon a hermit in his or her abode. One hermit lives here, devoted to a pure and simple life of contemplation. The hermit may be a divine spellcaster, for whom seclusion and meditation is a form of service to a deity. A hermit from a religious sect that embraces asceticism may have no shelter at all — perhaps devotion requires that you live on top of a boulder, naked to the elements even at this elevation. It may take a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check to get past the fact that your party has broken this seclusion, but the hermit may be willing to use divine spells to aid them.

Alternately, your party may have found a secular hermit — someone who, having been wounded by failure or grown weary of success, decided to retire completely from the world. Such a person won't have divine spells, but may have magic items, local lore, or even knowledge and personal connections from his or her past life that might help your party.

Yet another possibility is that this hermit is a retired adventurer or soldier, in the manner of knights in the Arthurian romances who became hermits to repent of lives spent fighting each other and dallying with married women. Hermits in this mold have discarded their fighting gear, but they may be persuaded to leave their seclusion and join your party as friendly NPCs.

Treat a religious hermit as an acolyte or a priest, but feel free to generate a higher-level divine spellcaster if you want to create a more spectacular effect with this encounter. Treat a secular hermit as an NPC class of your choice, or use a character class and level of your choice.

Treasure: Use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine if the hermit has any magic items and/or valuable devotional items.

Hunter. Your party comes across one hunter looking for game. Hunters who work at this altitude are bound to be pretty rugged — or desperate — folk. Most likely, they

live farther down and have come up into the mountains either because they're looking for rare game, or because game is hard to find closer to home. Depending on your party's appearance, this hunter may treat them with caution, even suspicion, at first. If you wish, have your party make a DC 10 Diplomacy check to get on the hunter's good side. Success means that the hunter is willing to help by trading goods and sharing food and local knowledge.

Treat a hunter as a NPC from the forester class, with the size of the encounter group depending on which template you decide to use.

Scaling the Encounter: The encounter group consists of one forester for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one hunter or one elite forester for two foresters.



Hunters may be looking for rare game or because game near their villages may be scarce.

Military. Rugged terrain and high altitude are not conducive to military operations. But if there is a war in this corner of your campaign world, mountains make a good place for a defensive stand — or a mountain pass could make a good route if you want to take the enemy from an unexpected direction. Your party encounters a modest force tasked to guard a pass, or a patrol based in a nearby stronghold. They are naturally suspicious. How could someone in this forsaken place be an innocent passer-by? You may require your party to make a DC 15 Diplomacy check to convince them that they are not aligned with the enemy — especially if they have nothing to identify them, such as a passport or a written guarantee of safe conduct. If persuaded that your party is friendly, the soldiers are willing to provide them with

local knowledge, as well as material assistance (if the soldiers are not themselves short of supplies). Treat a typical, rank-and-file soldier as a guard. If mounted, the horse is a riding horse. Leaders should qualify as veterans or knights, and they get to ride warhorses if you want them on horseback.

Scaling the Encounter: As a rough guideline, the encounter group should consist of one guard for each level in your party’s average level. You may substitute one watch officer for three guards and/or one captain of the guard for six guards to serve as the group’s leader.

Miners. Your party crosses paths with a small group of 1d10 miners looking for a fresh source of metals or raw gemstones. If there is a mining colony nearby, they might well be an offshoot from it.

This is not in and of itself a hostile encounter. The miners could have local knowledge that your party finds useful, as well as cold weather gear, torches, lamp oil, rope and other supplies for working in a hostile environment. They might also want your party to serve as armed escort, having realized a little too late that dangerous creatures lurk even in this inhospitable environment. In fact, if you want to stage a situation in which your party has the chance to rescue them from danger, roll on Table 7.2 for another encounter.



Miners you encounter might be an offshoot of an existing mine nearby, looking for resources or new veins of ore.

Pilgrims. Mountains often seem remote and mysterious to folk who live in the lands below, and so they have a way of becoming places of religious significance. Your party crosses paths with a group of devotees traveling to or from a holy site up in the mountains; they would have no other reason for coming to such forbidding country. Perhaps they have a specific request to make of their deity (ending a drought or plague, curing someone of disease, etc.) and they bring an offering. Or perhaps it’s just a ritual that their religion says they must perform

regularly. Depending on how religions work in your world, perhaps their mission is to vandalize a shrine to a rival deity.

Their deity and alignment should dictate how they react to meeting your party. In any event, they are lightly armed at best and they may want to travel in your party’s company for safety — especially if they know of a specific hazard in the area, like bandits or monsters. If friendly, they may also be willing to share local knowledge and trade with your party, or even share what divine magic capabilities they possess for your party’s benefit.

Scaling the Encounter. Properly scaling the encounter may not matter unless you think that the encounter could turn hostile. In that case use baseline encounter group of one acolyte for each level in your party’s average level. You may substitute one prophet for two acolytes; one zealot for four acolytes; or one priest for six acolytes.

Treasure: In addition to whatever treasure they carry on their person, pilgrims may carry with them an offering to their deity. You may use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

TABLE 7.6

Watch Out! - Mountains

d12	ENCOUNTER
1	Avalanche
2	Did You Hear That?
3-5	Falling Rocks
6	Hidden Crevasse
7	Mountain Specter
8	Tracks
9-10	Treacherous Footing
11	Tripping Hazard
12	Wind Gust

Avalanche. The snow-blanketed mountainside above your party begins to rumble. That is never a good sign. An overwhelming wave of snow and debris comes downhill, right at them. Have each party member make a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid getting caught by the avalanche. If it fails, that character is buried into snow; treat this like falling into quicksand.

Did You Hear That? Choose a party member to make a DC 15 Survival or Nature check. Failure means that that character believes that he or she has heard a noise made by creature or a dangerous natural phenomenon. If it succeeds, that party member realizes that this is an

illusion; either it's not as close as it seems or it isn't real at all.

If you wish, roll on Table 7.6.1 for guidance on what your party thinks it hears:

TABLE 7.6.1	
Did You Hear That? – Mountains	
d10	ENCOUNTER
1	Crash of falling rocks
2	Dragon roaring overhead
3	Ghostly wail
4	Human or humanoid cry of distress that trails off
5	Mountain lion growling
6	Rumble of something tunneling through rock
7	Voices speaking in Common
8	Voices speaking in Giant
9	Wolves snarling
10	Yeti howling

Falling Rocks. Rocks higher up the mountain come loose, and gravity does the rest. Pick a point in the party formation as the center of the rockfall's area of effect. Each party member within a 10-foot radius takes 2d6 bludgeoning damage, but a successful DC 15 Reflex save halves the damage, rounded up.

Hidden Crevasse. Snow, thin ice, an optical illusion, bad visibility — all of these things alone or working in concert can conceal a crevasse from your party's notice. You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception check to notice that the ground in their path is treacherous. If it fails, someone at the front of the party formation does not spot the crevasse in time to avoid it, and plunges 1d4 x 10 feet to the bottom, suffering the appropriate falling damage.

The crevasse is narrow enough to cross with a running long jump, but this requires a successful DC 10 Athletics or Acrobatics check.

Mountain Specter. Mist has set in around the mountain, so thickly that your party can no longer see the lands below them. At their altitude, however, the sky is clear. With their backs to the sun, your party sees a dark shape form on the thick sheet of mist below them. Is it an incorporeal undead — a shadow, a wraith, a specter? Why doesn't it attack? You may allow your party a DC 15 Nature or Survival check to recognize that this an optical

illusion caused by their own shadows being cast on the mist.

Tracks. Your party spots tracks that look like they belong to a rare monster native to the mountains, like a yeti. They may make a successful DC 15 Survival check to realize that they are very old, and they will not lead to anything useful. If no one makes a successful check, this may be the start of an amusing (for you as GM, anyway) wild goose chase.

Treacherous Footing. Someone in your party steps onto loose ground, precipitating a dangerous tumble down the mountainside. Pick one party member at or near the front of the party formation. Treat it as a treacherous scree hazard, except that the damage from falling is only 2d6. Wheel!

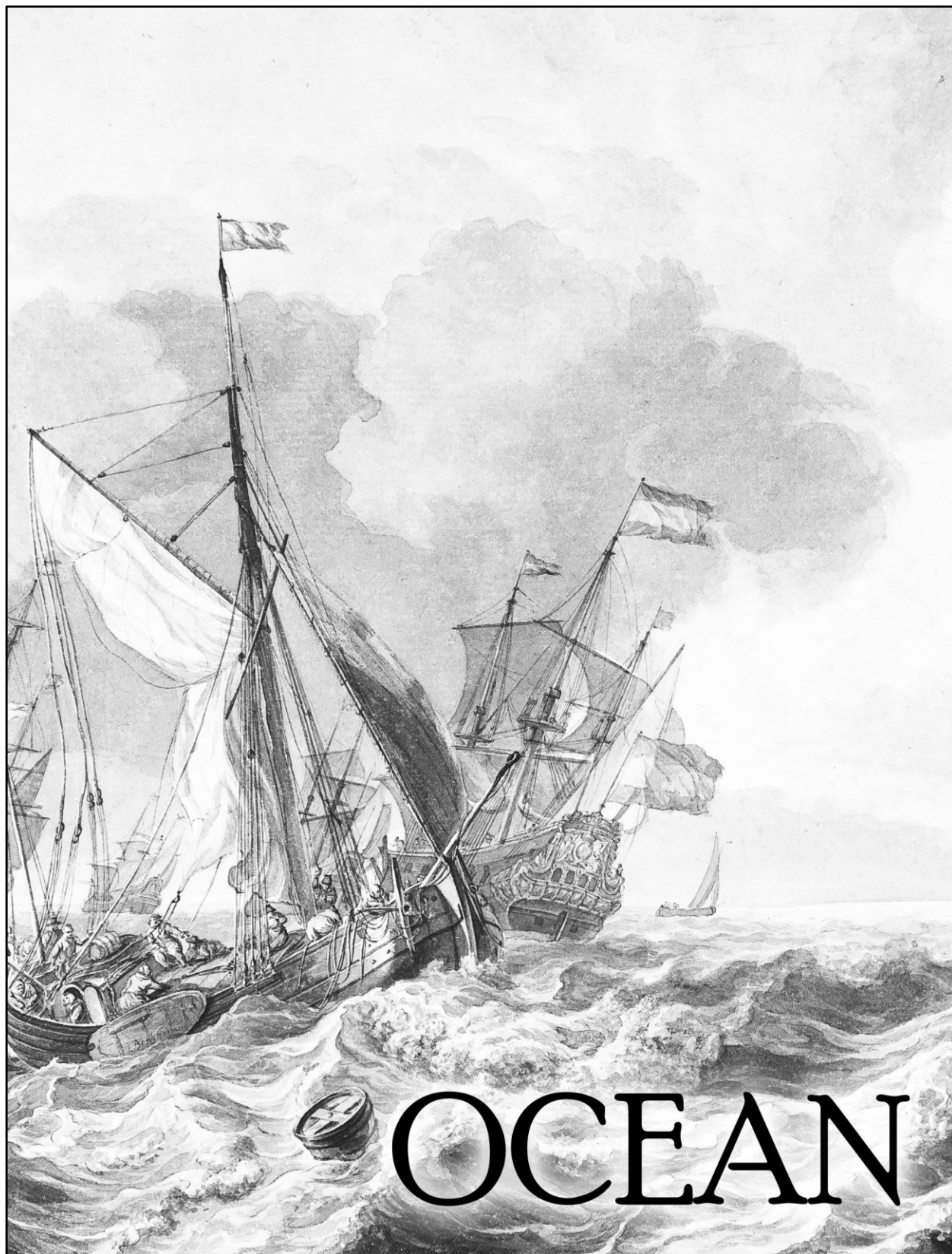
Tripping Hazard. Pick a party member at the front of the party formation. That character trips over an unseen obstacle — a rock sticking up out of the ground is a good candidate here in the mountains. He or she must make a successful DC 15 Reflex save to avoid a hard fall that causes 1d8 damage — and perhaps no small embarrassment in the eyes of the other party members.

Wind Gust. A biting mountain wind whips up, catching your party off guard. If they have made camp for the night, their campfire is extinguished, forcing them to light another one. If they've already used all their wood and kindling, they'll have to go hunting in the dark for more. If they're carrying torches, they go out. If they're using lanterns, they may lose their grip (see below).

Regardless of whether it's day or night, any party member who is standing must make a DC 5 Strength check to avoid being knocked down. Anyone who is knocked down by the wind immediately loses grasp of anything held in hand. Fragile objects break when they are dropped. In addition, anyone who is knocked down while wearing his or her pack must make a DC 5 Reflex save to avoid the pack falling heavily so that anything containing liquid, such as canteens and potions, breaking and spilling.

The Irlgaunt Came Over the Mountain

You may note that this chapter does not comment on how game mechanics should reflect the effect of high altitude on your party or creatures. It is assumed that all player characters have done their altitude training, and that the encounters described here involve creatures that, to some degree, self-select for their ability to function in the rarefied air.



CHAPTER EIGHT

Ocean

What is an Ocean?

Among the ten wilderness environments described in this book, the open ocean is unique. Once you leave sight of land, the sea is flat and eerily featureless, with only the sun by day and the stars at night to help you get your bearings. It is also a hostile environment to most of the creatures described in the *Bestiaries*, as well as all of the player character ancestries. No doubt, you have noticed that only a distinct minority of canonical creatures are either aquatic or amphibious. Sailing on the ocean, as defined here, also means that you're farther from land than most aerial creatures care to venture. This rather limits the range of plausible encounters on the high seas.

Not only that, but the sheer vastness of the ocean, as well as the depths of the waters, puts a further limit on what you may encounter here. Giant frogs are amphibious, but you're not going to find any in salt water and this far from land. An unusually high proportion of the encounters described here involve large, high-level monsters. They're comfortable out here, with plenty of elbow (or tentacle) room and hostile working conditions for pesky bands of smaller beings who might hunt them. This chapter includes a couple of encounters that assume the presence of small stowaways on your party's ship, but many of them involve big, tough customers.

What Do You Find in an Ocean?

When you determine that a random encounter is in order, roll on Table 8.1 to determine the category:

TABLE 8.1

Encounter Type - Ocean

d20	CATEGORY
1-8	Aggressive Creatures (Table 8.2)
9-11	Neutral Creatures (Table 8.3)
12-17	Humanoids and Humans (Table 8.4)
18-20	Watch Out! (Table 8.5)

Then, roll on the appropriate table to determine the creature, person or thing encountered.

TABLE 8.2

Aggressive Creatures - Ocean

d100	CATEGORY
1-5	Allghollthu Master
6-8	Baomal
9-12	Dragon Turtle
13-16	Elasmosaurus
17-23	Elemental
24-28	Eurypterid
29-33	Galvo
34-38	Gremlin, Fuath
39-43	Incutilis
44-50	Insects
51-55	Jellyfish
56-59	Kraken
60-65	Mimic
66-69	Mossaur
70-74	Octopus, Giant
75-79	Quoppopak
80-84	Sea Serpent
85-90	Shark
91-94	Snakes
95-100	Squid

Allghollthu Master [Aboleth] (B1). Your party's ship has the misfortune to sail into the area of effect of an aboleth's undersea lair. They notice the waters around the ship darken and a stench, like the ocean itself retching, rises from the surface. Then, one of these ancient monstrosities emerges from the water right beside the ship, presenting a spectacle designed to paralyze even the most seasoned mariner. However, this is not the aboleth itself, but a *project image* spell that it cast to persuade the crew to beg mercy and become its followers. The ploy works on 2d4 of the ship's crew, who behave from that point as cultists of the aboleth. They then turn on the remaining crew and passengers, trying to subdue them for later use as slaves or sacrificial victims.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 4, consider that the aboleth is not an illusion, but an actual aboleth that has risen from the depths. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak aboleth for the encounter; if your party's average level is higher than 10, use an elite aboleth. It tries to enslave as many of your party as it can as the ship's crew-turned-cultists attack the party members who cannot be enslaved.

Baomal (B1). Baomals are one of the true legends of the deep ocean, as fearsome and voracious a predator as

exists. It's large enough to be spotted from far enough away so that a ship can turn and make a run for it. This requires a successful DC 15 Perception check with a +1 ability bonus by the ship's lookout. If this fails, you may allow your party a DC 15 Perception or Nature check. Otherwise, the baomal's heads breaking the surface look like two indeterminate objects glinting in the sun until it gets to within 150 feet of the ship.

Scaling the Encounter: A baomal makes for a legendary encounter for legendary heroes. If your party's average level is lower than 18, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 18-19, use a weak baomal for the encounter.

Dragon Turtle (B1). The ship in which your party sails has, much to the misfortune of everyone on board, drawn the attention of a dragon turtle. One of these beasts rises from the deep to attack the ship and plunder its wreckage. It is possible to bribe a dragon turtle to spare a ship and those onboard — if your party can communicate with it, they may make a Diplomacy check to convince it to do so, with the DC dependent on how much they offer — but the dragon turtle's intention is aggressive.

If you wish to give your party the chance to run away, you may have the dragon turtle breach the surface far enough away for someone on the ship to recognize it at a distance. In this case, make a DC 15 Perception check with a +1 ability bonus for the ship's lookout. If this fails, you may allow your party a DC 15 Perception or Nature check. If one or the other succeeds, someone has spotted the dragon turtle in time for the ship to turn and make a run for it. If both fail, everyone mistakes its gargantuan shell for the play of sunlight (or moonlight) on the water.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 7, feel free to re-roll for another encounter. If your party's average level is 7-8, use a weak dragon turtle for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 12, use an elite dragon turtle.

Elasmosaurus (B2). These huge aquatic predators prefer to remain in the hidden parts of the world. But some roam the open ocean in search of prey, on the other hand, and this is how your party's ship encounters one. Or who is to say that your party isn't sailing unexplored seas that would constitute one of those lost parts of the world? Either way, your party and their shipmates look like food to it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak elasmosaurus for the encounter. If your party's average

level is higher than 10, use an encounter group of one elite elasmosaurus for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Elemental (B1). The expanse of the open ocean provides room enough for gateways to the Elemental Planes of Air and Water, or for elementals who have escaped their summoner to wander the Material Plane. Whether your party encounters an air elemental or a water elemental is up to you, or you may roll on Table 8.2.1:

TABLE 8.2.1

Elemental - Ocean

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Air Elemental
3-6	Water Elemental

Either way, the elemental reads the presence of the ship as a threat and attacks it.

Air Elemental/Scaling the Encounter. One air wisp (B3) should make a reasonable encounter for a beginning-level party. Otherwise, the elemental encountered should depend on your party's average level: one spark bat (B2) for a level 2 or higher party, one zephyr hawk (B1) for a level 3 or higher party, one living thunderclap (B2) for a level 4 or higher party, one living whirlwind (B1) for a level 5 or higher party, one belker (B2) for a level 6 or higher party, one invisible stalker (B1) for a level 7 or higher party, one storm lord (B1) for a level 9 or higher party, one melody of the wind for a level 10 or higher party, or one elemental hurricane (B1) for a level 11 or higher party.

Water Elemental/Scaling the Encounter. One water wisp (B3) should make a reasonable encounter for a beginning-level party. Otherwise, the elemental encountered should depend on your party's average level: one icicle snake (B2) for a level 2 or higher party, one brine shark (B1) for a level 3 or higher party, one mist stalker (B2) for a level 4 or higher party, one living waterfall (B1) for a level 5 or higher party, one blizzardborn (B2) for a level 6 or higher party, one quatoid (B1) for a level 7 or higher party, one tidal master (B1) for a level 9 or higher party, one ice wyrm (B2) for a level 10 or higher party, or one elemental tsunami (B1) for a level 11 or higher party.

Eurypterid (B3). Someone on board your party's ship discovers, much to everyone's consternation, one spiny eurypterid climbing the hull. It's reasonable to assume that it latched onto the ship closer to shore, and it has been clinging tenaciously ever since. Some spiny

eurypterids do this, mistaking the ship itself for prey. If it reaches the deck, it attacks the closest living thing on board.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is lower than 4, use a weak spiny eurypterid for the encounter. If your party’s average level higher than 8, you may use an encounter group of one elite spiny eurypterid for each multiple of 9 in your party’s average level.

Treasure: If eurypterid is considered a delicacy in your world, it might be worthwhile to put a fresh kill on ice and sell it to a fish monger in the next port. The price is ultimately up to you, but 10 gp for a spiny eurypterid would seem to make sense.

Galvo (B3). It’s never a good sign when you come upon a creature that constantly crackles with electricity. Your party’s first hint that there’s a galvo in the vicinity might be a clump of dead fish floating near their ship; though galvos kill to eat, their electrical field kills indiscriminately, so sometimes there are leftovers. However, that won’t stop a galvo from targeting your party. As your party and crew look on, one galvo sinks its claws into the planks of the hull and tries to climb aboard. If a ship’s boat is in use, it attacks those in the boat.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is less than 7, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party’s average level is 7-8, use a weak galvo for the encounter. If your party’s average level is higher than 12, use an encounter group of one elite galvo for each multiple of 12 in your party’s average level.

Gremlin, Fuath (B3). If your party’s ship gets the attention of these vicious aquatic gremlins, they trail it until night when most of the crew is presumably asleep. If you roll this encounter during the day, you may have the ship’s lookout make a DC 19 Perception check to spot a pair of eyes and half of a head sticking up above the ocean’s surface for just a moment. This should give your party a hint that something — in fact, one fuath — is watching the ship. Otherwise, have the fuath try to board the ship that night, making a DC 16 Stealth check to climb aboard without the night lookout noticing. If it succeeds, have it make a DC 20 Thievery check to immobilize the ship — sever the ropes that operate the sails, or break the oars, with its claws. With the ship stuck in place, it can butcher everyone on board at its leisure.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one fuath for each level in your party’s average level. You may freely substitute one elite fuath for four fuath if you don’t want to run a mass encounter with these nasty little things.

Incutilis (B3). As disquieting as it is to see one of these nautilus-like aberrations propel itself through the water at some hapless swimmer, they look downright nightmarish when they leave the water looking for victims. One bold incutilis tries to sneak aboard your party’s ship, believing that it can use its puppet to swim away before getting caught. Have the incutilis make a DC 16 Stealth check to get on deck without being spotted. However, if a ship’s boat is in use, it attacks those in the boat.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is 1, use a weak incutilis for the encounter. Otherwise, you may use an encounter group of one incutilis for each multiple of 2 in your party’s average level. You may freely substitute one elite incutilis for three incutilises.

Insects (B2). You won’t find giant insects onboard ship unless they’re paying passengers, but common insects can slip into stores and cargo unnoticed and multiply before they’re discovered. The crew opens a crate or barrel in the hold and receives a verminous surprise. Roll on Table 8.2.1 to determine what they find:

TABLE 8.2.1	
Insects - Ocean	
d6	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Army Ant Swarm
4-5	Cockroach Swarm
6-7	Fen Mosquito Swarm
+1 to die roll in a tropical ocean	
How your party reacts to the cries of alarm from below deck is up to them, of course.	
<i>Scaling the Encounter:</i> Use an encounter group of one swarm in all cases. There just isn’t room in the hold for more than one swarm of anything.	

Jellyfish (B2). Anyone swimming in the ocean may run afoul of jellyfish. The jellyfish mentioned here are mindless, but this means they instinctively attack anything that gets near them on the off chance that they’re prey. A swimmer or a sailor gone overboard may run afoul of either a fire jellyfish swarm or a giant jellyfish (as GM, choose either one). Also, a giant jellyfish will not attack a ship, as that require emerging too far out of the water. But it might attack a ship’s boat.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party’s average level is 4-5, use a weak fire jellyfish swarm for the encounter. If your party’s

average level is higher than 9, you may use an encounter group of one elite fire jellyfish swarm or elite giant jellyfish (B2) for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level. Feel free to combine the two — it's *Nideria Rex*!

Kraken (B1). Here be monsters. Your party has the great misfortune of coming to the attention of a kraken. The ship's crew should have some warning of what is to come, as the sky turns darker than the darkest storm clouds before the monster breaches the surface, and the ocean takes on an inky black hue as the kraken poisons the water to doom anyone who falls overboard.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is less than 16, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 17-18, use a weak kraken for the encounter.

Dolphins Are Your Friends

As described in the *Bestiaries*, dolphins — even killer whales — are entirely beneficent creatures that are willing to step in specifically when your party is attacked by an aquatic creature. They seem to have no other real in-game function; otherwise, they're as removed from effects on your party's status and their possible causes as any animal that just minds its own business. Because of this, it's hard to slot them into a random encounter except as a GM's *ex machina* that you can pull out of your bag of tricks when your party has bitten off more aquatic monster than it can handle. So dolphins and orcas are not part of a random encounter table because that appears to be how *Pathfinder 2nd Edition* defines them.

Mimic (B1). This is not so much an ocean encounter as a shipboard encounter. One mimic has stowed away on the ship in which your party travels, disguising itself as a chest or a sailor's locker. No one recognizes it, but everyone assumes that it belongs onboard. It ambushes your party while they are rummaging around in the hold.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use a weak mimic for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use one elite mimic for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level. Even a group of mimics can make themselves look like cargo.

Mosasaur (B3). These predatory reptiles are not amphibious like crocodiles, so they typically remain in the open ocean and feed on aquatic creatures — this, despite having short webbed limbs rather than fins. The finer points of zoology aside, though, a mosasaur can still overturn a ship's boat to pick off its crew if it is hungry. It

won't attack a ship, but if there's a boat in the water this is exactly what happens.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak platecarpus (B3) for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one platecarpus for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one tylosaurus (B3) or one elite platecarpus for two platecarpus; or one elite tylosaurus for three platecarpus.

Octopus, Giant (B1). Normal-sized octopi stick to shallows and coastal waters. An octopus met on the open ocean is bound to be a giant on the hunt. Giant octopi are smart enough to realize that one of them taking on a ship all by itself is not a high percentage bet on success. But it will tip over a boat to get those aboard into the water, where they are more vulnerable, and attack them. You may allow the boat's crew a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to notice an alarmingly large tentacle reaching for it in time to react.

Scaling the Encounter: Octopi are intelligent creatures, and that makes them dangerous (though giant octopi are not proportionately more intelligent than their smaller cousins). If your party's average level is lower than 6, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use a weak giant octopus for the encounter. Otherwise, you may use an encounter group of one elite giant octopus for each multiple of 12 in your party's average level. Multiple giant octopi might take on a ship, reckoning on strength in numbers.

Quoppopak (B2). These monstrosities are not large enough to attack a ship, but the crew of a ship's boat should be wary of them. You may allow the boat's crew a DC 15 Survival or Perception check to notice that something large lurks beneath the water nearby, so that it is not a complete surprise to them when one quoppopak breaches the surface and attacks them.

Scaling the Encounter: Quoppopak are fearsome opponents. If your party's average level is lower than 9, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 9-10, use one weak quoppopak for the encounter. If your party's average is higher than 14, use one elite quoppopak for each multiple of 15 in your party's average level.

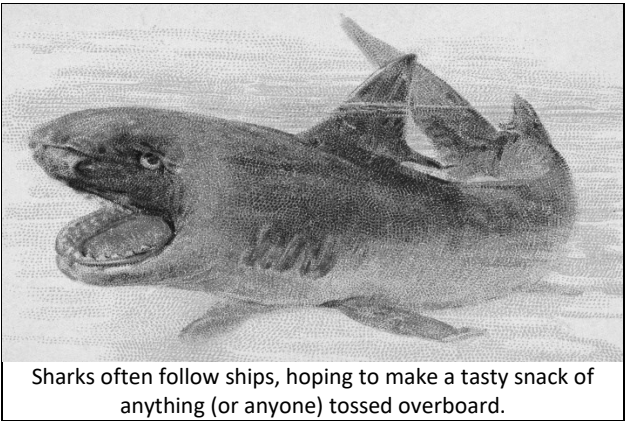
Sea Serpent (B1). Unfortunately for your party's ship and all aboard, a hungry sea serpent has spotted it. If possible, it uses its Capsize ability to tip it over, after which it can pick off crew and passengers at will, like snacking on peanuts.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 10, feel free to re-roll for a different

encounter. If your party's average level is 10-11, use a weak sea serpent for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 15, use an elite sea serpent.

Shark (B1). Though large and aggressive, a shark will not attack a ship. An ocean-going vessel is obviously too much for it to take on. However, a ship's boat — and certainly, anyone who has gone into the water — is a potential target. A great white shark attacking a boat tries to break or overturn it, thus leaving the occupants vulnerable in the water.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak great white shark for the encounter. Otherwise, use a school of one great white shark for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level for the baseline encounter group. You may freely substitute one elite great white shark or one megalodon (B1) for two great white sharks; or one elite megalodon for three great white sharks.



