

BATFOLK

TWO CHARACTER RACES OF DARKNESS AND BLOOD



A WALROCK HOMEBREW CREATION



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ON THE COVER

Tithi Luadthong paints a cavernous scene, illuminated in the far distance by the light of the sun. As featured on the cover, the cavern is darkened, representing the depths of the Underdark, illuminated only by the red glow of our iconic nycter's magic staff.



ALSO ON THE COVER

Lluis Abadias Garcia creates two iconic characters: Zikak, a nycter warlock, clutching his ancient magic staff formed from the ribs and heart of a long-dead drow, and Kozkra, a desmodu barbarian armed with her trusty hooked notbora and her peerless strength. Together, this improbable team works to cleanse the Underdark of the creatures that menace their peoples, and regain what was lost to their kind, long, long ago.

VERSION 0.1.1

Disclaimer: Most bats are omnivores and can, of course, eat lots of things! This includes insects, fruit, seeds, pollen, fish, and meat! There's no need or reason for you to subsist entirely on the blood of your enemies, stalking them through pitch-dark caverns for weeks on end, feeding upon them until they are little more than a mummified husk, animated only by the sheer terror of knowing that you are out there, after them, always watching. So be kind, and let your meals re-hydrate between feedings.

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INTRODUCTION

WITH A SINGLE BLACK TALON, ZIKAK TRACES the motions of the rune, the scratch of his nail sending faint echoes throughout the boundless caverns that make up his home. The script could be Giant, possibly, he muses, but certainly not Elven. These halls predate the coming of the drow. They could even date back before his own people's fallen empire.

Picking up his staff from a resting place against a nearby wall, Zikak holds it forward, its crimson illumination spreading across the gigantic time-worn cobblestones of the causeway which pave the road-like cavern from end to fathomless end. His people, the nycter, had made it out this far once, eons ago, but war and the merciless machinations of the Spider Queen had sundered their empire and driven them to the brink of oblivion.

So much knowledge lost. So many secrets, left to molder in the refuse pile of history. And his people, content to forget them all.

"Fools," he mutters, despite himself. Lost in thought, he sighs into the red-lit twilight of the cave.

His feet stop, dead in their tracks. The sigh quickly turns into a gasp as a ribbon of steel slides across his throat, gripping his flesh, a mere inch away from decapitation. Somewhere above him, a shadow shifts from an assassin's vantage along the ceiling.

"Do it then," he rasps, risking a glance upwards without moving his head, "You elves have killed off my kin, our history. Make it quick, take me to my ancestors."

Rocks groan and clatter as an immense weight shifts somewhere above him. The steel at his throat begins to press in. Zikak stifles his breath as he feels a lash of pain against his throat, followed by a drip, drip, dripping of his warm blood against the stone-wrought cavern floor.

"Be you this eager to die, bat-ling?" a low, feral growl rumbles with the tenor of the stones themselves, "No wonder the drow slaughtered your kind. Weak."

As an earthquake pounds through the stone beneath

him, Zikak braces himself, the steel at his throat holding steady. He steadies his feet, and he realizes: whatever this creature is, it has found its way to the ground. Standing directly behind him. Breath hot on his back.

"Do you have any use, then," the growl drags onward, "or are you only fit to be food?"

"I am a scholar!" Zikak responds, holding perfectly still, unblinking, moving only his mouth, "I study the forbidden, the forgotten. I know the ancient magics my people would let die!"

"I am certain you do," the growl reaches a crescendo, the steel trembling against Zikak's flesh, "The bat-lings always did believe in such tricks, and where did it get you?"

With a flourish that draws a second gasp of pain, the curved steel blade leaves Zikak's throat in an instant, whistling through the cold cavern air. Zikak wheels around, staff in hand, his free hand crackling with a green-black eldritch fire.

His eyes drift upwards, locking with the fearsome golden gaze of a desmodu, fanged and bestial, staring down at him while gripping in one of her powerful clawed hands a long, wrought staff ending in a vicious hook, still dripping with his blood.

"Prove you are not weak, then," she snarls, as Zikak takes an instinctive step backwards, "Fight me, or join my hunt. If you survive either, you are fit to continue living."

Zikak pauses, taking a second to tabulate his options. "What... are you hunting?" he inquires, with a note of wary skepticism.

"The slayers of your kind," the desmodu answers, looking up from the nycter, "These are the caves of the desmodu, now, but drow have been seen skulking here. I will drive them out. I will kill them."

She regards him, once more, with her murderous gaze.

"And you are allowed to be present. Should you not be a hindrance?"

"Lucky me," Zikak coughs, extinguishing his magical fire and rubbing his throat, "I can't wait to get started."





NYCTER

A diminutive and compassionate people haunted by a dark past, nycter strive to live in harmony with their cavernous environment, or to rediscover the secrets that shaped their once-great empire.

DENIZENS OF DUSK

Kindly and unassuming, nycter are short, leather-winged batfolk with large ears and snouts that dwell deep within caverns in tight-knit communities. Shorter even than most gnomes, nycter are between two to two-and-a-half feet tall, and are covered in a fine coat of soft fur.

The skin and fur of a nycter tend to be similar in coloration, and are commonly black, brown, red-brown, or grey, though very rarely a nycter can be entirely white. These albino nycter are seen as omens, either good or bad, and can just as easily become an esteemed elder as a communal outcast. Nycter eyes can be brown, red, yellow, entirely black, white, or grey.

Though they are one race, individual nycter have a great deal of variation between one another. Some nycter have their hands half-formed into their wings, manifesting as a set of grasping talons at the end of their wingtips, while others have arms and wings as entirely separate appendages. Nycter have long, pointed fangs, as well as surprisingly long tongues up to one and a half feet in length.

NOCTURNAL NATURALISTS

Most nycter care deeply for the animals and environments of the caves they live in, and consider themselves guardians of all natural underground life. The small communities nycter create are spaced amongst outcroppings of gargantuan fungi and unearthly subterranean fruit trees, often being build inside local mushrooms or vegetation. Nycter raise and keep livestock in the form of giant insects, and trade openly with outsiders.

One of the greatest honors a nycter can receive is to be named their community's Defender of the Cave. Each community appoints one Defender, usually the single best warrior those nycter have to offer, who then oversees the defense of not only their community, but the natural wildlife within miles around.

It is common for rangers or druids among the nycter to become Defenders, though depending on the challenges an individual community faces, it's not unheard of for nycter of other backgrounds to come upon the title. Some nycter depart on journeys throughout the Underdark and beyond to prove their worth as possible Defenders, taking on tasks thought impossible and doing whatever they can to help wildlife flourish.

LOATHSOME LEGACY

But nycter were not always caring and compassionate. In times far gone, they were a major power in the Underdark, sharing an empire with the mighty desmodu. In this age, nycter were terrifying practitioners of dark magic, crafting shadow and blood in ways few creatures even now understand, all in service of a malevolent entity now known only as the Unnamed One. It is theorized by some that nycter created the original curse of vampirism, though the truth of this is lost to time.

The nycter expanded throughout the Underdark until they came into conflict with the drow, with whom they fought a long and bloody war. Though it was contentious, the drow won out, driven by Lolth to eradicate their opposition. The drow annihilated all nycter and vestiges of nycter society they came across, and only the nycter that went into hiding in far-flung caverns escaped.

Over time, these surviving nycter became practiced in living off what their natural environment would provide. Leaving behind their eldritch arcana and bloody rituals, as their war and empire were over and these magics had little use, most nycter embraced communing with nature itself.

However, some nycter still hold onto the near-forgotten magic of their empire. There is power in the old ways, to be certain, and a few nycter believe this umbral might to be of the utmost importance in ensuring the continuance of their species. Any practitioners of the old ways are immediately cast out of nycter society, if discovered, so most practice in secret, and hide their true potential unless cornered.

