



THE DROWNING DEEP



An aquarium of horrors
for the world's greatest role-playing game

THE DROWNING DEEP

MEET THE DROWNED AND DEVOURING DOOM FROM BENEATH THE WAVES...

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THE DROWNING DEEP



Travelers be welcome, and beware. The sea is quixotic by its very nature; calm and serene one moment, raging and cruel the next. However, it is always deep and unknowable. Come, adventurer, and meet what lurks beneath the waves...

CURSE OF THE DEEP ONES

The ocean is too deep and wild to be held by any single god. For every Poseidon, Umberlee and Zeboim, there is something darker and more eldritch far below the unforgiving fathoms. Whether it be Cthulu or something yet stranger, Deep Ones lie in the ocean depths - perhaps dreaming, perhaps wakeful and wanting, but always taking the corpses of lost sailors or despairing suicides as their due - gifts, and servants of their unknowable will.

TERRORS OF THE COAST

While these monstrosities begin their lives in the sea, they are not compelled to remain there. While largely tethered to their creators and thus confined to coast, lakeside or riverbank, the Deep Ones' servants can and often do take to the land.

Note: All creatures in this book have the *Amphibious* ability, and can breathe air as well as water.

HOW TO USE

This miniature Monster Manual contains a variety of sea-based monsters for a D&D 5e campaign.

ENCOUNTER PLANNING

As most creatures in D&D exist on land or water but rarely switch smoothly between the two, coastal encounters are rare. Here are a few examples of how to use the creatures listed:

- **Lair of the Wavebreaker:** A series of shipwrecks have prompted a small fishing village to pool all their coin to hire a group of adventurers to deal with the problem once and for all.
- **Slaver's Bay:** The party finds a coastal town wherein the townsfolk sacrifice the old and infirm to the deep, but their fishermen and minimal livestock are ravaged all the harder with every sacrifice.
- **The Sea Witch:** A wealthy arcanist seeks the eye of a sea hag for a special project, and is willing to pay a handsome price to the adventuring group who fetches her one. Rumour mentions a possible sea hag coven down the coast, but the wary and insightful may find that there's more to the 'coven' than anyone bargained for.

SETTING THE SCENE

Like all other creatures, sea-based undead and aberrations have unique sensory markers that, if highlighted properly, can create the appropriate mood and atmosphere for fights of this type.

- **Scent:** Most of these creatures smell of brine, rot, seaweed and fish - bad enough, but worse when aggravated by flame-based attacks (anything causing fire or radiant damage).
- **Sound:** The damp and the rot should combine to create a glutinous slurping sort of sound, particularly in attempts at speech or being struck.

PATRON OR PLAGUE

While originally designed to be antagonists, there are other options for the disposition of the more cunning of these creatures. A Pact of the Great Old Ones warlock, for example, might find themselves visited by any of these bearing a message from their patron.

A DEEPER THREAT

Most of these are geared for players level 1-5, but obviously there is scope for upgrading them as per the requirements of player level and story. One thing to keep in mind is that the threat level of most of the creatures in this document is less about their physical attributes and more about their extra abilities. It's the dark magic that makes these more than the average creatures, so have fun with it. Use higher-level spells, or alter the ones that are there to make them that necessary bit trickier for the players to deal with.

MORE FROM THE DEEP

If you enjoyed these creatures, you might be interested in [AngloCanadian Studios](#); these creatures previewed there on a weekly schedule, along with maps, essays, anecdotes and reviews. There's a new theme every month!

LEGAL JUNK

This PDF was constructed courtesy [The Homebrewery](#) and [the GeniusInc Monster Maker](#). Images all courtesy Creative Commons free licencing. Most of the creatures were tested by my gaming group, so thanks also to the Cupcake Coterie for enduring the multiple horrors.

THE DROWNED

Necromancers are not the only ones who can raise the dead for their own purposes. They learned the art from gods and stranger things, who use the art of raising the dead for their own purposes. The Drowned have the undead nature of zombies but a great many advantages beyond that.

Eldritch Foot Soldiers. Any necromancer can raise a corpse to do its bidding, but the Drowned are a different matter altogether. Even those with the intelligence to be frightened are not affected by fear, protected by the indomitable will of the eldritch being that gave them life. They also cannot be Charmed, and any attempt to dominate their will in any way is doomed to failure, because their will is - quite literally - the will of a madness-inducing force beyond the reckoning of most mortal beings.