Snakes (B1). While some species of snake are aquatic, it is more likely that snakes hidden on board in the ship's cargo prove to be a hazard at sea. The problem may start as no more than a couple of small snakes that escape detection while the ship is loaded, but if they breed at sea the difficulties they present literally multiply. Either the crew or a member of your party incites an attack by one rat snake swarm while rummaging around in the hold.

Squid (B2). Their smaller cousins stick to coastal waters, but giant squid roam the open ocean. They are ferocious predators and large enough to take on a small ship as well as a ship's boat. One such squid swims right up to the side of the ship and uses its tentacles to reach anyone on board. Hiding below deck only forces the squid to figure out that if it crushes or capsizes the ship, the soft, edible bits will spill out.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 7, a giant squid might be more sea monster than you want to throw at them. Feel free to re-roll for a

different encounter. If your party's average level is 7-8, use a weak giant squid for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 12, use an encounter group of one elite giant squid for each multiple of 13 in your party's average level.

TABLE 8.3
Neutral Creatures - Ocean

d12	CATEGORY
1-2	Hippocampi
3-4	Narwhal
5-6	Rats
7-9	Seahorse
10-11	Tidehawk
12	Trilobites
13	Rays

+1 to the die roll in temperate or tropical ocean.

Hippocampi (B2). Your party spots these colorful aquatic steeds half-submerged as they traverse the ocean. Hippocampi are not aggressive by any means, and they can be tamed to serve as aquatic mounts. To subdue a hippocampus, it must be successfully grappled with both hands and kept in grappled condition for 6 consecutive rounds. At that point, it becomes docile and whomever grappled it may ride it or use it as a pack animal. Because of its size, two medium-size creatures may grapple with the same hippocampi simultaneously, and as long as one of them maintains its grappled condition, this counts toward the requirement for wrangling it.

However, if your party tries to approach hippocampi with the intent to wrangle them, have your party make a DC 15 Nature check:

- Success: They show no signs of alarm.
- Failure: They take alarm and flee to deeper water.
- Critical Failure: They take such alarm that they attack the first party member to enter the water.

Scaling the Encounter: Hippocampi are herd animals. Use an encounter group of one hippocampus for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite hippocampus for four hippocampi.

Narwhal (B3). The ship's lookout spots a narwhal nearby, and at least some of the crew and passengers stop and have a look at it. Despite their imposing tusk, narwhals are not aggressive creatures. It won't attack a ship or a boat. Someone in the water, however, should have to make a DC 10 Nature or Survival check to avoid giving the

narwhal the impression that it's a threat. A narwhal should not be provoked; its tusk will do some damage. However, narwhals may be wrangled and tamed; some aquatic humanoids have figured out how to do it. To wrangle a narwhal, it must be successfully grappled and kept in grappled condition for 6 consecutive rounds. At that point, it becomes docile and whomever grappled it may ride it. Because of its size, two medium-size creatures may grapple with the same narwhal simultaneously, and as long as one of them maintains its grappled condition, this counts toward the requirement for wrangling it.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a pod of one narwhal for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level as the baseline encounter group. You may freely substitute one elite narwhal for two narwhals.

Rats (B1). Presumably, the ship carrying your party has not begun to sink. So there may well be rats on board, hiding amongst the cargo, or in any hidden space they can find. Your party disturbs them while rummaging around in the hold, or opening a crate full of stores. They encounter one rat swarm. These rats don't attack party members who don't interfere with their basic mission of acquiring food. But it's highly unlikely that the ship's crew want to share their valuable supplies with rats, and they'll be glad if your party gets rid of them. Perhaps the captain grants your party free passage in exchange for working as exterminators.

Scaling the Encounter: There's only room for so many rat swarms in a ship's hold. However, if you want to create a more challenging encounter, use one elite rat swarm if your party's average level is higher than 3.

Seahorse (B3). Someone on board spots a giant seahorse just beneath the surface. It is curious about the ship, even friendly. It may be wrangled and ridden as a mount by a human or humanoid that can breathe underwater.

To wrangle a giant sea horse, it must be successfully grappled and kept in grappled condition for 6 consecutive rounds. At that point, it becomes docile and whomever grappled it may ride it or use it as a pack animal. Because of its size, two medium-size creatures may grapple with the same sea horse simultaneously, and as long as one of them maintains its grappled condition, this counts toward the requirement for wrangling it.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a herd of one giant seahorse for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level as the baseline encounter group. You may freely substitute one elite giant seahorse for two giant seahorses.

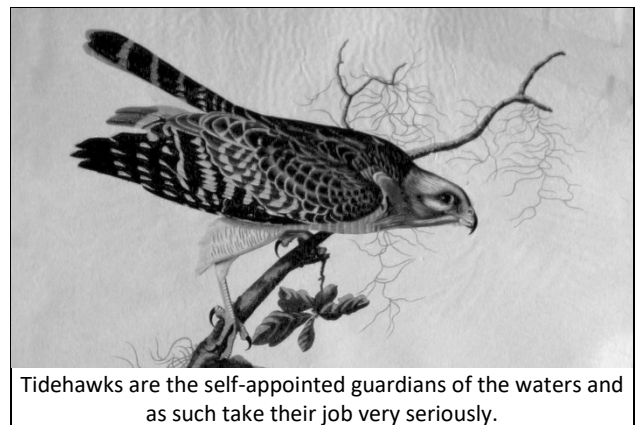
Tidehawk (B3). Tidehawks are mercurial guardians of the waters. Your ship's lookout spots one circling overhead (evidently, there was a rain squall here recently). When it sees your ship, it investigates who has entered its domain. You may have your party make a DC 25 Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: The tidehawk befriends your party and it is willing to travel with them, at least for a little while.

Success: It is at least willing to cast a low-level spell or two on your party's behalf before it sends them on their way.

Failure: It curtly demands that your party's ship leave its domain.

Critical Failure: Your party angers the tidehawk somehow. It rises into the sky and threatens to use its Typhoon Dive ability if they do not leave immediately.



Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is less than 10, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 10-11, use a weak tidehawk for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 15, use an elite tidehawk.

Trilobites (B3). These tiny arthropods are little more than sights of the ocean to those aboard ship. But to someone swimming or fallen overboard, they can be a nuisance or even a hazard. Someone in that situation draws the attention of 1d6 trilobites. Have that person make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, the trilobites see a large fish, not a humanoid, and they want to eat it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 2, use a baseline encounter group of one trilobite swarm for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite trilobite swarm for 2 trilobite swarms.

Ray (B2). Rays encountered in the open ocean do not attack boats or ships, but someone swimming in the

ocean and wishing to avoid provoking it should make a DC 15 Survival or Nature check. If it fails, the unfortunate in the water makes a false move and the stingray attacks. *Scaling the Encounter:* Rays are mostly solitary creatures. However, if you wish to create a more challenging encounter, use a manta ray instead of a stingray.

TABLE 8.4

Humanoids - Ocean

d10	CATEGORY
1-3	Locathah
4-5	Merfolk
6-7	Sea Devil
8-10	Triton
11-12	Cecaelia

+2 to the die roll if in a tropical ocean.

Locathah (B3). The ocean is full of wonders, so in that sense it should cause no alarm when a locathah hunter astride a moray eel pulls alongside your ship. It is not hostile, it's on the hunt for aquatic prey and it would appreciate any leads those on board can provide on where to find sharks, squid, etc. In exchange, it has pearls and valuables scavenged from shipwrecks, as well as information of its own about places near or relatively far away. It would also trade for ceramics and metal tools and weapons.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak locathah hunter for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one locathah hunter for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite locathah hunter for two locathah hunters.

Merfolk (B1). Merfolk rarely venture into the deep ocean, but regardless of your party's ship's position relative to land they may come across one merfolk warrior. Alone and this far out from coastal waters, it is likely to be a scout party from a nearby settlement. It is willing to trade with your party and share local knowledge. If you want to create a sidequest, have the merfolk ask your party to help its tribe defend itself from a monster or other foe.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one merfolk warrior for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite merfolk warrior for four merfolk warriors. You may also substitute one merfolk wavecaller (B1) for two merfolk warriors or one elite merfolk wavecaller for six merfolk warriors as the group's leader.

A group of four or more merfolk could constitute a military patrol or a war party, in which case they regard the encounter as an intrusion into their territory. You

may have your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check if they wish to defuse the situation:
Success: The merfolk respond positively. They are willing to trade with your party and offer local information.

Failure: They warn your party to leave their territory.

Critical Failure: They really don't like the looks of your party. They attack.

Sea Devil (B1). One sea devil scout lurking beneath the waves near its tribe's territory spots the ship carrying your party and decide that it is, at the very least, an item of interest to it. It swims alongside and tries to bully the crew into paying some kind of toll for passage through its tribe's waters. A larger group of sea devils (see *Scaling the Encounter*) may be numerous enough to attack the ship for plunder, in which case they split into two groups and attack from both port and starboard. They give the ship's passengers a chance to surrender, but they'll take anything worth having one way or another.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak sea devil scout for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one sea devil scout for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one sea devil brute (B1) for two sea devil scouts; or one elite sea devil scout for three sea devil scouts; or one elite sea devil brutes for four sea devil scouts. You may also substitute one sea devil baron (B1) for three sea devil scouts as the group's leader.

Triton (B2). Your party's ship has entered the domain of a tribe of tritons, so one of them, astride a dolphin, pops up from beneath the water and hails the crew. It is not particularly hostile. But it is on the lookout for outsiders who mean harm to this part of the ocean and your party are, from its point of view, intruders. You may have your party make a DC 10 Diplomacy check to convince them of their good intentions and avoid a confrontation:

Success: The triton, on behalf of its tribe, offers assistance to your party, particularly if they are in distress.

Failure: It sternly requests that they move along.

Critical Failure: Your party seems like enough of a threat that it attacks, using its Summon Aquatic Ally ability as necessary. Yes, your party has angered Aquaman.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one triton for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite triton for three tritons.

Cecaelia (B3). Seeing a creature with the upper body of a human and the lower body of an octopus emerge from beneath the water is an alarming sight. However, noting that it is laden with gear and trade goods may be reassuring — if it is monstrous, at least it also seems practical. In fact, your party encounters one cecaelia trapper that has spotted your party's ship as an opportunity to trade for what its tribe cannot make for themselves. However, cecaelias are also notoriously quick to anger, making negotiating with them a delicate process.

This cecaelia trapper hails your party, either to trade with them or just to ask for local information. You may have your party make a DC 20 Diplomacy check:

Success: They have gotten on its good side, and it is willing to trade with them and/or provide them with useful information.

Failure: They have irritated it, and it responds by arguing with them, or even trying to bully them.

Critical Failure: They have triggered it into attacking.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, use a weak cecaelia trapper for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one cecaelia trapper for each multiple of 5 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite cecaelia trapper for two cecaelia trappers.

TABLE 85

Humans - Ocean

d10	CATEGORY
1	Explorer
2	Fishermen
3-4	Merchants
6	Military Vessel
7-8	Pirates
9	Shipwreck
10	Smugglers

Explorer. A ship headed for unknown lands — at least, lands unknown in the place from which it set out — hails the ship carrying your party. In addition to the ship's crew, the explorers consist of one guide and one chronicler and 2d4 dockhands serving as bearers. Perhaps they are here thanks to the sponsorship of an academy or a ruler eager to know more about the world, or perhaps the explorer is a wealthy eccentric who undertook this expedition on his or her own.

Such an encounter is not likely to be hostile. Explorers are open and curious, and experienced ones know full well that they may well need a helping hand to survive a long ocean voyage. Instead, treat this as an opportunity for your party to receive some help from a knowledgeable stranger — the explorer is likely to have excellent maps and is willing to share them. Conversely, if they have been at sea for a while, the expedition may be lost and short of supplies, in which case they would express gratitude for whatever help your party could provide them. Also, if your party is in the mood for a sidequest, an explorer may offer one: If the expedition is headed into particularly dangerous territory, it may need guards to keep it safe.

How Well Do Kobolds Swim?

Let's face it: Table 8.4 was bound to be small because there just aren't many different aquatic humanoid. This is not to say that humanoids you find in the other, land-based chapters are hydrophobic and would never sail the oceans. But if you encounter them, they are likely to fit under one or more vocational descriptions aside for humans: hobgoblin soldiers on a transport ship; orc pirates; elven merchants. And so on.

Fishermen. Someone on board spots a boat or small ship with 1d4+2 anglers in search of large fish that one can only catch in the open ocean. If returning with fish in hand, they're willing to sell part of their catch. This presents two challenges, however: They're after big game fish, large enough to provide 100 tavern meals (though the fishermen will sell for the cost of only 40 tavern meals); and, of course, the fish will have to be preserved, cleaned and smoked or cooked before it goes bad.

Another possibility is that your party comes upon them while they are being attacked by a monster or creature of your choice from Table 8.2. They'll be grateful for any help your party lends them.

In any event, they're happy to provide your party with local knowledge, including tales of monsters and of course, stories of the one that got away.

Treat fishermen as dockhands.

Merchants. A merchant ship comes within hailing distance of the ship carrying your party. The merchant group on board consists of 2d4 merchants and 1d6 guards. They could help your party by making available necessary items, exchanging hard money for treasure items or providing knowledge of just about anywhere in

your campaign world — where is this ship going, and from whence did it sail? They may also be interested in hiring your party's ship — more specifically, the rugged adventurers on board the ship — as an escort if they fear pirates or sea monsters.

Treasure: Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the total value of the caravaners' individual possessions. In addition, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of goods and/or hard money on board.

Military Vessel. Your party's ship may cross paths with one or more large transports carrying soldiers to a far-off place, but trans-oceanic invasions are rare undertakings. Or they may spot a fleet of warships on their way to battle an enemy fleet. If they get too close, they'll be ordered to stop and await a boarding party tasked with determining whether they are friend, foe or neither. Your party may find itself in a situation where they have to talk their way out of being detained.

More likely, they come upon a small warship tasked with protecting a trade route and hunting down pirates. This ship hails your party's vessel and demands that they pull alongside. The warship's captain demands to know your party's ship's identity, destination and purpose. They want to determine, of course, whether your party's ship is involved in piracy and/or smuggling, and seize or sink it if so. If they are persuaded that everything on board is aboveboard, they'll let your party go on their way, perhaps even escort them for a while.

If you want to use a Diplomacy check to determine if you party can talk their way out of being suspected of bad intentions, a DC of 15 is always a reasonable baseline. But the DC could (and should) vary according to the situation.

Treat all sailors on the warship as guards.

Scaling the Encounter: The size of the encounter group should depend on the size of the vessel. Whatever the size, one ship captain, one navigator and at least one bosun are on board as officers.

Pirates. Unless your party has taken passage on a warship bristling with weapons, their vessel presents pirates with a plausible target. The pirate ship pulls alongside and calls for everyone on board to surrender or face the consequences. Everyone can see that the pirates have a boarding party ready to go. Whether the ship's crew decides to give up or fight depends on you as GM. Treat pirates as bandits; they're essentially bandits with boats. Add peg legs, eyepatches and parrots on the shoulder at your discretion.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average lower than 4, use an encounter group of 1d4+1 weak pirates. Otherwise, use a baseline boarding party of one pirate for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may substitute one ship captain for three pirates as the group's leader.

Treasure: If these pirates have taken another ship before this one, its stolen treasure will be on board. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of the looted goods and/or hard money. Consider that there is also a 20% chance that the pirates have with them a high-value captive whom they intend to ransom. The identity of this captive is left to you as GM, as it should depend on local circumstances and fit into your campaign world.

Shipwreck. Someone on board spies the remains of a ship lost at sea — bits of wreckage, a ship's boat — with 1d12 survivors in it or clinging to it. Roll on Table 8.4.1 to determine the kind of ship that went down and guidance regarding the nature of the survivors, how grateful they might be for rescue, and what they might offer your party as thanks:

TABLE 8.4.1
Shipwreck Survivors - Ocean

d8	ENCOUNTER
1	Explorer
2	Fisherman
3-5	Merchant
6	Military
7	Pirates
8	Smugglers

Smugglers. Though they also work the troublesome side of the law, smugglers are not the same as pirates. They already have valuable goods in hand, and they're trying to sneak them into a place where they can exchange them for money. A small, fast vessel comes into view of your party's ship, but its crew does not want their company. If your party's ship runs them down, they may try to play it off and pretend that they're doing nothing illegal; they may try to bribe your party into leaving them alone; or they may try to eliminate your party as witnesses to their crime.

Treat smugglers as bandits equipped only with shortwords.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak

bandits. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one bandit for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite bandit for two bandits. You may also substitute one gang leader for three bandits as the group's leader.

TABLE 8.5

Watch Out! - Ocean

d8	CATEGORY
1	Blazing Sun
2	Dead Calm
3	Fog
4-5	Man Overboard!
6-7	Storm
8	Whirlpool

The hazards in Table 8.6 are almost entirely weather-related. If you already have a system for determining weather at sea, feel free to ignore this table and re-roll on Table 8.1:

Blazing Sun. The hot sun in a cloudless sky glaring down on the open ocean takes its toll. Each party member must make a DC 20 Fortitude saving throw. All who fail suffer one enfeebled level for the next six hours or until sunset, whichever comes first.

If your roll this encounter at night, re-roll for a different encounter, or save it for the next day.

Dead Calm. The winds cease entirely, for whatever reason. If your party's ship uses sails, it cannot move under sail for the next six hours or until you roll again for a random encounter, whichever comes first.

Fog. A sudden fog sets in for the next six hours or until you roll again for a random encounter, whichever comes first. The circumstance penalty to visual Perception is +4.

Man Overboard! One of the crew has fallen into the ocean. What does your party do about it? Rescuing the unfortunate sailor would earn his or her gratitude, as well as gratitude from the rest of the crew. What form that takes is up to you as GM.

Storm. Your party's ship sails into stormy weather. For the next four hours, the ship operates under thunderstorm conditions. The circumstance penalty from wind is +4. Everyone who stays below deck has no chance of being struck by lightning. For anyone in an elevated and exposed position, such as a crow's nest, the chance is 5% per hour. For anyone else who is above deck, the chance is 1% per hour.

If your party's average level is 15 or higher, you may treat this as an encounter with an uthul (B1) instead. Have fun with that!

Whirlpool. Your ship approaches a point where shifting currents produce a whirlpool that could put the crew and passengers at some hazard. It's not a maelstrom powerful enough to doom the ship by itself — that's a major feature that should be saved for a fixed encounter. However, it could capsize a ship's boat that gets too close to it.

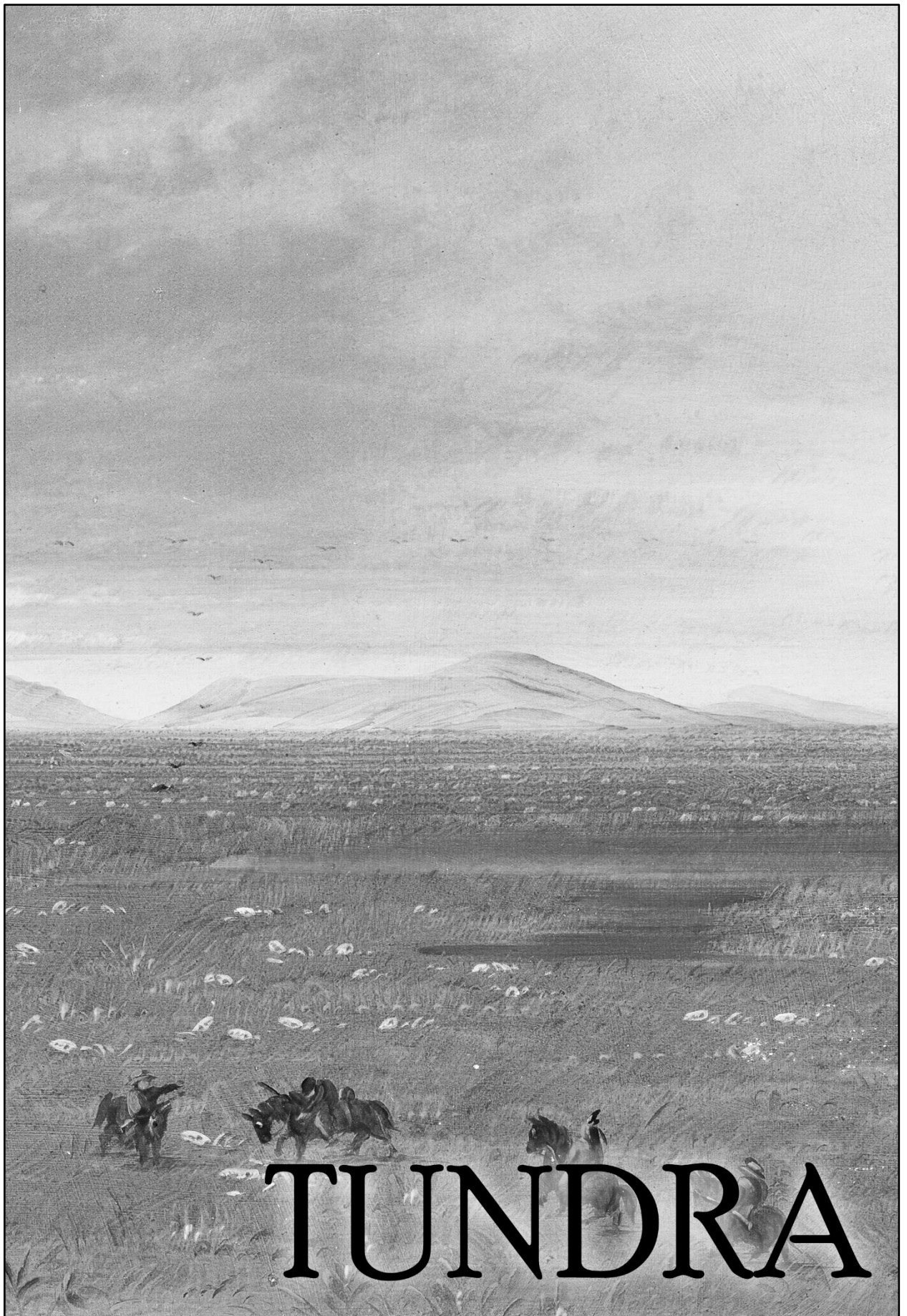
A ship's lookout (or, at your discretion, one of your party members) may make a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to see the whirlpool from a distance in time to steer away from it without problem. Otherwise, the ship gets too close to extricate itself easily. Steering clear at this point requires a successful DC 15 piloting check on the part of the ship's helmsman.

Failure means that the ship is caught in the vortex and lists heavily enough so that each party member should make a DC 10 Reflex save to grab hold of something firm and avoid falling overboard. Anyone who falls overboard swims out of the vortex by making a successful DC 30 Swimming check. If it fails, that character must make a successful DC 15 Swimming check each round until rescue is effected (e.g., a lifeline thrown from the ship).

"Desolate and Empty Is the Sea"

Admittedly, the ocean does not offer a lot of options for encounters compared to other environments. If you have your own ideas for ocean-going encounters, feel free to modify the tables in this chapter to accommodate them.





CHAPTER NINE

Tundra

What is Tundra?

Far enough from the lethal cold at the poles, but not so far that the ground ever fully thaws out in summer, the tundra presents adventuring heroes with an environment that is harsh, but not impossible, and it is certainly distinctive. Whether or not it describes a noticeable part of your campaign world is up to you. But if it does, this chapter gives you some guidance about what your party could encounter there.

However, it's worth noting that you're not going to find a wide assortment of creatures in the tundra. The soil is rich in nutrients, but between the permafrost, the cold and the lack of precipitation, it doesn't support trees and plant life is restricted to grasses, shrubs, moss and lichen. There's enough flora to support large herbivores like moose, and enough of them to support predators like winter wolves, frost drakes and remorhazes. But it literally takes a special breed to live here and like it, so there just isn't the same degree of biodiversity as you would find in, say, a tropical forest.

But you find frost giants and their associates, as well as certain humanoids who have come here with a specific purpose in mind. Human habitation is likely sparse, consisting of nomadic and semi-nomadic groups that hunt and herd for sustenance.

What Do You Find in Tundra?

When you determine that a random encounter is in order, roll on Table 9.1 to determine the category:

TABLE 9.1

Encounters - Tundra

d20	ENCOUNTER
1-8	Aggressive Creatures (Table 9.2)
9-13	Neutral Creatures (Table 9.3)
14-15	Humanoids (Table 9.4)
16-17	Humans (Table 9.5)
18-20	Watch Out! (Table 9.6)

Then, roll on the appropriate table to determine the creature, person or thing encountered.

Tundra is relatively flat and open, so it's likely that encounters will start at a distance. However, conditions that limit visibility — such as some of those described in Table 9.6 — and terrain features like boulders and low hills could also affect line of sight.

TABLE 9.2

Encounters - Tundra

d100	ENCOUNTER
1-4	Bulette
5-10	Cat
11-14	Drake
15-19	Elemental
20-23	Elemental, Mephit
24-26	Ettin
27-31	Frost Worm
32-34	Griffon
35-37	Insects
38-42	Kokogriak
43-46	Mudwretch
47-49	Owlbear
50-54	Remorhaz
55-57	Roc
58-62	Troll
63-67	Umonlee
68-73	Undead
74-76	Vampiric Mist
77-82	Warg, Winter Wolf
83-87	Wendigo
88-90	Will-o'-Wisp
91-95	Wolf
96-100	Wolverine

Bulette (B1). A land shark in the tundra is more likely to be active in the summer than in the winter, as it's easier to tunnel after the ground has thawed a bit. But it has to eat regardless of the season — and it has just spotted your party as its next meal. To create a little drama, you may require a successful DC 15 Perception check to sense the ground rumbling as the bulette approaches.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 6, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use a weak

bulette for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an encounter group of one elite bulette for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Treasure: Bulettes hunt on the move, so treasure that belonged to its previous victims is scattered far and wide. However, you may allow your party a DC 10 Survival check to follow the trail back to its last kill. If successful, use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Cat (B1). "Cat" here refers to the full range of big cats that have figured out how to survive in this difficult environment, such as lynx and cougars. Your party comes across one of these hunting cats in either of two situations: Your party scares off a prey animal that it was stalking, or they come upon it while feeding and it suspects them of wanting to steal its kill. Either way, it's angry enough at your party to attack.

Treat big cats encountered in the tundra as leopards.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak leopard for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one elite leopard.

Drake (B1). A few different varieties of these primitive dragons roam above the tundra. None of them are inclined to cut a hapless party of adventurers a break. Roll on Table 9.2.1 to determine the drake that your party encounters:

TABLE 9.2.1
Drake - Tundra

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-4	Frost Drake
5	Shadow Drake
6	Wyvern

Frost Drake (B1). Those vapor trails that your party sees in the sky come from a frost drake's exhaled breath. In the tundra, it is literally in its element. It knows that pickings are often slim in this unforgiving environment, and it decides that your party makes suitable prey.

Shadow Drake (B2). Shadow drakes are masters of mischief rather than terror, but they are no less troublesome than other drakes for all of that. They use any diminution of sunlight — whether from cloud cover, shadows falling along the hillside, dusk or nighttime — to steal valuables from the unwary. ➤

One shadow drake tries to sneak up on your party. Have it make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC to sneak into their formation undetected. If it succeeds, it targets a particular character for pilfering. Have it make a Thievery check against that character's Perception DC:

Critical Success: It steals a valuable item small enough to grasp in its claws and gets clean away.

Success: It finagles the item but the party member with the highest Perception DC notices it before it can get clean away.

Failure: Someone in your party notices it before it can steal anything.

Wyvern (B1). Though no more intelligent than other drakes, wyverns may act like evil dragons in toying with their victims, extracting tribute from them or humiliating them before destroying them. When a wyvern swoops down on your party, it may pause to taunt or extort your party before it attacks, just to get a reaction from them.

Scaling the Encounter: In the case of a wyvern or a frost drake encounter, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter if your party's average level is 1-2. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak drake for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an encounter group of one elite drake for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

In the case of a shadow drake encounter, if your party's average level is higher than 4, use an encounter group of one elite shadow dragon for each multiple of 5 in your party's average level.

Elemental (B1). From an elemental perspective, the tundra is a place where no one is entirely happy. Air dominates Earth, as the cold air bears down on the earth, freezing the soil for most of the year. The cold also suppresses Water, which cannot flow when it is frozen. Fire doesn't come to play at all for the same reason. And yet, cold also restricts Air's freedom, suppressing its movement as it does to the other elements. Air, Earth and Water all exist here, but in decidedly uncomfortable circumstances.