WHO IS THE UNNAMED ONE?

Erased from history, the identity of the Unnamed One is intentionally vague. It could be any number of entities, determined only by the DM.

Gods such as Camazotz, Kanchelsis, Vecna, or even the desmodu's own deity of Vesperian are all possibilities, as are any number of other dark gods or unseelie fey. The Unnamed One could have even been a mortal nycter, at one time, that rose up to near-godhood through sacrifice and blasphemous arcana. Most nycter intentionally avoid answering these questions, but a nycter delving into the old ways could find potent secrets hidden in their race's forgotten mysteries.

NYCTER NAMES

Nycter receive names at birth, bestowed upon them by either a community elder or their parents. Each nycter's name, when spoken by another nycter, is said to evoke an ephemeral feeling associated with the named nycter's personality, though this is completely lost on non-nycter.

A nycter can also have earned a deed name, if that nycter has done something to warrant it. Deed names are earned by overcoming great trials and struggles, and are always assigned by an elder or a Defender. Deed names are spoken before a nycter's given name as an honorific, and are only discarded in casual conversation.

Examples of names and deed names can be seen below:

Names: Akarak, Cheop, Chirrip, Eeeee, Irn, Krikk, Myym, Pipp, Screek, Tekkatek, Tikkir

Deed Names: Blindwatch, Deepdelve, Fearless, Forgotten, Neverlost, Nurture, Song, Skystride, Stalwart, Waymend

NYCTER TRAITS

All nycter characters have the following traits in common with one another.

Ability Score Increase. Your Dexterity score increases by 2, and your choice of your Charisma or Wisdom score increases by 1.

Age. Nycter have long lifespans, greater than humans but lesser than elves. A nycter is considered an adult at 30 years, venerable at 200 years, and can live to be 400 years.

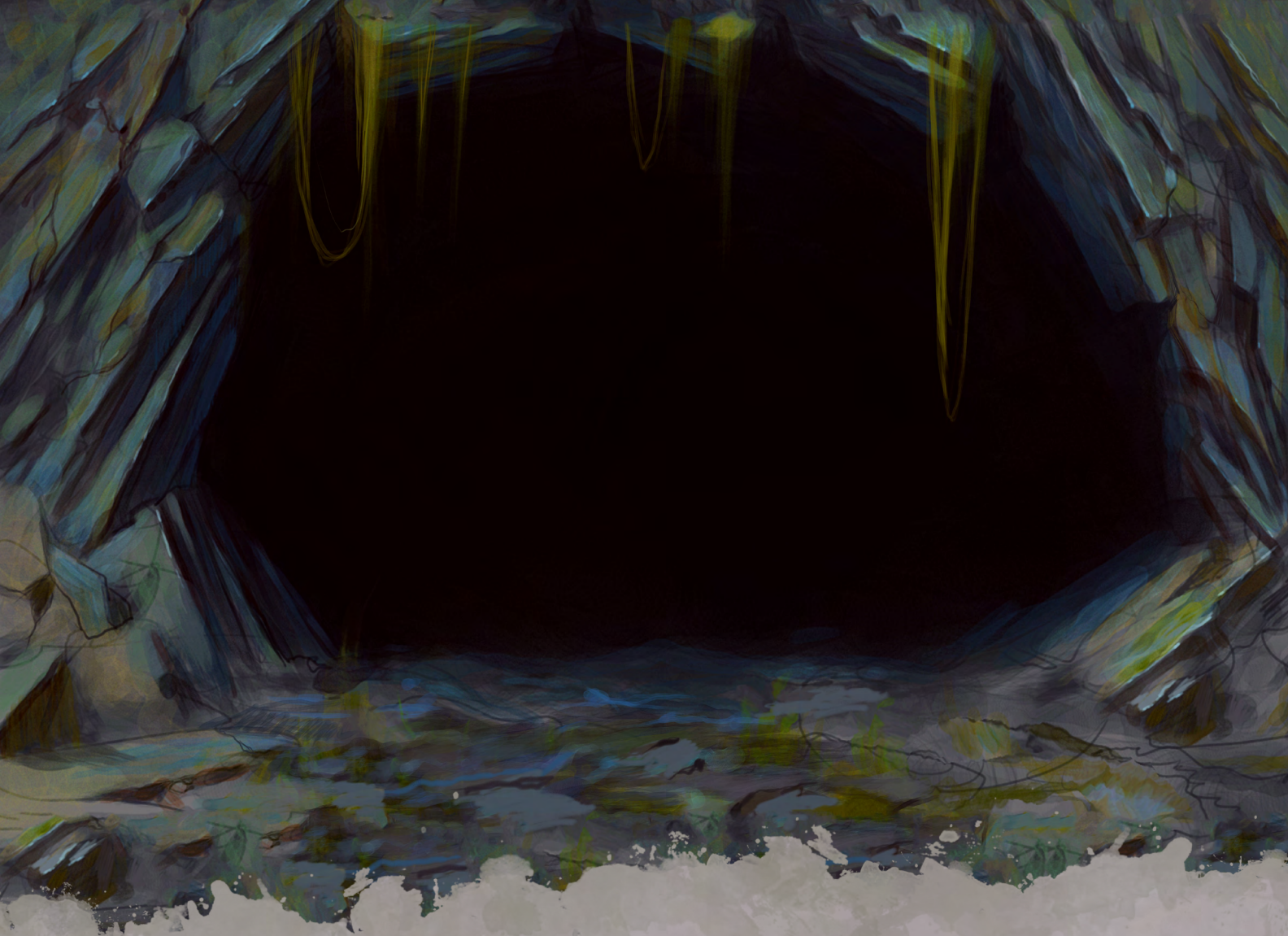
Alignment. Owing to the peaceable disposition of nycter communities, most nycter are good and neutral. Nycter that stray from the ideals of their community are often chaotic, and only very rarely evil.

Size. Small even compared to other diminutive races, nycter stand between 2 to 2 and a half feet tall. Your size is Small.

Speed. Your base walking speed is 25 feet.

Flight. You have a flying speed of 35 feet. When using your flying speed from this source, you must land on a horizontal surface at the end of each of your turns. If you do not, you begin falling slowly at a rate of 60 feet per





round at the end of your turn, taking no damage from falling in this way.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write both Common and Nycter. The Nycter language is made of a series of high-frequency clicks and chirps, and cannot be spoken by most creatures other than desmodu or nycter. A creature that understands the Desmodu language can also understand Nycter, though Nycter is light, squeaking, and harsh to its ears.

Darkvision. A natural denizen of the Underdark, darkness does not impede your vision. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

Echolocate. As a bonus action on your turn, you can emit an ultrasonic pulse at a point within 60 feet of you. You instantly know the location of any hidden or invisible creatures or objects within a 5 foot radius of that point, and you know illusions within this radius for what they are. If you are blinded or otherwise unable to see, you can see everything within this radius as if you possessed blindsight. These benefits last until the start of your next turn. If you are deafened, using this ability

confers no benefits. Once you use this trait, you must finish a short or long rest before you can use it again.

Once you reach 9th level, you can use this trait twice before you must finish a rest to regain its usage. Once you reach 17th level, you can use this trait three times between rests.

Fangs. You have tiny, sharp fangs that grant you a bite attack, which is a natural weapon you can use to make unarmed strikes. You can add your Dexterity modifier in place of your Strength modifier to attack rolls made with your bite. If you hit with your bite, you deal piercing damage equal to 1d4 + the modifier you used on your roll to hit. Your saliva is an anticoagulant, and a creature hit by your bite attack cannot regain hit points until the start of your next turn.