Horrifying Appearance. Rotting beneath the waves is quite different than rotting under the ground. The Drowned are blue-grey, bloated with sea water, and partly eaten by fish. However, they do tend to be more physically stable than most ground-based zombies, as they are less likely to be little more than bones; salt water acts as a curing agent and preserves the flesh and skin. Other alterations have been made to the appearance of the Drowned, adding natural weapons such as claws, 'swords' or tentacles to an already horrifying being.

Unexpected Cunning. As well as the physical and magical gifts bestowed by the unnatural force that raised them, the Drowned are also gifted with at least basic intelligence. As well as being able to distinguish friend from foe, the Drowned are able to comprehend obstacles, avoid dangerous terrain and use basic tactics. Some are even innate spellcasters, able to not only cast damaging spells but to maintain concentration on a spell in combat, just as any spellcaster might do. They can also engage in teamwork, with Drowned Witches often backing up Drowned Warriors and becoming a far more deadly total than the sum of their rotted parts.

Messengers of the Deep. While not devoid of intelligence, the Drowned are not given to in-depth conversation. However, if commanded by their master, they can give messages of some complexity, and carry on a simple conversation if required.



DROWNED WARRIOR

Drowned Warriors are the most basic of the undersea undead. Its bloated, salt-cured skin serves as its armour, and it is literally armed of a blade made of barnacles and coral growths all up its dominant arm to the elbow. Drowned Warriors are strong and far sturdier than any creature with no visible armour or clothing should be.

DROWNED WARRIOR

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 47 (5d10 + 20)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Con +2, Wis +1

Damage Immunities necrotic

Damage Resistances poison

Damage Vulnerabilities radiant

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened

Senses darkvision 50ft. passive Perception 9

Languages Understands Abyssal and Aquan but cannot speak

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Higher Power. The drowned warrior serves some foul entity whose power transcends any common magical influence. They are immune to spells that Turn Undead.

Noxious Spit. As an attack action, the drowned warrior spits a bubble of foul-smelling ooze at a single target. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 1d6 acid damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The drowned warrior makes 2 attacks

Blade Arm. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage

DROWNED WITCH

Unlike their Warrior counterpart, Drowned Witches are not particularly sturdy, although they can still take punishment than most regular corpses, risen or not. What they lack in physical prowess, they make up for in magical ability, capable of bolstering themselves or their Warrior allies in combat or dealing significant damage to a foe.

DROWNED WITCH

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 45(6d10 + 12)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (0)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)	14 (+2)	5 (-1)

Saving Throws Con +2, Wis +1

Damage Immunities necrotic

Damage Resistances poison

Damage Vulnerabilities radiant

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened

Senses darkvision 50ft. passive Perception 12

Languages Understands Abyssal and Aquan but cannot speak

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Higher Power. The drowned witch serves some foul entity whose power transcends any common magical influence. They are immune to spells that Turn Undead.

Innate Spellcasting. The drowned witch's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12). The drowned witch can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

3/day each: *Acid Splash*, *Chill Touch*, *Poison Spray*

1/day each: *Armor of Agathys*, *Dissonant Whispers*, *Ray of Sickness*

Actions

Multiattack. The drowned witch makes 2 attacks

Tentacle Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit* 9 (2d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

HAGS

Sea hags are very much a part of Dungeons and Dragons. However, while sea hags are terrifying enough in their own right, eldritch powers rarely stop at 'enough' when it comes to terror. Whether killed by adventurers and reanimated or having proven their worth in some other way, some sea hags are elevated by the Deep Ones to something much more dangerous.

OCEAN HAG

Intelligent and wrathful, the ocean hag is set apart from its sea hag counterpart in a variety of ways. Most adventurers would prefer to face the hyena-like sea hag than to meet an ocean hag in its lair.

Visage of the Damned. Ocean hags are large and corpulent beings, bloated to stretching point with sea water and green-grey with algae and rot. Their faces are twisted abominations, the muscles twisted and shrunken with bloat and drying as it journeys between air and water. They maintain the Horrifying Visage and Death Glare of their sea-sisters.

Cruel Cunning. Ocean hags are intelligent creatures, and will speak to their prey, often pinpointing a psychological weakness and exploiting it in combat.