Choose the type of elemental being that your party encounters, or roll on Table 9.2.2:

TABLE 9.2.2**Elementals - Tundra**

d8	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Air Elemental
4-5	Earth Elemental
6-8	Water Elemental

Air Elemental/Scaling the Encounter: Frigid air whipping across the tundra makes itself felt, as if something slapped you in the face. What if something actually did slap you in the face, that something being an air elemental?

One air wisp (*B3*) should make a reasonable encounter for a beginning-level party. Otherwise, the elemental encountered should depend on your party's average level: one spark bat (*B2*) for a level 2 or higher party, one zephyr hawk (*B1*) for a level 3 or higher party, one living thunderclap (*B2*) for a level 4 or higher party, one living whirlwind (*B1*) for a level 5 or higher party, one belker (*B2*) for a level 6 or higher party, one invisible stalker (*B1*) for a level 7 or higher party, one storm lord (*B1*) for a level 9 or higher party, one melody of the wind for a level 10 or higher party, or one elemental hurricane (*B1*) for a level 11 or higher party.

Earth Elemental/Scaling the Encounter. Your party is more likely to encounter earth elementals in the warmer months, when the permafrost thaws a bit and the vise-like hold of frozen water loosens. They rise up, damp from the thaw and angry at everyone and everything.

One earth wisp (*B3*) should make a reasonable encounter for a beginning-level party. Otherwise, the elemental encountered should depend on your party's average level: one living boulder (*B2*) for a level 2 or higher party, one sod hound (*B1*) for a level 3 or higher party, one earthen destrier (*B2*) for a level 4 or higher party, one living landslide (*B1*) for a level 5 or higher party, one sand sentry (*B2*) for a level 6 or higher party, one xorn (*B1*) for a level 7 or higher party, one granite glyptodont (*B2*) for a level 8 or higher party, one stone mauler (*B1*) for a level 9 or higher party, or one elemental avalanche (*B1*) for a level 11 or higher party.

Water Elemental/Scaling the Encounter: Your party can encounter a water elemental in any season, whether in solid or liquid form. Such distinctions mean little to an elemental from the Plane of Water. ➤

One water wisp (*B3*) should make a reasonable encounter for a beginning-level party. Otherwise, the elemental encountered should depend on your party's average level: one icicle snake (*B2*) for a level 2 or higher party, one brine shark (*B1*) for a level 3 or higher party, one mist stalker (*B2*) for a level 4 or higher party, one living waterfall (*B1*) for a level 5 or higher party, one blizzardborn (*B2*) for a level 6 or higher party, one quatooid (*B1*) for a level 7 or higher party, one tidal master (*B1*) for a level 9 or higher party, one ice wyrm (*B2*) for a level 10 or higher party, or one elemental tsunami (*B1*) for a level 11 or higher party.

Elemental, Mephit (*B1, B2*). These annoying little elementals have a habit of crossing over into the Material Plane, like ink bleeding through paper, and making nuisances of themselves. They are not predatory, but they are very annoying and they interpret any attempt to brush them aside as an attack. The tundra attracts various types of mephit. Roll on Table 9.2.3 to determine the kind of mephit your party encounters:

TABLE 9.2.3**Mephits - Tundra**

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Air Mephit
3	Earth Mephit
4-5	Ice Mephit
6	Ooze Mephit

Air Mephit (*B1*). Your party spots a wisp of vapor describing an apparently random pattern in the thin, cold air. It's an air mephit. When it spots your party, it targets them for mischief and swoops down on them repeatedly, often uttering a piercing whine as it does so. It does not stop unless physically forced to do so, as it gets mindless amusement out of annoying your party.

Earth Mephit (*B1*). Your party finds its path blocked by one earth mephit standing (or sitting, if you prefer) directly in its way. It refuses to move no matter what your party says or does to get it out of the way, and it attacks if your party tries to go around it.

Ice Mephit (*B2*). One course there are ice mephits in the tundra. They torment creatures of the Material Plane for no reason other than their own amusement. When one ice mephit spots your party, it attacks them out of sheer boredom. ➤

Ooze Mephit (B2). Ooze mephits appear in the warm weather months, when the ground thaws enough to create muddy patches in which they feel comfortable. Your party passes one ooze mephit lounging in a little bog. It begs your party (in Aquan or Terran, of course) for a handout, whether a valuable item or a service of some kind, and it shifts from wheedling to violence if it doesn't get what it wants.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite mephit for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Ettin (B1). Your party hears two voices booming out across the tundra. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature check to recognize that it's an ettin arguing with itself. If they choose not to avoid the ettin, it calls out to your party and demands that they help settle a dispute. It should be something that the party would find awkward or at least pointless to answer — for instance, are gnome steaks marbled enough to make good eating? No matter what answer the party gives, one or both heads accuses them of unfairly favoring the other and the ettin attacks.

Alternately, the ettin stops short when it spots the party and realizes that it's hungry after arguing with itself for such a long time.

Scaling the Encounter: As amusing as ettins can be if you run the encounter with the right sense of humor, you should feel free to re-roll for a different encounter if your party's average level is 1-2. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak ettin for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use one elite ettin for the encounter.

Treasure: The ettin carries some coins in a pouch looped around its loincloth. Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Frost Worm (B2). When the ground beneath your feet suddenly starts rumbling and quivering, it is seldom — if ever — a good sign. This is especially true if a frost worm burrowing through the permafrost is the cause. The worm has detected your party as prey and breaches the surface to attack them. The worm's approach should give them enough time to sense that something is amiss and do something about it. Combat begins when it breaches the surface within striking distance of your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 10, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 10-11, use a

weak frost worm for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 15, use an elite frost worm.

Treasure: Cutting open and gutting a frost worm is quite a chore, but it should reveal valuables that belonged to its previous prey — and frost worms eat a lot. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

The Cold, Hard Ground

Permafrost is one of the defining characteristics of tundra — it's so cold the year-round that below a certain depth, the soil just never thaws out. However, this chapter assumes that the larger and more fearsome burrowing predators will find away around that, either by staying above the permafrost or churning right through it, ice be damned. Bulettes can do it, and frost worms, with their native affinity to cold, do it with ease.

Griffon (B1). A griffon, roaming afield from its eyrie in nearby hills, spots your party and goes for one of their mounts or pack animals — or at least, it thinks it has spotted a mount or a pack animal.

If taming and training griffons is part of your campaign world, then no doubt griffon trainers would pay well for them. To subdue a griffon to the point where it can be bound and held captive, one large or two medium-size creatures must successfully grapple the griffon using both hands. They must maintain the grapple for 10 consecutive turns. At that point, the griffon stops struggling. How your party keeps it bound until it can be delivered is up to them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak griffon for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use a pack (flock?) of one elite griffon for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Insects (B2). Even insects find life in the tundra unappealing. All the same, in the warmer months flies find just enough warmth and food to go out and about; mosquitos find stagnant water in thawed-out bogs to keep their life cycle going, and little crawly things find just enough food lying about to keep their species going. Roll on Table 9.2.4 to determine the type of insect your party encounters:

TABLE 9.2.4

Insects - Tundra

d10	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Ant
3-4	Cockroach
5-7	Fly
8-10	Mosquito

Ant (B2). Your party is not looking through a magnifying glass; they really have come face-to-face with a human-sized ant tramping along the frozen ground. It's not a predator, but it is an omnivore that eats anything that seems like food and it is large enough to enforce its will in a way that can look like predation. To it, your party looks like food.

Alternately, army ants are much smaller, but they come at you in a vicious, relentless swarm. If your party runs afoul of an army ant swarm (B2), it spots them (or more precisely, a food source somewhere among your party's belongings) during a rest halt or while they have camped for the night and attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak giant ant for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one army ant swarm for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Cockroach (B2). You find cockroaches wherever they can scavenge off of creatures higher up the food chain. It gets awfully cold in the tundra, but cockroaches can survive here because — well, because they're cockroaches. During a rest halt, one giant cockroach goes after your party's rations. It won't attack unless threatened, but it will eat everything up unless stopped.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite cockroach swarm (B2) for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Fly (B2). Baby giant flies feed on carcasses so that they grow up into big and strong giant flies. Your party comes upon the remains of... something... that has been almost entirely consumed by 1d4 giant maggots. They're still hungry and primitive instinct drives them to try to continue feeding on your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3 use an encounter group of 1d4 giant maggots. If your party's average level is higher than 3 use an ➤

encounter group of one giant fly (B2) for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. The flies have found a carcass into which to lay eggs, and they defend their spawning ground against a perceived threat.

Mosquito (B2). When the ground thaws it creates enough standing water to support a healthy mosquito population. One fen mosquito swarm sets about your party, and they won't be swatted away.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak fen mosquito swarm for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one fen mosquito swarm for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite fen mosquito swarm or one giant mosquito for two fen mosquito swarms.

Kokogiak (B3). Encountering a bear on the open tundra is challenge enough. Consider how much more of a challenge it is to cross paths with a bear-like beast with six legs, knowledge of two languages and the ability to mimic the cries of a creature in distress. Your party hears cries that sound like a human in danger of its life. It's really a kokogiak trying to lure them in with their guard lowered. Once your party gets to within 60 feet of it, they notice that there is no victim. At this point, the kokogiak uses its Tormented Snarl ability to render your party flat-footed and it tries to make them its prey.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 10, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 10-11, use a weak kokogiak for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 15, use an elite kokogiak.

Mudwretch (B2). Mudwretches at this latitude remain dormant for much of the year, but when the ground thaws out they use bogs as their lair. The moisture replenishes their life energy, of course — but so does blood. Your party comes upon one such mudwretch in need of sustenance, and to it they look like walking energy drinks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak mudwretch for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one mudwretch for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite mudwretch for three mudwretches.

Owlbear (B1). Owlbears have few places to conceal themselves, but those who live in the tundra have developed all-white coloration as camouflage. Have your party make a DC 20 Perception check to notice that

something in the middle distance isn't quite blending in with their surroundings. If it fails, they remain unaware of the owlbear's presence until they hear a terrible shriek piercing the frigid air. You may then require a DC 15 Nature check to recognize it as an owlbear's Bloodcurdling Screech ability. Shortly thereafter, one of these monstrous beasts charges your party, eager to prey on them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak owlbear for the encounter. If your party's average level is 7-10, use one elite owlbear. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use a mated pair of elite owlbears for the encounter group.

Remorhaz (B1). Your party notices steam rising from the ground nearby. In summer, it may just look like mist rising as sunlight plays on a chilly marsh. In winter, it definitely looks like some source of heat is at work under the frozen soil. When they get as close to the spot as they dare, one remorhaz bursts up from beneath the ground. It may have mistaken your party for a polar bear or a herd of elk, but it views them as prey all the same.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak remorhaz for the encounter. If your party's average level than 10, use one elite remorhaz.

Roc (B1). Hunting in the tundra takes a roc away from its mountain eyrie, but the open sight lines and the presence of large prey animals often make the trip worthwhile. Human and humanoid prey are less common — but that makes your party all the more attractive as a rare delicacy.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 7, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 7-8, use a weak roc for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 12 use an elite roc.

Troll (B2). Even though travelers to extort are rare in this part of the world, frost trolls still find enough victims to get by, strong-arming herders and hunters for food and personal possessions when they have to. Your party approaches a hilltop or a cave that one frost troll claims as its own.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak frost troll for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one frost troll for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. You may substitute two troll hounds (B2) for one frost troll, as long as there is at least one frost troll in the group. You

may also freely substitute one elite frost troll or one two-headed troll (B2) for two frost trolls.

Treasure: The frost troll's racket has worked well enough in the past: Its victims pay one way or another. If your party defeats the frost troll in its lair, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Umonlee (B2). These huge and relentless predators stalk arctic and sub-arctic regions, devouring whatever they can find. Fortunately, they are relatively rare. But your party just found one, and vice-versa.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 13, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 14-15, use a weak umonlee for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 18, use an elite umonlee.

Undead (B1, B2, B3). Few who perish in this hostile wilderness die peacefully and without suffering. Furthermore, the dry, frigid climate preserves their physical form astonishingly well, and this creates ample raw material for necromancy that animates them with its cruel imitation of life. Roll on Table 9.2.5 to determine the undead abomination that greets your party:

TABLE 9.2.5

Undead - Tundra

d20	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Festrog
4	Ghost
5-8	Ghoul/Ghast
9-12	Skeletons
13	Specter
14-15	Wight
16-17	Wraith
18-20	Zombies

Festrog (B3). The barren, frozen tundra is a pretty darned good place to die from exposure or starvation. Encountering a festrog should not come as a complete surprise at this latitude. Your party suddenly realizes that they are being followed by one festrog, going about on all fours as if stalking them.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one festrog for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite festrog for three festrogs. A pack of festrogs may use pack hunting tactics, spreading out and approaching ►

from multiple angles to hem in your party.

Ghost (B1). That is no optical illusion; the ethereal form flitting across the frozen landscape really is a ghost. It is most likely the remnant of someone who died a miserable death in the wilderness. Perhaps a predator got to this person, or perhaps lack of shelter from the elements was the larger cause of death. Whatever the case, you may make this into a hostile encounter by having the ghost try to possess a member of your party so that it may resolve unfinished business from its former life.

Scaling the Encounter: Ghosts always work alone. However, if you wish to make a more challenging ghost encounter for a 10th level or higher party, use a ghost mage instead of a ghost commoner. Or you may freely substitute a ghost of your own design.

Ghouls/Ghasts (B1). The cold and dry tundra does an alarmingly good job of preserving remains that may later rise as ghouls and ghasts. One ghoul approaches your party, driven by mindless hunger for their flesh.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 4-5, use one elite ghoul or one ghast for the encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use one elite ghast for the encounter. If your party level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite ghoul for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level, or one elite ghast for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Skeletons (B1). Your party comes upon 1d4+2 skeleton guards — undead created from remains that have been stripped of flesh by scavengers and the elements. They may be what is left of adventurers or travelers who got stranded in the open without shelter and died of exposure. They may be casualties of a quarrel between the peoples native to this place that were left where they fell. Driven by rage at their fate, they attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak skeleton guards. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite skeleton guard for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one skeletal champion for two elite skeleton guards.

Specter (B2). Your party comes upon one specter that was once someone who perished in the wilderness, but all connections to who and what it was in life no longer exist. Only blind hatred of the living drives it ➤

to attack your party on sight.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different undead encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak specter for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use one elite specter.

Wight (B1). Your party comes upon a cairn that someone improvised on the frozen ground. It is up to you as the designer of this world whether or not it should be apparent who set it up, and whose remains it houses. However, it is sure that if your party gets close enough to inspect it, a wight rises out of it, angry that they have disturbed its rest.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak wight for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite wight for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Wraith (B1). There are plenty of ways to come to a bad end in the wilderness, and your party has the misfortune to come across a wraith that was once someone who perished in these frozen wastes, and which is now bound to this part of it. Perhaps they pass an improvised grave, or just a half-buried skeleton. Whatever the case, it takes out the resentment that it bore at the end of its life on your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, feel free to re-roll for a different undead encounter. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak wraith for the encounter. If your party's average level is 9-12, use one dread wraith (B2). If your party's average level is higher than 12, use one elite dread wraith.

Zombie (B1). Your party come across one plague zombie or 1d4 zombie shamblers that have been programmed to kill every living thing they encounter. The source of the necromancy that created these zombies we leave to you. Perhaps they slipped the leash of their creator and they now wander the frigid wastes, mindlessly looking for victims.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one plague zombie for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one zombie brute or one elite plague zombie for two plague zombies, or one zombie hulk for six plague zombies. If you want to create a large encounter for that "The Walking Dead" effect, freely substitute 1d4 zombie ➤

shamblers for one plague zombie.

Treasure: It's quite possible that ghosts and wraiths are encountered in or near the place where they died or were buried — in which case, the valuables they had on them are lying about somewhere. You may require a successful DC 15 Perception check to find them. Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

With skeletons and zombies, they may have with them some remains of what they had on their person at the time of their death. Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Vampiric Mist (B2). During the warmer weather months, your party may come upon a patch of ground that has thawed out and turned into a bog. However, a weird red mist rises from it. It's a vampiric mist, and it smells their blood. To it, their blood smells tasty.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak vampiric mist for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite vampiric mist for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Warg, Winter Wolf (B1). Your party crosses paths with one winter wolf roaming the tundra in search of prey. It may have left the service of hobgoblin mercenaries or orc marauders, considering them unworthy. Or it may be wild and native to this place. Either way, it is hungry and your party looks like prey.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak winter wolf for the encounter. Otherwise, use a pack of one winter wolf for each multiple of 5 in your party's average level for the encounter group. You may freely substitute one elite winter wolf for two winter wolves.

Wendigo (B1). You may allow your party some warning that a wendigo is on the hunt. Its Howl ability can be heard far enough away so that it looks like just a speck in the distance when it uses it. You may then allow them a DC 20 Nature check to identify it as a wendigo's bone-chilling vocalization. This ought to give them ample opportunity to decide whether or not they want to engage with the beast before combat becomes inevitable.

Alternately, if you want to create a bit of drama and a wendigo is not too much for your party to handle, have

them come upon it terrorizing some herders or ice fishermen (see Table 9.5). Or it is on its way to collect tribute from a local tribe.

Scaling the Encounter. If your party's average level is less than 15, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 15-16, use a weak wendigo for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 20 use an elite wendigo.

Will-o'-Wisp (B1). Will-o'-Wisps are most active in the summer, when the topsoil thaws out and creates patches of chilly marsh, some of which are quite treacherous. In one of these places, a luminous globe — all that is left of an unquiet soul who froze to death, or who stumbled into the mire and drowned on a deceptively warm summer day long ago — dances and bobs above the boggy ground.

If you want to add some spice to the encounter, consider that this evil spirit tries to lure victims into a patch of quicksand-like bog to render them helpless. In this case, the will-o'-wisp restricts itself to a 50-foot diameter area. At the center of this area, the swamp turns into a 20-foot diameter pit of quicksand. If the will-o'-wisp is not already directly above the quicksand when it is engaged in melee combat, it retreats until it is above the quicksand, thus forcing its attacker to step into it in order to continue the melee.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak will-o'-wisp for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an encounter group of one elite will-o'-wisp for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Treasure: Belongings from the will-o'-wisp's previous victims have been piling up here, with various valuables scattered in the muck. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Wolf (B1). Wolves find just enough food here to make a predatory go of it. In this case, your party comes across one wolf, separated from its pack — or perhaps the last survivor of a pack. It's hungry enough to attack your party, regardless of the odds.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one wolf for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite wolf or one dire wolf for three wolves, or one elite dire wolf (B1) for six wolves.

Treasure: Furriers in your world may be willing to pay for wolf pelts. How much is ultimately up to you, but 1 gp is a reasonable baseline price for a normal wolf pelt and 2 gp for a dire wolf pelt. Dire wolf pelts are not necessarily

more desirable, but they are larger and offer more fur to work with.

Wolverine (B2). These ferocious predators stalk the frozen wastes, and it seems as if they're always hungry. Or — even worse — they're spoiling for a fight just for the sake of it. Your party hears the unmistakable snarl of one wolverine as they make their way across the tundra, and it can only mean trouble.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak wolverine for the encounter. If your party's average level is 4-7, use one giant wolverine for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use one elite giant wolverine for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

TABLE 9.3

Neutral Creatures - Tundra

d20	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Bear
3	Blink Dog
4	Calathgar
5	Dragon
6	Eagle
7-8	Elephant, Mammoth
9-10	Fox
11	Hippogriff
12-13	Ledalusca
14-16	Moose
17	Rat
18	Sportlebore
19-20	Weasels

Bear (B1, B2). It's the tundra. There's a bear. Should that come as any surprise? It could be a black bear, a brown bear or, at this latitude, a polar bear (see *Scaling the Encounter*).

Black bears (B2) and grizzly bears (B1) hibernate, so during the winter an encounter with one would have to take place in a cave. No doubt, your party stumbled into it looking for shelter. It remains asleep as long as your party makes a successful DC 15 Stealth check to avoid disturbing it. If it wakes up, it awakens in a foul mood and attacks.

On the other hand, during the rest of the year, it's warm enough for the bear to be out and about and looking for

food. The smell of your party's travelers' rations draw its attention. To scare it off, have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it succeeds, the bear takes the hint and lumbers away. If it fails, the bear charges them.

Polar bears (B2) do not hibernate, so the season does not affect their behavior. They're always active, and they're always hungry. Your party spots a polar bear prowling around for food. If they are resting, the bear comes sniffing around, drawn by whatever rations they are carrying. To scare it off, have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it succeeds, the bear takes the hint and lumbers away. If it fails, the bear charges them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a black bear for the encounter. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a grizzly bear. If your party's average level is higher than 4, use an encounter group of one polar bear for each multiple of 5 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite polar bear for two polar bears.

Blink Dog (B2). Your party crosses paths with a dog with long ears and a wisp of fur hanging from its chin. It's not aimlessly wandering the frozen wastes; it's a blink dog scouting on behalf of its pack as it roams the Material Plane, defending it from evil influences.

If it intuits that there are evil characters with bad intentions in your party, it keeps its distance and uses its innate spells to get away. Otherwise, anyone who is fluent in Sylvan can communicate with it, although it make take a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check to overcome its natural aloofness. A blink dog on a mission may provide your party with a sidequest as it asks them to help its pack. A successful Diplomacy check (DC 15 or 20, depending on whether or not it diverts the blink dog from its purpose) by a good-aligned character may persuade it to accompany your party for a short while.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish, you may use a pack of blink dogs for the encounter group, consisting of one for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level.

Calathgar (B2). A splash of bright blue and red is an unusual sight in the barren tundra, but a calathgar is no ordinary plant. It's not predatory, but it can defend itself as ably as any animal. One calathgar detects the presence of your party, who didn't realize that it was there until they approached within 30 feet. At this point, have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone has made a false move that registers with the calathgar as a threat, and it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak calathgar for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use a patch of one elite calathgar for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

Dragon (B1). Your party notices a shadow in the sky. It's a dragon on the prowl. To determine what kind of dragon roll on Table 9.3.1:

TABLE 9.3.1

Dragon - Tundra

d12	ENCOUNTER
1	Black
2	Blue
3	Green
4	Red
5-7	White
8	Brass
9	Bronze
10	Copper
11	Gold
12	Silver

To determine its age, see *Scaling the Encounter*, below.

To be clear, this need not be a hostile encounter. The dragon is not defending its lair, so it may just be curious about your party. It may have more important things to do and decline to take notice of them at all. Or it may be hungry and on the hunt, or it's angry because your party has intruded on territory it claims as its own.

Scaling the Encounter: Because dragons get tougher with age, the age of the dragon encountered should depend on your party's average level — especially if you decide that this is going to be a hostile encounter. If your party's average level is lower than 11, they encounter a young dragon. If their average level is 11-15, they encounter an adult dragon. If their average level is higher than 15, they encounter an ancient dragon.

Eagles (B1). Roll on Table 9.3.2 to determine if your party is fortunate enough to be spotted by a giant eagle, or they come across ordinary eagles hunting for small animals:

TABLE 9.3.2

Eagles - Tundra

d4	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Eagles
4	Giant Eagle

Eagles. Your party notices a convocation of 2d8 eagles wheeling overhead. If your party has a small animal kept as a pet or familiar, or food (travelers rations qualify) kept exposed, have the eagles make a DC 15 Perception check. If they are successful, they dive and try to snatch it up, attacking anyone who gets in their way.

Giant Eagle. On the other hand, your party may have the good fortune to enter territory patrolled by a giant eagle. If your party has predominantly good characters (or at least, no evil characters), the giant eagle follows it to the limit of its domain, providing a sort of combat air patrol for your party. If your party hails it (remember, giant eagles only understand Auran and Sylvan), it responds. Convincing it to do your party a service requires a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check. Unless your party consists entirely of good characters, a critical success is needed to gain its full cooperation.

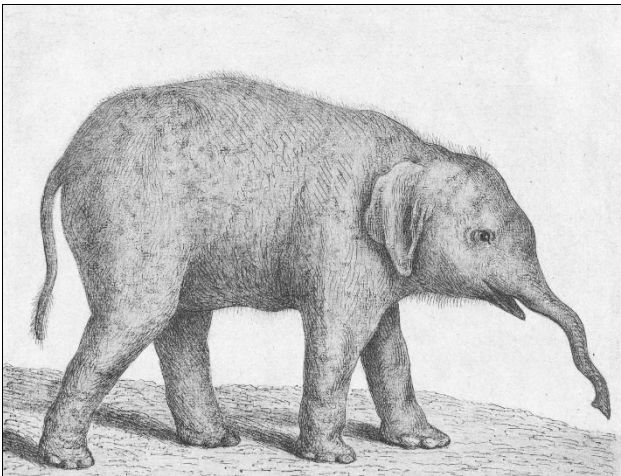
Alternately, if you want to provide your party with a sidequest, the giant eagle tries to enlist them in dealing with some evil humanoids in its territory. However, since it cannot speak, have your party make a DC 15 Nature. If successful, that character understands that it wants them to follow it. Critical success indicates an educated guess that it wants help dealing with enemies.

Elephant, Mammoth. Mammoths roam the tundra. While they are hunted for food, they also pose a significant threat when they feel they have to defend themselves. Your party comes across one mammoth looking for forage. Unless they make an effort to steer clear of it, they come face-to-face with a huge beast with large, sharp tusks. You may allow your party a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that provokes the mammoth. It charges.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 8, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 8-9, use one weak mammoth for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one mammoth for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Treasure: Nomadic tribes that roam the tundra hunt mammoths and may feel no need to pay for its meat. On the other hand, they may buy from or barter with someone who has already done the work — its beats getting gored or trampled while hunting for yourself. They may be willing to pay 3 gp or its equivalent in goods or services for a carcass, and 5 gp for its tusks.

However, the tusks will fetch more money in distant lands, where mammoth are not found — use the going rate for ivory in your campaign world. Also, mammoth steaks are a delicacy in lands where there are no mammoth to hunt. A preserved carcass may fetch as much as 10 gp from a butcher.



Any type of elephant is not to be trifled with and the tusks and temper of the mammoth mean any party should approach with caution.

Fox (B3). Foxes restrict their predation to small animals and insects, so they're not much of a danger to an adventuring party. However, they are sly creatures and a party camping for the night or taking a rest halt may lose something useful to them. A pack of 1d8 arctic foxes sniffs out that your party has something that they want — it may be an animal familiar small enough to eat, traveler's rations, medicinal herbs, or even just a shiny and attractive object. Have them make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC as they try to infiltrate their camp:

Critical Success: The foxes get in and out without your party noticing at all.

Success: They succeed in stealing something, but your party notices them on the way out.

Failure: Your party notices them before they can snag anything.

Critical Failure: Your party notices them before they can even make a move.

Treat arctic foxes as red foxes with white fur.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3 use one elite red fox for the encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use one fading fox (B3). If your party's average level is higher than 5, use a pack of one fading fox for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Hippogriff (B2). Your party sees a hippogriff circling overhead, looking for its next meal, or on the ground dealing with its prey. Hippogriffs are aggressive hunters and your party's pack animals make a tempting target, but the presence of armed humans and humanoids may deter them. Whether or not this is a hostile encounter is up to you.

Hippogriffs may be a kind of prey as well as predators. If hippogriffs are used as mounts in your world, it must follow that captive adults have value as breeding stock, and chicks captured from the wild also have value because they are still young enough to be tamed. To that end, you may allow your party a DC 20 Survival check to trace a path to the hippogriff's lair (likely to be sited atop a large rock or on a hilltop) after observing it for a while. If your party has someone capable of flight, reduce the DC to 15. To subdue an adult hippogriff to the point where it can be bound and held captive, it must be successfully grappled with both hands and kept in grappled condition for 10 consecutive rounds.

Scaling the Encounter: If you want to stage a hostile encounter and you need to make it more of a challenge, use a herd of one elite hippogriff for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

Ledalusca (B3). Your party spots what looks from a distance like an ice sculpture that someone has just abandoned on the tundra. It may appear to be a depiction of the sun, or a nearby terrain feature. Or it may look like a depiction of a living thing — and on close inspection, it looks like an actual living thing frozen solid! In fact, it is a ledalusca. If your party inspects it up close, it tries to filch something of value, like a gemstone or a potion, from one party member. Have the ledalusca make a Thievery check against your party's highest Perception DC:

Critical Success: The ledalusca gets clean away with it.