Nycter Skills. You gain proficiency in one skill of your choice out of Animal Handling, Arcana, Nature, Stealth, or Survival.

Speak with Bats. Through sounds and gestures, you can communicate simple ideas with bats, and understand their responses. Bats typically are not capable of complex thoughts, but are able to tell you things they have seen within the past 24 hours.



DESMODU

Strong and determined, the desmodu are stalwart defenders of their caverns and their ways of life. Though others might see them as wild or feral, the desmodu have a nuanced society and culture, and often hide a kindness deep beneath their gruff demeanors.

CHIROPTERAN CHAMPIONS

Looming over most other races, desmodu are often seen as hulking and deeply intimidating. Desmodu have long, powerful arms with membranes of leather-like skin connecting between their underarms and their bodies. Somewhere between 8-9 feet tall and bristling with claws and fangs, a desmodu is an imposing sight for an unwitting surface-dweller to stumble upon in the depths of the Underdark.

Desmodu have fur that is red-brown, dusky grey, or black in coloration, and have piercing eyes that can be yellow, red, amber, acid green, or white. A desmodu's fur is especially dense in large ruffs on the back of its neck, and in tufts along its arms and legs. The hands and feet of a desmodu end in sharp, bestial talons, which the desmodu use for grasping rocky surfaces far

more than combat.

Many desmodu take part in ritual scarification, and adorn themselves with a scarred rune in their language when they complete an arduous undertaking, or emerge victorious from a particularly dire violent encounter. An unscarred desmodu is usually either a young and untested fighter, or a brutal prodigy who has not yet encountered anything they considered a challenge to their natural might.

VENGEFUL VINDICATORS

The desmodu have always been formidable warriors, harkening back to the empire they shared with the nycter. While nycter legend paints the desmodu as horrifying creations of dark magic their warlocks created to keep the empire safe, the desmodu vehemently disagree, claiming they had original stewardship over the empire, and took the nycter under their metaphorical wings to defend them against the hostile Underdark.

Regardless of what the truth may be, the empire fell to the drow. With its fall, the desmodu learned a vital lesson: never tolerate weakness, in themselves or others. Their scattered settlements preached a gospel of strength, and began worshipping the god Vesperian. Called the Guardian of Caverns, Vesperian is depicted as a large desmodu holding a bat and a notbora, a long wood or metal staff with a cruel curved hook at one end.

Most desmodu consider themselves charged with keeping the world free from those who would annihilate their people. The drow are chief among those the desmodu consider enemies, but the desmodu also keep a wary eye on other Underdark threats, occasional invaders from the Elemental Plane of Fire, and sometimes especially suspicious surface dwellers.

SURVIVOR SOCIETIES

As a culture, the desmodu are still reeling from being nearly wiped out at the hands of the drow. Stories tell of ancient and proud desmodu lineages, but in present times, a desmodu family is whatever they make of it. New clans are formed not by parentage, but by generation, as each generation of desmodu considers itself a distinct social entity, with its own structures and leaders. The leadership of the eldest living desmodu generation becomes known as the elders of a particular desmodu community, and are the defacto rulers of their colony of desmodu.

Desmodu will, on occasion, adopt non-desmodu they intensely respect into their clan. This usually takes the form of the ceremonial gifting of a notbora, which the honored creature must be able to lift and at least swing if it is to be adopted. Once adopted, the honored creature is considered to be culturally a part of the clan by other desmodu, though is usually expected to still be somewhat ignorant of their ways.

DESMODU NAMES

Desmodu are given child-names at birth, and are only given adult names when they are able to lift and fight with a notbora. An adult name is a modification of the child-name, usually created by adding a few letters, an inflection, or a syllable, but nevertheless is worn as a badge of honor by young adult desmodu.

Examples of adult names for desmodu can be found below:

Names: Akroo, Banndar, Chinda, Dhun, Garnaz, Harkaat, Mekmit, Rakthran, Terzing, Viday, Zarkuun

DESMODU TRAITS

Regardless of their place in society, all desmodu characters have the following traits.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength score increases by 2, and your choice of your Constitution or Wisdom score increases by 1.

Age. Desmodu mature and age slower than humans. A desmodu is an adult at 25 and venerable at 150. Most desmodu don't allow themselves to die of old age, but a desmodu can live to be over 200.

Alignment. Desmodu society is complex, and has home for individuals of all alignments. Though their culture may be brutal, many good desmodu focus on finding the strength in others and nurturing it. Conversely, evil desmodu simply wish for domination, over their own kind and all others.

Size. Towering over most other races at 8-9 feet tall, you have an immense, hulking frame. Nevertheless, your size is Medium.

Speed. Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write both Common and Desmodu. The Desmodu language ranges into both ultrasonic and subsonic frequencies, and



cannot be spoken by most creatures other than desmodu or nycter. A creature that understands the Nycter language can also understand Desmodu, though the sounds of Desmodu are much more harsh and guttural.

Darkvision. The desmodu often live in the dark, and are used to existing in a world without light. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

Desmodu Weapon Training. You have proficiency with notboras.

Feral Running. While both your hands are unoccupied, you can choose to run on all fours. If you do, increase your walking speed by 5 feet.

Fangs. You have powerful fangs that grant you a bite attack, which is a natural weapon you can use to make unarmed strikes. If you hit with your bite, you deal piercing damage equal to 1d6 + your Strength modifier. Your saliva is an anticoagulant, and a creature hit by your bite attack cannot regain hit points until the start of your next turn.

Gliding. You have a flying speed of 60 feet, but you can only use this flying speed when you would otherwise fall. You cannot fly upwards using this speed, and you must end each turn at least 5 feet lower in elevation than where you started. You cannot fly in this way if you are incapacitated or wearing heavy armor.

Sonic Burst. You can use your action to unleash a blasting sonic roar in 15 foot cone. Each creature in this cone must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 8 + your proficiency bonus + your choice of either your Constitution or Wisdom modifier.

On a failed save, a creature takes 2d6 thunder damage. If the save is successful, the creature takes no damage. The damage increases to 3d6 at 6th level, 4d6 at 11th level, and 5d6 at 16th level. An unattended non-magical object in this cone takes the maximum possible damage from this ability instead of rolling damage or saving throws.

If you are not deafened when you use this ability, you become aware of the location of every creature and object in its area until the start of your next turn, as if you possessed blindsight. You also automatically discern illusions within the area for what they are.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

Speak with Bats. Through sounds and gestures, you can communicate simple ideas with bats, and understand their responses. Bats typically are not capable of complex thoughts, but are able to tell you things they have seen within the past 24 hours.

ADDITIONAL FEATS

If your DM allows the use of feats from chapter 6 of the *Player's Handbook*, a nycter character has access to the following special feats. If a feat requires a particular subrace, a character must also have that subrace in order to take the feat.

BLOOD FEASTING

Prerequisite: Nycter or Desmodu

Increase your Strength or Dexterity by 1, to a maximum of 20.

The damage die of your bite attack increases to a d8. Additionally, once on your turn when you hit a Small or larger creature that is not an aberration, construct, elemental, ooze, plant, or undead with your bite attack, you can choose to gain temporary hit points equal to three times your proficiency bonus, which last for up to one minute. You can do so twice before you must finish a short or long rest to regain all usages of this ability.

DEAFENING ROAR

Prerequisite: Desmodu

Increase your Constitution or Wisdom by 1, to a maximum of 20.

When you use your Sonic Burst trait, creatures in the cone are deafened until the end of your next turn whether they succeed or fail the saving throw. Additionally, a creature that fails the saving throw against Sonic Burst takes one additional d6 of damage and is pushed up to 10 feet away from you in a direction of your choosing. Unattended objects in the area of your Sonic Burst take this additional damage maximized, as usual, and are also pushed up to 10 feet.

