

# The Wildside Gaming System

Fantasy Role-Playing Edition



# Creatures

This section is intended for the GM's use. Players should not know their enemies too well, at least not at first. If you are not a GM, reading this section may make it difficult for you to feign unfamiliarity with a creature your character encounters for the first time.


The following are capsule descriptions of some of the creatures that may be encountered by characters in the course of their lives. Some may be hostile to characters, some friendly, some indifferent or incidental. Obscure creatures or creatures invented by game masters are described in some detail, while better known creatures are less fully fleshed out. This section is designed as a game aid, not a zoology textbook, and precise accuracy may be sacrificed for ease of playability. GM's who know animals well enough to spot the inaccuracies should feel free to adjust them to fit their own tastes. The descriptions of faerie creatures that follow are drawn primarily from folklore and mythology, rather than contemporary fantasy.

## KEY:

**table:** this indicates whether the creature receives damage on table I, II, III or IV. The numbers in parentheses are the amount of damage the creature can take before death/before being rendered unable to continue.

**armor:** an attacker must roll this number or higher in order to penetrate a creature's hide or natural armor. Creatures with no natural protection are listed as armor: 1.

**fighters:** this is a key to the creature's fighting ability. All bonuses to combat or damage rolls as well as any sort of special ability—such as poison, especially bad breath, etc.—are described here. Bonuses given are against weapons of average length (length class C) and should be modified if opponents' weapons are shorter or longer.

Creatures living primarily in water are marked with a .

A few creatures listed here are not found under natural circumstances. They dwell on mysterious planes accessible only to summoners, or are magical in nature. This would include the genie (or djinni) found in a bottle, the living tornado of fire summoned by an elemental, or the demon to whom a warrior sells his soul (not just warriors do this . . . remember *Damn Yankees* and Benet's "The Devil and Daniel Webster"). Any creature not found in nature is marked with a ✱.

## A

**AARDVARK** (common)—these nocturnal termite eaters live in complex tunnel networks which they dig with their large claws. They grow to about 5 feet in length (7 including tail) and are covered with thick, gray skin. Aardvarks live in savanna, grasslands, and forests where the ground is soft. Aardvarks are shy, but their tunnels are often shared with other, sometimes less shy creatures. Aardvark tunnels are often long and complicated. They may have many openings, and invariably end with a large chamber. Except during mating season, they are solitary creatures.

**table:** I (100/60)

**armor:** 4

**fighters:** 0

**AARDVARK** (giant)—a larger, less shy, nastier cousin to normal aardvarks. These nocturnal carnivores also live in complex tunnel networks which they dig with their large claws. They grow to about 8 feet in length (11 including tail), weigh up to 600 pounds, and are covered with thick, gray skin. Like their cousins, giant aardvarks live in savanna, grasslands, and forests where the ground is soft. Their tunnels, often shared with other creatures, are generally long and complicated. They may have many openings, and invariably end with a large chamber. Except during mating season, they are solitary creatures.

**table:** II (80/50)

**armor:** 4

**fighters:** +1

**AARDWOLF**—a small doglike animal similar to a hyena. Aardwolves are colored anywhere from yellow to dark brown, with dark vertical stripes. They have a dark stripe running down their backs and legs, and long, narrow, pointed ears. Aardwolves are shy and nocturnal. They are only about 3 feet long (including tail) and weigh less than 10 pounds. If attacked, they raise a crest of dark hairs on their backs and—like skunks—emit a strong, unpleasant odor. They live in small groups on savanna and dry plains.

**table:** I (30/20)

**armor:** 4

**fighters:** 0

✳ **AHKRES**—this is the fabled lost civilization of lizard-headed poet-warriors. The Ahkres are highly intelligent and their culture is quite advanced, both technologically and philosophically—about on the level of Renaissance Italy. Although quite warlike as a culture, and generally aggressive personally, Ahkres tend to be philosophical, moody, and subject to fits of brooding and depression. There is a tremendous sense of cultural loss among Ahkres because of the loss of the flower of their civilization, the city of Ahkrestan, which disappeared without a trace after the philosophers of that city called into question the roles of gods in a changing society. Young Ahkres warrior-poets frequently undertake quests to find some trace of Ahkrestan, but although a few relics of the city have been unearthed in locations spread over a half dozen far-flung planes, no survivors or real clues have been found. Because of this questing, Ahkres may be found nearly anywhere, if not generally in great numbers, at least well-armed and -equipped.

