



**SHADOW** OF THE **BROODMOTHER**

**AN ADVENTURE FOR  
5TH, 11TH, 17TH LEVEL**

**"SOMETHING IN THE SWAMP  
JUST WON'T STAY DEAD."**

**HELIANA**



# CONTENTS

<b>USING THIS BOOK</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>HUNT —</b>	
<b>SHADOW OF THE BROODMOTHER</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> . . . . .	<b>3</b>
<b>BACKGROUND</b> . . . . .	<b>3</b>
Summary . . . . .	4
Adventure Hooks . . . . .	4
<b>KNOW THY ENEMY</b> . . . . .	<b>6</b>
Clue 1: Mind Control . . . . .	6
Clue 2: Infectious Disease . . . . .	6
Clue 3: Watery World . . . . .	7
<b>MILAKUL SWAMP</b> . . . . .	<b>8</b>
<b>THE BATTLE AHEAD</b> . . . . .	<b>8</b>
Broodmother's Lair . . . . .	9
Wave 1: Broodlings . . . . .	13
Wave 2: The Chrysalis . . . . .	14
Wave 3: Broodmother Reborn . . . . .	16
<b>AFTERMATH</b> . . . . .	<b>17</b>
<b>TREASURE</b> . . . . .	<b>18</b>
Harvesting . . . . .	18
Crafting . . . . .	18
<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>APPENDIX A — MAGIC ITEMS</b> . . . . .	<b>20</b>
<b>APPENDIX B — SPELLS</b> . . . . .	<b>27</b>
<b>APPENDIX C — CREATURES</b> . . . . .	<b>28</b>
<b>APPENDIX D — FAMILIARS</b> . . . . .	<b>36</b>
<b>APPENDIX E — SOUNDS</b> . . . . .	<b>39</b>
<b>LEGAL</b>	<b>39</b>

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# USING THIS BOOK

Get ready to dive into a world of dangerous hunts, challenges, and monsters. This book presents all the tools you will need to run an entertaining adventure.

## RULE ZERO

You are encouraged to use whichever pieces of this book you like and change the ones you don't. If there is a DC that seems off, a name that doesn't fit, or a quest hook that seems incongruous, then make it your own. Remember: if you're all having fun, you're doing it right.

## RUNNING THE HUNT

The adventure in this book is referred to as a hunt. It is a type of adventure in which you find clues, prepare for the fight ahead, and then have a big battle. This hunt can be run at a variety of different average party levels (APLs), listed in the hunt's introduction. The hunt uses the following structure:

**Introduction.** The name and level of the hunt, as well as a brief synopsis.

**Background.** The information the GM needs to know about why a monster needs to be hunted! This includes:

- A summary of the monster
- Three quest hooks: curiosity, morality, and compensation
- Monetary and XP rewards
- Brief biographies of key NPCs

**Location.** The location where the hunt takes place, sometimes containing descriptions of unique flora and fauna or other rules.

**Know Thy Enemy.** Clues about the monster that, if discovered by the player characters, help them prepare for the battle.

**The Battle Ahead.** The creature's lair actions, any environmental effects, composition of each wave, and triggers for moving between waves.

**Aftermath.** This section wraps up each quest hook of the hunt and suggests ways this story can continue and shape your world. The Loot Tavern's bard, Cacophonics, has the link to the song he writes for the party here.

**Treasure.** Discoverable loot related to the specific boss monster, as well as information related to the optional Tracking and Crafting rules found in the *Heliana's Guide to Monster Hunting* book.

**Beyond Deadly.** Death is inevitable. In this book, it is a little *more* inevitable than usual, especially if your party doesn't pick up on the clues and prepare accordingly.

If you have fewer than four player characters or a lower APL than that for which the hunt is balanced, consider lowering the difficulty. This can be achieved by removing some creatures, replacing them with lower CR versions, or using the 'Helping Hand' paragraphs within each hunt to reduce the difficulty. The hunt's boss fight is designed to use a party's entire resources for a day's adventuring, which exceeds the daily XP budget at higher levels.

### AVERAGE DAILY XP BUDGET PER HUNT

Level	Daily XP Budget Used per Hunt
1-4	100%
5-10	130%
11-16	160%
17-20	200%

**Clues.** This hunt contains at least three clues that can be conveyed to the players before combat starts. Understanding the clues is the key to your players preparing for the fight ahead and feeling empowered when their preparations pay off. Every clue has at least one example of how you can convey the information to your players. Note, these are examples! It's still up to you as the GM to make any necessary changes to the story and roleplay interactions to make sure your players understand these clues.

Be obvious when delivering clues. The more you can repeat and illustrate a clue, the more the players will understand it. In addition, prompting the adventurers to summarise what they've learnt by using an NPC to ask questions can engender a much-needed dialogue between players. Furthermore, player characters need time to prepare in a way that allows them to meaningfully act on the clues. It is often both enjoyable and less deadly for players to take a long rest to recover resources, prepare spells, and design a plan that exploits a monster's weaknesses. Be sure to give them the opportunity to prepare!

# INTRODUCTION

This hunt, *Shadow of the Broodmother*, is intended for 3 to 7 characters with an average player level (APL) of 5, 11, or 17. Characters who complete this hunt should earn enough experience to progress one-quarter of the way to 6th level or halfway of the way to 12th or 18th level. The adventurers must find and defeat the remnants of a rare swamp aboleth that has purportedly already been killed by a group of celebrated adventurers. After hunting for clues about this aberration, the hunt culminates in a three-wave boss battle. This battle is **deadly** and uses the party's entire daily XP budget. A party well-equipped for an extended fight, as well as means of alleviating disease and mind control, will prove beneficial on this monster hunt.