Success: It succeeds in removing the item, but the victim notices that something is missing before the ledalusca gets clear of the scene.

Failure: It grasps the item, but gets noticed in the act.

Critical Failure: Someone sees it reaching out before it can even touch the item it has targeted.

Another possibility is that the ledalusca has determined to protect this corner of the tundra from desecration. It regards your party with some suspicion, perceiving them as trespassers. In this case, you may require a DC 15 Diplomacy check by someone who can communicate in Aquan to try to defuse the situation:

Success: They convince the ledalusca that they mean no harm and it does not interfere with them.

Failure: It gestures that your party should leave.

Critical Failure: It reads their intentions as hostile and it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite ledalusca for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Moose (B3). Your party spots a lone moose (call it an elk, if you wish) browsing for what vegetation it can find. Even if your party does not behave in a threatening manner, there is a chance that it mistakes their actions and attacks. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that sets it off and it charges.

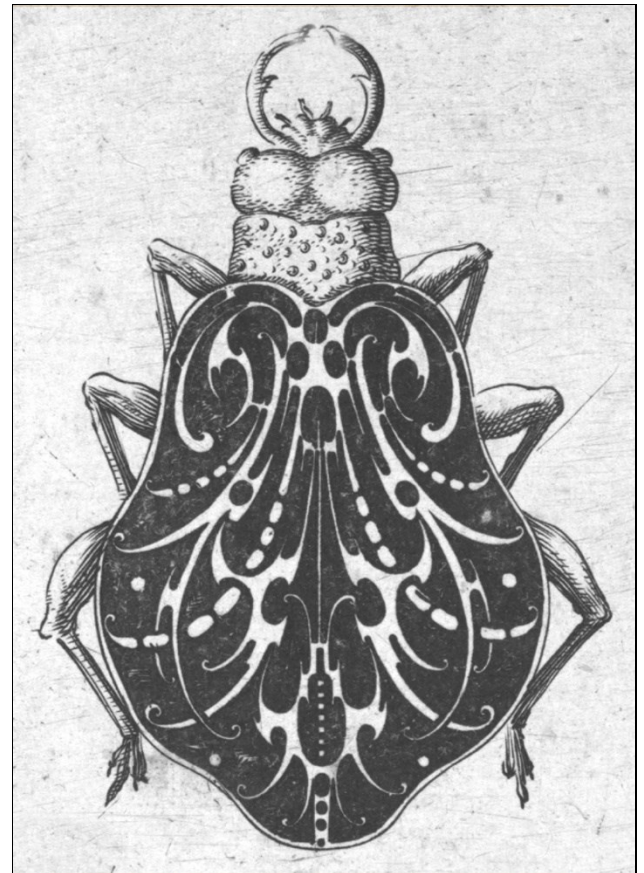
Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use one weak moose for the encounter. Otherwise, use a herd of one moose for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level for the encounter.

Treasure: Nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes that draw sustenance from this harsh land hunt moose to meet their needs, and generally have no need to buy meat from strangers. However, antlers and other body parts may be of ritual or medicinal use to them, in which case they may be willing to pay or barter to the equivalent of 1d4 gp, depending on the item and their actual need for it.

Rats (B1). Small rodents that make themselves a nuisance live everywhere, even in a place this cold and desolate. They prefer to be called tundra mice instead of rats, thank you very much, and they get very aggressive when food is scarce. They get hangry. 1d4+2 giant rats sniff out your party's food rations as they cross paths with each other. They don't attack party members who don't interfere with their basic mission of acquiring food. But unless they are stopped, they eventually account for all of your party's rations, making off with what they don't eat on the spot.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3, use one rat swarm (B1) for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite rat swarm for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Sportlebore (B2). Your party spots what looks like perfectly good traveler's rations scattered on the frozen ground. It looks quite edible. It's up to them whether they want to claim it as their own under the legal precedent set by *Finders v. Losers*. How are their provisions holding up as they trek across the sub-arctic wastes? However, if they eat it, they discover to their cost that there was a sportlebore among the goodies.



Sportlebore cannot resist burrowing into ration packs and as such, sometimes become snacks themselves.

Scaling the Encounter: Eating a sportlebore may unleash a sportlebore swarm, which is probably a bit much to handle for a low-level party. If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak sportlebore swarm. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an elite sportlebore swarm.

Weasels (B3). Someone at the front of your party's formation accidentally steps into a burrow housing enough weasels to cause trouble when they get angry and defend their home. You may allow your party a DC

10 Perception or Survival check to spot the burrow in time to avoid it or give warning to whomever is about to disturb it. The burrow houses a pack of 2d4 weasels.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish to make the encounter more challenging, use an encounter group of one elite weasel for each level in your party’s average level. You may freely substitute one megalictis (B3) for four elite giant weasels, or one elite megalictis for six elite giant weasels.

Treasure: There is a 10% chance that they are actually mink, and their pelts would be of some value to furriers — 1 gp for normal-sized mink, and 5 gp for a megalictis. You may require a successful DC 15 Nature check for your party to tell the difference between mink and weasels.

TABLE 9.5
Humanoids - Tundra

d20	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Catfolk
3-6	Dwarves
7-10	Giant
11	Hobgoblins
12	Kovintus
13-14	Ogre
15-17	Orcs
18-20	Werecreature

Catfolk (B1). Your party encounters one catfolk pouncer roaming the frozen wastes. As with many amurran, wanderlust drives it to travel the world, even to this remote corner of it. Either their paths literally cross, or the catfolk hails them, momentarily distracted from rubbing two sticks together to start a fire. It is eager to know what your party is doing here, but it has no ulterior motive than pure curiosity. It freely shares whatever knowledge it has.

A catfolk pouncer may make a useful NPC in the sort of encounters that low-level parties are likely to face. You may allow your party a DC 10 Diplomacy check to convince it to travel a while in their company and share in the adventure. However, if your party is predominantly evil, a critical success is required.

Dwarves. It’s uncommon, but not unknown, to find dwarves in this part of the world. They’re rugged enough to deal with the cold, and the prospect of finding metal deposits are sufficient to draw some adventurous souls out of their homes under mountains and hills. Perhaps

they have come here to look for lumps of iron with magical properties that are said to have fallen from the sky and buried themselves in the permafrost.

Unless your party includes any of the dwarves’ traditional enemies, they freely share their local knowledge and even material help — you may require the party to make a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check in the latter case. They could offer your party a sidequest, offering weapons or even ingots of precious metal in exchange for their help in dealing with monsters or other enemies.

Scaling the Encounter: A group of dwarf prospectors consists of 2d8 miners plus 1d4 guards, or one guard and one acolyte. Or they could be a more academically-minded expedition, in which case you could treat them as explorers: one chronicler, one guide and 1d4 bodyguards. A war party prepared for a fight with the dwarves’ traditional enemies consists of 2d8 guards and one acolyte. In all cases, the guards are armed with battleaxes. If you anticipate that this will be a hostile encounter, you may use a group consisting of one guard and one archer sentry (armed with light crossbow instead of longbow) for each multiple of 5 in your party’s average level, and if your party’s average level is higher than 15 add one captain of the guard as the leader.

Giant (B1, B2, B3). The frozen wastes are most hospitable to frost giants, but they are not the only giants you may find roaming the tundra. To determine the giant encountered, roll on Table 9.4.1:

TABLE 9.4.1 Giants - Tundra	
d8	ENCOUNTER
1-5	Frost Giant
6	Rune Giant
7-8	Taiga Giant

Frost Giant (B1). You probably won’t find a frost giant fortress plopped down in the middle of a flat stretch of tundra, but your party may encounter one frost giant from a stronghold sited on nearby high ground. It’s acting as a scout for its clan, or as a messenger on its way to another frost giant clan. Unless your party can persuade it that they mean no harm, it takes them as a potential enemy that must be eliminated, even it’s just to be on the safe side. You may allow your party a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check to talk their way out of a fight.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is lower than 7, feel free to re-roll for a different ➤

encounter. If your party's average level is 7-8, use a weak frost giant for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 12, use a team of one elite fire giant for each multiple of 13 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

Rune Giant (B1). Enormous and charcoal-black, rune giants stand out against a backdrop of snow and ice. They find this an asset, as it makes them even more intimidating than in environments that offer less contrasting backdrops. Your party has the rare privilege of crossing paths with one rune giant out to get the lay of the land. It tries to extort tribute from your party, as rune giants consider that their size and might give them a natural right to dominate others. How your party reacts is up to them, but you may use a DC 30 Diplomacy check to resolve it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 14, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 14-15, use a weak rune giant for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 19, use an elite rune giant.

Taiga Giant (B2). These giants that roam the frozen wastes are relatively peaceful as giants go. They are not above rustling herd animals or stealing from settlements, but they don't kill for its own sake. They normally keep a low profile, but it's not unthinkable that your party crosses paths with one. Perhaps it is making off with someone else's animal, or perhaps it is looking for food. Perhaps it is just minding its own business.

Whether your party chooses to ignore the giant or treat with it, you may have your party make a DC 20 Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: It actually takes a liking to your party. It freely shares food and information without expecting something in return.

Success: It is willing to trade with your party.

Failure: It ignores them and moves on.

Critical Failure: The giant decides that someone looked at it sideways, or something your party does angers it enough to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 10, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 10-11, use a weak taiga giant for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 15, use an elite taiga giant.

Hobgoblins. Hobgoblins would no more set up permanent bases here than most other humanoids, so the hobgoblins that your party encounters here are most likely mercenaries pursuing a defeated foe on behalf of their employers. As such, they're a business-like, no-nonsense bunch with strong leadership. They may be suspicious of your party — are they friend or foe? But they won't attack for unprofessional reasons, such as wanton cruelty or boredom.

However, the hobgoblins do interrogate your party closely, looking for information that will help them wind up the current operation. They'll let your party go if they're convinced your party is not a foe, but you may require that your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check to make it so.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one hobgoblin soldier for each level in your party's average level. You may substitute one goblin dog (B1) for one hobgoblin soldier as long as goblin dogs do not outnumber hobgoblins. Also, you may freely substitute one elite hobgoblin soldier or one hobgoblin archer (B1) for four hobgoblin soldiers. You may substitute one hobgoblin general (B1) for six hobgoblin soldiers as the group's leader.

A large group of hobgoblins indicates that the winds of war are brewing — although ultimately, that sort of thing should be determined by what else is going on in your campaign world. Unless your party has stumbled upon the hobgoblin lair, a large hobgoblin encounter group would be a war party on their way to or from the war zone. They have more important business than attacking your party.

Kovintus (B3). Kovintus who have chosen this inhospitable land for their home live in ice caves or encampments that use boulders shoved around by the movement of glaciers for windbreaks. Your party meets one kovintus geomancer as it takes a recreational stroll; or perhaps it is on its way to leave an offering for a local deity. If your party wishes to speak with it, have them make a DC 15 Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: The kovintus is willing to share its maps and use its primal spells for their benefit.

Success: It shares its maps, but offers no more.

Failure: It is wary of your party and it does not agree to help them at all.

Critical Failure: Your party angers the kovintus to the point where it attacks them.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish, you may use an encounter group of one elite kovintus geomancer for each multiple of 7 in your party’s average level.

Ogre (B1). Your party spots one ogre warrior out scouting for potential raiding targets on behalf of its tribe. There aren’t many targets here in the frozen wastes, but like their distant giant kin, ogres at least feel comfortable operating up here. It is brutish enough and sufficiently confident in its powers to try to take them captive, or kill them outright if they resist.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is 1-2, use one weak ogre warrior for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one ogre for each multiple of 3 in your party’s average level. You may freely substitute one elite ogre warrior for two ogre warriors, or three ogre gluttons (B1) for four ogre warriors. You may also substitute one ogre boss (B1) or one onidoshi (B2) for two ogre warriors as the group’s leader.

Orcs (B1). Your party crosses paths with 1d6 orc brutes. You’re not going to find orcs setting up a permanent dwelling in the tundra. Orcs encountered here are most likely raiding at the outer margins of their geographical comfort zone, or they have been driven into exile. In either case, they are desperate and in a surly mood. To them, your party looks like a good source of plunder right now, so they fan out and attack without bothering to parlay.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak orc brutes. If your party’s average level is 4-5, use an encounter group of 1d6 orc brutes. If your party’s average level is higher than 5 use a baseline encounter group of one orc warrior (B1) for each level in your party’s average level. You may freely substitute one elite orc warrior for two orc warriors. You may also substitute one orc warchief (B1) for one orc warrior as the group’s leader

Treasure: If the orcs are coming back from a successful raid, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of their plunder. Consider that there is also a 20% chance that the bandits have with them 1d4 captives. The identity of this captive is left to you as GM, as it should depend on local circumstances and fit into your campaign world.

Werecreature. To determine what manner of werebeast your party encounters, roll on Table 9.4.2:

TABLE 9.4.2

Werecreature - Tundra

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Werebear
3	Wererat
4-6	Werewolf

All werecreatures assume their animal form if the encounter comes down to combat, although they may choose their hybrid form instead if they have access to a weapon.

Werebear. In this part of the world, werebears usually appear as polar bears in their animal form. Your party comes across a werebear has staked out the top of a low hill or a cave as its domain and the place for which it is the custodian. As soon as it sees your party, it assumes its human form. It is not automatically hostile to your party, especially if there are no evil characters present, and it may be willing to provide them with useful information about the surrounding area.

On the other hand, an encounter could create difficulties for your party if the werebear decides that someone in your party would make a good apprentice (and successor to its self-appointed duties as the local guardian). Once it realizes that there is a druid or a ranger in your party, a light goes on in its head — and it won’t take “No” for an answer.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is higher than 7, use one elite werebear for the encounter.

Wererat. In this part of the world, wererats appear as tundra mice in their animal form. One wererat appears to your party in its humanoid form, pretending to be a hunter in distress or a herder who got separated from his flock. It asks to travel with your party for protection until that supposed time when it can rejoin its tribe. It tries to slip toward the back of the party formation and waits for a moment when everyone’s back is turned to it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party’s average level is 1, use one weak wererat. If your party’s average level is higher than 5, use one elite wererat for each multiple of 6 in your party’s average level.

Werewolf. In this part of the world, werewolves usually appear as winter wolves in their animal form. One spots your party and cannot turn down the opportunity to claim more victims. However, it is ►

clever enough to approach them in its human form, pretending to be a hunter or herder in distress. Once your party gets close and drops its guard, it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak werewolf. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use one elite werewolf for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

TABLE 95

Humans - Tundra

d10	ENCOUNTER
1	Adventurers
2	Explorers
3-4	Fishermen
5-6	Herders
7-8	Hunters
9	Shaman
10	Trappers

Adventurers. Unless your party contains all of the adventurers in your campaign world, it's at least theoretically possible that they'll run into another adventuring party even on the barren, frozen tundra. Perhaps they're pursuing the same objective as your party. Perhaps they have a different mission; perhaps they're headed for a site that your party knows nothing about (like ancient ruins said to hold lost treasures). Perhaps they're half-frozen and starving, or wounded, or cursed.

How they react to your party depends on a variety of factors. Are they rivals pursuing the same goal? If not, perhaps this party is willing to share useful information. In fact, if your party is stuck and having a hard time advancing the storyline of your campaign, a friendly encounter like this can help steer them in the right direction. Differences in alignment may also shape how the two parties react to each other.

Composition of this rival party is up to you and can vary according to circumstance. Any party in the wilderness would be well-advised to have someone accomplished in Survival, such as a ranger, with them. Conversely, a party that is struggling may be in a bad way precisely because no one is well-versed in Survival or Nature.

Scaling the Encounter: Unless there is some possibility that this encounter turns hostile, the relative level of the

party is mainly a matter of affect. A higher-level party might project self-confidence and calm (or arrogance), while a beginning-level party might stumble about, unsure of themselves. If you're leaning towards a hostile encounter, however, consider that the total challenge level of the party should be your party's average level -2, more or less.

Explorers. Your party crosses paths with a small human party who appear to be well-bundled up against the cold. They are explorers, driven by restlessness and curiosity to seek the very ends of the world — and so here they are. The group consists of one chronicler and one guide, and 1d4 bodyguards — local nomads whom they have hired as guides.

Such an encounter is not likely to be hostile. Instead, you may treat this as an opportunity for your party to receive some help from a knowledgeable stranger — the explorer is likely to have excellent maps of nearby areas (and knowledge of those areas) and is willing to share them. Conversely, an expedition that has been in the field for a while may be running short on cartography supplies or other necessities and may be willing to pay well if your party can help supply what they lack. Also, if your party is in the mood for a sidequest, an explorer may offer one: If the expedition is headed into particularly dangerous territory, it may need additional guards to keep it safe.

Who in Their Right Minds Would Live Here?

A fair question, when applied to humanoid whom you might find while stomping through the tundra. Let's face it: In fantasy roleplaying games, humanoids are generally associated with a type of landscape or particular activities that characterizes them. That's what defines them by comparison to humans, who are the proverbial jacks of all trades, and masters of none. As the designer of your campaign world, you can always develop your own particular reasons why humanoids would be present here to an extent that makes them viable as random encounters. But by their various definitions, humanoids just don't fit here as well as humans, who are more adaptable.

Fishermen. Your party comes across a 1d6 anglers engaged in their occupation by a pond or stream. If it's winter they're ice-fishing, dropping their bait into a hole carved into the frozen surface of a pond. If it has been a good day and they have fish in hand, they're willing to sell from their catch for half of what a tavern meal would cost — the hitch being, of course, that you have to clean and smoke or cook it yourself before it goes bad. With just bit of coaxing, they're also happy to provide your

party with local knowledge, including tales of monsters nearby and of course, stories of the one that got away.

Treat fishermen as dockhands.

Herders. A herd of moose or some other herd animal adopted to this latitude is not an uncommon sight here. Nor is it rare to see amongst and around them 2d4 herders, who belong to a nomadic or semi-nomadic tribe and keep these animals for the benefit of their kith and kin. Your party startles them, but they are not necessarily hostile. It's just that, as natives familiar with this area, they thought they would avoid any sort of trouble bringing their animals here. If you wish, you may require your party to make a DC 10 Diplomacy check to reassure them.

That being said, the herders can provide your party with helpful local knowledge. They know all the nearby sources of food and fresh water, the places where monsters are reputed to reside, places to shelter from the cold, gossip from their tribe and perhaps other tribes in the area. They may even have specific knowledge that can help your party get where they want to go.

Treat herders as trackers, but without the weapons and armor. They carry crooks or staves that they can wield two-handed as clubs, but they wear no armor.

Hunters. Some of the local nomads hunt for game rather than herd animals to feed themselves. Your party comes across one hunter in transit to a familiar hunting ground. Depending on your party's appearance, a hunter may act with caution, even suspicion at first. Despite being well-armed, a hunter understands what it means to operate in the wilderness and there are always strange folk about. However, if your party is not hostile to them the hunter is willing to trade goods and supply food and local knowledge. If you wish, have your party make a DC 10 Diplomacy check to get on the hunter's good side.

Scaling the Encounter: Use an encounter group of one poacher for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level, or one forester for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level, or one hunter for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Shaman. Your party comes upon an elder from a local tribe who has gone into the wilderness to commune with their deities. This shaman performs a religious rite dressed in ceremonial garb that may incorporate elements from creatures native to the area, such as antlers, feathers, or animal skins, and it involves entering a trancelike state in which he or she may receive prophetic visions. At your discretion, 1d6 cultists accompany the shaman, serving as assistants and

gatekeepers. They consider it their sacred duty to prevent your party from interfering with the ritual.

How the shamanic group reacts depends on your party's actions. Maintaining a respectful distance while the ritual plays itself out could gain their trust and lead to helpful contacts with the rest of the tribe — trade, local knowledge, gifts of food and/or survival gear. On the other hand, they may resent your party seeing something that was not meant for their eyes. That is up to you as GM.

If your party interrupts the rite before it plays out, the shaman — still in an altered state of consciousness — turns on your party and attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-5, treat the shaman as a prophet. If your party's average level is 6-10, treat the shaman as a zealot. If your party's average level is higher than 10, treat the shaman as a priest. Or use an appropriate druid NPC of your choice.

Trappers. Your party comes across one trapper out here for pelts to sell to furriers in the nearest settlement. However, they may encounter their traps before they meet the trapper who set them out. If you wish, have your party make a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to note the presence of a leg trap before someone in the front of the party formation sets it off.

Simple Hazard: Leg Trap

Mechanical Trap

Stealth DC 15

Description A vise on a chain staked to the ground.

The jaws are held open by a spring controlled by a latch; a trigger releases the latch, which releases the spring and causes the jaws to snap shut.

Disable Thievery 15 to detach the spring.

Leg Trap Hardness 9 **Leg Trap HP** 28 (BT 14)

Immunities critical hits, object immunities, precision damage

Step Into It — Trigger Stepping onto the trigger causes the trap to snap shut, causing 1d6 piercing damage. The trapped creature cannot move more than 5' from the anchor chain. A successful DC 20 Athletics check by someone else pries it open; otherwise, the victim has to wait for the trapper, who has a key that opens it by resetting the spring.

The trapper may provide your party with local lore and may even give them material aid. You may require a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check for your party to establish that kind of rapport. Conversely, the trapper may fear attack and try to enlist your party as

bodyguards. At your discretion, your party gets paid in pelts that they can sell at any settlement.

Treat the trapper as a poacher.

Scaling the Encounter: The encounter group consists of one poacher for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. Consider that a group of trappers might offer your party a business opportunity: They're on a roll and they reckon that if they keep at it a little longer they'll have more pelts than they can carry home. They offer to sell some of their pelts at half the going rate, which would allow your party to double their money by selling them to a furrier.

TABLE 9.6

Watch Out! - Tundra

d10	ENCOUNTER
1	Blizzard
2-3	Bog
4	Call of the Wild
5-6	Fog
7	Loose Ground
8	Mirage
9	Tracks
10	Tripping Hazard

Blizzard. The tundra doesn't get much precipitation in a typical year. But that doesn't mean that it never snows, or that it never snows hard. A sudden blizzard brews up and makes life miserable for your party. For the next d6 x10 minutes, treat creatures and objects in the area around them as concealed, all movement allowances are halved and aerial movement requires a successful DC 20 Athletics check.

Bog. In the spring and summer, the ground thaws out in spots so that it becomes squishy and treacherous underfoot. In some some places, it's treacherous enough so that you'll sink into it completely without hitting the permafrost underneath. Your party stumbles into such a patch. Have them make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check to spot the hazard before one party member at the front of the party formation steps right into it. Treat it like quicksand at that point.

Call of the Wild. Sound can distort in the frigid air, so that its source appears to be much closer than it really is. Your party hears a noise made by a creature or natural phenomenon. It sounds very near — no more than 50 feet away. Have them make a DC 15 Survival check to

realize that this is an illusion, and the sound is coming from a source so far away that they cannot presently see it.

If you wish, roll on Table 9.6.1 for guidance on what your party thinks it hears:

TABLE 9.6.1

Call of the Wild - Tundra

d10	They Think They Hear...
1	Bear growling
2	Ghostly wail
3	Hoofbeats of herd animals
4	Permafrost/frozen ground crackling
5	Voices speaking in Common
6	Voices speaking in Giant
7	Whistle of bows being fired
8	Wolves snarling
9	Wyvern shrieking overhead
10	Yeti howling

Fog. A dense mist sets in suddenly, and your party is right in the middle of it. For the next 1d4 hours, everyone in your party suffers a +4 circumstance penalty to visual Perception regardless of where they go and how far they travel during this time.

Loose Ground. The terrain undulates where your party is currently located, and they near the crest of a rise from which they can get a good view of the surrounding area. However, a party member — choose one, or a character who wants to get a good look around may literally step forward as the best candidate — steps onto a patch of loose soil. It gives way and the character takes a tumble. Treat it as a treacherous scree hazard, except that the damage from falling is only 1d10. Wheel!

Mirage. Draw on the geography of your campaign world and pick a feature of the landscape — such as a mountain, a boreal forest, the shoreline of a lake — that lies below the visual horizon in relation to your party's current location. In short, it's so far away that there is no way that your party should be able to see it. However, strange atmospheric conditions bend light so that they *can* see it; therefore it seems much closer than it really is. You may allow your party a DC 15 Survival check to realize that this is a superior looming mirage, and the terrain feature is much farther away than it looks.

The Idea of North

A key assumption underlying this chapter is that the climate and the terrain all but preclude two important categories of human activity: agriculture and commerce. You can't get enough plants to grow, and the population density is too thin for a robust economy based on cash for goods. Anyone you meet is here for one of two reasons: subsistence hunting and herding, or a headstrong sense of adventure. That's pretty much it.

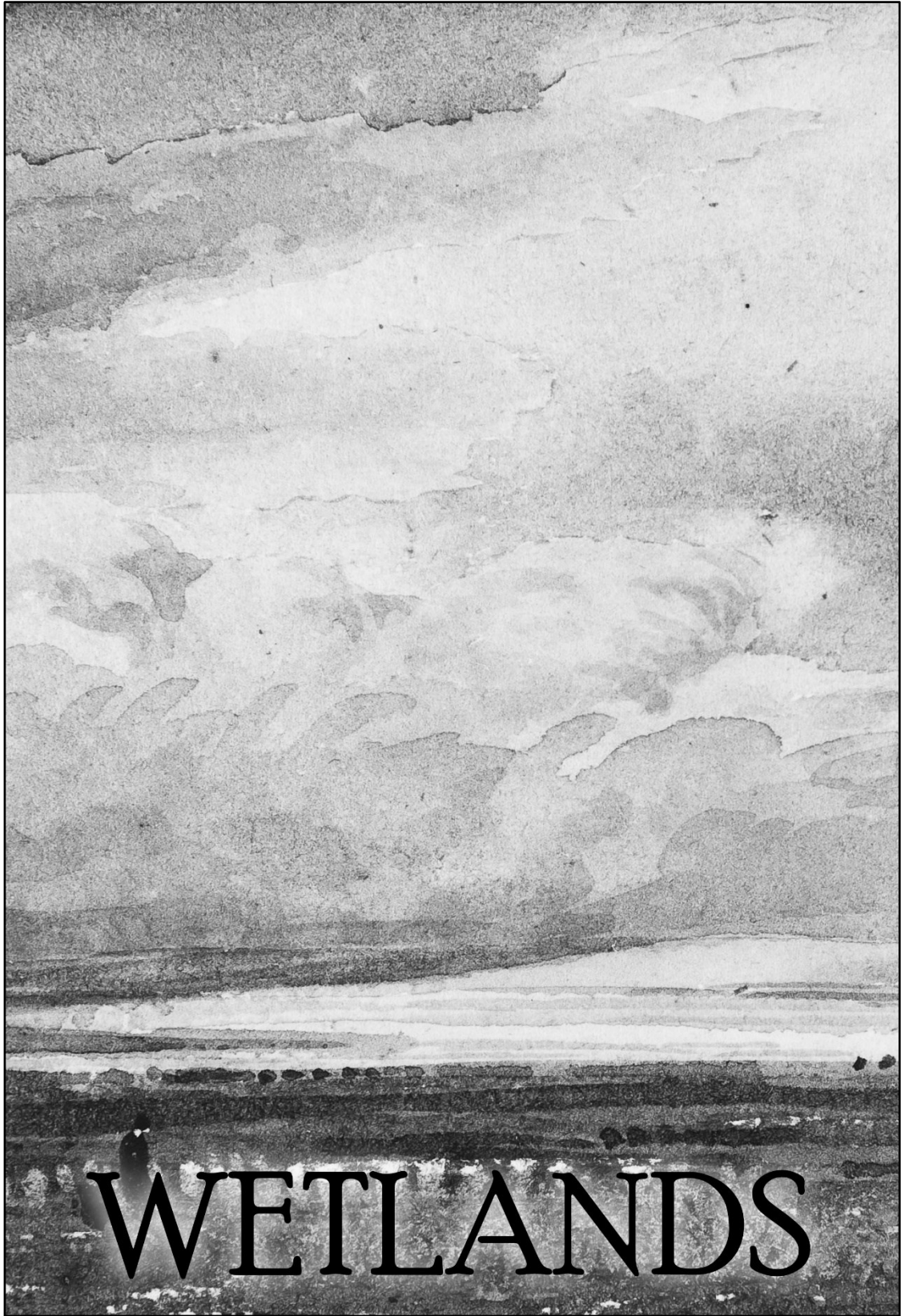
Tracks. Your party spots tracks in the frozen ground made by a creature of your choice. At your discretion, they may be fresh enough to lead to an encounter if followed. Or you may allow your party a DC 15 Survival check to realize that they are very old, and they will not lead to anything useful. If they fail, this may lead to an amusing (for you as GM, anyway) wild goose chase.