HEALING SALIVA

Prerequisite: Nycter

Increase your Charisma or Wisdom by 1, to a maximum of 20.

Your saliva is infused with a potent healing energy, and you are able to use your long tongue to lick wounds shut. As an action, you can lick an adjacent creature other than yourself to restore hit points equal to three times your proficiency bonus + your choice of either your Charisma or Wisdom modifier. You can use this ability twice before you must finish a short or long rest to regain all its expended uses.

HUNTING PULSE

Prerequisite: Desmodu or Nycter

Increase your Dexterity, Charisma, Constitution, or Wisdom by 1, to a maximum of 20.

You have honed your ultrasonic voice, and you can use it to make a special attack with the Attack action. This special attack is a ranged spell attack with a range of 120 feet. You are proficient with it, and you add your choice of one of your ability modifiers out of Dexterity, Charisma, Constitution, or Wisdom to the attack roll of this special attack.

On a hit, this attack deals 1d8 thunder and 1d8 psychic damage to the target, as the sound overwhelms its senses. Targets that are deafened or naturally cannot hear take only 1d8 thunder damage from this attack.

Once on your turn when you hit a creature that can

hear with this attack, you can choose to attempt to stun that creature. If you do, the creature must succeed on a Constitution saving throw against a DC of 8 + your proficiency bonus + the ability modifier you chose for the attack roll or become stunned until the start of your next turn. Once you attempt to stun a creature in this way, you cannot do so again until you finish a short or long rest.

NOTBORA MASTER

Prerequisite: Desmodu

Increase your Strength by 1, to a maximum of 20.

Once on your turn, when you hit a Large or smaller creature with the front end of a notbora, you can use a bonus action to use one of the following abilities. You can use a bonus action in this way a number of times equal to half your proficiency bonus (round up) before you must finish a short or long rest to regain all expended uses.

Grabbing Strike. Make a Strength (Athletics) check contested by the target's Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check (the target chooses the ability to use). If you are successful, you grapple the target. While the target is grappled, you cannot attack with the back end of the notbora, and attacking a target other than the grappled creature with the front end of the notbora ends the grapple.

Pulling Strike. You pull the creature 5 feet towards you. If the creature ends this movement adjacent to you, you can make an attack with the back end of the notbora without using another bonus action.

Tossing Strike. Push the target 10 feet away from you in a straight line in a direction of your choice.

Tripping Strike. Make a Strength (Athletics) check contested by the target's Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check (the target chooses the ability to use). If you are successful, the target is rendered prone.

NEW ITEMS

The following new items have significance for desmodu and nycter characters.

NEW ADVENTURING GEAR

The adventuring gear listed in this section is typically designed by nycter or desmodu artisans, and is particularly useful for adventuring in the Underdark.

Breathing Mask. A leather mask with glass goggles that covers the user's face, worn by creatures that venture into airless or toxic environments. The mask is water-tight and can be worn underwater, but is useless without an air supply.

Breathing Mask Air Supply. An alchemically-created air supply, containing 4 hours of ultra-compressed air fitted into a small steel disk the size of a humanoid's palm. When fitted to a breathing mask, the air supply immediately begins dispensing breathable air, and can be disengaged early to retain some of the contained air.

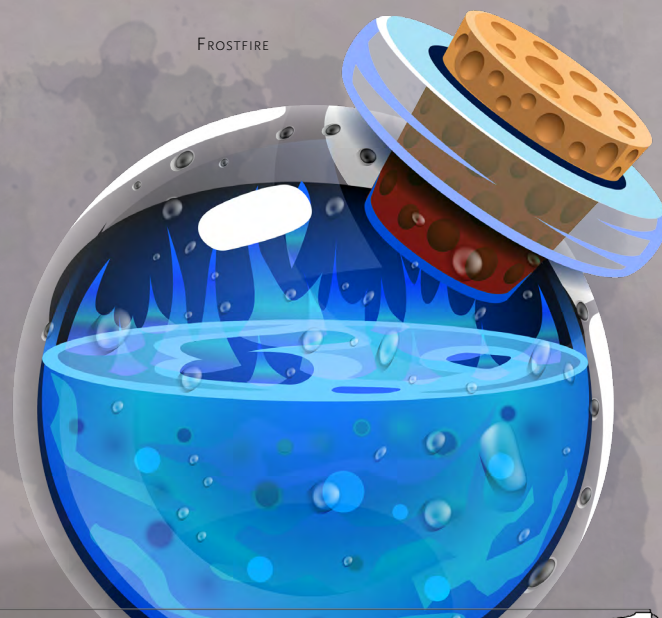
A creature proficient with alchemist's supplies can

create an air supply using the normal crafting rules, or can use the crafting rules to replenish an existing but (fully or partially) exhausted air supply at a cost of 50 gp per each additional hour of air.

Cable, Steel. Used underground just as rope is on the surface. Has 10 hit points, an AC of 19, and can be burst with a DC 32 Strength check. Though it is light-weight, it is cumbersome to carry without a spool.

Cablespool. A spool that can hold up to 100 feet of steel cable. It can be wound quickly, able to retract all 100 feet of cable in a single round with an action and a successful DC 16 Strength check. When fixed in place, it can also be set to automatically dispense or reel in cable as an attached creature climbs, doing so at a rate equivalent to the creature's climbing speed (or half its regular movement speed, if the creature does not have this speed).

Desmodu Brew. A thick, highly alcoholic beverage brewed by the desmodu, made of liquefied fermented mushrooms brewed with sugars from luminous cavernous fruit. Traditionally served with a subterranean night-crawler as thick as a sausage alive and inside the mug containing the beverage, it is considered a challenge for surface-dwellers to finish this drink. A creature other than a desmodu that drinks this beverage must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw against poison. On a failed save, the creature spends the next one minute that



NEW ADVENTURING GEAR

Item	Cost	Weight
Breathing mask	50 gp	4 lbs.
Breathing mask air supply	400 gp	1 lb.
Cable, steel (50 feet)	25 gp	2 lbs.
Cablespool	125 gp	2 lbs.
Desmodu brew, mug	1 sp	1/4 lb.
Frostfire (flask)	50 gp	1 lb.
Kinship badge	5 gp	—

NOTBORA: MARTIAL MELEE WEAPON

Weapon Name	Cost	Damage	Weight	Properties
Notbora	30 gp	1d8 slashing	10 lbs.	Heavy, reach, special, two-handed

turn retching and reeling. Creatures that are immune to poison automatically succeed on this saving throw.

Frostfire. A sticky, adhesive white-blue alchemical substance that is neither strictly a solid, fluid, or gas, and leaches heat from its surrounding environment. As an action, you can throw this flask up to 20 feet, shattering it on impact.