# BACKGROUND

Slkvol (SLIK-vol) the aboleth broodmother has, for the past few million years, shaped the ecology of Milakul swamp to best serve its own interests: the native swallybogs worship Slkvol as a deity, the fauna all bear signs of Slkvol's modifications, and adventurers are enthralled to spread word of how uninteresting and unworthy of exploration the swamp is. However, Dr. Doolots is not so easily deterred.

Dr. Doolots, a female dragonborn anthrozoologist, is intent on unveiling the swamp's secrets. After several of her field assistants went missing, she gave credence to the swallybog tales of the 'swamp curse' and contracted Heliana, the Hunt Master, to send a group of monster hunters. The Fearsome Five tracked Slkvol to its flooded cave where they dispatched it in a mighty battle, taking one of Slkvol's spawn from its egg sacs back as proof.

However, Slkvol was prepared for such an eventuality. The egg sacs—and there are dozens—contain aboleth broodlings whose sole purpose is to venture into the swamp, mind control creatures, and return this biomass to the cave where it can be converted into a new body for Slkvol. Upon returning to the swamp, Dr. Doolots' assistants continued to disappear, leaving her believing the Five duped her.

By the time the party arrives, Slkvol has almost been reformed. The three waves of the battle represent the final flood of broodling-controlled biomass, the chrysalis converting this biomass into a new broodmother, and the reborn Slkvol.



## DR. DOOLOTS

Humanoid (dragonborn), zoologist, she/her

**Personality.** Curious, enthusiastic, overthinker.

**Appearance.** Tall, sinewy, golden-scaled, piercing blue eyes, wears *pince-nez*.

**Desire.** To catalogue all species in the world.

**Fear.** Failing to prevent (or even causing) the extinction of an uncatalogued creature.

*"What are you!? That hair, those eyes... hrm... is that parasite or symbiont embedded in your skin?"*

## SUMMARY

Here's the main info to assimilate:

- ♦ **Which Monster?** Slkvol the aboleth broodmother and its many broodlings.
- ♦ **Where's the Monster?** The monster's realm is a swamp accessible through a bayou. Its lair is enclosed by thick vines that prevent passage to those not under Slkvol's control.
- ♦ **Monsters' Motivation.** The broodlings want to gather enough biomass to reform Slkvol. Slkvol then wants to enthrall the party.
- ♦ **Monsters' Previous Actions.** Slkvol has lorded over the swamp for the last few million years, bending it to its will. After being killed, Slkvol's broodlings have mind controlled many creatures—including Dr. Doolots' field assistants—gathering them all in Slkvol's lair.

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

Enticing your party to slog through a swamp ain't no easy thing! Luckily, if curiosity, morality, or the chance to tell a good story doesn't tickle their fancy, there's always gold. Feel free to use as many of the following hooks as necessary to get the party to bite!

- ♦ **Curiosity: The Unending Curse.** The party overhears an argument; Dr. Doolots accuses the Fearsome Five (jokingly called the Fearful Five for their tendency to give up when hunting especially ferocious beasts) of lying. The Five claimed to have killed the beast responsible for the 'swamp curse'—they have one of the beast's offspring to prove it. However, Doolots, their patron for this mission, claims that the local swallybogs are still behaving oddly. If anything, the curse is now worse!
- ♦ **Morality: The Missing Assistant.** Dr. Doolots, a zoologist studying swamp ecology, approaches or otherwise contacts the party. She previously hired adventurers to clear the swamp of a dangerous curse affecting local fauna but, despite the adventurers' protestations of success, the curse seems to be persisting. Her field assistant, a swallybog named Gilforth, has been captured and she needs someone to save the swamp's inhabitants. Gilforth is identifiable by the white lab coat he wears.



DR. DOOLOTS



- **Compensation: Swamp Gold.** The party comes across an advert on a noticeboard in an adventurer's guildhall, town square, or on Heliana's job board in the Loot Tavern itself. In addition to monetary rewards (see the table below), L'Arsène Upin (an infamous gadgeteer), also near the noticeboard, mentions that the properties of monstrous amphibians' skin and toxins allow incredibly useful items to be fashioned from them. If the party can harvest whatever swamp monster is probably responsible for this curse, he could make something useful for the party.

In all cases, Dr. Doolots acts as the quest giver and can give the party directions to a place where they can dock their boat and proceed on foot. She doesn't know much about what's going on—she hasn't had a chance to start her research, as her assistants—local tribespeople known as swallybogs—keep disappearing. Dr. Doolots offers a reward relative to the party's level; adjust this to best fit your world's economy.

#### HUNT REWARDS PER PLAYER CHARACTER

Hunt Level	Gold	XP*
5th	750 gp	1,900
11th	3,500 gp	8,200
17th	8,750 gp	21,000

\*Includes all monsters, traps, and puzzles, averaged for a party of 4.

# KNOW THY ENEMY

Doolots suggests the party's first port of call be the Fearsome Five, followed by Heliana who currently holds the monster-hunting contract. Each of the following clues lists ways in which you can hint at the broodmother's traits. The clues are:

- The aboleth broodmother and its offspring, broodlings, use mind control.
- The touch of the broodmother is infectious.
- The broodmother and broodlings travel mostly through water.

## CLUE 1: MIND CONTROL

The aboleth broodmother and its broodlings can all attempt to charm creatures within close range of them that they can see. When charmed, a creature is under the charmer's control. On their own, a broodling's charm is easy to overcome but, en masse, broodlings become more powerful. A broodling can attempt to charm a creature once per day. Damaging a charmed creature can help break this charm.