Eldritch Magics. While sea hags must be in a coven to cast most spells, an individual ocean hag has all the spellcasting ability of a coven. Their ability set in that regard more resembles night hags than sea hags.

OCEAN HAG

Large aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 17

Hit Points 112(15d8 + 45)

Speed 30ft., swim 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception +7, Insight +6

Damage Resistances cold, fire; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons

Damage Vulnerabilities radiant

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened

Senses darkvision 50ft. passive Perception 12

Languages Abyssal, Aquan, Infernal

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Horrific Appearance / Death Glare. The ocean hag has the Horrific Appearance and Death Glare abilities as per the sea hag in the Monster Manual (DC 11 Wisdom saving throw in both cases).

Innate Spellcasting: The hag's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). She can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *detect magic*, *Identify*, *magic missile*, *Ray of Sickness*

3/day each: *Bestow Curse*, *Counterspell*, *Hold Person*, *Locate Object*, *Tidal Wave*

2/day each: *Phantasmal Killer*, *Polymorph*

Actions

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

SLAVER HAG

At first glance, there is little to differentiate a slaver hag from a regular sea hag. However, when a sea hag sings, far too much takes notice.

Horrific Camouflage. At first glance, a slaver hag looks no different than a regular sea hag, and has the same Horrific Appearance ability as the sea hag.

Sing the Army. The difference between slaver hags and sea hags come when the slaver hag sings. A slaver hag spends its time in the depths creating thralls of whatever corpses its eldritch master has not claimed as the Drowned. When threatened or attacking, the slaver hag sings those thralls up from the depths to kill on command.

SLAVER HAG

Medium aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 52(7d8 + 21)
Speed 30ft., swim 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)

Damage Resistances necrotic
Damage Vulnerabilities radiant
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses darkvision 60ft. passive Perception 11
Languages Abyssal, Aquan, Infernal
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Horrific Appearance. The slaver hag has the Horrific Appearance ability as per the sea hag in the Monster Manual (DC 11 Wisdom saving throw in both cases).

Summon Thralls: The slaver hag can summon 1d6 thralls twice per day.

Actions

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

SLAVER THRALL

Animated by the eldritch force that gave the slaver hag life but only at a remove, slaver thralls are the weakest link in the chain of lower-level shock troops from the depths.

Piecemeal Beings. The thrall of a slaver hag bears little or no resemblance to any human or humanoid it might have been in life. Pieced together of the parts too badly damaged to serve as the Drowned, slaver thralls are piecemeal affairs. A slaver hag will attempt to piece together the most efficient thrall possible; kuo-toa hands and feet for better swimming, elven or half-elven eyes, even the tentacles of a fallen Drowned Witch.

Strength in Numbers. While particularly vulnerable on their own, slaver thralls are never alone. With their slaver hag master behind them and their brethren at their side, slaver thralls are a force to be reckoned with in large numbers.

SLAVER THRALL

Large aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 18(4d8)
Speed 30ft., swim 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	10 (0)	11 (0)	11 (0)	10 (0)	8 (-1)

Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Understands Abyssal, Aquan, Infernal but cannot speak
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5ft., one creature. *Hit:* 3 (1d4+1) piercing damage.

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



HORRORS FROM THE DEEP

While horrific in their own right, the Drowned and the Hags are, at least, recognisably humanoid, with recognisable weak points. However, the Deep Ones do far more than simply raise the dead or empower existing horrors. When these things are not enough, the Deep Ones create new unfathomable monsters to wreak havoc on the dry lands above.

PRIMORDIAL LURKER

With slick black skin and malevolent glowing eyes, the primordial lurker most resembles a miniature kraken.

Weapon of Mass Destruction. The primordial lurker is a huge and formidable foe, capable of doing immense damage with its flailing tentacles and a wave of earth-shaking necrotic power, and breaks up tactical engagements, ships, and occasionally small towns.

Hunter of the Deep. The primordial lurker travels far faster on water than it does on land, making it able to chase down most small vessels - all the better to pull it under and crush it, leaving more Drowned and more parts for the slaver hags.

PRIMORDIAL LURKER

Large aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 73 (7d8 + 42)

Speed 20ft.; swim 40ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	10 (0)	22 (+6)	11 (0)	10 (0)	11 (0)

Damage Resistances poison, fire

Damage Vulnerabilities ice, radiant

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened

Senses darkvision 60ft.