Tripping Hazard. Pick a party member at the front of the march order. That character trips over an unseen obstacle — perhaps a rock, animal bones or a pair of antlers anchored in the frozen ground. He or she must make a successful DC 10 Athletics or Acrobatics check to avoid a face plant onto the permafrost that causes 1d8 damage — and perhaps no small embarrassment in the eyes of the other party members.

Chill or Too Chilly?

Like desert, tundra is an extreme environment that may or may not play much of a role in your campaign world. If your party has no reason to brave the cold near the poles, you may not need this chapter at all. If your campaign takes place during an ice age of your world, you may come to know this chapter by heart, down to each comma and semi-colon. Either way — or at some point in between — it's useful to know what creatures can haunt this frozen land as a point of comparison with more hospitable places.





CHAPTER TEN

Wetlands

What are Wetlands?

You can call them swamps, marshes, fens or bogs. Or you can be polite and call them wetlands. Either way, they are places that are flooded for much of the year, if not year round, so that traveling through them either requires a shallow-draft vessel like a raft or a boat, or a muddy slog on foot. They occur next to rivers and large lakes that inundate them. But there are also saltwater wetlands next to oceans. So you may think of them as places that transition between water and dry land, with generous helpings of the former, so that it's soggy than littoral (where the dividing line between water and land tends to be more sharply drawn).

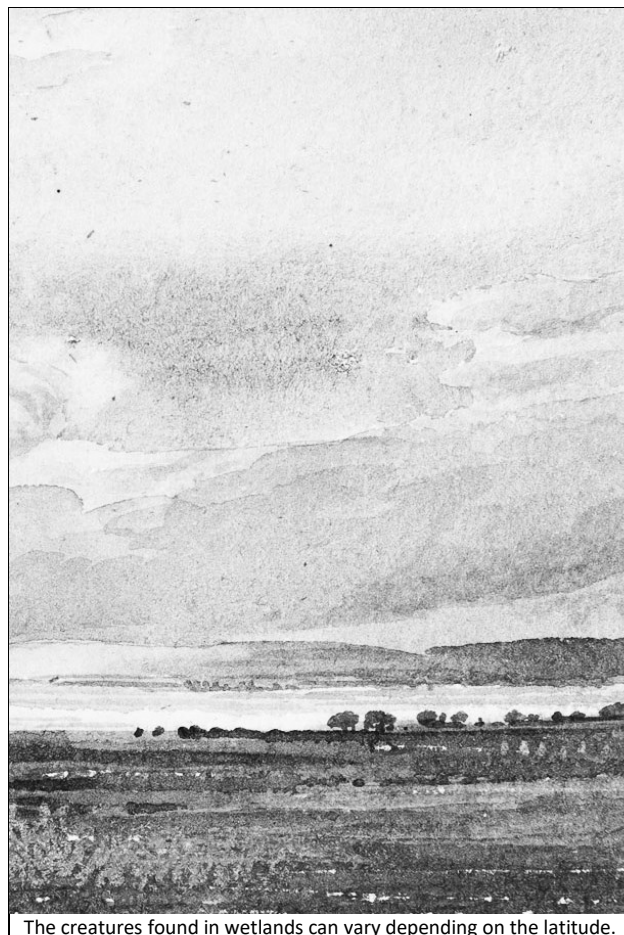
It Sank into the Swamp. So...

It is to be admitted that visualizing a party of adventurers traveling through a swamp offers some mechanical challenges. Are they on dry land? In thick mud? Wading in shallow water, or waist-deep in it? Is the water deep enough so that it makes sense to travel by boat or raft? Wetlands encompasses all of these things. But exactly how an encounter plays out may depend on circumstance — which of the above applies to your party, and which to the creature? That's really up to you as GM — that is, how you envision this part of your campaign world — as well as how your players handle traveling through it.

In spite of the morbid gloom that often characterizes them, they support a wide range of fauna and flora — including monsters. In places, the water is deep enough to accommodate creatures as large as hydras, and to allow infiltration by aquatic humanoids like sea devils. Some wetlands, like tropical mangrove swamps, support tree growth dense enough so that they feel like forests with waterlogged floors, while marshes and bogs content themselves with grasses and shrubs.

Wetlands can occur at almost any latitude, with the main difference between them being the degree of clamminess against your skin as you wade through the mire and water soaks your leggings. Is it merely uncomfortable, or can you feel the cold all the way down to your bones? However, wetlands in different climatic bands also differ in terms of the creatures that you encounter in them, so some of the tables in this chapter

require die roll modifiers depending on your party's current location in your campaign world. For instance, you may find wolves in subarctic wetlands, but not in tropical swamps and marshes. Conversely, boa constrictors make themselves at home among the vines and warm muck of tropical swamps, but they find cold bogs discouraging.



The creatures found in wetlands can vary depending on the latitude.

What Do You Find in Wetlands?

When you determine that a random encounter is in order, roll on Table 10.1 to determine the category:

TABLE 10.1

Encounter Type - Wetlands

d20	CATEGORY
1-7	Aggressive Creatures (Table 10.2)
8-12	Neutral Creatures (Table 10.3)
13-15	Humanoids (Table 10.4)
16-17	Humans (Table 10.5)
18-20	Watch Out! (10.6)

Then, roll on the appropriate table to determine the creature, person or thing encountered.

TABLE 10.2

Aggressive Creatures - Wetlands

d100	CATEGORY
1-3	Owlbear
4-6	Wolf
7-9	Ahuizotl
10-13	Cat
14-16	Centipede
17-18	Chuul
19-21	Drake
22-23	Elemental
24-25	Elemental, Mephit
26-27	Ettin
28-31	Fey
32	Froghemoth
33-34	Griffon
35-37	Harpy
38-40	Hydra
41-46	Insects
47-49	Leech
50-53	Mudwretch
54-55	Nilith
56-62	Plant
63-64	Peluda
65-66	Roc
67-68	Scorpion
69-71	Shambler
72-73	Slug
74-77	Snakes
78-81	Spiders
82-84	Troll
85-90	Undead
91-92	Wargs
93-95	Web Lurker
96-99	Will-o'-Wisp
100	Xill
101-103	Crocodile

+3 to the die roll in tropical wetlands.

Owlbear (B1). Your party hears a terrible shriek echo through the swamp; you may require a DC 15 Nature check to recognize it as an owlbear's Bloodcurdling Screech ability. Shortly thereafter, one of these monstrous beasts comes crashing through the vegetation, eager to prey on your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak owlbear for the encounter. If your party's average level is 7-10, use one elite owlbear. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use a mated pair of elite owlbears for the encounter group.

Wolf (B1). You will not find wolves in tropical swamps, but you will find them in temperate wetlands, and also in sub-arctic bogs (which are not unlike mushier versions of boreal forests). Your party comes across one wolf, separated from its pack — or perhaps the last survivor of a pack. It's hungry enough to attack your party, regardless of the odds.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one wolf for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite wolf or one dire wolf for three wolves, or one elite dire wolf (B1) for six wolves.

Treasure: Furriers in your world may be willing to pay for wolf pelts. How much is ultimately up to you, but 1 gp is a reasonable baseline price for a normal wolf pelt and 2 gp for a dire wolf pelt. Dire wolf pelts are not necessarily more desirable, but they are larger and offer more fur to work with.

Ahuizotl (B2). Your party hears what sounds like a cry of distress coming from deeper in the swamp. They can't see the source, however. You may allow them a DC 20 Nature check to realize that it's not a human or humanoid voice, but an imitation. In fact, the source of the noise is an ahuizotl, hiding among the reeds or behind a mangrove. It's a tried and true formula by which these weird beasts lure their prey.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak ahuizotl for the encounter. If your party's average level is 9-12, use one elite ahuizotl. If your party's average level is higher than 12, consider using two elite ahuizotls — one to spring the trap, and one to set the bait and then pile in once the trap is sprung.

Cat (B1). "Cat" in this context refers to a variety of species of big cat — dangerous top predators in their native environment, not a small, domesticated fur ball that you might keep as a pet or a familiar. While hacking their way through a part of the swamp with dense vegetation, your party comes across one of these hunting

cats in either of two situations: They scare off a prey animal that it was stalking, or they come upon it while feeding and it suspects them of wanting to steal its kill. Either way, it's angry enough at your party to attack. Roll on Table 10.2.1 to determine the big cat that your party encounters:

TABLE 10.2.1	
Cat - Wetlands	
d6	ENCOUNTER
1-4	Leopard
5	Smilodon
6-7	Tiger

+1 to die roll in temperate and tropical wetland.

Scaling the Encounter: For leopards, use one weak leopard for the encounter if your party's average level is 1. If your party's average level is higher than 5, your party may come upon a leap of leopards feeding on a carcass, with one elite leopard for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

For smilodons, feel free to use a leopard instead if your party's average level is lower than 4. If your party's average level is 4-5, use one weak smilodon for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use a pack of one elite smilodon for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Tigers always hunt alone. If your party's average level is 1-3, use a weak tiger for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use one elite tiger for the encounter.

Centipede (B1, B2). Centipedes are not aggressive by nature, but the giants among them are so large and so voracious that they constantly need to feed, and their size allows them to deal with most creatures without fear. When your party crosses paths with 1d6 giant centipedes slithering among the vegetation, the centipedes consider that live food has just been delivered to their door.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak giant centipedes. If your party's average level is 4-6, use one giant whiptail centipede (B2) for the encounter, or consider that your party has provoked the wrath of one giant centipede swarm (B1) hiding among some rocks. If your party's average level is 7-8, use one elite giant whiptail centipede. If your party's average level is higher than 8, consider using the granddaddy among centipedes, one titan centipede (B2). If this location won't accommodate

a creature that large, use an encounter group of one elite giant whiptail centipede for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level instead.

Chuul (B1). You may allow your party a DC 20 Nature or Survival check to intuit that something distinctly unpleasant lurks beneath the water nearby:

Critical Success: They realize that it is a predator waiting to ambush them.

Success: They get the uneasy feeling that something bad is about to happen., but nothing more specific.

Failure: They don't realize that danger lurks nearby until the chuul's tentacles lash at them from beneath the water's surface.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use one weak chuul for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an encounter group of one elite chuul for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Drake (B1, B2). Several different varieties of these primitive dragons may be encountered in swamps and marshes. None of them are inclined to cut a hapless party of adventurers a break. Roll on Table 10.2.2 to determine the drake that your party encounters:

TABLE 10.2.2	
Drake - Wetlands	
d6	ENCOUNTER
1-3	River/Sea Drake
4-6	Shadow Drake
7-8	Jungle Drake

+1 to die roll in temperate wetlands
+2 to die roll in tropical wetlands

River (B1)/Sea Drake (B2). If your party is traveling in a freshwater swamp (i.e., by a river or lake), a river drake spots them from above and dives to attack them. If they are traveling in a saltwater marsh, on the other hand, they encounter a sea drake. Both are aggressive predators that would just as soon prey on humans and humanoids as fish and aquatic mammals.

Scaling the Encounter: River drakes are smaller than sea drakes and present a different level of challenge. If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak river drake for the encounter. If your party's average

level is higher than 2, use an encounter group of one river drake for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level; you may freely substitute one elite river drake for two river drakes.

For a sea drake encounter, if your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to use a river drake instead of a sea drake; consider that it has wandered from its normal environment. If your party's average level is 4-5, use one weak sea drake for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an encounter group of one elite sea drake for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Shadow Drake (B2). Shadow drakes are masters of mischief rather than terror, but they are no less troublesome than other drakes for all of that. They use any diminution of sunlight — and in overgrown wetlands, it can get very gloomy — to steal valuables from the unsuspecting. One shadow drake tries to sneak up on your party. Have it make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC to sneak into your party's formation undetected. If it succeeds, it targets a particular character for pilfering. Have it make a Thievery check against that character's Perception DC:

Critical Success: It steals a valuable item small enough to grasp in its claws and gets clean away.

Success: It finagles the item but the party member with the highest Perception DC notices it before it can get clean away.

Failure: Someone in your party notices it before it can steal anything.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 4, use an encounter group of one elite shadow dragon for each multiple of 5 in your party's average level.

Jungle Drake (B1). Jungle drakes conceal themselves among mangrove stands and other parts of the swamp with heavy vegetation. You may require that your party make a DC 15 Perception or Nature check to spot a jungle drake waiting for them to approach within striking distance.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a river drake encounter instead. If your party's average level is 4-5, use one weak jungle drake. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an encounter group of one elite jungle drake for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Elemental (B1, B2, B3). If your party is more than ankle-deep in water, a water elemental rears up before them from out of the swamp. If they're standing on mostly dry land, the ground beside them resolves itself into an earth elemental. In either case, the elemental being is disturbed by its proximity to an alien element. It's an unhappy camper, and it lashes out at your party.

Earth Elemental/Scaling the Encounter. One earth wisp (B3) should make a reasonable encounter for a beginning-level party. Otherwise, the elemental encountered should depend on your party's average level: one living boulder (B2) for a level 2 or higher party, one sod hound (B1) for a level 3 or higher party, one earthen destrier (B2) for a level 4 or higher party, one living landslide (B1) for a level 5 or higher party, one sand sentry (B2) for a level 6 or higher party, one xorn (B1) for a level 7 or higher party, one granite glyptodont (B2) for a level 8 or higher party, one stone mauler (B1) for a level 9 or higher party, or one elemental avalanche (B1) for a level 11 or higher party.



There are a wide variety of water elementals to be found in this kind of terrain. Finding one that's an appropriate challenge for your party should be straightforward enough.

Water Elemental/Scaling the Encounter. One water wisp (B3) should make a reasonable encounter for a beginning-level party. Otherwise, the elemental encountered should depend on your party's average level: one icicle snake (B2) for a level 2 or higher party, one brine shark (B1) for a level 3 or higher party, one mist stalker (B2) for a level 4 or higher party, one living waterfall (B1) for a level 5 or higher party, one blizzardborn (B2) for a level 6 or higher party, one quatoid (B1) for a level 7 or higher party, one tidal master (B1) for a level 9 or higher party, one ice wyrm (B2) for a level 10 or higher party, or one elemental tsunami (B1) for a level 11 or higher party.

Elemental, Mephit (B1, B2). These annoying little elementals have a habit of crossing over into the Material Plane, like ink bleeding through paper, and making nuisances of themselves. They are not predatory, but they are very annoying and they interpret any attempt to brush them aside as an attack. Wetlands

attract various types of mephit. Roll on Table 10.2.3 to determine the kind of mephit your party encounters:

TABLE 10.2.3
Mephit - Wetlands

d4	ENCOUNTER
1	Earth Mephit
2-3	Ooze Mephit
4	Water Mephit

Earth Mephit (B1). Your party finds its path blocked by one earth mephit standing (or sitting, if you prefer) directly in its way. It refuses to move no matter what your party says or does to get it out of the way, and it attacks if your party tries to go around it.

Ooze Mephit (B2). Your party passes one ooze mephit lounging in the muck. It begs your party (in Aquan or Terran, of course) for a handout, whether a valuable item or a service of some kind, and it shifts from wheedling to violence if it doesn't get what it wants.

Water Mephit (B1). Water mephits feel equally at home in salt or fresh water. As elemental creatures, it's all water to them. One water mephit spots your party as it lurks just beneath the surface and it decides to have a little fun at their expense. The prank can take the form of squirting water at them while remaining submerged — if someone approaches to find out the source, it just encourages the mephit to keep teasing them. Or it pops up from the water just to shout abuse at them, then ducks under to remain hidden. It sounds harmless enough, but like all mephits, it won't stop until forced to do so.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite mephit for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Ettin (B1). Your party hears two loud voices coming from somewhere amongst the thick vegetation. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature check to recognize that it's an ettin arguing with itself. If they choose not to avoid the ettin, it calls out to your party and demands that they help settle a dispute. It should be something that the party would find awkward or at least pointless to answer — for instance, whether forest fey or swamp fey have worse body odor. No matter what answer the party gives, one or both heads accuses them of unfairly favoring the other and the ettin attacks.

Alternately, the ettin stops short when it spots the party and realizes that it's hungry after arguing with itself for such a long time.

Scaling the Encounter: As amusing as ettins can be if you run the encounter with the right sense of humor, you should feel free to re-roll for a different encounter if your party's average level is 1-2. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak ettin for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use one elite ettin for the encounter.

Treasure: The ettin carries some coins in a pouch looped around its loincloth. Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Fey (B1, B2). It's easy to forget that not all fey are harmless. Their (usually) diminutive size and their eccentric appearance give them an advantage similar to that given to small dogs: Larger creatures interpret their aggression and malice as mere mischief and they don't take them seriously enough. Roll on Table 10.2.4 to determine the fey creature encountered:

TABLE 10.2.4
Fey - Wetlands

d12	ENCOUNTER
1-4	Culdewen
5-7	Kelpie
8-10	Nuckelavee
11	Redcap
12	Rusalka

Culdewen (B2). Your party spots what looks like a harmless — because unusually diminutive — old man rowing a boat or poling a raft. Best not to get too close, though, because it's really a culdewen and as such, it's a skilled and voracious hunter of living things. If your party comes within its striking distance, it becomes excited and targets the nearest party member as its prey.

If your party's average level is lower than 5, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use one weak culdewen for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an encounter group of one elite culdewen for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Kelpie (B2). These shapechanging predatory fey should appear to your party in a form that would tempt at least one party member to come in for a ➤

closer look. This is, unfortunately for them, the kelpie using its Captivating Lure ability.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use a weak kelpie for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use one elite kelpie.

Nuckelavee (B2). A nuckelavee has mistaken the fetid, rotten air of the swamp for a kind of pollution. Thus, it has come to this spot on the Material Plane eager to exact vengeance — if not on an actual culprit who despoiled a waterway, then on someone who just happens to be handy. Your party happens to be handy.

If your party's average level is less than 7, feel free to re-roll for a different fey encounter. If your party's average level is 7-8, use a weak nuckelavee for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 12, use an elite nuckelavee.

Redcap (B1). These murderous fey kill just for the fun of it. Redcaps that inhabit swamps make good use of heavy vegetation to strike from ambush. This gives them an advantage even if they are outnumbered.

One redcap spots your party. Have it make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds, it gets the drop and charges the character at the back of the party formation. If it fails, your party spots a small, wizened humanoid, with its pointed red cap the only giveaway to its true identity. It tries to play off meeting your party as an innocent chance encounter, but keeps looking for a chance to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak redcap for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, a group of redcaps out for a spree — one elite redcap for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level — should make the encounter more challenging.

Rusalka (B2). Rusalka are not violent, but they are predatory and aggressive; they do not kill but they most certainly enjoy enslaving victims and treating them like toys. It conceals itself among the reeds and mangroves while it uses its Beckoning Call ability on unwary victims.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 10, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 10-11, use a weak rusalka for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 15, use one elite rusalka.

Frogheemoth (B2). Whether they realize it or not, your party approaches a part of the wetlands where the water is extremely deep. You may have them make a DC 15 Perception check to notice a stalk capped by several different eyeballs poking up out of the murky water. If they succeed, they have time to skirt the frogheemoth's reach, or formulate an attack plan before the beast reveals itself. If they fail, the frogheemoth waits until they get within 40 feet, then it strikes from ambush.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is less than 11, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 11-12, use a weak frogheemoth for the encounter. If your party's average level higher than 16, use an elite frogheemoth.

Griffon (B1). The biodiversity of wetlands offer predators like griffons plenty of potential reward for traveling far from their eyries in mountains and hills. One such griffon spots your party and goes for one of their mounts or pack animals — or at least, it thinks it has spotted a mount or a pack animal.

If taming and training griffons is part of your campaign world, then no doubt griffon trainers would pay well for them. To subdue a griffon to the point where it can be bound and held captive, one large or two medium-size creatures must successfully grapple the griffon using both hands. They must maintain the grapple for 10 consecutive turns. At that point, the griffon stops struggling. How your party keeps it bound until it can be delivered is up to them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak griffon for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use a pack (flock?) of one elite griffon for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Harpy (B1). A harpy's siren song sounds loud, clear and irresistible in the eerie stillness of the swamp. In wetlands, harpies make their lairs in large trees or on patches of solid ground that jut up from the swamp. Without fail, they choose locations very near treacherous ground that functions like quicksand, all the better to trap hapless passersby entranced by their song. Your party hears one siren. Can they resist it?

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak harpy for the encounter. Otherwise, use a clan group of one harpy for each multiple of 5 in your party's average level as the encounter group. You may freely substitute two elite harpies for three harpies. Whether or not they sing in harmony is up to you.

Treasure: By definition, a harpy's perch is its lair, so it's unlikely that this encounter takes place far from its

home. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of the accumulated belongings from its earlier victims.

That Sank Into the Swamp

Given that swamps, marshes, bogs — whatever you want to call them — are basically liminal spaces between land water, it seems appropriate to leave it entirely up to local circumstance whether your party hooks up with a water elemental or earth elemental.

Hydra (B1). As your party navigates the swamp, they see monstrous reptilian heads rear up out of the murky water. They have come across one hydra that has come rather far inland to hunt — perhaps it has hunted out the fish and other aquatic creatures in its territory. Your party looks as edible to it as any land-based creature.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak hydra for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, you may use an encounter group of one elite hydra for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Insects (B1, B2). Insects are a constant nuisance in wetlands, especially during warm weather months. You may not think of them as predatory, but they feed without giving it much thought and they cause trouble in their own way. Some are viciously aggressive when they feel threatened. Roll on Table 10.2.5 to determine the insects encountered:

TABLE 10.2.5

Insects - Wetlands

d20	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Ant
3	Cockroach
4-8	Dragonfly
9-11	Fly
12-16	Mosquito
17	Tick
18-20	Wasps

Ant (B2). Your party is not looking through a magnifying glass; they really have come face-to-face with a human-sized ant tramping through the swamp. It's not a predator, but it is an omnivore that eats anything that seems like food and it is large enough to enforce its will in a way that can look like predation. ➤

To it, your party looks like food.

Alternately, army ants are much smaller, but they come at you in a vicious, relentless swarm. If your party runs afoul of an army ant swarm (B2), it spots them (or more precisely, a food source somewhere among your party's belongings) during a rest halt or while they have camped for the night and attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak giant ant for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one army ant swarm for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite giant ant for one army ant swarm.

Cockroach (B2). You find cockroaches wherever they can scavenge off of creatures higher up the food chain. During a rest halt, one giant cockroach goes after your party's rations. It won't attack unless threatened, but it will eat everything up unless stopped.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite cockroach swarm (B2) for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Dragonfly (B2). Like mosquitos, dragonflies need fresh water in order to reproduce. So it should come as no surprise if your party encounters dragonflies near a lake or a river. It may surprise them, however, to find dragonflies large enough to feed on a party of adventurers.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak dragonfly nymph for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite giant dragonfly (B2) for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level; these are adults defending eggs that they just laid in the water.

Fly (B2). Baby giant flies feed on carcasses so that they grow up into big and strong giant flies. And there are plenty of dead, rotting things in a swamp. Your party comes upon the remains of... something... that has been almost entirely consumed by 1d4 giant maggots. They're still hungry and primitive instinct drives them to try to continue feeding on your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3 use an encounter group of 1d4 giant maggots. If your party's average level is higher than 3 use an encounter group of one giant fly (B2) for each ➤

multiple of 4 in your party's average level. The flies have found a carcass into which to lay eggs, and they defend their spawning ground against a perceived threat.

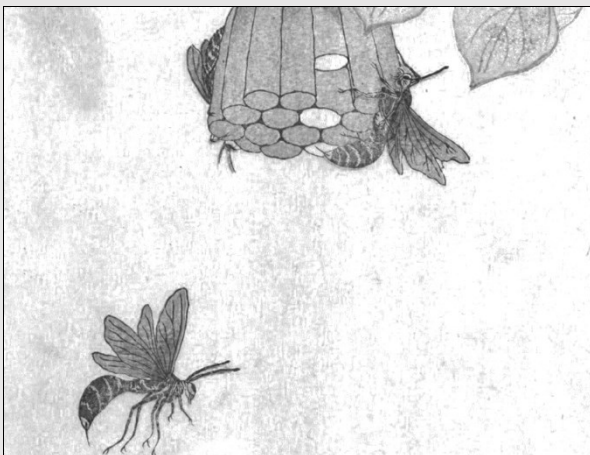
Mosquito (B2). Mosquitos take to wetlands like no other type of environment. Particularly during the warm months, you should expect them to swarm you as you make your way through the swamp. Some mosquitos are nastier and more persistent than others. One fen mosquito swarm sets about your party. They want nutritious blood and they won't be swatted away.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak fen mosquito swarm. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one fen mosquito swarm for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite fen mosquito swarm or one giant mosquito for two fen mosquito swarms.

Tick (B2). Pick a party member at random. One giant tick pops out from the ground cover and tries to attach itself to that character so that it can feed.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite giant tick for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Wasp (B1). Beware that pendulous thing hanging from the branch of a large tree; it's the nest of a giant wasp. You may allow your party a DC 20 Nature or Survival check to recognize it for what it is before they get close enough to set off the one giant wasp guarding it, but giant wasps are quick to anger and quick to sting.



Wasps are easy to set off and will go after your party and all your pack animals if you have them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak giant wasp for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 2, use an encounter group of one giant wasp for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level.

Alternately, if your mind recoils at the idea of giant wasps, you may use one weak wasp swarm for the encounter if your party's average level is 1-3. If your party's average level is 4-7, use one wasp swarm. If your party's average level is 8-11, use one elite wasp swarm.

Leech (B2). Leeches flourish in wetlands. Ordinary leeches are relatively harmless by themselves, or even in small groups. However, in sufficient numbers or when they reach a certain size, they become dangerous bloodsucking predators that can drain the life from a creature, even without meaning to do so. One giant leech rears up from the swamp and tries to grab the nearest party member.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one giant leech for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one brood leech swarm for two giant leeches; or one elite giant leech for three giant leeches; or one elite brood leech swarm for four giant leeches.

Mudwretch (B2). These elemental creatures feel very much at home in wetlands, where they can immerse themselves in water and hunt on land, as needed. The moisture replenishes their life energy, of course — but blood does so more efficiently than water. Your party comes upon one such mudwretch in need of sustenance, and to it they look like walking energy drinks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak mudwretch for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one mudwretch for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite mudwretch for three mudwretches.

Nilith (B1). At first, it might look like a tree sloth that has been skinned, but it's really a nilith. These hateful aberrations take pleasure in striking fear and terror in their victims, so they do not drop down from trees to strike by surprise. Instead, they make a display, taking advantage of their innate spellcasting and Mind Crush ability to terrorize them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 8, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 8-9, use one

weak nilith for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 13, use one elite nilith for the encounter.

Ooze (B2). Certain oozes find enough shade and damp in the swamp to allow them to thrive there. To determine the type of ooze that your party comes across (or steps into), roll on Table 10.2.6:

TABLE 10.2.6
Ooze - Wetlands

d8	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Amoeba Swarm
3-4	Giant Amoeba
5-7	Slime Mold
8	Verdurous Ooze

Amoeba Swarm. Amoebas live in the mud and water, and sometimes they collect into large groups and act as a swarm. Have the amoeba swarm make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds, it looks like a granulated pool of slime, and they don't realize it's a living thing until they're close enough for it to strike. In any event, it attacks without thinking.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite amoeba swarm for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Giant Amoeba. Like other creatures in the wild, amoebas can grow big for their kind without becoming proportionately intelligent or discerning in its feeding behavior. A single giant amoeba is smaller than an amoeba swarm and harder to spot. But it behaves in the same mindless and voracious way and it's easy to mistake it for a translucent puddle of slime. Handle the encounter the same as an amoeba swarm (see above).