**Fearsome Five.** The Five have a broodling captured in a small cage, covered by a cloth. When the cloth is removed, the broodling attempts to charm one of the party members. The DC is low (**DC 6 Wisdom saving throw**) but, success or failure, the party member realises they were a moment away from trying to free the critter. If asked, Ser Lonsalttle (LG male gnome **knight**) motions to a goliath compatriot and says something like the following:

"Hah! Looks like little Slimo almost got you there!" he says, slapping his thigh. "Climbo here almost got taken in by the fellow, too! Had to give him a rap around the noggin' to snap him out of it, eh, Climbo? Yes, this little blighter," he points at the broodling "tries to get at least one of us each day. Lucky for us there's only one of them; get a few of 'em near each other and you don't stand a chance. The cloth seems to put paid to his hi-jinks, mind you."

**En Route.** As the party progresses into the swamp, a broodling splashes out of the undergrowth, staring at one of the party members and trying to charm them. Success or failure, the character realises they were close to picking up the critter and protecting it.

## CLUE 2: INFECTIOUS DISEASE

The aboleth broodmother and its offspring can spread disease through their touch. The diseased creature becomes a vessel for more broodlings and is prone to drying out if it spends too long out of the water. The broodlings can only hatch underwater, so this alteration is a way of keeping their host in a favourable environment.

**Fearsome Five.** One of the Five, a N female halfling assassin named Garr Oate, has a large tub of grease she is constantly applying to her skin, which looks painfully dry. A **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check notices a conspicuous, fleshy yellow lump (a broodling sac) under her sleeve. She mentions:

"Bloody swamp has dried my skin out. Only time I get any relief is when I take a bath - I've never bathed so much!"

If pressed about the yellow sac she says:

"Just some botfly larvae. Our cleric says to wait till it hatches so we don't leave an open wound."

A **DC 15 Intelligence (Medicine or Nature)** check reveals that this is not a botfly larva. The broodling sac is too unique for anyone to know what it is by making a check.

**En Route.** As the party nears Slkvol's swamp while boating through the bayou, they spot a half-submerged crocodile sunning itself near a fallen tree. A **DC 8 Wisdom (Perception)** check spots the large yellow lumps (broodling sacs) on its back. A result of **13** or higher notices that, where the crocodile is out of the water, both its skin and the sacs look dry and damaged. Under the water, the skin and sacs look healthy, and small creatures can be seen moving within the sacs.

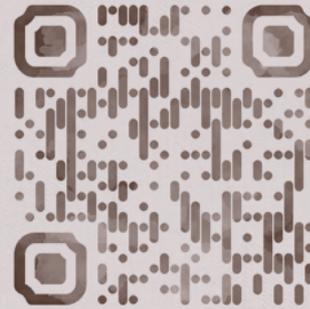
## CLUE 3: WATERY WORLD

The swamp's inhabitants are more mobile—and more deadly—in the water. Water can act as a medium through which the broodmother's and broodlings' psychic energy can propagate. For this reason, the lair around Slkvol's cave can produce waves to knock creatures over and submerge them. Items and spells that grant a swim speed will prove great boons on this hunt.

**Fearsome Five.** The party's bard, a NG male dwarf named Cacophonics, is composing a song about the fight. In its current, unfinished version it reads:

“Attend the tale of the Fearsome Five.  
Through curséd swamps did they bravely strive.  
The water crashed and did pull them in,  
So phantasmical horrors could wear them thin.  
Their magic let them swim and thrive,  
The Fearsome Five,  
Delivered the monster's death wish.”

**Stories.** If the party enquires with any locals, or perhaps asks Dr. Doolots herself, it's revealed that the swamp curse is capable of plucking men from their boats so that they see untold horrors in the water below. It's not such a big deal for those that can easily swim out of the water, but many a warrior laden with heavy armour has failed to resurface after such a wave.



YOU CAN PLAY THE SONG BY SCANNING OR  
CLICKING ON THE QR CODE, OR BY TYPING IN THE  
URL BELOW.

[HELIANA.LT/BROODMOTHER](https://heliana.lt/broodmother)



## MILAKUL SWAMP

For the most part, Milakul swamp is a navigable bayou replete with a dizzying array of unique flora and fauna. It is a humid, mosquito-filled labyrinth from which many adventurers have failed to emerge. Luckily for the party, the map Dr. Doolots has provided makes finding Slkvol's swamp much easier. You can use the following list to describe some of the many wonders observed en-route:

- A bird shoots a lightning bolt from its long, reptilian tail, stunning a fish near the water's surface before swooping down to pluck it with its long talons.
- An eight-eyed fish spins a web around an unlucky frog under the water's surface.
- A large-fronded fern bends down to dip its net-like leaves into the water, scooping up a pile of silt which it begins filtering.
- Small, six-limbed mammals groom one another in the tree-tops, fixing the party with hard stares as they ferry insects to their mouths.
- An unkempt human clad in ragged scraps of armour (an adventurer who got lost many decades ago) runs away when spotted by the party.
- An amphibious-looking humanoid (a swallybog, see page 34) spear fishing on the edge of the river.

The party can park its boat at the head of a sunken trail leading through nigh-on impassable underbrush to Slkvol's lair. This short journey is a good time to reveal Clue 1 to the party (page 6) if you have not done so already.