Make a ranged attack against a creature or object, treating the frostfire as an improvised weapon. On a hit, the target takes 1d4 cold damage at the start of each of its turns. A creature can end this damage by using its action to make a DC 10 Dexterity check to scrape the frostfire off its body

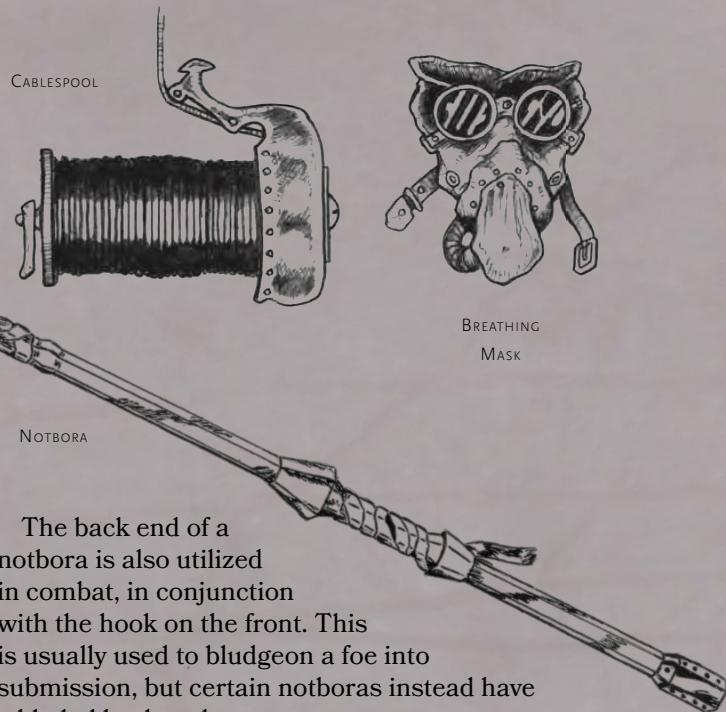
Kinship Badge. A circular metal identifying badge used by both nycter and desmodu when adventuring in the deep reaches of the Underdark. When struck with a fingernail, it elicits an ultrasonic tone that can be heard by desmodu, nycter, and other creatures with ultrasonic hearing up to 5,000 feet away. The tones vary depending on the type of kinship badge, and different badges exist for different nycter or desmodu clan groups or affiliations. Usually, these badges are used to announce one's presence or allegiance over a distance.

NEW WEAPON

The weapon included here is of particular importance to desmodu, and all desmodu characters are considered to have proficiency with it.

NOTBORA

The distinctive hunting weapon of the desmodu, the notbora grew into a soldier's weapon throughout the rise and fall of the empire shared by the desmodu and nycter. Appearing as a massive quarterstaff with a sharpened hook on one end, the notbora is often used to catch escaping foes, or to sweep the legs out from under an adversary.



The back end of a notbora is also utilized in combat, in conjunction with the hook on the front. This is usually used to bludgeon a foe into submission, but certain notboras instead have a bladed back end.

While many notboras come with a leather strap that enable it to be slung over the back, some especially well-made notboras have a catch and hinge in the center that allows the notbora to be folded in half for easy transportation. A folded notbora is usually clipped to a harness at one's side, and can be folded or unfolded as a part of the same interaction used to sheathe or unsheathe it.

Special. When you take the Attack action and attack with a notbora, you can use a bonus action to make a single melee weapon attack with the notbora's opposite end. This attack has a reach of 5 feet, instead of the front end's reach of 10 feet.

You are proficient with this attack if you are proficient with the notbora, and you add the same modifiers and bonuses to the attack roll as a regular attack with the notbora. On a hit, the attack deals 1d4 damage, which is either bludgeoning or slashing damage, depending on the notbora's construction.



BESTIARY

Included in this section are additional creatures of significance to the desmodu and nycter, intended to be utilized in a wide variety of ways.

DESMODU

Desmodu are large, hairy, bat-like humanoids standing between 8 and 9 feet tall, that superficially have as much in common with a nycter as an ogre does with a human. Unlike ogres, however, desmodu are intelligent and articulate, though still possessed of formidable strength and size.

Nevertheless, desmodu and nycter are relatively close kin, and in bygone times fought alongside one another to repel the drow and the other threats of the Underdark. When the nycter went into hiding, so too did the desmodu, and relations between the two races became fractured, as most members of each race blamed members of the other for their downfall.

DESMODU CLERIC

Most desmodu worship the god Vesperian, whom they depict as a large desmodu male with a crown of elongated fangs. Desmodu dogma holds that Vesperian is a noble god, the creator of



DESMODU
CLERIC

DESMODU CLERIC

Medium humanoid (desmodu), any alignment

Armor Class 14 (scale mail)

Hit Points 72 (11d8 + 22)

Speed 30 ft. (35 ft. with Feral Running), fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)

Skills Insight +5, Intimidation +3, Perception +5, Religion +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Desmodu, Terran

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Feral Running. While both the desmodu's hands are unoccupied, it can run on all fours, increasing its walking speed by 5 feet.

Gliding. The desmodu can only use its flying speed when it would otherwise fall. It cannot fly upwards using this speed, and it must end each turn at least 5 feet lower in elevation than where it started.

Speak with Bats. Through sounds and gestures, the desmodu can communicate simple ideas with bats, and understand their responses.

Spellcasting. The desmodu is a 6th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The desmodu has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *spare the dying*, *thaumaturgy*, *toll the dead**

1st level (4 slots): *bane*, *cure wounds*, *shield of faith*

2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness*, *hold person*, *lesser restoration*

3rd level (3 slots): *bestow curse*, *spirit guardians*

* this spell is found in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The desmodu makes either two attacks with its notbora and (if possible) one with the notbora's back end, or it makes one notbora attack, one bite attack, and one attack with the notbora's back end.

Notbora. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

Notbora, Back End. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning or slashing damage.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage. A creature hit by this attack cannot regain hit points until the start of the desmodu's next turn.

Sonic Burst (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). The desmodu can use its action to unleash a blast of sound in a 15-foot cone; each creature in the cone must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 2d6 thunder damage on a failed save. If the desmodu is not deafened, it knows the location of every creature in this area until the end of its next turn.

their race, a patron of bats, and the guardian of caverns, who holds darkness and protection as his domains.

Many respected elders in desmodu society are clerics of Vesperian, who often tend the great number of small shrines to Vesperian interspersed throughout desmodu settlements.

DESMODU COMMONER

The society the desmodu have developed is somewhat clannish, though an individual desmodu clan has little to do with blood. Clans are delineated by generation and settlement, rather than blood ties, and the oldest living members of the oldest clan rule any given settlement.

Status within desmodu society is a factor of both a desmodu's age and ownership of livestock, the latter of which are typically larger bats and lizards. Having no one currency of their own, though recognizing that of others, desmodu often engage in barter with travellers in the Underdark.

DESMODU COMMONER

Medium humanoid (desmodu), any alignment

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 16 (3d8 + 3)

Speed 30 ft. (35 ft. with Feral Running), fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2, Perception +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Desmodu

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Feral Running. While both the desmodu's hands are unoccupied, it can run on all fours, increasing its walking speed by 5 feet.

Gliding. The desmodu can only use its flying speed when it would otherwise fall. It cannot fly upwards using this speed, and it must end each turn at least 5 feet lower in elevation than where it started.

Speak with Bats. Through sounds and gestures, the desmodu can communicate simple ideas with bats, and understand their responses.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage. A creature hit by this attack cannot regain hit points until the start of the desmodu's next turn.

Sonic Burst (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). The desmodu can use its action to unleash a blast of sound in a 15-foot cone; each creature in the cone must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 2d6 thunder damage on a failed save. If the desmodu is not deafened, it knows the location of every creature in this area until the end of its next turn.

DESMODU WARLOCK

The desmodu never delved into dark magics as deeply as their nycter relatives, and most easily left such things

DESMODU WARLOCK

Medium humanoid (desmodu), chaotic evil

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft. (35 ft. with Feral Running), fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Skills Arcana +2, Intimidation +5, Perception +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Desmodu

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Feral Running. While both the desmodu's hands are unoccupied, it can run on all fours, increasing its walking speed by 5 feet.

Gliding. The desmodu can only use its flying speed when it would otherwise fall. It cannot fly upwards using this speed, and it must end each turn at least 5 feet lower in elevation than where it started.

Speak with Bats. Through sounds and gestures, the desmodu can communicate simple ideas with bats, and understand their responses.