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite giant amoeba for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Slime Mold. Otherwise harmless fungi are part of the swamp's ecosystem, as they help break down dead plants into nutrients to feed the next generation of living things. However, your party approaches a predatory slime mold that lives symbiotically with these fungi, and it spots your party as a chance to get its own life cycle going, lashing out to infect the ➤

closest character in the party formation.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak slime mold for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite slime mold for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Verdurous Ooze. Your party passes a patch of vegetation in which one these green oozes has concealed itself. Have the verdurous ooze make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds, its coloration works as camouflage, and they don't realize that a predatory creature is present until they're close enough for it to strike.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is less than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different ooze encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use one weak verdurous ooze for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an encounter group of one elite verdurous ooze for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Plant (B1, B2). Plants are not always your friend. Just because they cannot see, cannot speak and they can barely move, it doesn't mean that they cannot prey on whatever comes within their reach. Roll on Table 10.2.7 to determine the plant that is eager to disabuse your party of the notion that it is just a vegetable:

TABLE 10.2.7
Plant - Wetlands

d20	ENCOUNTER
1-6	Assassin Vine
7-9	Dezullon
10-13	Flytrap
14-17	Mandragora
18	Scythe Tree
19-20	Viper Vine

Assassin Vine (B2). You may allow your party a DC 20 Perception or Survival check to notice that the unusually thick ground cover just twitched. If it fails, they don't realize that an assassin vine has used its tremorsense to spot them until they come within in its striking distance of its Grasping Foliage ability.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak assassin vine for the encounter. ➤

If your party's average level is higher than 6, use a patch of one elite assassin vine for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level for the encounter group. In this case, locate the assassin vines so that they can strike from different angles.

Dezullon (B1). It is easy enough to mistake these oversized pitcher plants for just another big plant taking advantage of the swamp's abundant water and rich soil; even recognizing it as a carnivorous plant, one might still assume that it only preys on small animals. That is not the case, however, and they are quite capable of entrapping humans and humanoids as well.

You may allow your party a DC 20 Nature or Survival check to intuit that a menace to them lurks nearby before at least one party member comes within range of the dezullon's Stench ability.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 8, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 8-9, use a weak dezullon for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 13, use one elite dezullon.

Flytrap (B1). It's something of a misnomer to call these carnivorous plants flytraps because they are far too large and mean to content themselves with eating flies. As your party makes its way through a part of the swamp with heavy vegetation, a pair of jaws darts out of the undergrowth at them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak snapping flytrap for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use a patch of one elite snapping flytrap for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level for the encounter group. You may freely substitute one giant flytrap for two elite snapping flytraps.

Mandragora (B2). Your party comes across something that looks like a small deformed humanoid sticking up out of muck. It strikes at the nearest arcane spellcaster, or if none is present, the character carrying the most potions and/or alchemical materials. It is hungry enough so that it will even consume the blood of a creature without any magic in it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak mandragora for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use a patch of one elite mandragora for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level for the encounter group. ➤

Scythe Tree (B2). Dead trees are not uncommon in many swamps. However, dead trees are not always as they seem. You may allow your party a DC 20 Perception or Survival check to notice that the ends of some branches on that dead tree just ahead look strangely like curved blades. That's because they are curved blades; this is a scythe tree and it attacks as soon as your party comes within range.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different plant encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use one weak scythe tree for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 10, use one elite scythe tree for the encounter.

Viper Vine (B2). Your party spots an enormous patch of ground cover. Unfortunately for them, it's a viper vine at rest and coiled like a snake. You may allow your party a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to notice a flicker of motion that suggests that what they're approaching is no ordinary plant. Otherwise, the viper vine uses its tremorsense and Captivating Pollen ability as soon as someone in the party formation comes within range.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 11, feel free to re-roll for a different plant encounter. If your party's average level is 11-12, use one weak viper vine for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 16, use one elite viper vine for the encounter.

Treasure: Because these predatory plants are not migratory and only slightly mobile, they hunt more or less in their lairs. This means that your party might find the accumulated belongings of the plants' previous victims after defeating them. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Peluda (B2). Without being aware of it (most likely) your party has entered a part of the swamp that a peluda claims as its home turf. They see what looks like a tanned dragon flying at them, coming in low and fast just above the reeds. Peludas are intensely territorial and usually attack intruders on sight. However, you may allow your party a DC 29 Diplomacy or Intimidation check to talk their way out of a confrontation — no doubt, by playing on its deep-seated insecurity when faced by more powerful creatures.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 8, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 8-9, use a weak

peluda for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 13, use one elite peluda.

Treasure: Peludas have rather eccentric dietary practices. They like to eat coins and gems in the belief that it makes them stronger. They don't digest them, however, so if your party guts a slain peluda, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of the contents.

Roc (B1). A roc has roamed far afield from its mountain or hilltop eyrie in search of food, and the diversity of offerings in wetlands make up for traveling so far from home. If anything, the roc has learned that someone on a boat or a raft, or plodding through the muck, has nowhere to run from a powerful aerial predator, so travelers and local fishermen are easy pickings. When it spots your party, they look pretty tasty, so it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 7, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 7-8, use a weak roc for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 12 use an elite roc.

Scorpion (B1). Not that they would ever do this intentionally, but your party disturbs a giant scorpion concealed by vegetation. It has a large stinger, and it doesn't hesitate to use it. Whether it acts in what it perceives as self-defense, or because your party looks like prey, it makes little practical difference.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use a weak giant scorpion for the encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use one scorpion swarm. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite giant scorpion for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Shambler (B1). As your party makes its way through a part of the swamp with dense vegetation, they may or may not realize that a shambler has spotted them as a possible food source. You may require your party to make a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to realize that the jumble of plant growth off to the side just moved.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use a weak shambler for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an encounter group of one elite shambler for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

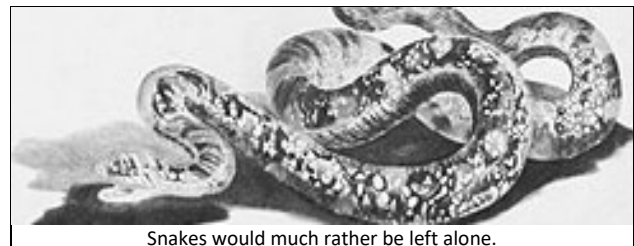
Treasure: Shamblers feed on the move, but their previous prey's less perishable possessions remain inside them. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This

Book to determine the value of what spills out of its innards when it is slain.

Slug (B2). Slugs may seem like unlikely predators, but the giants among them are large enough to consume livestock and humanoids and they're not particularly fussy about what they eat. Your party finds itself face-to-eyestalks with a giant slug rearing up out of the swamp. Will it get the better of them and make a meal out of them? Run the encounter and see.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 6, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use a weak giant slug for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 11, use an encounter group of one giant slug for each multiple of 11 in your party's average level.

Snakes (B1, B3). Venomous snakes occur in tropical and sub-tropical climates, and they feel very much at home in wetlands. They possess an unfortunate combination of traits: On the one hand, their coloration makes them hard to spot amid vegetation and in dim light, but on the other hand they tend to lash out if you get too close to them, even if you don't mean to threaten them. This is what happens to your party. You may allow a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to realize that the front of the party formation is about to step on a snake. This should give them enough time to take evasive action, although you may consider that this simply means they aren't surprised when the snake lashes out.



Constrictor snakes are found only in tropical regions where it's hot and humid enough for a large cold-blooded creature to survive. But where they do occur, they are awe-inspiring predators.

Roll on Table 10.2.8 to determine the snake(s) encountered:

TABLE 10.28**Snakes - Wetlands**

d6	ENCOUNTER
1-4	Rat Snake Swarm
5-6	Viper
7	Emperor Cobra
8	Ball Python
9	Giant Anaconda

+1 to die roll in temperate swamps

+3 to die roll in temperate wetlands

Rat Snake Swarm (B3). Your party stops to rest among ground cover in which some rat snakes have sheltered. You may allow a DC 10 Perception check to notice the snakes before they get close enough to attack. Rat snakes are not venomous, but you don't want to get bitten by one all the same.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak rat snake swarm for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite rat snake swarm for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Viper (B1). Your party disturbs 1d8 vipers nesting in a shallow depression. It's too late to avoid an aggressive response from them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use a weak viper swarm (B3) for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite viper swarm for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Emperor Cobra (B2). The Perception check determines whether or not your party spots an emperor cobra before it rears up out of the ground cover and strikes.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, use one weak emperor cobra for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use a nest of one elite emperor cobra for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

Ball Python (B1). Unlike vipers, ball pythons rely on squeezing their prey to death. This often involves dropping onto them from a nearby tree and coiling around it before it can react. You may have the snake make a Stealth check against the highest Perception DC in the party to determine whether they notice the ball python waiting for them to get within range. ➤

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use one elite ball python for the encounter.

Giant Anaconda (B1). If there is anything more daunting than running afoul of a ball python-sized constrictor, it is being targeted as food by a giant anaconda — and they can grow giant indeed in tropical swamps. One of these beasts targets one of your party members, confident that the rest won't be able to harm it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 6, feel free to re-roll for a different snake encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use one weak giant anaconda for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 11, use one elite giant anaconda.

Treasure: It's quite possible that a giant constrictor snake has fed on humans or humanoids before and that the less perishable possessions remain in its digestive tract. If your party bothers to slit the snake open and root around inside, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of what they find.

Spider (B1, B2). If your party runs afoul of spiders in a swamp, it is probably because they have built large webs among dense stands of vegetation. It may be an empty web, as in Table 10.6: Hampering Web, or it may be crawling with spiders — or it may be that just one very big and dangerous spider calls it home and hunting ground. Roll on Table 10.2.9 to determine the spiders encountered:

TABLE 10.29**Spiders - Wetlands**

d8	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Ether Spider
3-5	Hunting Spider
6	Ogre Spider
7-8	Spider Swarm
9	Dream Spiders

+1 to die roll in tropical wetlands

Ether Spider (B1). One ether spider literally appears out of nowhere to attack your party, having spotted them from its lair in the Ethereal Plane. Ether spiders are quite fearless, and they use their ability to ➤

jump back and forth between the Ethereal Plane and the Material Plane to conduct hit-and-run attacks, wearing the party down until they are all incapacitated or dead.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, use a weak ether spider for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use one elite ether spider.

Hunting Spider (B1). A hunting spider can represent either a web-spinning spider that has set up shop

in a bush or between bushes, or a large trap-door spider with a burrow. It's up to you as GM, what kind of encounter you want to set up.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, there is one elite hunting spider for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level present in the web.

Ogre Spider (B2). The web houses one very large spider, an ogre spider. It may not wait for someone from your party to get entangled in its web; instead it uses its web ranged weapon attack to immobilize anyone who gets within range.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-4, use a weak ogre spider for the encounter.

Spider Swarm (B1). The web houses 1d4 swarms of tiny spiders. All of them respond aggressively if something so much as touches their web.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3, use an encounter group of 1d4 spider swarms. If your party's average level is 4-5, use an encounter group of 1d4 elite spider swarms. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one elite spider swarm for each level in your party's average level.

Dream Spiders (B2). The web houses 1d4 dream spiders in their native element. A dream spider encounter is particularly dangerous as its venom suffuses its web, so that you don't even need physical contact with the spider itself to suffer from it. Treat a dream spider's web as a hampering Web hazard (see Table 3.6). Touching the web not only requires a Fortitude save against poison, it also alerts the dream spider to the presence of prey.

Treasure. Ogre spiders may have trapped humanoid-sized victims in the past and left some of their ➤

valuables caught in their web. You may use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value if you wish.

Troll (B1). A troll has staked out this corner of the swamp as its own. It emerges from the shadows of the trees and demands a fee in order to let your party pass through. Perhaps it demands one of the party's pack animals as its toll, or a suitable amount of coins. It fights rather than let anyone pass for free.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak troll for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use an encounter group of one elite troll for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level. If scaling the encounter calls for more than one troll, you may substitute two elite troll hounds (B2) for one troll. If the encounter calls for more than two trolls, you may also substitute one troll king (B1) for two trolls.

Treasure: The troll's racket has worked well enough in the past: Its victims pay one way or another. If your party defeats the troll in its lair, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Undead (B1, B2). The deep gloom and air of decay that permeates swamps, especially where the vegetation is thick and crowds out the sun, make them natural homes for the undead. Wetlands are as remote and dangerous as any wilderness environment, so they offer plenty of opportunities to die an unfortunate death, and for unquiet souls to be kept restless by dark magic of mysterious origin. Roll on Table 10.2.10 to determine the undead abomination that greets your party:

TABLE 10.2.10

Undead - Wetlands

D20	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Mummy, Bog
4	Banshee
5-6	Draugr
7	Ghost
8-11	Ghoul/Ghast
12	Revenant
13-14	Shadow
15-16	Skeleton
17	Wraith
18-21	Zombie

+1 to die roll in tropical wetlands ➤

Mummy, Bog (B2). Normally, mummies are the undead remnants of those who have received a proper burial only to fall under some kind of necromancy. Bog mummies have not even had that much consideration; most of them perished in the swamp, or when they were cast into the mire without ceremony.

One such bog mummy rises from the swamp to confront your party. It may carry resentments into undeath from the end of its natural life, but its urge to violence lacks focus. Your party will do as a target because they are close at hand.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 5, use a weak bog mummy for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use an encounter group of one bog mummy for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level.

Banshee (B1). Assuming that elves are a part of your campaign world, it's a good bet that they live, or at least once lived in this wetland. This banshee is a relic of evil deeds and tragic events from their history. Perhaps your party hears its forlorn wail from a distance, and they only confront it if they investigate. Or perhaps they stumble upon the banshee's domain, and in its madness and despair it demands that they hand over their valuables, particularly their jewelry.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 15, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 15-16, use a weak banshee for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 20, use one elite banshee.

Draugr (B2). Draugrs usually rise from those lost at sea, but death by water is a part of life in wetlands as well. Even someone who drowns in shallow water while poling a raft or paddling a boat through the marsh may remerge as a draugr. It may unnerve your party to see one come onto the shore, enraged at its fate and eager to kill any living thing it encounters. But it should not surprise them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak draugr for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one draugr for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. All ashore that's going ashore! You may freely substitute one elite draugr for three draugrs.

Ghost (B1). That is no optical illusion; the ethereal form floating above the marsh really is a ghost. It is ►

most likely the remnant of someone who drowned or died some other miserable death far from home. Whatever the case, you may make this into a hostile encounter by having the ghost try to possess a member of your party so that it may resolve unfinished business from its former life.

Scaling the Encounter: Ghosts always work alone. However, if you wish to make a more challenging ghost encounter for a 10th level or higher party, use a ghost mage instead of a ghost commoner. Or you may freely substitute a ghost of your own design.

Ghoul (B1). Swamps are full of unfortunate souls that met miserable ends here, and whose remains were preserved well enough to rise as ghouls or ghosts. One ghoul approaches your party, driven by mindless hunger for their flesh.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 4-5, use one elite ghoul or one ghost for the encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use one elite ghost for the encounter. If your party level is higher than 7, use an encounter group of one elite ghoul for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level, or one elite ghost for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Revenant (B2). Unlike many forms of undead, revenants have a specific motivation and a sharp focus for their hatred. Your party comes across the undead husk of someone who was forcibly drowned and washed up on shore, or murdered where there were no witnesses, or otherwise met their end at the hands of another by the water's edge. It seeks revenge, but against the particular party it holds responsible for ending its natural life. Assuming that this is not someone in your party, the revenant does not attack — in fact it might even provide your party with a sidequest if they can help the revenant locate the target of its vengeance.

Shadows (B1). Walking in the gloom created by mangrove trees and other heavy vegetation, your party glimpses a shadow out of the corner of the eye. But it's not an illusion, it's a creature in its own right, an insubstantial undead intent on draining the life from the living. It's not particularly at home here and shadows prefer absolute darkness, where they can strike unseen. All the same, it attacks the nearest party member, eager to spawn one more of its own kind.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak shadow for the encounter. If ►

your party's average level is higher than 7, use one elite shadow for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Skeletons (B1). Your party comes upon 1d4+2 skeleton guards — undead created from remains from which the flesh has rotted away. Perhaps they were soldiers killed or drowned while fleeing through the swamp. Perhaps they were adventurers or explorers ambushed by brigands — or perhaps they were pirates themselves, who were hunted down in the name of justice or revenge, or who fell out among themselves. Driven by rage at their fate, they attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak skeleton guards. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite skeleton guard for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one skeletal champion for two elite skeleton guards.

Wraith (B1). There are plenty of ways to come to a bad end in the wilderness, and your party has the misfortune to come across a wraith that was once someone who perished in the swamp, and which is now bound to this part of it. Perhaps they pass an improvised grave, or just a half-buried skeleton. Whatever the case, it takes out the resentment that it bore at the end of its life on your party.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, feel free to re-roll for a different undead encounter. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak wraith for the encounter. If your party's average level is 9-12, use one dread wraith (B2). If your party's average level is above 12, use one elite dread wraith.

Zombie (B1). Your party come across one plague zombie or 1d4 zombie shamblers that have been programmed to kill every living thing they encounter.. The source of the necromancy that created these zombies we leave to you. Perhaps they slipped the leash of their creator and they now wander the land.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one plague zombie for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one zombie brute or one elite plague zombie for two plague zombies, or one zombie hulk for six plague zombies. If you want to create a large encounter for that "The Walking Dead" effect, freely substitute 1d4 zombie shamblers for one plague zombie. ➤

Treasure: It's quite possible that ghosts and wraiths are encountered in or near the place where they died or were buried — in which case, the valuables they had on them are lying about somewhere. You may require a successful DC 15 Perception check to find them. Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

With skeletons and zombies, they may have with them some remains of what they had on their person at the time of their death. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Warg (B1). Your party crosses paths with one warg that has escaped from a pack kept by a local humanoid tribe, or otherwise gotten separated from them. Regardless of the reason, it is hungry and your party looks like food.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak warg for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one warg for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite warg for three wargs. If this encounter takes place in a sub-arctic zone, you may also freely substitute one winter wolf for two wargs or one elite winter wolf for two elite wargs.

Web Lurker (B1). Web lurkers lurk in parts of the wetlands that have heavy vegetation that can hide them — preferably trees, but dense shrubbery will also do, and they don't even mind partially submerging themselves in shallow water. A lone web lurker tries to ambush your party, attacking from behind once they have passed its hiding spot. You may allow a DC 15 Perception or Survival check to sense that something is trying to hide from your party as they approach. If it fails, the web lurker gets to use its Web Trap ability to pin as many party members as possible, intending to close and finish off each one at leisure.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak web lurker for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use one elite web lurker. If your party's average level is higher than 11, you may use a tag-team of two elite web lurkers for the encounter group.

Treasure: You may consider that the web lurker jumps your party from its habitual spot, and that meager treasure from its previous victims lies scattered in the vicinity. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of what your party finds.

Will-o'-Wisp (B1). Will-o'-wisps can be found virtually anywhere in wetlands, so it should not seem out of place

if your party spots a luminous globe dancing and bobbing above the mire. If you want to add some spice to the encounter, consider that the will-o'-wisp tries to lure victims into a patch of quicksand to render them helpless. In this case, the will-o'-wisp restricts itself to a 50-foot diameter area at the center of the clearing. At the center of this area, the swamp turns into a 20-foot diameter pit of quicksand. If the will-o'-wisp is not already directly above the quicksand when it is engaged in melee combat, it retreats until it is above the quicksand, thus forcing its attacker to step into it in order to continue the melee.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 3-4, use a weak will-o'-wisp for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use an encounter group of one elite will-o'-wisp for each multiple of 10 in your party's average level.

Treasure: Belongings from the will-o'-wisp's previous victims have been piling up here, with various valuables scattered in the muck. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.



Will-o'-wisps don't use treasure themselves, but the fens where they lurk are often littered with the valuables their victims carried.

Crocodile (B1). Crocodiles are very much at home in temperate and tropical wetlands, where they can conceal themselves in shallow water right until it's close enough to strike. One crocodile, bold (or hungry) enough to strike even when outnumbered leaps out of the swamp at your party, teeth bared.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a bask of one crocodile for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level for the baseline encounter group. You may freely substitute one elite crocodile for three crocodiles or one deinonychus (B1) for four crocodiles.

TABLE 10.3

Neutral Creatures - Wetlands

d100	ENCOUNTER
1-7	Moose
8-10	Bear
11-13	Arboreal
14-17	Bats
18-22	Beetle, Flash
23-24	Blink Dog
25-28	Boar
29-32	Bog Strider
33-34	Dragon
35-37	Eagle
38-43	Fey
44-47	Fox
48-52	Frog
53-56	Hippopotamus
57-59	Krooth
60-64	Leshy
65-69	Lizard
70-74	Monkey
75-78	Opossum
79-82	Porcupine
83-84	Quetz Couatl
85-88	Rats
89-92	Rhinoceros
93-96	Skunk
97-100	Weasels
101-110	Vultures

+5 to die roll for temperate wetlands.

+10 to die roll for tropical wetlands.

Moose (B3). Moose inhabit sub-arctic and temperate wetlands, where the climate agrees with them and they find enough vegetation to support them. Your party spots a lone moose grazing among the vegetation. Even if your party does not behave in a threatening manner, there is a chance that it mistakes their actions and attacks. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that sets it off and it charges.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use one weak moose for the encounter.

Otherwise, use a herd of one moose for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level for the encounter.

Bear, Black (B2). Black bears roam sub-arctic and temperate wetlands, and your party spots one prowling the swamp for food. If your party just wants to scare it off, have them make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it succeeds, the bear takes the hint and lumbers away. If it fails, someone has made a false move, provoking the bear to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak black bear (B2) for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use an encounter group of one elite black bear for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Arboreal (B1, B3). In wetlands with heavy vegetation, there may be trees that have been touched by enchantments so ancient that humans have not observed or recorded them. If your party travels through a gloomy swamp in which a deep, otherworldly presence hangs over the place, they're sensing echoes of the forces that created these animated trees that guard the wetlands

Your party has some sort of physical contact with a huge tree. Perhaps someone stumbles over a root and falls heavily against it. Perhaps someone just leans against it to rest. Perhaps someone breaks off a branch, or carves a sigil into the trunk, or does some other casual mischief. Perhaps a familiar or an animal companion uses the tree for its own purposes. Whatever it is, the tree expresses its alarm.

An arboreal is not necessarily hostile. If your party asks it for help, a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check wins it over. If your party includes someone visibly carrying an axe of some sort, the DC is 20. If the party has harmed the tree in any way, the DC is 25. Help from an arboreal includes providing knowledge about the immediate area, or even accompanying your party as an ally as long as this doesn't require leaving the forest.

However, an arboreal instinctively react to open flame with hostility. Lighting a torch or starting campfire causes it to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak arboreal warden for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one arboreal warden for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute two arboreals for three arboreal wardens, or one elite arboreal warden for two arboreal wardens. You may also substitute one arboreal regent for two arboreal wardens or one elite arboreal regent for three arboreal wardens as the group's leader.

Bats (B1). Your party passes a dead tree, its trunk apparently hollowed out, in a gloomy corner of the swamp. They hear odd noises, like squeaking or chattering, coming from inside. If they so much as look into the open cavity, they see one swarm of vampire bats in the hollow. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move, and the bats attack.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one vampire bat swarm for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite vampire bat swarm for three vampire bat swarms. You may also freely substitute one giant bat for two vampire bat swarms and one elite giant bat for four vampire bat swarms.

Beetle, Flash (B1). Your party comes across 1d8 flash beetles scuttling along a patch of dry land. Perhaps your party notices them glowing in the gloom of an overgrown patch of the swamp. Fire beetles are not aggressive, but they defend themselves if threatened — if they're hunted for their luminous glands, for instance.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 5 and they're in a mood to harvest flash beetles, you may use an encounter group of one flash beetle for each level in your party's average level.

Blink Dog (B2). Your party crosses paths with a dog with long ears and a wisp of fur hanging from its chin. It's not wandering aimlessly through the swamp; it's a blink dog scouting on behalf of its pack as it roams the Material Plane, defending it from evil influences — and in the darkest and gloomiest corners of wetlands, it's not hard to find something of the sort.

If it intuits that there are evil characters with bad intentions in your party, it keeps its distance and uses its innate spells to get away. Otherwise, anyone who is fluent in Sylvan can communicate with it, although it make take a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check to overcome its natural aloofness. A blink dog on a mission may provide your party with a sidequest as it asks them to help its pack. A successful Diplomacy check (DC 15 or 20, depending on whether or not it diverts the blink dog from its purpose) by a good-aligned character may persuade it to accompany your party for a short while.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish, you may use a pack of blink dogs for the encounter group, consisting of one for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level.

Boar (B1). Your party spots one wild boar rooting around in the undergrowth for food. Boar are popular targets for hunters. They'll fight back if attacked — indeed, the challenge they present is part of the appeal of hunting them. But they have also developed a fight-or-flight

instinct, and if your party wishes to avoid a fight, have them make a DC 15 Survival or Nature group check to scare the boar off.

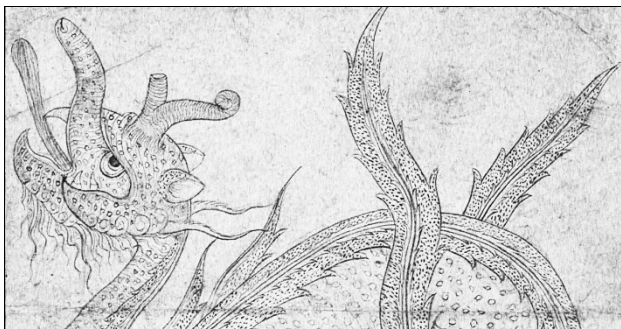
Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak boar for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one boar for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. If you prefer not to have a large herd of wild boar descend on your party, you may freely substitute one daeodon (B1) for two wild boar; one elite wild boar for three wild boar; or one elite daeodon for four wild boar.

Treasure: Boar meat is good eating for many folk. Perhaps a nearby butcher will pay 1 gp or thereabouts for a fresh carcass. The price might go up to 3 gp for a daeodon.

Bog Strider (B2). Your party comes across one of these insect-like creatures on the hunt, padding along the surface of the marsh at a good clip. It spots your party, stops and speaks to them in Aquan. Its intention and state of mind are up to you as GM, but it's possible that it's asking for any leads on where it can find prey animals — or that it's upset because your party scared off its quarry.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak bog strider for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one bog strider for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite bog strider for three bog striders.

With a hunting party of multiple bog striders, consider that your party encounters only one initially, with the others out of sight but on call through its wavesense tremor tapping. Surprise!



There are no dragon-free kinds of terrain.

Dragon (B1). Your party notices a shadow in the sky. It's a dragon on the prowl. To determine what kind of dragon roll on Table 10.3.1:

TABLE 10.3.1

Dragon - Wetlands

d12	ENCOUNTER
1-2	Black (B1)
3	Blue (B1)
4	Green (B1)
5	Red (B1)
6	White (B1)
7	Brass (B1)
8	Bronze (B1)
9	Copper (B1)
10	Gold (B1)
11	Silver (B1)
12	Brine (B2)

To determine its age, see *Scaling the Encounter*.

To be clear, this need not be a hostile encounter. The dragon is not defending its lair, so it may just be curious about your party. It may have more important things to do and decline to take notice of them at all. Or it may be hungry and on the hunt, or it's angry because your party has intruded on territory it claims as its own.

Scaling the Encounter: Because dragons get tougher with age, the age of the dragon encountered should depend on your party's average level — especially if you decide that this is going to be a hostile encounter. If your party's average level is lower than 11, they encounter a young dragon. If their average level is 11-15, they encounter an adult dragon. If their average level is higher than 15, they encounter an ancient dragon.

Eagles (B1). Roll on Table 10.3.2 to determine if your party is fortunate enough to be spotted by a giant eagle, or they come across ordinary eagles hunting for small animals.

TABLE 10.3.2

Eagle - Wetlands

d4	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Eagles
4	Giant Eagle

Eagles. Your party notices a convocation of 2d8 eagles wheeling overhead. If your party has a small animal ►

kept as a pet or familiar, or food (travelers rations qualify) kept exposed, have the eagles make a DC 15 Perception check. If they succeed, they dive and try to snatch it up, attacking anyone who gets in their way.

Giant Eagle. On the other hand, your party may have the good fortune to enter territory patrolled by a giant eagle. If your party has predominantly good characters (or at least, no evil characters), the giant eagle follows it to the limit of its domain, providing a sort of combat air patrol for your party. If your party hails it (remember, giant eagles only understand Auran and Sylvan), it responds. Convincing it to do your party a service requires a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check. Unless your party consists entirely of good characters, a critical success is needed to gain its full cooperation.

Alternately, if you want to provide your party with a sidequest, the giant eagle tries to enlist them in dealing with some evil humanoids in its territory. However, since it cannot speak, you may require your party to make a successful DC 15 Nature check to understand that it wants them to follow it. Critical success indicates an educated guess that it wants help dealing with enemies.