### INFECTED CROCODILE

## THE BATTLE AHEAD

The upcoming battle consists of 3 waves, the first against the broodlings and swallybogs, the second against the aboleth's chrysalis, and the third against the reborn aboleth broodmother. The battle should be conveyed as a race against time to try and prevent the broodmother from reforming. In reality, there is no way to stop this, but the players can affect how strong the subsequent waves are depending on how much damage they deal to the broodlings, the mind-controlled creatures, and the chrysalis.

**Variable Strength.** Throughout the encounter, actions the players take can reduce how strong the chrysalis and broodmother are in the subsequent waves. This change in strength is measured by a passive penalty or bonus to the damage of its attacks and abilities. The penalty can be no greater than -5, and the bonus no greater than the average player level. This can be affected in the following ways:

- **Wave 1:** Each **10 damage** dealt to the huddled creatures results in a **-1 penalty** to the damage rolls of the chrysalis and broodmother.
- **Wave 2:** Each broodling or creature that melds into the chrysalis gives a **+1 bonus** to the damage rolls of the chrysalis and broodmother.
- **Wave 2:** Each **20 damage** dealt to the chrysalis results in a **-1 penalty** to the damage rolls of the chrysalis and broodmother.



## GM TIP – KEEPING TRACK

Save yourself panic by having a pencil and eraser ready! A tally chart can be used to keep track of the current bonus/penalty the chrysalis and broodmother have applied to their damage rolls. The tally chart is then simply another modifier you apply to the result of each damage roll.

**Timings.** Waves 2 and 3 start on round 4 and 7 of combat, respectively. The third wave (and the encounter) ends when the broodmother is defeated.

## BROODMOTHER'S LAIR

Upon arriving at the entrance to Silkvol's swampy lair, you can read the following to narrate the party's journey:

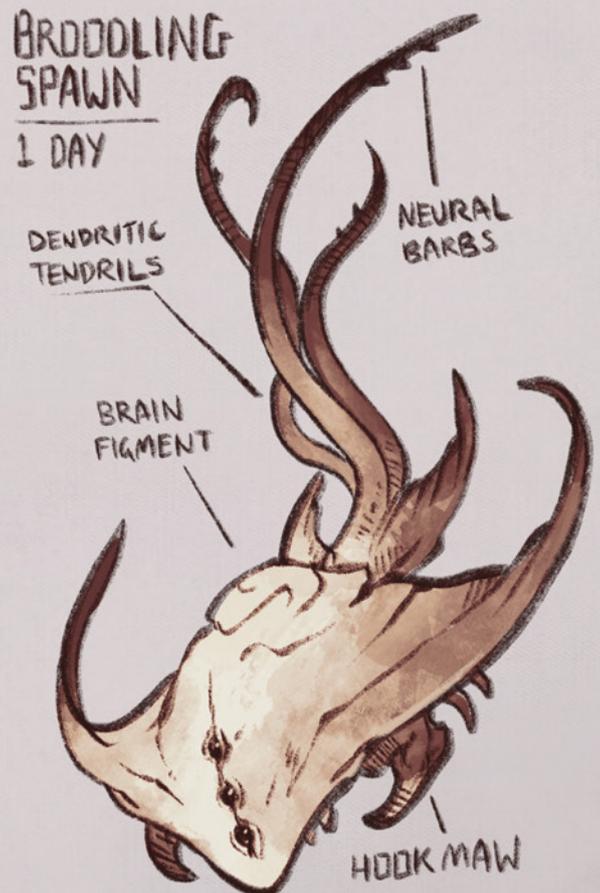
A small, muddy bay leads up to a thicket of impassable vegetation. Within the wall of closely knitted swamp bramble is a half-submerged passageway of uneven, muddy ground, scarcely 5 feet wide.

The air is cool and clammy within the passage. The ground undulates beneath the water; roots and clods of earth occasionally break its surface, while at other times it falls away with a lurch, leaving you thigh-deep. Despite the lack of any perceivable current—whirlpools of silt spiral straight upwards with each footfall—the water elicits a sensation like a strong tide pulling you onwards wherever it touches your bodies. The air is void of the thrum of living things that have accompanied you on the journey thus far. There is no buzz of mosquitoes and the distant call of bird song is muffled, swallowed by the thick vegetation that hems you in.

This is an appropriate time to narrate the 'en route' encounter for Clue 1 if you choose to do so. Otherwise, you can continue reading:

Turning yet another corner, the space opens up. You would be forgiven for thinking you were in a cave, so thick is the twisted swamp bramble that rises up from the surrounding foliage, forming a dome overhead. Visible within the humid, dimly-lit dome is a lake some hundred feet across. Small islands of mud protrude from the water below and the ruins of a primitive village are picked out by narrow shafts of sunlight.

On a small island at the far side of the lake is the unmistakable dead form of a tentacled creature. Between the lake's entrance and the corpse are assembled all manner of local swamp creatures, many bearing the fleshy yellow sacs you've seen elsewhere. More appear through the thick vegetation or bubbling up from the lake. Each carries tiny manta-like creatures that latch onto their hosts' backs with a hooked mouth appendage.





MAP 1. SLKVOL'S LAIR

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

KEY: A - HUDDLED CREATURES  
B - SLKVOL'S CAVE

CARTOGRAPHER: THE MAD CARTOGRAPHER



## **GENERAL FEATURES**

The lair has the following features:

**Ceiling.** The ceiling is a dome made of 5-foot-thick swamp bramble. It starts 10 feet above the water around the lair's edge and rises to 40 feet high in the centre. Each 5-foot cube of the thicket has an AC of 15, 50 hit points, **vulnerability** to cold damage, **resistance** to bludgeoning damage, and **immunity** to piercing, poison, and psychic damage.