Magic is well developed among the Ahkres, as are most of the arts and sciences. Magicians of all schools can be found among them. Although each individual Ahkres learns his or her trade through a loose guild system—since Ahkres are reptiles with no external sexual characteristics, there is no real differentiation between the sexes—every one must also study intensively in weapons, history, and literature. An Ahkres is not considered an adult until he or she passes stringent exams of proficiency in all 3 areas and has been granted the title of warrior-poet. The result of this is that nearly all mature Ahkres are proficient in a number of weapons—usually at least 8—can recite their racial history, and can compose bleak, depressing poetry about their lost innocence.

The Ahkres are a long-lived race. Typically, one reaches adulthood at 30, middle age at 120, retirement by 240, and decrepitude by 280 or so. Although the typical lifespan is about 300 years, some Ahkres have been known to live much longer. Contributing to this is the species near-total immunity to all disease and infection and rapid healing ability. Since the disappearance of Ahkrestan, the main center of civilization has been the city of Ahkstan, a sprawling jumble of buildings totally labyrinthine to non-natives. Pockets and outposts of Ahkres may be found nearly anywhere and on any plane. These outposts will be well-armed, equipped with magic (especially summoners) and in some sort of contact with Ahkstan and their home plane, no matter how distant. Ahkres stand between 6 and 7 feet tall, are covered with fine scales which range from deep brown to a rich golden color and usually pale as the creatures grow older. They generally dress in brightly colored breeches and tunics and wear boots, armor, and weapons.

**table:** II (70/50)

**armor:** 5 or 8 from armor worn

**fighths:** +2 or better with nearly any weapon, +10% or more on damage rolls

✳ **AIR DEMI-ELEMENTAL**—a large, unearthly spirit made of pure air, elementals are intelligent, fearsome, and

innately magical in nature, although they are bound by any promises they make (bound to the letter, if not the spirit). An elemental that is summoned but not controlled by its caster (and they will try mightily to outwit or otherwise escape from their caster's control) may go on a destructive spree—especially if the wizard who summoned it will be blamed for the damage. They can only be hit by magical weapons, and can't be killed. (If damaged past what it can take, an elemental's spirit wanders aimlessly in disembodied form, seeking revenge and return to its home plane of existence.) Demi-elementals are about 20 feet high.

**table:** III (100/100)

**armor:** only magic weapons can hit

**fighths:** +3, +30% to damage rolls, element

✳ **AIR ELEMENTAL**—a large, unearthly spirit made of pure air, elementals are intelligent, fearsome, and innately magical in nature, although they are bound by any promises they make (bound to the letter, if not the spirit). An elemental that is summoned but not controlled by its caster (and they will try mightily to outwit or otherwise escape from their caster's control) may go on a destructive spree—especially if the wizard who summoned it will be blamed for the damage. They can only be hit by magical weapons, and can't be killed. (If damaged past what it can take, an elemental's spirit wanders aimlessly in disembodied form, seeking revenge and return to its home plane of existence.) Demi-elementals are more than 30 feet high.

**table:** IV (70/70)

**armor:** only magic weapons can hit

**fighths:** +4, +40% to damage rolls, element



\* AIR SPIRIT—a large, unearthly spirit made of pure air, elementals are intelligent, fearsome, and innately magical in nature, although they are bound by any promises they make (bound to the letter, if not the spirit). An elemental that is summoned but not controlled by its caster (and they will try mightily to outwit or otherwise escape from their caster's control) may go on a destructive spree—especially if the wizard who summoned it will be blamed for the damage. They can only be hit by magical weapons, and can't be killed. (If damaged past what it can take, an elemental's spirit wanders aimlessly in disembodied form, seeking revenge and return to its home plane of existence.) Demi-elementals are about 15 feet high.

**table:** II (100/100)

**armor:** only magic weapons can hit

**fighths:** +2, +20% to damage rolls, element

ALLIGATOR—carnivorous reptiles found primarily in tropical and subtropical swamplands. Although smaller than their crocodile cousins, alligators are still imposing in length and contain an excess of long, pointy teeth in their blunt snouts. Although they normally prey on moderate sized creatures—fish, small deer, pets, preadolescent children—alligators will at times take on larger prey. They may be encountered singly or in bunches, especially when one is wading through swamps.