Spellcasting. The desmodu is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It regains its expended spell slots when it finishes a short or long rest. The desmodu knows the following warlock spells:

Cantrips (at will): *blade ward, eldritch blast, magic stone**, *minor illusion, thunderclap, true strike*

1st-3rd level (2 3rd-level slots): *arms of hadar, darkness, fear, hex, shatter, vampiric touch*

* this spell is found in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The desmodu makes two attacks with its notbora and one attack with the notbora's back end.

Notbora. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage.

Notbora, Back End. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage. A creature hit by this attack cannot regain hit points until the start of the desmodu's next turn.

Sonic Burst (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). The desmodu can use its action to unleash a blast of sound in a 15-foot cone; each creature in the cone must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 2d6 thunder damage on a failed save. If the desmodu is not deafened, it knows the location of every creature in this area until the end of its next turn.

forgotten when they split from the nycter. However, some still hold to the old ways, even going so far as to claim the blasphemy that Vesperian and the Unnamed One are the same being.

Officially, desmodu society shuns these cults of the Unnamed One, but some desmodu settlements are run by the cults in all but name. Desmodu warlocks believe strongly in capturing and sacrificing hapless mortals, ritualistically drinking their blood before burning their flesh to ashes in honor of their nightmarish patron.

DESMODU WARRIOR

Though other desmodu may be willing to barter or talk with outsiders, desmodu warriors are highly aggressive and mistrustful of all non-desmodu. Representing a warlike faction of desmodu culture, most desmodu warriors believe their race to be the sole rightful owners of the Underdark, denied their birthright only by the deceit of the drow and the weakness of the nycter. These desmodu hold that acquiring what they want by force is the only correct way to interact with the rest of the world, and are only very rarely persuaded otherwise.

DESMODU WARRIOR

Medium humanoid (desmodu), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (chain mail)

Hit Points 83 (1d8 + 33)

Speed 30 ft. (35 ft. with Feral Running), fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +6, Intimidation +4, Perception +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Desmodu

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Feral Running. While both the desmodu's hands are unoccupied, it can run on all fours, increasing its walking speed by 5 feet.

Gliding. The desmodu can only use its flying speed when it would otherwise fall. It cannot fly upwards using this speed, and it must end each turn at least 5 feet lower in elevation than where it started.

Master's Strike. Once on its turn when the desmodu hits an opponent with its notbora attack, it can use a bonus action to perform its choice of one of the following:

Grabbing Strike. The desmodu makes a Strength (Athletics) check contested by the target's Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check (the target chooses the ability to use). If the desmodu succeeds, it grapples the target. While the target is grappled, the desmodu cannot attack with the back end of its notbora. If the desmodu attacks a target other than the grappled creature with the front end of the notbora, the grapple ends.

DESMODU BATS

The desmodu (and to a lesser extent, the nycter) breed large bats for a variety of purposes, from transport, to hunting, to combat. These bats understand a handful of commands in either the Desmodu or Nycter language once they are trained, and these bats are almost always domesticated.

A few of these specialized bats have returned to their feral roots after the fall of the empire, but the desmodu in particular have taken great pains to wrangle these wild populations. Well-bred bats are a valuable resource that can fetch a fortune at the hands of a savvy desmodu merchant, and surviving feral populations of these bats are as lucrative a treasure as a chest full of golden coins.

GUARD BAT

Layered with dense muscles under sleek black-grey fur, guard bats often roost in the ceilings of desmodu or nycter caverns, watching over the creatures that tend to them. Guard bats are close to giant bats in heritage, but have been bred to be fiercely loyal to their masters, and

Pulling Strike. The creature is pulled 5 feet closer to the desmodu.

Tossing Strike. The desmodu pushes the target 10 feet away from it in a straight line.

Tripping Strike. The desmodu makes a Strength (Athletics) check contested by the target's Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check (the target chooses the ability to use). If the desmodu is successful, the target is rendered prone.

Speak with Bats. Through sounds and gestures, the desmodu can communicate simple ideas with bats, and understand their responses.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The desmodu makes two attacks in any combination. If at least one of these is with its notbora, it can make one additional attack with the notbora's back end.

Notbora. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Notbora, Back End. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage. A creature hit by this attack cannot regain hit points until the start of the desmodu's next turn.

Sonic Burst (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). The desmodu can use its action to unleash a blast of sound in a 15-foot cone; each creature in the cone must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 2d6 thunder damage on a failed save. If the desmodu is not deafened, it knows the location of every creature in this area until the end of its next turn.

to have an especially deadly bite.

Guard bats are occasionally used by nycter patrols for mounts. While desmodu can use these bats as mounts, the relative sizes of bat and desmodu make the experience uncomfortable for each.

GUARD BAT

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 32 (5d10 + 5)

Speed 10 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	2 (-4)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +5

Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages —

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Echolocation. The bat can't use its blindsight while deafened.

Flyby. The bat doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

Keen Hearing. The bat has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

Perceptive. The bat adds twice its proficiency bonus to its Perception checks, in place of its normal bonus.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage. A creature hit by this attack cannot regain hit points until the start of the bat's next turn.

HUNTING BAT

About the size of a large dog, hunting bats sometimes fly freely throughout desmodu and nycter settlements, scrabbling across ceilings, roofs, and through alleys in search of food. Trained desmodu and nycter hunters often use these bats to track prey (both bestial and humanoid) through the tunnels, communicating with these bats via ultrasonic chirps.

Though the nycter can ride these bats, they rarely do. Hunting bats are barely strong enough to carry a rider for very far, and quickly become temperamental when ridden.

HUNTING BAT

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 10 ft., fly 70 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +6

Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Echolocation. The bat can't use its blindsight while deafened.

Flyby. The bat doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

Keen Hearing. The bat has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage. A creature hit by this attack cannot regain hit points until the start of the bat's next turn.

Hunting Pulse (Recharge 5–6). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 60/120 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d8) thunder damage and 4 (1d8) psychic damage, or only 4 (1d8) thunder damage against a target that is deafened or cannot hear. A target that can hear must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become stunned until the start of the bat's next turn.

WAR BAT



WAR BAT

At the height of the fallen empire, the caverns of the nycter and desmodu rang with the chattering of war bats, massive beasts bred to obliterate their foes in open combat. Often serving as mounts or beasts of burden, war bats carried nycter warlock-generals or desmodu notbora cavalry during the empire. In more recent eras, these war bats serve merchants as often as warriors, carrying heavy loads between colonies throughout the Underdark.

WAR BAT

Huge beast, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 51 (6d12 + 12)

Speed 10 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+4)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Athletics +6, Perception +3

Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Echolocation. The bat can't use its blindsight while deafened.

Flyby. The bat doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

Keen Hearing. The bat has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The bat makes two bite attacks. The bat can replace one of these attacks with a use of its Sonic Burst, if available.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) piercing damage. A creature hit by this attack cannot regain hit points until the start of the bat's next turn.

Sonic Burst (Recharge 5–6). The bat can use its action to unleash a blast of sound in a 15-foot cone; each creature in the cone must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) thunder damage on a failed save. If the bat is not deafened, it knows the location of every creature in this area until the end of its next turn.

NYCTER

Small, nimble, and elusive, the nycter are even slighter than halflings, especially compared against their much-larger desmodu cousins. The nycter have a storied history of dark magic, sacrifice, and fallen empires, but have settled into being a mostly peaceful and friendly culture of subterranean naturalists.

The nycter considered the desmodu to either be their friends or servants once, depending on whom you ask, but most nycter these days are distrusting at best of their desmodu kin. The brutality and strength of the desmodu are reminders to the nycter of their own fragility, and of the terrible might of the collective empire

the nycter held with the desmodu, which most nycter currently consider to be a mark of shame.