**Walls.** The walls are made of the same thicket as the ceiling but are 15 feet thick. The walls can open to allow broodlings, the broodmother, and the creatures they control to pass.

**Floor.** The floor is mostly murky water 15 feet deep. 5 feet of water heavily obscures anything beyond it. Small islands—tangles of roots, mud, and rushes—protrude from the water and are difficult terrain. The swallybog ruins are made of damp wooden planks.

**Light.** The interior is dimly lit.

**Hazard: Infections.** The water of this swamp is a petri dish of loose genetic material and virulent creations of the broodmother. Any creature that is reduced to half its maximum hit points or fewer by piercing or slashing damage must make a **VDC Constitution saving throw** or become infected with a disease. If the disease is not cured within **24 hours**, the creature becomes afflicted by one randomly-determined disease from the *contagion* spell until the disease is removed.

A submarine cave (containing various treasures, see page 18) can be found in the water to the east with a successful **DC 10 Wisdom (Perception)** check.

## LAIR ACTIONS

The aboleth broodmother has **tremorsense** throughout its lair. So long as the broodmother or one of its offspring is alive and within the lake, it can evoke the ambient magic to take lair actions. The DCs and damage of the lair actions and environmental hazards depend on the level at which you run the hunt.

### VARIABLE LAIR ACTION STATISTICS

Hunt Level	VDC	Vmod	Vdam
5th	13	+5	5 (2d4)
11th	15	+7	10 (3d6)
17th	17	+9	21 (6d6)

**Lair Actions.** On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the creature takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects; the same effect can't be used two rounds in a row:

- ♦ **Tempestuous Turbulence.** The water within the lair writhes and swirls, causing 6-foot-tall waves to crash over all the low-lying islands. Each creature in the water, or on the ground less than

5 feet above the water's surface, must make a **VDC Strength saving throw** or be pulled up to 20 feet into the water.

- ♦ **Plague Tide.** The water begins to bubble, filling the lair with noxious, aerosolised droplets. A creature is affected even if it doesn't need to breathe. Each creature must succeed on a **VDC Constitution saving throw** or become **poisoned**. If running this hunt at 11th or 17th level, the creature is poisoned as if it had failed a saving throw against the *contagion* spell (no concentration required). A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on it on a success.
- ♦ **Aqua Phantasm.** Water in the aboleth broodmother's lair magically becomes a conduit for the unspeakable horrors the broodmother has witnessed in its vast memory. Each creature of the broodmother or broodlings' choice within the lair's waters must succeed on a **VDC Wisdom saving throw** or take **Vdam** psychic damage and become **frightened** of the huddled mass of creatures (wave 1), the chrysalis (wave 2), or the broodmother (wave 3) until the end of its next turn.



## WAVE 1: BROODLINGS

Upon noticing the party, several of the charmed creatures change tack to intercept them, though the majority stay in a huddled mass near the lake's centre. **Broodlings** (page 28) that haven't yet found a host jet through the water towards the characters. Hiding from the party, charmed **swallybogs** (page 34) sneak freely through the undergrowth. The rest of the creatures huddle together in front of the cave's entrance.

**Sneaking Swallybogs.** Roll a single **Dexterity (Stealth)** check for the swallybogs before combat and on each of their turns until they attack. In the brambles, their check modifier equals **Vmod**. If the result is lower than one of the adventurers' passive Perceptions, let that player know that its character notices something moving through the swamp bramble.

**The Missing Assistant.** If using "The Missing Assistant" adventure hook, Gilforth (NG **swallybog**), conspicuous in his now-muddied white lab coat, is visible near the north edge of the huddled mass. Gilforth resists any attempt to grapple him (+1 **Dexterity (Acrobatics)** modifier). If Gilforth is not within the huddle when wave 1 ends (at initiative 0 of the third round of combat), the charm on him is broken. If he is still in the huddle, he gets absorbed into the chrysalis.

**Huddled Creatures.** Separate from the monsters which attack the party is a Huge mass of creatures—broodlings, swallybogs, crocodiles, snakes, frogs and other swamp dwellers—huddling together in front of the cave. This huddle can be targeted by attacks and spells. The huddled mass has an AC equal to the **VDC** and a saving throw modifier equal to **Vmod - 3**. Treat the huddle of creatures as two separate individuals for the purposes of determining damage from area of effect abilities and spells.

To add a sense of urgency, tell the players that the huddled mass is slowly growing, with the flesh of adjacent creatures fusing to one another.

## DARKVISION & PERCEPTION

Creatures without darkvision have **disadvantage** on Perception checks that involve sight in dim light. You can impose a **-5 penalty** on passive Perception to account for this disadvantage.

## ENEMIES

Charmed snakes and crocodiles swim alongside broodlings, while swallybogs lurk behind the swamp bramble, ready to unleash an ambush. Depending on the level at which you're running this hunt, the makeup of the enemy combatants differs.

**Level 5.** At 5th level, the wave 1 combatants are:

- 8 **broodlings\*** (CR ½)
- 3 **swallybogs\*** (CR ½)
- 3 **constrictor snakes** (CR ¼)

**Level 11.** At 11th level, the wave 1 combatants are:

- 1 **swallybog gillwrangler\*** (CR 6)
- 1 **giant crocodile** (CR 5)
- 2 **swallybog sharpfins\*** (CR 3)
- 6 high threat **broodlings\*** (CR 2; 52 hit points, 50 foot swimming speed, +8 to hit modifier, Sting saving throw **DC 14**, Entrance base saving throw **DC 14**)

**Level 17.** At 17th level, the wave 1 combatants are:

- 2 **swallybog gillwranglers\*** (CR 6)
- 3 **giant crocodiles** (CR 5)
- 4 **swallybog sharpfins\*** (CR 3)
- 8 high threat **broodlings\*** (CR 2; see above)

\*See Appendix C



## TACTICS

**Broodlings and Beasts.** Broodlings in close proximity to one another have higher Intelligence (see Appendix C). Hence, while the snakes/crocodiles surge toward the nearest target, the broodlings identify which of the party has a low Wisdom saving throw and flank the adventurers to attack that creature *en masse*.