**table:** I (120/100)

**armor:** 7

**fighths:** +1, +30% to damage rolls



ANTELOPE—there are a great many varieties of these herbivorous mammals: oryx, addax, pronghorn, gemsbok, saiga, springbok, gazelle, etc. They are found in deserts, on plains and steppes, and in other open and somewhat arid areas. Antelopes in general require very little water and can travel a great way to find it. They rely on speed to escape from predators, but if cornered most can fight effectively with variously shaped horns, especially the oryx, which can be a nasty opponent. The fastest antelope, like gazelles, can attain a steady speed of 50 miles an hour. Antelopes range from about 2 feet at the shoulder (gazelles) to about 4 feet high at the shoulder.

**table:** I (40/30 to 90/70)

**armor:** 3

**fighths:** 0 to +3, -15% to damage received

AOUDAD—a large goat which lives in arid, rocky areas. They have thick, light brown coats with long fringes of lighter colored fur on throat, chest and front legs. Their long, curved horns can reach almost 3 feet in length (females are smaller). Males may be over 5 feet long and 6 feet at the shoulder, and weigh more than 300 pounds. They are great climbers and leapers, their color camouflaging them in the rocks in which they live. They may be found alone, or in family groups led by a single large male.

**table:** II (70/50)

**armor:** 5

**fighths:** +2, +10% to damage rolls

## B

### Bane Beast

FULLBANE—the largest type of banebeast, about 10 feet at the shoulder. They are covered with a pelt of thick, matted,

dark fur. They are somewhat similar to wolverines in appearance and temperament. The poison from their talons causes a paralysis that can linger for weeks, and sometimes kill. Fullbanes inhabit mountain forests and cold wooded areas.

**table:** IV (70/50)

**armor:** 6

**fighths:** +4, poison

HALFBANE—These are the middle type of banebeast, about 6 feet at the shoulder. They are covered with a pelt of thick, matted, dark fur. They are somewhat similar to wolverines in appearance and temperament. The poison from their talons causes a paralysis that can linger for weeks, and sometimes kill. Halfbanes live in mountain forests and cold woodlands.

**table:** III (70/50)

**armor:** 6

**fighths:** +3, poison

QUARTERBANE—These are the smallest type of banebeast, about 3 feet at the shoulder. They are covered with a pelt of thick, matted, dark fur. They are somewhat similar to wolverines in appearance and temperament. The poison from their talons causes a paralysis that can linger for weeks, and sometimes kill. They live in mountain woods and cold forests.

**table:** II (70/50)

**armor:** 6

**fighths:** +2, poison



## B (cont'd)

BASILISK—a rather small carnivorous reptile whose diet consists basically of worms, slugs, snails, and insects. Its gaze also kills any creature unfortunate enough to meet it. Otherwise, the basilisk is fairly harmless. Basilisks are rare, but can occasionally be found in dry hills and desert.

**table:** I (60/40)

**armor:** 4

**fighths:** -3

BAT—live in caves, belfries or other suitably dark locations, swarming out at night to hunt. They navigate by radar, may be rabid, and are generally peaceable if undisturbed. Vampires can summon swarms of blood-sucking vampire bats however, which will overwhelm any opponent.

**table:** I (5/3)

**armor:** 1

**fighths:** +1, inflicting 1% of damage on a hit. Vampire bats will hang on and do an additional 1% per round of bloodsucking. Swarms of bats will automatically score numerous hits—how many is determined by the GM based on the circumstances.

## Bears

BEAR (black and brown bears)—These can be found in nearly any environment, although most commonly in temperate and colder areas. These bears are omnivores, eating anything from berries, fish, honey (of course), and small animals to the occasional lost human. Bears are prized for their furs, but they do not easily give up their hides. Although bears do not go out of their way to harass humans, they are very common in frontier areas, and penned livestock are hard to resist. . . .

**table:** II (80/60)

**armor:** 5

**fighths:** +3, +30% to damage rolls

GRIZZLY BEAR—Grizzlies are enormous (up to 1,500 pounds), fierce, solitary bears found in temperate and cold areas, especially mountains and semi-open country. Grizzlies are black or brown or a combination of the two, with a large hump over the shoulders. They are great diggers and fast runners (more than 35 mph). Grizzlies are mostly nocturnal, and lethargic in winter.

**table:** III (90/70)

**armor:** 5

**fighths:** +3, +40% on damage rolls