NYCTER COMMONER

Most nycter survive any way they can, tending underground crops and livestock, or gathering the resources the caves have to offer. Nycter traders are fairly common, as far as nycter go, and often have positive relations with dwarves, svirfneblin, and most other races of the Underdark.

The drow are seen as boogeymen in nycter society, and encountering a drow, even in conversation, is considered to be a likely death sentence. When drow expand into an area in which nycter are present, the nycter quickly move out, leaving behind supplies and livelihoods if necessary.

NYCTER DEFENDER OF THE CAVE

Nycter societies honor those among them who have done incredible things, or who have proven themselves worthy through wisdom and leadership. The highest honor a nycter can receive is to be named the

NYCTER COMMONER

Small humanoid (nycter), any alignment

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 10 (3d6)

Speed 25 ft., fly 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Skills Stealth +4, Survival +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Nycter

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Echolocate (Recharge 5-6). The nycter can use a bonus action to emit an ultrasonic pulse at a point within 60 feet. The nycter then knows the location of any hidden or invisible creatures or objects within a 5 foot radius of that point, and knows illusions within this radius for what they are. If the nycter is blinded or otherwise unable to see, it can see everything within this radius as if it possessed blindsight. These benefits last until the start of the nycter's next turn, and if the nycter is deafened, using this ability confers no benefits.

Limited Flight. When using its natural flying speed, the nycter must land at the end of each of its turns. If it does not do so, it begins falling gently at a rate of 60 feet per round, taking no damage from falling in this way.

Speak with Bats. Through sounds and gestures, the nycter can communicate simple ideas with bats, and understand their responses.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage. A creature hit by this attack cannot regain hit points until the start of the nycter's next turn.

NYCTER DEFENDER OF THE CAVE

Small humanoid (nycter), any alignment

Armor Class 17 (studded leather armor)

Hit Points 110 (20d6 + 40)

Speed 25 ft., fly 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	20 (+5)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +5, Con +6, Wis +8

Skills Athletics +5, Nature +4, Perception +8, Stealth +9, Survival +8

Senses darkvision 90 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages Common, Nycter, two others

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Dread Ambusher. The nycter adds its Wisdom modifier to its initiative rolls, and deals an additional 4 (1d8) damage with its weapon attacks on the first round of combat.

Echolocate (Recharge 4-6). The nycter can use a bonus action to emit an ultrasonic pulse at a point within 60 feet. The nycter then knows the location of any hidden or invisible creatures or objects within a 5 foot radius of that point, and knows illusions within this radius for what they are. If the nycter is blinded or otherwise unable to see, it can see everything within this radius as if it possessed blindsight. These benefits last until the start of the nycter's next turn, and if the nycter is deafened, using this ability confers no benefits.

Limited Flight. When using its natural flying speed, the nycter must land at the end of each of its turns. If it does not do so, it begins falling gently at a rate of 60 feet per round, taking no damage from falling in this way.

Speak with Bats. Through sounds and gestures, the nycter can

communicate simple ideas with bats, and understand their responses.

Spellcasting. The nycter is a 17th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). The nycter has the following ranger spells prepared:

1st level (4 slots): *cure wounds*, *disguise self*, *ensnaring strike*, *zephyr strike**

2nd level (3 slots): *lesser restoration*, *pass without trace*, *rope trick*

3rd level (3 slots): *conjure animals*, *fear*, *plant growth*

4th level (3 slots): *freedom of movement*, *greater invisibility*, *stoneskin*

5th level (1 slot): *seeming*, *steel wind strike**

* this spell is found in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*

Umbral Shroud. While in darkness, the nycter can choose to be invisible to any creature that relies on darkvision to see it.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The nycter makes either four melee attacks, two ranged attacks, or two melee attacks and one ranged attack. Only one of these attacks can be with its bite.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) slashing damage.

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d4 + 5) piercing damage. A creature hit by this attack cannot regain hit points until the start of the nycter's next turn.

REACTIONS

Shadowy Dodge. The nycter can impose disadvantage on one attack made against it, before knowing the result of the roll.

"Defender of the Cave," a title that encompasses both "ranger-general" and "village elder" in its scope and responsibilities.

Each nycter village has a Defender, which is usually a nycter with considerable skill as a ranger or druid. As the name implies, the Defender sees to the defense of their village, keeping it safe from outside threats, and acting as an arbiter in disputes between nycter.

The Defender is always a master of combat, able to take on creatures many times their size. When a nycter village must be evacuated in the face of adversaries such as the drow, it is expected for the Defender to remain behind until every nycter in the village has made it to safety, holding off their foes to their dying breath, if necessary.

NYCTER DRUID

After the fall of the empire, the nycter watched their cities and culture burn into nothingness before the might of the drow. Bereft of safety and purpose, the nycter found both in the arms of nature, building small colonies in caverns with fertile soil and ample wildlife. Nycter druids oversaw these first colonies, and continue to shepherd nycter villages to this day.



NYCTER DEFENDER
OF THE CAVE

NYCTER DRUID

Small humanoid (nycter), any alignment

Armor Class 14 (hide armor)

Hit Points 49 (11d6 + 11)

Speed 25 ft., fly 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)

Skills Animal Handling +6, Nature +2, Stealth +4, Survival +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Druidic, Nycter

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Change Shape (2/Day). The nycter magically polymorphs into either a bat (MM, p. 318) or a hunting bat, and can remain in this form for up to 1 hour. The nycter can choose whether its equipment falls to the ground, melds with its new form, or is worn by the new form. The nycter reverts to its true form if it dies or falls unconscious. The nycter can revert to its true form using a bonus action on its turn.

While in a new form, the nycter retains its game statistics and ability to speak, but its AC, movement modes, Strength, and Dexterity are replaced by those of the new form, and it gains any special senses, proficiencies, traits, and actions that the new form has but that it lacks. It cannot cast spells while in its new form, but can still maintain concentration on spells it has already cast.

Echolocata (Recharge 5-6). The nycter can use a bonus action to emit an ultrasonic pulse at a point within 60 feet. The nycter then knows the location of any hidden or invisible creatures or objects within a 5 foot radius of that point, and knows illusions

within this radius for what they are. If the nycter is blinded or otherwise unable to see, it can see everything within this radius as if it possessed blindsight. These benefits last until the start of the nycter's next turn, and if the nycter is deafened, using this ability confers no benefits.

Limited Flight. When using its natural flying speed that is not a product of its Change Shape trait, the nycter must land at the end of each of its turns. If it does not do so, it begins falling gently at a rate of 60 feet per round, taking no damage from falling in this way.

Speak with Bats. Through sounds and gestures, the nycter can communicate simple ideas with bats, and understand their responses.