**Swallybogs.** The swallybogs can move freely through the thick undergrowth around the lair's periphery. They can emerge from any part of the forested swamp bramble area on the map. Their purpose is to isolate and eliminate any creature that is attacking at range and keeping its distance from the huddle.

## AFFECTING THE NEXT WAVES

Damaging the huddle of creatures in front of the cave weakens the chrysalis in wave 2. For each **10 points** of damage the huddle takes, the chrysalis' and broodmother's damage rolls gain a **-1 penalty** (maximum of -5) until it finishes a short or long rest.

### VISCERAL FEEDBACK - WAVE 1

Your players don't know if they're having an effect if you don't narrate it! If a player damages the huddle of creatures, be sure to let them know the other creatures they're fighting dislike that.

They could even change targets to attack the creature that damaged the huddle. You could say, "As the mindless beasts fall under your attack, your foes let out hisses and snorts of anger, turning their attention on you."

## WAVE 2: THE CHRYSALIS

With a wet sucking sound, the huddle of creatures melds into a mass of writhing limbs, eyes, bones, and viscera. As the form of each creature dissolves into a single bubbling mound of flesh, the broodlings all turn tail, rushing to merge with the creature. Over the next few rounds, more creatures rush from the surrounding water to meld with the mass.

**Survivors.** Each non-swallybog creature that survived wave 1 spends all its movement and actions to move towards the chrysalis. These creatures Dash; they don't have the wherewithal to take the Disengage action. Each creature that reaches the chrysalis' space immediately melds with it, granting

the chrysalis and the broodmother a **+1 bonus** to damage rolls until it finishes a short or long rest.

**Newcomers.** At initiative 20 of each round (winning initiative ties), **constrictor snakes** appear at the edge of the map (GM's choice of location; consult the table below for the number of snakes). They act on initiative 0 of each round, using their movement and action to move directly towards the chrysalis. Each creature that reaches the chrysalis' space immediately melds with it, granting the chrysalis and the broodmother a **+1 bonus** to damage rolls until it finishes a short or long rest.

## SNAKES SPAWNED PER ROUND

Hunt Level	Number of Constrictor Snakes Spawned
5th	2 (1d4)
11th	6 (2d4 + 1)
17th	9 (3d4 + 2)

**Lair Actions.** Ignore the lair actions for this wave.

## ENEMIES

This wave involves a single chrysalis, a couple more aggravating swallybogs, and multiple low-health beasts that spawn each turn. Depending on the level at which you're running this hunt, the makeup of the enemy combatants differs.

**Level 5.** At 5th-level, the wave 2 combatants are:

- 1 lesser brood chrysalis\* (CR 6)
- 2 swallybogs\* (CR ½)

**Level 11.** At 11th-level, the wave 2 combatants are:

- 1 brood chrysalis\* (CR 12)
- 1 swallybog gillwrangler\* (CR 6)
- 1 swallybog sharpfin\* (CR 3)

**Level 17.** At 17th-level, the wave 2 combatants are:

- 1 greater brood chrysalis\* (CR 18)
- 2 swallybog gillwranglers\* (CR 6)
- 4 swallybog sharpfins\* (CR 3)

\*See Appendix C

## TACTICS

All creatures except the swallybogs and chrysalis spend their movement and actions trying to reach the chrysalis in order to be assimilated. The chrysalis tries to maintain a central position while slowing creatures with its Sticky Ectoplasm so they can be assimilated after its adult form emerges.



BROOD  
CHRYSALIS

**Swallybogs.** As in wave 1, the swallybogs, being charmed creatures, move freely through the thick undergrowth. They can emerge from any part of the forested swamp bramble area on the map. Their purpose is to attack creatures that are out of the chrysalis' range.

### **AFFECTING THE NEXT WAVES**

Damaging the chrysalis weakens the **aboleth broodmother** in wave 3. For each **20 points** of damage the chrysalis takes, the chrysalis' and broodmother's damage rolls gain a **-1 penalty** (maximum of **-5**) until it finishes a short or long rest.

### **VISCERAL FEEDBACK - WAVE 2**

Giving players feedback on how their actions affect this mechanic is an important part of them solving the puzzle in wave 2. You can say things like *"As the snake melds into the chrysalis, the mass of flesh writhes in triumph, its movements more vigorous and its ectoplasm more virulent,"* or *"As your blows crack the chrysalis' exterior, its strength appears to wane, its attacks becoming less potent."*

## WAVE 3: BROODMOTHER REBORN

The hard carapace of the chrysalis ruptures open with a damp crack, releasing the tentacled form of a rubbery-skinned aboleth. Small yellow sacs on its back already swim with unborn broodlings.

### ENEMIES

The **aboleth broodmother**, along with any surviving swallybogs and beasts, attacks the players. Depending on the level at which you're running this hunt, the makeup of the enemy combatants differs.