Fey (B1, B2, B3). Fey are creatures of the deep forest, but they can be found in mangrove swamps and any other wetland environment where there are plenty of trees about. Unlike the malicious fey described above, they mean no harm. But they have agendas of their own that can work at cross-purposes with that of adventurers pursuing fortune and glory. To determine which fey creature your party comes across, roll on Table 10.3.3:

TABLE 10.3.3

Fey - Wetlands

d12	ENCOUNTER
1	Grodair
2-3	Nereid
4-6	Nixie
7	Nymph
8-11	Sprite
12	Unicorn

Grodair (B2). Your party spots one of these weird, amphibious fey on land as it migrates in search of a friendlier place to live. It's full of water and ready to roll. It may try to communicate with your party in one of its native tongues, full of questions about the ➤

general area and where might be a good place to create a lake — i.e., make a new home for itself. It's not hostile, although it may get frustrated if no one in your party understands Aquan or Sylvan. If your party has any kind of dealing with the grodair, you may have them make a DC 15 Diplomacy check. If a critical failure results, someone does or says something to set it off, and it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 8, use an elite grodair for the encounter.

Nereid (B2). Nereids live in and travel among lakes and rivers, and their preference for solitude sometimes leads them to remote wetlands. When your party comes across a nereid wading through the swamp, it regards them with suspicion. You may have your party make a DC 20 Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: They win over the nereid. It is willing to use its spells to help them. It may even be willing to travel with them for a while.

Success: It is willing to share local knowledge with them. It may give them a sidequest and ask them to deal with a local rusalka.

Failure: It politely, but firmly requests that they leave it alone

Critical Failure: Somehow, they triggered it into treating them as a threat. It attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: Although this need not be a hostile encounter, feel free to re-roll for a different fey encounter if your party's average level less than 8.

If your party's average level is 8-9, use a weak nereid for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 13, use an elite nereid.

Nixie (B2). Nixies prefer to remain hidden until they have cause to reveal themselves to strangers and a swamp with vegetation gives them plenty of places to hide. A nixie watches your party as they enter its domain. Have it make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC. If it succeeds, your party will not know it's there until it chooses to reveal itself and demand that they state their business. At this point, you may have your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: The nixie takes kindly to them and offers to use its Grant Desire ability to help them. ➤

Success: They convince it that they mean no harm.

Failure: For whatever reason, it remains cold to your party and warns them to clear off.

Critical Failure: Your party has thrown up all kinds of red flags, and it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one nixie for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite nixie for four nixies.

Nymph (B1). If this encounter takes place in a part of the swamp that has trees, you may use a dryad. Otherwise, your party comes across a naiad that has chosen this corner of the wetlands, instead of a stream or pond, as its domain. In either case, how the nymph reacts to your party depends on whether or not it sees them as the source of corruption that would taint its domain. You may have your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: They have befriended the nymph. It is willing to use its spells to help them.

Success: It is willing to share local information with them.

Failure: It remains wary of your party and asks them to leave.

Critical Failure: Your party said or did something so uncouth that the nymph attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: For a dryad encounter, if your party's average level is 6-10, consider an elite dryad for the encounter. If your party's average level is 11-12, consider using a weak dryad queen (B1). If your party's average level is higher than 16, use an elite dryad queen.

For a naiad encounter, if your party's average level is 2-4, use an elite naiad for the encounter. If your party's average level is 5-6, use a weak naiad queen (B1). If your party's average level is higher than 10, use an elite naiad queen.

Sprites (B1, B2, B3). Sprites are the quintessential fey creatures because of their diminutive size and their penchant for (mostly) harmless mischief. However, they do come in different varieties with some subtle differences between them. Roll on Table 10.3.4.1 to determine the manner of sprite that your party encounters: ➤

TABLE 10.3.4.1

Sprites - Wetlands

d10	ENCOUNTER
1	Draxie (B3)
2-3	Grig (B1)
4	Melixie (B3)
5	Nykteras (B3)
6-7	Pixie (B1)
8-10	Sprite (B1)

As a general rule, an encounter with a sprites involves them using their Innate Spells to trick your party for the sprites' own amusement. As minor exceptions to this rule, sprites may use their Luminous Fire ability to spark your party's curiosity and lead them on a wild goose chase, while pixies may use their pixie dust and draxies their breath weapon to beguile your party.

It is also worth noting that nykteras are less fun-loving than other sprites, and more righteous, though in a slightly warped sort of way. You may have your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check in dealing with them:

Critical Success: The nykteras take a liking to your party. They offer to use their innate *heal* spells to help them.

Success: They offer protection while your party rests — and also food, which means sharing the staples of their diet, which replicates the diet of bats. Refusal of such an offer may set off their Wrath of Spurned Hospitality ability.

Failure: They remain suspicious of your party and ask them to leave.

Critical Failure: Was it something your party said? The nykteras attack.

Scaling the Encounter: Scaling an encounter with sprites just right is not a crucial matter, since they're not attacking your party to kill them. However, an encounter group of 1d4 if your party's average level is 1, or one elite of that kind for each level in your party's average level makes sense for sprites and nykteras. For melixies, use an encounter group of 1d4 if your party's average level is lower than 5; if your party's average level is 5 or higher use an encounter group of one elite melixie for ➤

each level in your party's average level. For grigs, use an encounter group of one for each level in your party's average level, and you may freely substitute one elite grig for three grigs. You may use one draxie or one pixie for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level, or one elite of that kind for each multiple of 8 in your party's average level.

Unicorn (B1). One of these legendary beasts has staked out an unsullied corner of the swamp for itself and defends the place's sanctity against all comers. It uses its innate spell casting to *detect alignment (good)*, and it makes a mental note of the results. However, even good characters who appear to be harming the swamp in some way rouse its suspicion.

A successful DC 15 Nature check by a good character who tries to interact with it, or a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check by anyone, helps turn the unicorn to your party's side:

Critical Success: The unicorn offers to help your party with its Innate Spells.

Success: Your party persuades it to help them with simpler things, like information about the local area or allowing them to rest in its domain, under its protection.

Failure: The unicorn refuses to aid your party.

Critical Failure: Something has gone so terribly wrong that the unicorn attacks. If killing a unicorn is a horrific act in your campaign world, then your party will just have to deal with the consequences.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 6, use one elite unicorn for the encounter.

Fox (B3). Foxes restrict their predation to small animals and insects, so they're not much of a danger to an adventuring party. However, they are sly creatures and a party camping for the night or taking a rest halt may lose something useful to them. A pack of 1d8 red foxes sniffs out that your party has something that they want — it may be an animal familiar small enough to eat, traveler's rations, medicinal herbs, or even just a shiny and attractive object. Have them make a Stealth check against your party's highest Perception DC as they try to infiltrate their camp:

Critical Success: The foxes get in and out without your party noticing at all.

Success: They succeed in stealing something, but your party notices them on the way out.

Failure: Your party notice them before they can snag anything.

Critical Failure: Your party notices them before they can even make a move.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3 use one elite red fox for the encounter. If your party's average level is 4-5, use one fading fox (B3). If your party's average level is higher than 5, use a pack of one fading fox for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Frogs (B2). Frogs are not aggressive predators, but even so an amphibian's got to eat — and the larger the frog, the bigger its prey. When your party makes its way through the swamp, they draw the attention of one giant frog. If any party member is small or smaller, or there is a familiar or other animal companion present, the frog lashes out instinctively and tries to swallow it. It leaves alone anyone of medium or larger size.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite giant frog for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. That should scale the encounter for higher-level parties without capsizing the lily pads from too many humanoid-sized frogs crowding onto them.

Hippopotamus (B2). Hippopotami are not predators, but they are bad-tempered and they get aggressive if they don't like the looks of you. Your party comes upon one hippopotamus lolling in a muddy riverbank or lakeshore. Have them make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, they set it off, and it charges them.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 3-4, use one weak hippopotamus for the encounter. Otherwise, use a herd of one hippopotamus for each multiple of 5 in your party's average level as the encounter group. You may freely substitute one behemoth hippopotamus for two hippopotami.

Krooth (B1). Krooth feed on amphibious reptiles and reptilian humanoids, so unless your party includes members who fit that description, the krooth that they encounter lumbering through the swamp does not see them as food. However, they are intensely territorial and

respond ferociously if they feel threatened. Have your party make a DC 20 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that sets off the krooth and it attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is below 6, feel free to re-roll for a different encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use one weak krooth for the encounter. If your party's average level is 11-15, use one elite krooth. If your party's average level is 15 or higher use a mated pair of krooths for the encounter group. Female krooths are particularly territorial.

Leshy (B1, B2, B3). Wetlands, with their abundant moisture and nutrient-rich muck, create an agreeable environment for these intelligent and ambulatory plants. A swamp can maintain a diverse population of leshys, so it's not at all unusual to find a mixed group. See *Scaling the Encounter* for suggestions on determining the encounter group.

Despite the fact that they can move about, leshys do not wander. If you encounter them, it is because you have stumbled into a corner of the swamp they have determined to defend. You may require that your party make a successful DC 15 Nature or Perception check to realize that what looks like jumbled ground cover has appendages and eyes that follow them. Leshys are not necessarily hostile; how they respond to your party depends on whether or they sense that your party is a threat to them and their home. If you wish, you may have your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check in dealing with the leshys:

Critical Success: The leshys like your party and allow them to rest here. If your party is attacked (by a pursuer, for instance), they fight alongside them as friendly NPCs.

Success: The leshys like your party well enough. They agree to help your party by using their *speak with plants* spell to glean useful knowledge from some trees who have lived here for a long time. They allow your party to stay here for one rest period, but no more.

Failure: The leshys makes a noise that ought to be interpreted as skepticism. They tell your party to move along.

Critical Failure: Whatever your party said or did, the leshys interpret it as hostile. They attack.

Scaling the Encounter: Different types of vegetation share wetlands, and so do different types of leshy. Construct the encounter group as you please, or according to the type of plant life that dominates in that particular area. Use one leaf leshy (B1) or vine leshy (B3) for each level in your party's average level, and you may

freely substitute one flytrap leshy (B2) for 10 leaf and/or vine leshys.

Lizards (B1). While some lizards grow big enough to pose a threat, it's not certain (or perhaps even likely) that they will attack your party. Even giant lizards are content to feed on small animals. Use one giant gecko as a catch-all for any big lizard that your party might find climbing up or down a tree trunk or padding through the muck. It's minding its own business for the most part. You may require your party to make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone in your party makes a false move that triggers an attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite giant gecko for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite giant chameleon (B2) for two elite giant geckos.

That Burned Down, Fell Over, Then Sank into the Swamp

What is a unicorn doing in a swamp? Whatever it wants, really. Given that wetlands are sometimes heavily forested, it makes sense to suggest that beings more commonly associated with forests may be found here. It's also a plausible way to give these iconic creatures a more prominent role in this book.

Monkey (B3). Monkeys are not incapable of aggression, but to larger creatures they are generally agents of mischief rather than aggressors. They know that they can use their agility to steal what they want from humans and humanoids. It could be food, or even just a shiny and attractive object. One monkey tries to sneak up on your party while they camp for the night or take a rest halt. Have it make a Thievery check against your party's highest Perception DC:

Critical Success: The monkey gets in and out without your party noticing at all.

Success: It succeeds in stealing something, but your party notices it on the way out.

Failure: Your party notices it before it can snag anything.

Critical Failure: Your party notices it before it can even make a move.

Scaling the Encounter: If you want to create a more challenging encounter, use one elite monkey. If your party's average level is 2 or higher, you may use a monkey swarm (B3) instead of a lone monkey, or an elite

monkey swarm if your party's average level is higher than 5. It is hard, after all, to surpass the amusement value of a barrel full of monkeys.

Opossum (B3). Opossums of normal size do not make an encounter of note, but when they grow big enough, they might. Normal opossums shy away from larger creatures, but giant opossums fight back if they feel threatened and they're large enough so that their claws leave a mark. Your party comes upon one giant opossum, either scampering through ground cover or hanging from a tree branch sturdy enough to support its weight. You may have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that sets off the opossum and causes it to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a pack of one giant opossum for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level as the encounter group. You may freely substitute one khavrugodon (B3) for four opossums.

Porcupine (B3). Porcupines are neither aggressive nor predatory and what armament they do have is mostly defensive in nature. However, giant porcupines are confident enough in their size that they can charge a creature perceived as a threat and force it to deal with the weapons it possesses. Your party comes across one of these giant porcupines as it scuttles across the forest floor or browses in the undergrowth. Have them make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that sets off the porcupine and causes it to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: Porcupines are mostly solitary creatures, but they sometimes forage in groups, especially in winter. If you want to create a more challenging encounter, use a prickle of one giant porcupine for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite giant porcupine for three giant porcupines.

Quetz Couatl (B2). As far as your party goes, an encounter with a quetz couatl is probably best understood as a chance to help your party along when they're struggling. With its impressive size, spectacular coloration and ability to fly, its appearance is designed for a bit of divine intervention, and that's how you can use it. The quetz couatl may be acting on behalf of a good-aligned deity followed by a party member, or it may be following them of its own accord, waiting to step in when they seem to be at a dead end.

This assumes that your party is good-aligned or, at worst (from the quetz couatl's point of view) lawful neutral. If your party is predominantly evil, it may choose to hinder

them instead. Perhaps it steps in to defend good-aligned creatures from your party.



While spectacular in size and appearance, the quetz couatl is built to run errands for "good" aligned entities.

Rats (B1). You find rats everywhere they can find food. 1d4 giant rats sniff out your party's food rations as they cross paths with each other, most likely when your party takes a rest stop among the trees and provide a stationary target. They don't attack party members who don't interfere with their basic mission of acquiring food. But unless they are stopped, they eventually account for all of your party's rations, making off with what they don't eat on the spot.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 2-3, use one rat swarm (B1) for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 3, use an encounter group of one elite rat swarm for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level.

Rhinoceros (B2). Rhinoceros are not a common sight in wetlands, but they find enough grasses and other plants here to survive. Your party interrupts one rhinoceros as it

grazes. If they're in a temperate or tropical wetlands, it's a rhinoceros; if they're in a sub-arctic zone it's a woolly rhinoceros (B2). It is not aggressive — as a herbivore, it does not hunt for food. But if it feels threatened it becomes a dangerous foe. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that the rhinoceros interprets as a threat. It charges.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use one weak rhinoceros for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 7, use a herd of one rhinoceros for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

For woolly rhinoceros, use a weak normal rhinoceros with the Cold Adaptation ability if your party's average level is lower than 4. If your party's average level is 4-5, use one weak woolly rhinoceros for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 9, use a herd of one woolly rhinoceros for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level for the encounter group.

Skunk (B3). Your party stumbles upon a skunk lurking among the ground cover. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, someone makes a false move that sets off the skunk and it directs its Spray Musk ability at the nearest party member.

Scaling the Encounter: Skunks are solitary creatures. If you wish to make the encounter more challenging (and stinkier) use an elite skunk for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 2, use one elite giant skunk (B3).

Weasels (B3). On dry ground, someone at the front of your party's march order accidentally steps into a burrow housing enough weasels to cause trouble when they get angry and defend their home. You may allow your party a DC 10 Perception or Survival check to spot the burrow in time to avoid it or give warning to whomever is about to disturb it. The burrow houses a pack of 2d4 weasels.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish to make the encounter more challenging, use an encounter group of one elite weasel for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one megalictis (B3) for four elite giant weasels, or one elite megalictis for six elite giant weasels.

Treasure: There is a 10% chance that they are actually mink, and their pelts would be of some value to furriers — 1 gp for normal-sized mink, and 3 gp for a megalictis. You may require a successful DC 15 Nature check for your party to tell the difference between mink and weasels.

Vulture (B3). Vultures contribute so much to the pall of gloom and despair that hangs over some wetlands that they practically blend into the background. But when your party spots what appears to be an oversized vulture picking at a carcass, they might want to exercise some care. Ordinary vultures are mere scavengers and can be chased off without much trouble. However, a giant vulture is a different matter. Confident in its size and strength, it is prepared to defend its food source against all comers. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. If it fails, a party member has made a false move that persuades the vulture to attack.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak giant vulture for the encounter. Otherwise, use a flock of one giant vulture for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite giant vulture for two giant vultures.

TABLE 10.4

Humanoids - Wetlands

d100	ENCOUNTER
1-4	Azarketi
5-12	Boggard
13-18	Catfolk
19-28	Elves
29-31	Eunemvro
32-37	Gnolls
38-43	Goblins
44-49	Hag, Green
50-54	Hobgoblins
55-57	Kovintus
58-67	Lizardfolk
68-71	Ogre
72-79	Orcs
80-84	Planar Scion, Undine
85-90	Ratfolk
91-94	Tengu
95-100	Werecreature

Azarketi (B3). Azarketi mostly keep to their native territories in the deep ocean, but a few of them explore the wider world and interact with land-based communities. Your party crosses paths with one such azarketi explorer that has established a relationship to one or more communities in the wetlands. Depending on what else is going on in this corner of your campaign world, it may ask your party for information on what is

going on in the area, or it may be willing to provide your party with such information. It might also offer your party a sidequest, if the settlement with which it has ties faces a threat from monsters or some other menace.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one azarketi explorer for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite azarketi explorer for three azarketi explorers.

Boggard (B1). It looks like an oversized frog walking on its hind legs — and wearing primitive armor — but it's really a boggard scout spying on your party while trying to hide among the reeds. It's part of a small settlement of these vicious amphibian humanoids, and it's probably out foraging or on its way to spy on its neighbors. Marking down your party as unwelcome strangers, it tries to bully them into clearing off.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one boggard scout for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one boggard warrior for two boggard scouts; or one elite boggard scout for three boggard scouts; or one elite boggard warrior for four boggard scouts. You may also substitute one boggard swampseer for three boggard scouts or one elite boggard swampseer for five boggard scouts as the group's leader.

Catfolk (B1). Your party encounters one catfolk pouncer possessed with wanderlust and traveling the world, as is the habit with amurrans. Either their paths literally cross, or it hails them with a friendly greeting while lazing about on dry land. It is eager to know what your party is doing here, but it has no ulterior motive than pure curiosity. It freely shares whatever knowledge it has.



A catfolk pouncer may make a useful NPC in the sort of encounters that low-level parties are likely to face. You may allow your party a DC 10 Diplomacy check to

convince it to travel a while in their company and share in the adventure. However, if your party is predominantly evil, a critical success is required.

Scaling the Encounter: The farther from catfolk's tropical homelands, the more likely you will find them traveling alone. If this encounter happens in tropical wetlands, use an encounter group of 1d4 catfolk pouncers; otherwise, there is only one. If you want to raise the level of the encounter to make it worth the while of a higher-level party, use elite catfolk pouncers.

Elves. Wetlands with trees may house a native elf population. Your party encounters a group of elves from a nearby community. A wide range of plausible possibilities covers their reason for being here. Perhaps they are just hunting or gathering, or they're on a routine patrol to look out for possible threats to their community. Perhaps they're a war party, acting on information that a hostile group of orcs or goblins is about. Perhaps they are pursuing a criminal, or looking for one of their own who has gone missing. Much should depend on what else is going on in this corner of your campaign world. Make it fit as closely as you like.

How the elves react to your party depends a lot on their mission and your party's composition. Obviously, a party with elves in it is more likely than not to receive friendly treatment. Conversely, they regard a party with traditional enemies of the elves in it with suspicion or even hostility. However, if your party establishes a rapport with this group, they may be willing to provide local lore. They may even ask for your party's help with their mission.

Scaling the Encounter: The baseline encounter group consists of one elf poacher for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may substitute two elf trackers for three elf poachers to keep down the size of the encounter group, if you wish. If your party's average level is higher than 18, substitute one elf hunter or priest for three elf poachers as the group's leader.

Eunemvro (B3). If your party comes upon one of these odd, extraplanar humanoids it is a good bet that there are undead nearby. Destroying undead is the main — if not sole — focus of eunemvro's existence, and this one is pursuing a lead on a group of undead creatures or a powerful undead, like a lich. Eunemvro are aloof and it rarely occurs to them to ask strangers for help, so it's not a given that it offers your party a sidequest to come along with it. In fact, it becomes hostile if it suspects that your party harbors someone who practices necromancy. However, it may be persuaded to accompany your party for a while if destroying undead are involved; you may require a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check.

Scaling the Encounter: If you suspect that the encounter will turn hostile, use a weak eunemvvo for the encounter if your party's average level is lower than 5. Conversely, if your party's average level is higher than 8, use an encounter group of one elite eunemvvo for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level.

Gnolls (B1). Your party crosses paths with one gnoll hunter picking its way through the swamp. It's scouting for settlements with anything worth taking, or looking for isolated fishermen or traders to victimize. Keeping that in mind, it probably has more important things to do than hassle your party. However, it's quite possible that it will bully them for useful information and if it senses weakness it might even attack them despite being outnumbered.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use a weak gnoll hunter for the encounter. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one gnoll hunter for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may substitute one elite gnoll cultist and/or one gnoll sergeant for two gnoll hunters as the group's leaders. If you want to keep down the size of the encounter, you may freely substitute one elite gnoll hunter for two gnoll hunters.

If the gnoll group is relatively large this may be an actual raiding party. They may be on their way back from a successful raid, spattered with blood and taking with them captives whom they will sacrifice to their demon god. In either case, they ignore your party if your party declines to interfere with them, guided as they are by their primary purpose.

Treasure: If the gnolls are coming back from a successful raid, use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the fruits of their labor.

Goblins (B1). Goblins tend to make their lairs elsewhere, but they come to the marshes as a good place to find isolated victims that they can slaughter and loot, or take captive and torture for their amusement. Your party spots a group of 2d4 goblin warriors. As small as they are, they're also mean and cocky. So it should come as no surprise when they treat your party as a target of opportunity.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d6 weak goblin warriors. If your party's average level is 4-6, use an encounter group of 1d4 elite goblin warriors. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite goblin warrior for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one goblin commando (B1), goblin pyro (B1), or goblin dog (B1) for one elite goblin warrior or two goblin warriors. You may also substitute

one goblin war chanter (B1) for one elite goblin warrior or two goblin warriors as the group's leader.

A large group of goblins is likely to be a substantial raiding party on their way from their lair. Or they may be a raiding party on their way back, with loot and 1d6 human and/or humanoid captives. Consider that there is a 5% chance that any given captive is someone of consequence, who could provide your party with a significant reward for their safe return home. In either case, the encounter group has more important things to do than deal with your party. However, if your party finds a goblin lair, they fight to the death to defend it. In addition to the normal treasure found in the lair, there are 1d8 human and/or humanoid captives bound and eager for rescue.

Treasure: If the encounter group is a returning raiding party, use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value.



Hag, Green (B1). Your party hears what sounds like the voice of a young woman crying for help coming from deeper into the swamp. Upon inspection, they see her half-submerged, evidently struggling to get out. Unfortunately, it's really a green hag trying to lure them into quicksand-like mire. It looks forward to the pleasure of watching them struggle, then perish. If necessary, it will help the process along.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak green hag for the encounter. If your party's average level is 6-7, use one elite green hag. If your

party's average level is higher than 7, use a coven of three green hags for the encounter group.

Treasure: This bog is the hag's lair, and it keeps trophies from its previous victims here. Use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value.

Hobgoblins (B1). Wetlands are not particularly friendly to conventional military operations, so the hobgoblins that your party encounters here are most likely mercenaries scouting or pursuing a scattered foe on behalf of their employers. As such, they're a business-like, no-nonsense bunch with strong leadership. They may be suspicious of your party — are they friend or foe? But they won't attack for unprofessional reasons, such as wanton cruelty or boredom.

Your party comes a lone hobgoblin soldier. It may be scouting the swamp to get the lay of the land, or running messages between different parts of an army. It may be a straggler looking to rejoin its unit. It's not necessarily hostile unless it suspects you of being the enemy, but it could interrogate your party closely, looking for information that will help its side.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one hobgoblin soldier for each level in your party's average level. You may substitute one goblin dog (B1) for one hobgoblin soldier as long as goblin dogs do not outnumber hobgoblins. Also, you may freely substitute one elite hobgoblin soldier or one hobgoblin archer (B1) for four hobgoblin soldiers. You may substitute one hobgoblin general (B1) for six hobgoblin soldiers as the group's leader.

A large group of hobgoblins indicates that the winds of war are brewing — although ultimately, that sort of thing should be determined by what else is going on in your campaign world. Unless your party has stumbled upon the hobgoblin lair, a large hobgoblin encounter group would be a war party on their way to or from the war zone. In any event, they have more important business than attacking your party. In fact, they might even size them up and try to recruit them to fill out the ranks.

Kovintus (B3). Kovintus in wetlands live in treehouses or hollowed-out boles of big mangroves, or on rafts with shelter from the elements. Your party meets one kovintus geomancer out for recreation; or perhaps it is on its way to leave an offering for a local deity. If your party wishes to speak with it, have them make a DC 15 Diplomacy check:

Critical Success: The kovintus is willing to share its maps and use its primal spells for their benefit.

Success: It shares its maps, but offers no more.

Failure: It is wary of your party and it does not agree to help them at all.

Critical Failure: Your party angers the kovintus to the point where it attacks them.

Scaling the Encounter: If you wish, you may use an encounter group of one elite kovintus geomancer for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

Lizardfolk (B1). Your party has entered territory claimed by a lizardfolk tribe. A patrol from that tribe spots your party. Lizardfolk are not innately aggressive or predatory, but they are deeply suspicious of outsiders and protective of their territory and, by extension, their young. Defusing a confrontation with them — even a purely accidental one — may require some delicacy. You may have your party make a DC 25 Diplomacy check (DC 15 if someone speaks Draconic or Iruxi):

Critical Success: The lizardfolk extend their hospitality.

Success: That they lower their weapons and let your party go on their way.

Failure: They stand their ground; your party may turn back, but the lizardfolk refuse to let them pass.

Critical Failure: They attack.

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one lizardfolk defender (B1) or lizardfolk scout (B1) for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite of either type for four of either type. You may also substitute one lizardfolk stargazer (B1) for two lizardfolk defenders or lizardfolk scouts, or one elite stargazer for six defenders or scouts, as the group's leader.

Ogre (B1). Your party spots one ogre warrior out scouting the wetlands for potential raiding targets on behalf of its tribe. It is brutish enough and sufficiently confident in its powers to try to take them captive, or kill them outright if they resist.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak ogre warrior for the encounter. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one ogre for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite ogre warrior for two ogre warriors, or three ogre gluttons (B1) for four ogre warriors. You may also substitute one ogre boss (B1) or one onidoshi (B2) for two ogre warriors as the group's leader.

Orcs (B1). Orcs are not particularly comfortable living in a swamp, but they do visit looking for raiding targets. Wetlands elven communities are particularly attractive

to them. Your party crosses paths with 1d6 orc brutes on just such a reconnaissance mission. As brutal as they are, there's no guarantee that they'll pay your party much attention. Their leader may look your party over and decide that they're not worth the bother. But they may also decide to interrogate your party for information about the surrounding area, and they'll easily resort to violence if your party is slow to cooperate. They are less likely to give your party a break if there are elves in it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use an encounter group of 1d4 weak orc brutes. If your party's average level is 4-5, use an encounter group of 1d6 orc brutes. If your party's average level is higher than 5 use a baseline encounter group of one orc warrior (B1) for each level in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite orc warrior for two orc warriors. You may also substitute one orc warchief (B1) for one orc warrior as the group's leader.

Treasure: If the orcs are coming back from a successful raid, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of their plunder. Consider that there is also a 20% chance that the bandits have with them 1d4 captives. The identity of this captive is left to you as GM, as it should depend on local circumstances and fit into your campaign world.

Planar Scion, Undine (B2). Your party may spot what looks like a village of rafts floating on the swamp in the distance, but they actually encounter one undine hydromancer who has come ashore from its ship-town in search of firewood and materials for repairing their rafts. It sees no reason to get aggressive with them; in fact, it is more likely to ask for leads on where it can get what it's looking for. If your party can give it a little help, it may be willing to return the favor. At this point you may have your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check; success means that the undine is willing to use one of its spells to aid them.

Scaling the Encounter: An undine encounter is unlikely to turn hostile, but if you want to scale up the encounter use a landing party of undine: one undine hydromancer for each level in your party's average level, and you may freely substitute one elite undine hydromancer for three undine hydromancers.

Ratfolk (B1). If ysoki are part of your campaign world, your party may run into them in wetlands. They find ample food here, as well as isolation from their enemies. They like to site their communities near waterways that allow their merchants to do a little business with the wider world. Your party crosses paths with one ratfolk grenadier out scavenging for useful items.