Spellcasting. The nycter is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The nycter has the following druid spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *gust**, *mold earth**, *primal savagery**, *thunderclap**

1st level (4 slots): *animal friendship*, *healing word*, *earth tremor**, *faerie fire*, *thunderwave*

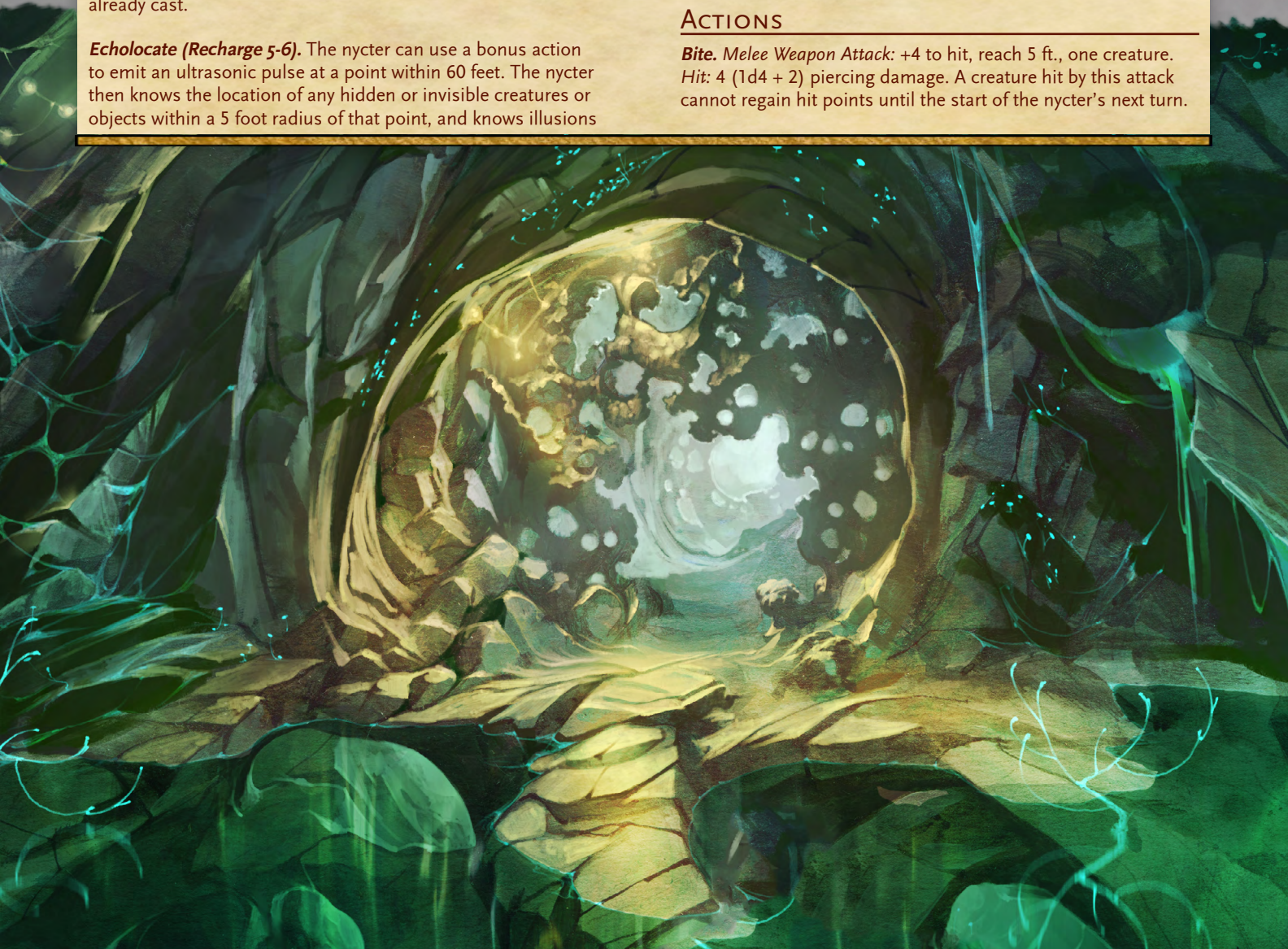
2nd level (3 slots): *gust of wind*, *lesser restoration*, *spider climb*, *web*

3rd level (2 slots): *conjure animals*, *erupting earth**, *gaseous form*, *stinking cloud*

* this spell is found in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage. A creature hit by this attack cannot regain hit points until the start of the nycter's next turn.



NYCTER SKULKER

Small humanoid (nycter), any alignment

Armor Class 14 (leather armor)

Hit Points 30 (9d6)

Speed 25 ft., fly 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Skills Perception +3, Sleight of Hand +5, Stealth +7, Survival +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Nycter, Thieves' cant

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Cunning Action. On each of its turns, the nycter can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Echolocate (Recharge 5-6). The nycter can use a bonus action to emit an ultrasonic pulse at a point within 60 feet. The nycter then knows the location of any hidden or invisible creatures or objects within a 5 foot radius of that point, and knows illusions within this radius for what they are. If the nycter is blinded or otherwise unable to see, it can see everything within this radius as if it possessed blindsight. These benefits last until the start of the nycter's next turn, and if the nycter is deafened, using this ability confers no benefits.

Limited Flight. When using its natural flying speed, the nycter must land at the end of each of its turns. If it does not do so, it begins falling gently at a rate of 60 feet per round, taking no damage from falling in this way.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). The nycter deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the nycter that isn't incapacitated and the nycter doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Speak with Bats. Through sounds and gestures, the nycter can communicate simple ideas with bats, and understand their responses.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The nycter makes two attacks, only one of which can be with its bite.

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

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage. A creature hit by this attack cannot regain hit points until the start of the nycter's next turn.

NYCTER SKULKER

Some solitary nycter make their ways in the societies of other races, hiding amongst their shadows and staying out of sight. Rather than live a communal life in harmony with nature, these nycter live off the urban leavings of others, scrounging and stealing what they need to live.

Regardless of whether it is earned or not, nycter that spend too long in an urban environment often gain a negative reputation. Seen as a blight, a nuisance, or

simply an easy scapegoat, these nycter trust few others and mostly keep to themselves.

NYCTER WARLOCK

While the few nycter cultists that exist quest after fragments of lost lore and whispers of forgotten power, a true nycter warlock is so much more. Most nycter warlocks start as scholars of the history of their race, and enter into pacts with the Unnamed One as a way to learn truths about their past that are otherwise inaccessible.

Most nycter warlocks hide their craft, as to reveal themselves risks immediate death or exile. Nevertheless, the existence of warlocks among the nycter often causes their occasional academics and scholars to be treated with extreme suspicion, watched constantly by other nycter (and, notably, Defenders) for the slightest sign of dark magics. In an ironic twist, many scholars turn to pact magic in the first place for the tools to escape this intense scrutiny, and to be able to continue their studies without harassment from others.



NYCTER WARLOCK

Small humanoid (nycter), chaotic evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 71 (13d6 + 26)

Speed 25 ft., fly 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+3)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Int +6, Wis +4, Cha +9

Skills Arcana +6, Deception +7, Stealth +5, Survival +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Nycter, two others

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Dark Devotion. The nycter has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Echolocate (Recharge 4-6). The nycter can use a bonus action to emit an ultrasonic pulse at a point within 60 feet. The nycter then knows the location of any hidden or invisible creatures or objects within a 5 foot radius of that point, and knows illusions within this radius for what they are. If the nycter is blinded or otherwise unable to see, it can see everything within this radius as if it possessed blindsight. These benefits last until the start of the nycter's next turn, and if the nycter is deafened, using this ability confers no benefits.

Limited Flight. When using its natural flying speed, the nycter must land at the end of each of its turns. If it does not do so, it begins falling gently at a rate of 60 feet per round, taking no damage from falling in this way.

Speak with Bats. Through sounds and gestures, the nycter can communicate simple ideas with bats, and understand their responses.

Spellcasting. The nycter is a 12th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). It regains its expended spell slots when it finishes a short or long rest. The nycter knows the following warlock spells:

- Cantrips (at will): *chill touch*, *eldritch blast*, *magic stone**, *minor illusion*, *poison spray*, *thunderclap*
 1st-5th level (3 5th-level slots): *arms of hadar*, *banishment*, *darkness*, *ennervation**, *dimension door*, *find familiar*, *hex*, *hold monster*, *invisibility*, *mage armor* (self only), *negative energy flood**, *shadow of moil**, *vampiric touch*
 * this spell is found in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature.
Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage. A creature hit by this attack cannot regain hit points until the start of the desmodu's next turn.

Avatar of the Unnamed (1/day). The nycter conjures a war bat under its control in a space it can see within 60 feet. The war bat exists for 1 minute before disappearing.