**Level 5.** At 5th level, the wave 3 combatant is:

- ♦ 1 lesser aboleth broodmother\* (CR 8)

**Level 11.** At 11th level, the wave 3 combatant is:

- ♦ 1 aboleth broodmother\* (CR 16; no mythic form)

**Level 17.** At 17th level, the wave 3 combatant is:

- ♦ 1 aboleth broodmother\* (CR 16; CR 22 mythic form)

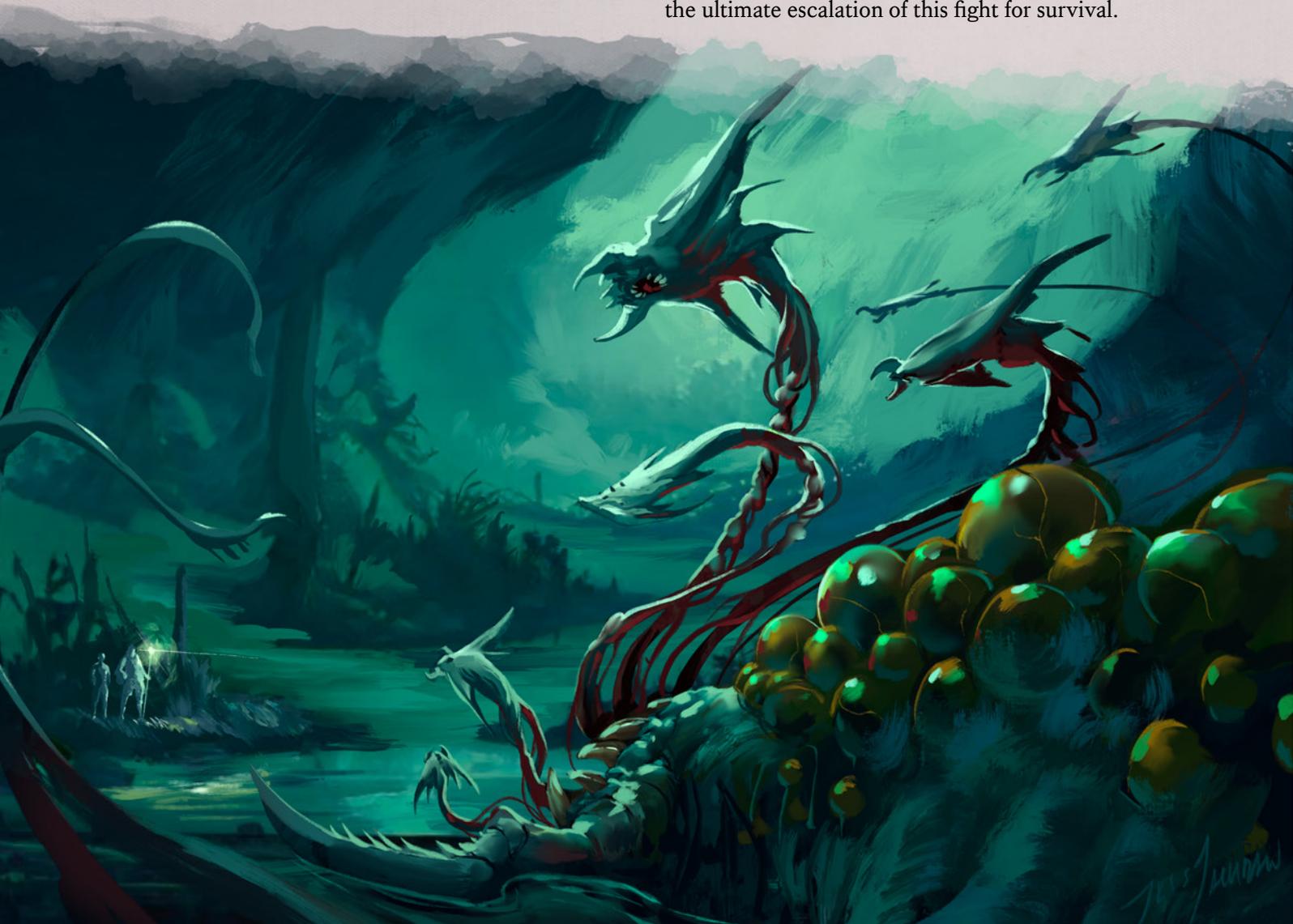
\*See Appendix C

### TACTICS

Using its Jet legendary action in conjunction with the murky water, the aboleth broodmother can pop up almost anywhere, taking a party unawares. Its greatest defence is avoiding being seen. It is an extremely intelligent fighter and uses the following tactics:

- ♦ It immediately identifies low-Wisdom characters.
- ♦ It spends its first turns birthing broodlings and trying to Entrance characters.
- ♦ Under no circumstances does it willingly move onto land; its long tentacles can reach up to the swallybog ruins.
- ♦ It doesn't let itself get cornered, especially by high damage dealers.
- ♦ It uses its Jet legendary action to disappear below the murky water immediately before the turn of a player character it deems particularly dangerous.