Ratfolk are suspicious of outsiders, and upon spotting you this lone grenadier might try to hide in the reeds and challenge your party from concealment. If they can overcome its distrust — you may require a DC 20 Diplomacy check — it may be willing to share local knowledge and trade alchemical tools and ingredients.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-3, use one weak ratfolk grenadier. Otherwise, use a baseline encounter group of one ratfolk grenadier for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite ratfolk grenadier for two ratfolk grenadiers.

If the group consists of four or more ratfolk, they have a cart full of trade goods and a draft animal and they're on their way to join a caravan. In this case, gaining their trust could result in a sidequest working for them as caravan guards.

Tengu (B1). Given that these humanoids with crow-like features are widely distrusted, it's safe bet that a tengu encountered in the swamp is an outcast of some sort. Probably, it has been kicked out of a settlement on suspicion of being up to no good.

Your party crosses paths with one tengu sneak. It is not aggressive, but it may be desperate. So it resorts to the skills that got it into trouble in the first place. At your discretion, it flags down your party and strikes up a conversation, perhaps offering useful local knowledge to keep them distracted. You may have it make a Society check against the highest Intimidation DC in your party as it weighs the risks and rewards of trying to pick a pocket. If it succeeds, the tengu has decided to go for it — i.e., your party has failed to scare it off. It then targets the character with the lowest Intimidation DC.

Scaling the Encounter: It's almost unheard of to find a large group of tengu wandering the wilderness. However, if you want to create a more challenging encounter, use one elite tengu sneak for the encounter, or a group of one normal tengu sneak for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level. Half of them try to distract your party from the other half trying to pickpocket them.

Werecreature (B1, B2). There's nothing like a casual meeting with a lycanthrope to make a sojourn through a dismal swamp even creepier. To determine what manner of werebeast your party encounters, roll on Table 10.4.1:

TABLE 10.4.1**Werecreature - Wetlands**

d8	ENCOUNTER
1	Werebear
2	Wereboar
3-4	Wererat
5	Weretiger
6-8	Werewolf

All werecreatures assume their animal form if the encounter comes down to combat, although they may choose their hybrid form instead if they have access to a weapon.

Werebear (B1). Your party comes across a werebear that has claimed this corner of the wetlands as its domain. Perhaps it was once a druid, or a wandering ranger who volunteered for this fate to protect the creatures and plants therein from harm. It is not automatically hostile to your party, especially if there are no evil characters present, and it may be willing to provide them with useful information about the surrounding area.

On the other hand, an encounter could create difficulties for your party if the werebear decides that one of the player characters would make a good apprentice (and successor to its self-appointed duties as the local guardian). Once it realizes that there is a druid or a ranger in your party, a light goes on in its head — and it won't take "No" for an answer.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is higher than 7, use one elite werebear for the encounter.

Treasure: Because they are territorial, your party may encounter a werebear in or near its lair. In that case, use the guidelines for lairs in *How to Use This Book* to determine the value of its treasure.

Wereboar (B2). A wereboar met by chance in the swamp was most likely an unfortunate resident of a nearby settlement who went hunting or fishing alone and ran afoul of a wereboar. It goes about looking for victims to share its fate, hoping that a lone boar will lure an unwary hunter, as was once done to it. A party of adventurers could offer it an even more attractive target — confident in its ability to take at least one of them and drive the others off, it attacks. ➤

Scaling the Encounter: Use a baseline encounter group of one wereboar for each multiple of two in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite wereboar for three wereboars.

Wererat (B1). One wererat appears to your party in its humanoid form, pretending to be a hunter or fisherman from a nearby community in distress. Perhaps it claims to be lost and it asks to travel with your party for protection until it can regain its bearings. It tries to slip toward the back of the march order and waits for a time when everyone's back is turned to it.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak wererat. If your party's average level is higher than 5, use one elite wererat for each multiple of 6 in your party's average level.

Weretiger (B2). Your party crosses paths with a weretiger on the hunt. If it's hungry, it may stalk and attack your party, though it is more likely to focus on driving off the party members and taking the pack animals than on hunting the party members themselves. Otherwise, it may assume human form and treat your party as fellow travelers, content to barter with them and exchange information about unknown places.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1, use one weak weretiger for the encounter. If your party's average level is higher than 8, use an encounter group of one elite weretiger for each multiple of 9 in your party's average level.

Werewolf (B1). One werewolf spots your party and cannot turn down the opportunity to claim more victims. However, it is clever enough to approach them in its human form, pretending to be a trader or a hunter in distress. Once your party gets close and drops its guard, it morphs into its hybrid form and attacks.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is 1-2, use one weak werewolf. If your party's average level is higher than 6, use an encounter group of one elite werewolf for each multiple of 7 in your party's average level.

TABLE 10.5

Humans - Wetlands

d20	ENCOUNTER
1	Adventurers
2-5	Bandits/Pirates
6	Druid
7	Exiles
8	Explorer
9-13	Fishermen
14	Fugitives
15-17	Hunters
18-19	Merchants
20	Military

Adventurers. Unless your party contains all of the adventurers in your campaign world, it's at least theoretically possible that they'll run into another adventuring party navigating the swamp. Perhaps they're pursuing the same objective as your party. Perhaps they have a different mission; perhaps they're headed for a site that your party knows nothing about (like ancient ruins said to hold lost treasures). Perhaps they're lost and starving, or wounded, or cursed.

How they react to your party depends on a variety of factors. Are they rivals pursuing the same goal? If not, perhaps this party is willing to share useful information. In fact, if your party is stuck and having a hard time advancing the storyline of your campaign, a friendly encounter like this can help steer them in the right direction. Differences in alignment may also shape how the two parties react to each other.

Composition of this rival party is up to you and can vary according to circumstance. Any party in the wilderness would be well-advised to have someone accomplished in Survival, such as a ranger, with them. Conversely, a party that is struggling may be in a bad way precisely because no one is well-versed in Survival or Nature.

Scaling the Encounter: Unless there is some possibility that this encounter turns hostile, the relative level of the party is mainly a matter of affect. A higher-level party might project self-confidence and calm (or arrogance), while a beginning-level party might stumble about, unsure of themselves. If you're leaning towards a hostile encounter, however, consider that the total challenge level of the party should be your party's average level -2, more or less.

Bandits/Pirates. Whether you call them bandits or swamp pirates, armed robbers find no shortage of places to hole up and hide in wetlands. There are plenty of narrow inlets and creeks where only small boats fit, and which require intimate knowledge of the waterways to avoid getting snagged or running aground. Mangrove swamps and other wetlands with heavy vegetation offer concealment from unwelcome company, too.

Even though a party of adventurers like yours is better-armed than their typical target, it's not out of the question that they'll attack. They're used to traveling to busy waterways to find victims, so when someone like your party arrives in their front yard, they may figure that they might as well save themselves the travel. Also, they're bound to be suspicious of strangers. They may think that your party is a posse sent out after them — or that they're out to rob them of what they robbed from others.

Scaling the Encounter: If your party's average level is lower than 4, use an encounter group of 1d4+1 weak bandits. Otherwise, use an encounter group of one bandit for each multiple of 2 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one elite bandit for two bandits. You may also substitute one gang leader for three bandits as the group's leader.

Treasure: You may decide that your party has surprised the bandits in their lair. If so, use the guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value and contents. Do so also if you decide that the bandits encountered are on their way back from a successful raid. Consider that there is also a 20% chance that the bandits have with them a high-value captive whom they intend to ransom. The identity of this captive is left to you as GM, as it should depend on local circumstances and fit into your campaign world.

Druid. Your party crosses paths with one druid in his or her native element. Druids in the wild may wander, with no fixed abode, but it's at least as likely that they protect a patch of wetlands with fierce devotion. How druids react to your party depends almost entirely on whether or not they think your party represents a menace to the natural environment. A druid who is persuaded that your party's intentions are benign may be willing to help by providing local lore, casting spells for their benefit, or even joining them as a friendly NPC as long as it does not involve leaving the swamp.

Scaling the Encounter: Since there are no NPC templates for druids in the core rules, use a druid of your own design, or from another source. If you anticipate a hostile encounter, the druid's level should be equal to your party's level -2. If not, its level matters less as a matter of play balance, and it should fit whatever purpose you have in mind for the encounter.

But the Fourth One Stayed Up

Conducting military operations in a swamp is hard. The ground is too unsteady for an army to stand and fight, but at the same time the water is too shallow to support deep-draft warships. As the King of Swamp castle in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* unwittingly reveals, it's quite difficult building a fortress in wetlands.

Yes, Alfred the Great of England famously waged war on the Viking invaders from the marshes of Somerset. So you may consider that bands of irregular fighters may operate from hiding places in wetlands, if there's something like that going on in your world. But more often, armies deploy on solid ground and if there's a swamp present, they'll use it to anchor their flank as effectively as a major river. Hence, soldiers encountered in wetlands are likely to be engaged in more peripheral activities, like scouting or pursuing fugitives.

Exiles. Your party encounters 1d6 humans or humanoids who could serve as a source of adventure hooks. From their appearance, they have obviously seen better days. They have fled their home for any of a variety of reasons: perhaps they are royalty or nobility who have been usurped; perhaps the opposite is the case and they are failed usurpers themselves and they now fear for their lives. Or perhaps they have gotten caught up in some kind of blood feud in their homeland and that's why they fear for their lives. Whatever the circumstance, they have come to the swamp because they need some place to hide.

No matter their reason for being here, they should offer your party an adventure hook of some sort. It may involve protecting the exiles from their real (or imagined) pursuers. It may involve returning to their former home and securing an important item that was left behind (a family heirloom, a badge of office), perhaps even helping them return home and force their way back into their former position of prominence. At the very least, exiles can provide your party with information about their former home territory, which in turn could be a key location in your campaign.

Use any NPC template you like for the exiles, depending on the backstory you assign them.

Explorers. Your party bumps into a small party driven by curiosity to discover the heretofore unknown — in this case, a wetlands system that has been mostly untouched by human hands. The group consists of one chronicler

and one guide, and 1d4 bodyguards. Perhaps they are here thanks to the sponsorship of an academy or a ruler eager to know more about the world, or perhaps the explorer is a wealthy eccentric who undertook this expedition on his or her own.

Such an encounter is not likely to be hostile. Explorers are open and curious, despite the fact that the swamp has more than enough hazards to keep them on their guard. Instead, you may treat this as an opportunity for your party to receive some help from a knowledgeable stranger — the explorer is likely to have excellent maps of nearby areas (and knowledge of those areas) and is willing to share them. Conversely, an expedition that has been in the field for a while may be running short on cartography supplies and other necessities and may be willing to pay well if your party can help supply what they lack. Also, if your party is in the mood for a sidequest, an explorer may offer one: If the expedition is headed into particularly dangerous territory, it may need additional guards to keep it safe.

Fishermen. Your party comes across a 1d6 fishermen from a nearby settlement using spears or bows. It looks more like hunting than fishing with bait, but they're after prey that swims. They fish from dry land or from rafts or boats. They're used to being left alone in this treacherous environment, and because they have to get fairly close to their targets, they're always on the alert for predators like crocodiles. So they may react to your party with suspicion, even hostility. You may require your party to make a DC 10 Diplomacy check to win them over.

On the other hand, if they're friendly and they have fish in hand, they're willing to sell fish from their catch for half of what a tavern meal would cost — the hitch being, of course, that you have to clean and smoke or cook it yourself before it goes bad. With just bit of coaxing, they're also happy to provide your party with local knowledge, including tales of monsters in the water nearby and of course, stories of the one that got away.

Treat fishermen as dockhands armed with either javelins or shortbows. In both cases, the projectiles are tethered to the fisherman, allowing them to pull in their prey. However, this also limits their range to 50 feet.

Fugitives. Your party crosses paths with 1d6 bedraggled humans or humanoids stumbling through the swamp. They look to be in less-than-optimal shape, but they're moving as fast as the difficult terrain permits. Most, if not all of them have a manacle around one wrist, with the other manacle dangling on its chain. They're escaped prisoners who have fled into the swamp. From whom they are fleeing and why they were imprisoned in the

first place is up to you, and ought to depend on where in your campaign world this encounter takes place.

How the encounter plays out depends not only on how your party reacts, but on the state of mind you assign to the fugitives. On the one hand, it's hard to imagine that they went to the trouble of a jailbreak just to allow a bunch of strangers to take their freedom back from them. On the other hand, they might be desperate with hunger and exhaustion and ready to give up. Each of them has learned whip their freed manacle by the chain and wield it as a club.

Treat the fugitives as bandits, but without weapons or armor.

Treasure: Fugitives have no treasure.

Hunter. Your party comes across one hunter picking his or her way through the swamp, looking for game. The hunter may have set up a nearby encampment as a base of operations, but has probably come here from the nearest settlement.

Depending on your party's appearance, a hunter may act with caution, even suspicion at first. Hunters understand that there are always strange folk about when you operate in a wilderness away from home. However, if your party is not hostile the hunter may be willing to help by trading goods and supplying food and local knowledge. You may have your party make a DC 15 Diplomacy check to get on the hunter's good side.

Treat a hunter as a NPC from the forester class, with the size of the encounter group depending on which template you decide to use.

Scaling the Encounter: The encounter group consists of one forester for each multiple of 4 in your party's average level. You may freely substitute one hunter or one elite foresters for two foresters.

Merchants. Your party spots some merchants moving their goods through the swamp by raft or boat. The group consists of 2d6 merchants and 2d8 guards. Traveling merchants could help your party by selling them necessary items, exchanging hard money for treasure items or providing knowledge of just about anywhere in your campaign world. Where are these traders going, and where did they originate? They may also be interested in hiring your party as additional guards if they fear pirates.

Treasure: Use the guidelines for pocket change in How to Use This Book to determine the total value of the caravaners' individual possessions. In addition, use the

guidelines for lairs in How to Use This Book to determine the value of goods and/or hard money on board.

Military. Wetlands are not friendly to large-scale military operations. The terrain makes it too difficult to move whole armies, not to mention the supplies that they need. However, if war touches this corner of your campaign world, your party may cross paths with outriders from one side or another who are looking for useful information. In fact, they may be pursuing a foe that their side has defeated, assuming that fleeing soldiers have entered the swamp. They won't attack your party without provocation. However, they do stop your party to grill them for information, and possibly enlist their help with their mission.

Treat a typical, rank-and-file soldier as a guard. If mounted, the horse is a riding horse. Leaders should qualify as veterans or knights, and they get to ride warhorses if you want them on horseback.

Scaling the Encounter: As a rough guideline, the encounter group should consist of two guards for each multiple of 3 in your party's average level. You may substitute one watch officer for three guards and/or one captain of the guard for six guards to serve as the group's leader.

TABLE 10.6

Watch Out! - Wetlands

d20	ENCOUNTER
1-3	Falling Branch
4	Falling Tree
5	Hampering Web
6-10	Quicksand
11-12	Submerged Log
13	Swamp Gas
14-15	Thick Mist
16	Tracks
17-19	Tripping Hazard
20	Voices in the Mist

Falling Branch. Look out below! A high branch falls from a dead, diseased or injured tree as your party passes by. Whatever the cause, the branch is heavy enough, or it falls from high enough, to leave a dent. Determine the party member closest to the tree in question, or pick one at random. Treat the falling branch as a melee attack with a +0 bonus that causes 1d6 bludgeoning damage.

Falling Tree. Timber! The decayed remains of a dead tree topples over just as your party nears it. Choose the angle at which it falls onto them. Or roll 1d12 to determine the tree's bearing: 12 o'clock means that it is dead ahead; 1 o'clock means that its bearing is 30 degrees to the right; 6 o'clock means that it falls onto the party from directly behind, etc. The tree falls onto the party from that bearing. The trunk — the part heavy enough to cause damage — is 20 feet long. Anyone in the path of the trunk must make a successful DC 10 Reflex save to get out of the way. Anyone who fails takes 2d8 bludgeoning damage. Anyone who succeeds must move out of the spaces into which the tree falls; if this means moving into a space occupied by someone else, that character must make a successful DC 15 Reflex save to avoid a collision, or else take 1d4 bludgeoning damage and fall prone.

Hampering Web. There is a finely-woven spider's web between two trees right in your party's path, but there is no spider present. Your party may make a DC 15 Perception check to spot the web before someone at the front of the party formation walks right into it. Treat as a hampering web, as per the hazard description in the core rules. In addition, for each failed attempt to escape by the trapped character, there is a 10% chance, cumulative with each new attempt, that one spider swarm appears from out of the darkness and enters the web from the top edge to see what it caught this time (if your party's average level is 5 or higher, consider using an ogre spider).

Quicksand. Your party stumbles into a patch of swamp so treacherous underfoot that it functions like quicksand. Have your party make a DC 15 Nature or Survival check to spot the quicksand before one party member in the front of the party formation steps right into it.

Submerged Log. Your party sees something partially submerged — but what is it? It could be the head of a crocodile, or part of an even more dangerous predator, like a hydra! Have your party make a DC 15 Survival check to realize that it is actually a hollow log stuck in the mud and angled so that the top part can be seen above the water. It's quite harmless — unless you decide that there really is a crocodile or some other predator lurking inside it.

Swamp Gas. As they make their way through the swamp, your party notices the terrible smell of decay and rot, and it just keeps getting worse and worse. Swamp gas is especially strong and noxious here. Have each party member make a DC 15 Fortitude save to avoid being sickened by the stench. Everyone who fails is sickened for the next 1d4 hours — that is, until your party gets clear of the swamp gas and everyone has had the chance to get fresh air back into their lungs.

Consider that there is a 10% chance that the swamp gas spontaneously combusts while your party is in its midst. Pick a random square with at least one party member in it and treat it as the target of the spell *flaming sphere*, except that it burns out after 1 turn.

Thick Mist. A dense mist suddenly sets in over the swamp, and your party is right in the middle of it. For the next 1d4 hours, your party suffers a +4 circumstance penalty to visual Perception regardless of where they go and how far they travel during this time.

Tracks. Your party spots tracks in the frozen ground made by a creature of your choice. At your discretion, they may be fresh enough to lead to an encounter if followed. Or you may allow your party to make a DC 15 Survival check to realize that they are very old, and they will not lead to anything useful. If the check fails, this may lead to an amusing (for you as GM, anyway) wild goose chase.

Tripping Hazard. Pick a party member at the front of the party formation. That character trips over an unseen obstacle — a rock sticking up out of the ground or a half-buried abandoned weapon, for instance. He or she must make a successful DC 10 Reflex save to avoid a hard fall that causes 1d4 damage — and perhaps no small embarrassment in the eyes of the other party members. If you prefer an incident more challenging to your players, consider that the character who trips and falls lands in a mire so treacherous that it is, effectively, quicksand.

Voices in the Mist. Swamps — especially those with heavy vegetation that block lines of sight — have a way of playing tricks on the mind. The mangrove trees close in on you, and the prevalent air of decay and death brings out your anxieties and fears. It shouldn't come as a surprise if your party falls prey to acoustic illusions, thinking that they hear something that isn't there.

Choose a party member to make a DC 15 Survival or Nature check. If it fails, that character believes that he or she has heard a noise made by creature or natural phenomenon to which it presently has no line of sight. It can be as consequential as a dragon's roar from deeper in the swamp, or as eerily intimate as muttering in Orcish coming from behind that mangrove tree. A successful check means that that party member realizes that this is an illusion; either it's not as close as it seems or it isn't real at all.

If you wish, roll on Table 10.6.1 for guidance on what your party thinks it hears:

TABLE 10.6.1**Did You Hear That?**

d10	They Think They Hear...
1	Banshee wailing
2	Giant insects buzzing
3	Human or humanoid calling for help, water splashing
4	Large amphibian croaking
5	Large (or larger) creature splashing through the swamp
6	Panther or other predatory cat snarling
7	Voices speaking in Common
8	Voices speaking in Draconic, with a lizardfolk accent
9	Voices speaking in Elvish
10	Voices speaking in Sylvan

And That's What You're Gettin', Lad....

If the sidebars in this chapter throw you, consider *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* your assigned viewing. The fact that swamps are neither wholly land or wholly water makes them a challenging environment in which to run your party because you should always be aware of which element predominates in a given place, or if one predominates at all. The fun part of wetlands is that they offer a range of creatures (and folk) to encounter as exotic and fantastical as you'll find in the deep forest and the underground.



AFTERWORD

Why This Book Sucks

By now, you have no doubt realized that not every monster from the first three *Bestiaries* is mentioned in this book. I may have felt at one point that it would be good to cover all of them, just so the advertising copy could brag about it. But it was never a realistic hope. If your favorite beast didn't make into *Book of Hidden Paths*, I apologize. In their place, I offer the following explanations, which cover most, if not all, of the absences:

No Angels? No Demons or Devils?

Demons and devils make great antagonists, but as natives of other planes they have no easy hook for placing them in an environment on the Material Plane. With elementals (including mephits), at least, they have an innate connection with an aspect of the Material Plane that can tie them to a particular type of terrain. A water elemental splashing in a tide pool or making waves in the open ocean? That makes at least some sense. All it takes is a little imagination to conjure an excuse for why they would linger outside of their native plane. Set upon by a swarm of fey? The Material Plane is so popular with fey that it's as if they all keep second homes in the woods and rent them out to each other as timeshares.

But an erinyes or a glabrezu? What would they be doing in the Material Plane? There has to be a very particular purpose behind their presence, and that purpose should be tied to your deliberate design of your campaign world and campaign narrative rather than emerging out of the probabilities reflected in a random encounter table.

Same thing with angels. They're a striking addition to a campaign, but it's hard to tie them to a particular likelihood of appearing in a particular environment in the Material Plane because they have to have a very specific reason for being here. That reason, whatever it is, is bound to involve so many details that need to flow organically from your particular campaign.

The City Monster and the Country Monster

Both editions of *Pathfinder* present you with a vast array of creatures with which to populate your campaign world. A few are benevolent; many are not. Some are weak; some are genuinely fearsome. One may also say that some creatures in the *Bestiaries* make less sense — or indeed, they don't make sense at all — in the context of chance encounters in the wilderness. It makes much

more sense to come across them where there is some population density — villages, towns and cities.

So I decided to leave them out of *Book of Hidden Paths*. Not out of any lack of love, but it makes sense to save them for a future book on random encounters in the midst of what passes for civilization in fantasy RPGs.

No Dinosaurs?

I understand that the decision to exclude dinosaurs from this book is a subjective call and, as such, it is subject to controversy. I dunno. Maybe it's just me, but I have always had a hard time mixing and matching dinosaurs with fantasy roleplaying games. I have nothing against them, and nothing against GMs who include them in their campaign world. But for me, dinosaurs bring to mind *The Land That Time Forgot* and the pulp action genre rather than fantasy, so I overlook their inclusion in the *Bestiaries*. Dinosaurs wouldn't faze me at all in a *Savage Worlds* campaign, but they feel like an odd fit with *Pathfinder*. It's probably just me. If you hold a different view, feel free to make some elbow room for them.

Too Much Like a Boss

Some creatures are so rare and/or just so powerful that they are best suited for a starring role. They're designed to be boss monsters, and as such you should place them deliberately in your campaign, if they are to appear at all. Liches and vampires fit that description, for instance. After turning the matter over many times, I decided that linnorms fit that description also.

In short, it just doesn't seem right to use their star power on a random encounter, so I didn't include them in these pages.

Deconstructing Constructs

Constructs like golems and homunculi present a problem similar to that posed by angels, demons and devils: They don't occur naturally in the Material Plane, so it's hard to make a case for them appearing in a particular type of terrain. They have to be created by someone in order to exist at all. Without an innate connection to the natural world, they just don't have a role to play in a book about random wilderness encounters. If you want your party to run into a golem while picking their way through the forest, you'll have to put it there yourself.

Similarly, there are some creatures who don't make a clean fit with any terrain type, and when you combine that with at least one of the other factors I discuss here, I just couldn't figure out how to make use of them. For instance, titans fit this description, as do many creatures that belong predominantly to certain planes other than the Material Plane.

Don't Mention the Official Setting

The *Pathfinder* OGL is fairly generous, but it does place specific references to the official campaign setting off-limits. Therefore, I tried to be circumspect in referring to places and creatures that are very specific to Golarion. If you're looking for a creature that is closely linked to Golarion and don't find it, it is possible that it struck me as too closely linked to the official setting, and that it seemed best avoid any sort of intellectual property-related complications.

It is also possible that some creatures that are closely linked with specific parts of Golarion struck me as too narrowly-focused to be useful *Book of Hidden Paths*, in which I try to take a wide-angle view of fantasy RPG creatures. This came into play with some of the creatures in *Bestiary 3* in particular. For instance, the imperial dragons are specifically, if not exclusively, linked to Tian Xia, the "Asian" part of Golarion. To my mind, however, metallic dragons already incorporate into *Pathfinder* the Asian conception of dragons as beings of wisdom and even benevolence and do a satisfactory job of offsetting the chromatic dragons, which embody the Western conception of dragons. So the imperial dragons strike me as a little redundant, and something that would fit oddly into this book alongside the more general-purpose dragons that we have known and loved since the beginning of fantasy RPGs.

And Finally: What About Pathfinder 1E?

Ramen Sandwich Press launched *Found by the Way*, our series of Pathfinder-compatible location modules, just a few weeks before Paizo announced Pathfinder 2nd Edition. This was not our plan; it was a matter of bad luck and unfortunate timing. Knowing that the transition between editions would happen gradually — that some folks in the Pathfinder community would not abandon 1st Edition right away, and that some subset of them would never switch at all — we promised at the time that we would make our Pathfinder products compatible with both editions for as long as people seemed to want it. It seemed like the best way to cope with an awkward situation.

Now, two years on from the launch of 2nd Edition, I don't know for sure if anyone will buy this book with an eye to using it with the 1st Edition rules. But if anyone has it in mind, I offer this suggestion:

In 2nd Edition, Level takes the place of CR as a guide for understanding a creature's potential for giving your party a good fight. However, if you compare a CR from the 1st Edition Bestiaries with the Level for the same creature in the 2nd Edition Bestiaries, you will, as a general rule, find that the differences between them are modest — if indeed, they differ at all. That is to say, creatures present

similar levels of challenge in both editions. So if you want to use *Book of Hidden Paths* with 1st Edition creatures, a quick-and-dirty rule for doing so is to use the Scaling the Encounter formulas presented in these pages, but substitute that creature's 1st Edition CR for its Level. Assume that 1/2 CR equals Level 0; CR 1/3 equals Level -1; and CR 1/4 equals Level -2. The results will not come out exactly even in every case, but they will be, as the old expression goes, close enough for government work.



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I talk about this in the Introduction to *Book of Hidden Paths*, but random encounters in roleplaying games have always fascinated me. I started with *Dungeons & Dragons* shortly after AD&D became a thing, and the big appendix of random encounters in the AD&D DMG still blows my mind. The fact that encounters could come at you out of nowhere meant that almost anything was possible even if the DM hadn't thought of it, and that appendix demonstrated in graphic form the richness and variety of all the living (and undead) things in the game. All those tables, so many tables....

And yet, I felt — and still feel — that more guidance on how to make random encounters work would be helpful. Again, from the Introduction:

"Okay, so I roll my percentile dice and check the result for the environment through which the party is traveling. It turns up, 'Orc'.... But how many orcs are there? What are they doing here — which, in turn helps answer the related and all-important question, how do they react to meeting the party? It would help to have some cues to jump-start the encounter. But there is no further guidance. Instead, I imagine Gary Gyga glaring at me, visibly annoyed: 'Whaddya mean? It's orcs. Deal with it.'"

So it has always been. The 5th Edition core rules offers a solid discussion of the how's and why's of random encounters, but I think the subject still deserves more. So I wrote *Book of Chance Meetings* to expand on the subject and give DMs a more thorough idea of what might happen when your party bumps into that group of orcs as they plunge into the forest.

You get 10 main chapters, each devoted to a particular type of wilderness terrain: Caverns, Desert, Forest, Grasslands, Hills, Littoral, Mountains, Ocean, Tundra and Wetlands. After a brief discussion of that terrain type, each chapter launches into a series of tables and sub-tables outlining possible plausible encounters. They cover most of the creatures included in the 5th Edition Standard Reference Document, from familiar wild animals to exotic monsters like kraken and purple worms, plus humanoids, various vocations/professions, and physical hazards that you can use for petty harassment (just to remind your players that adventuring isn't all fun and glory). In turn, each table entry discusses how that creature reacts — topics range from how to acquire a pet rat to what that ancient red dragon is thinking as it looks down at your party — how many of them are present (scaled to your party's average level), and what treasure might be gained from defeating it. *Book of Chance Meetings* gives DMs a deep dive into an under-explored aspect of RPGs. Even experienced DMs will find food for thought and fresh ideas about how to make a party food for monsters.

— Douglas Sun

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