Languages Understands Abyssal, Infernal and Aquan but cannot speak

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Higher Power. The primordial lurker serves some foul entity whose power transcends any common magical influence. They are immune to spells that Turn Undead.

Destructive Wave. The primordial lurker can use its turn to generate a wave of damaging necrotic energy as per the Destructive Wave spell (Constitution save DC 12).

Actions

Multiattack. The primordial lurker makes 4 attacks

Tentacle Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit* 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

CORAL HULK

Similar to the piscoth in design but far more deadly, the coral hulk is the siegebreaker of the Deep Ones' army.

Armored Carapace. A coral hulk's greyish-blue skin is actually an armored shell, not dissimilar to that of a crab but a great deal thicker. The heavy carapace is also often overgrown with barnacles, which only adds to the creature's armor.

Devastating Claws. The coral hulk's upper extremities are also crab-like; its upper limbs end in crab-like claws, which it uses to either slash its enemies or clap together to create a wave of bludgeoning force.

Gaze of the Great Old Ones. As one of the Deep Ones' favoured chosen, the gaze of the coral hulk can confuse and madden its target, making an eventual attack all the more deadly.

CORAL HULK

Large aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 93 (11d10 + 33)

Speed 30ft.; swim 20ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	13 (+1)	16 (+2)	9 (-1)	10 (0)	10 (0)

Damage Resistances thunder, bludgeoning

Damage Vulnerabilities lightning, radiant

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, stunned

Senses darkvision 60ft.

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Higher Power. The coral hulk serves some foul entity whose power transcends any common magical influence. They are immune to spells that Turn Undead.

Confusing Gaze. The gaze of the coral hulk has an effect identical to an umber hulk's Confusing Gaze ability (Charisma save DC 15).

Seismic Claws (3/day). The coral hulk can slam its claws together and produce the effect of a Thunderwave spell (Constitution save DC 13)

Actions

Multiattack. The coral lurker makes 3 attacks, two with its claws and one with its mandibles (Seismic Claws replaces mandible attack).

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit* 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage.

Mandibles. *Melee weapon attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) piercing damage.

WAVEBREAKER

The wavebreaker is the most physically similar to the Deep Ones who gave them life. Barely bipedal, strong of arm, winged and tentacle-faced, the wavebreaker is a mighty foe both in terms of its sheer brute strength and the limited but powerful magic it wields.

Guardians of the Deep. The wavebreaker exists to guard something powerful, dangerous and important - the property of the dread being who created it. Inside each wavebreaker, hidden where what passes for its heart might be, lies an item of immense power - either a corrupted artefact of some description, or something that the Deep One that created it wanted corrupted. Anything that wishes to take this item from the wavebreaker must kill it and carve deep into its body to find the item. Of course, they also have to kill the wavebreaker first, and the creature has more than enough savagery to destroy anyone or anything that would dare try to take what belongs to its master.

Portal to the Deep Realms. Unintelligent but savage, a wavebreaker is gifted with the ability to open a portal to the horrible dark realms in which its master lives. Operating on instinct and unspoken command, it can also move this portal around the battlefield, to try to capture as many foes in it as possible as if to provide its master with yet more servants.



WAVEBREAKER

Large aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 115 (11d10 + 55)

Speed 30ft.; swim 20ft.; fly 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	11 (0)	20 (+5)	4 (-3)	6 (-2)	10 (0)

Damage Immunities poison

Damage Resistances acid, bludgeoning, cold, necrotic

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 8

Languages Understands Abyssal, Infernal and Aquan but cannot speak

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Higher Power. The wavebreaker serves some foul entity whose power transcends any common magical influence. They are immune to spells that Turn Undead.

Cleave. The wavebreaker sweeps a claw out in a bone-breaking arc. All creatures within a 10ft. cone must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take 19 (3d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. On a successful save, creatures take half damage and are not prone.

Portal to the Abyss (3/day). The wavebreaker can open a portal to a plane of horrors, and move it wherever it wishes. The wavebreaker casts a variant of Hunger of Hadar; players ending their turn in the sphere take necrotic rather than acid damage, and the wavebreaker can use a bonus action to move the portal 30 feet in any direction. The portal remains open until it loses a Concentration save or is otherwise dispelled.

Actions

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10ft., one target. *Hit* 19 (3d8 + 6) slashing damage.