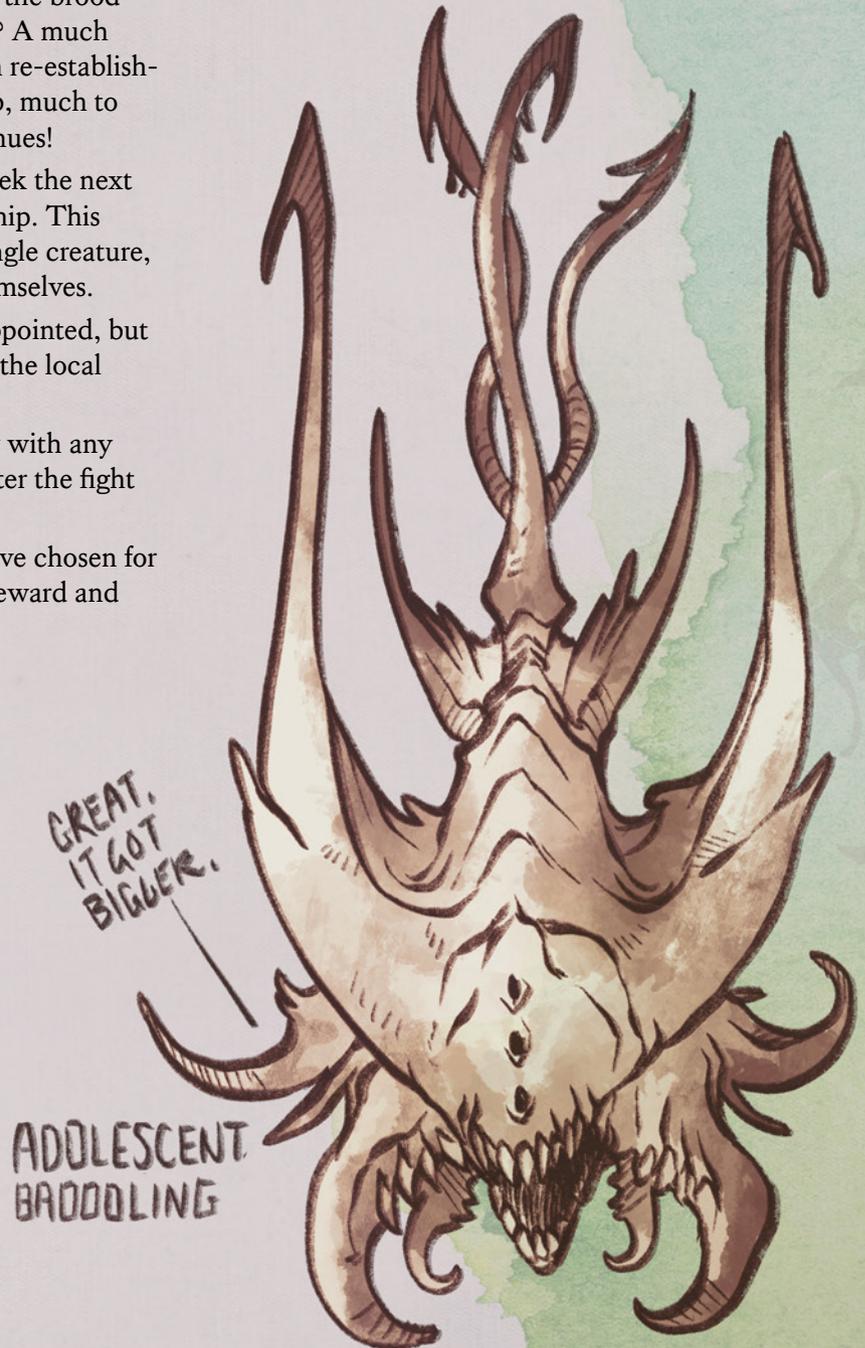
Once it has used up its daily uses of its Entrance action, the broodmother's tactics become more aggressive; it is now fighting to survive. The mythic trait (only used in the 17th-level hunt) represents the ultimate escalation of this fight for survival.



# AFTERMATH

What happens next? The options below are possible routes you could choose to take the story.

- Slkvol is gone! The remainder of its broodlings succumb to predators of the swamp and the only trace of the broodmother is a bizarre ability the swamp's humanoids develop; a psychic, telepathic connection that spreads like an infection. The curse is lifted!
- Slkvol lives on! There's no way all the broodlings could have been killed, right? A much reduced Slkvol is reborn, intent on re-establishing its dominion of Milakul swamp, much to Doolots' chagrin. The curse continues!
- If Slkvol is slain, the swallybogs seek the next most impressive specimen to worship. This could be Doolots, a mysterious jungle creature, or one of the player characters themselves.
- If Gilforth is slain, Doolots is disappointed, but quickly finds a new assistant from the local population.
- If Gilforth lives, he helps the party with any Harvesting checks immediately after the fight concludes (see page 18).
- Heliana, or whichever patron you've chosen for this quest, gives the players their reward and offers them a new contract.



# TREASURE

Slkvöl's underwater cave can be spotted with a successful **DC 10 Wisdom (Perception)** check. Inside are the spoils of ill-prepared adventurers, explorers, and traders. The rewards depend on the level at which you run this hunt.

## TREASURE IN SLKVÖL'S CAVE

Hunt Level	Coins	Gemstones
5th	1d6 x 1,000 sp 3d6 x 100 gp	1d4 x 25 gp diamonds 1d4 x 25 gp gems
11th	5d6 x 200 gp 1d6 x 20 pp	1d6 x 50 gp diamonds 3d6 x 50 gp gems
17th	7d6 x 300 gp 1d6 x 30 pp	2d6 x 50 gp diamonds 6d6 x 50 gp gems



BROODMOTHER  
EYE

# CRAFTING

The following magic items can be crafted from the broodmother's unique monster components. You can use the optional Crafting rules available in *Heliana's Guide to Monster Hunting*.

## BROODMOTHER ABOLETH CRAFTABLE ITEMS

Item Name	Item Type	Rarity	Attunement	Magical Components	Essence	Value*
<i>Broodmother's Embrace</i>	Wondrous item	Rare			<i>Robust</i>	3,500 gp
		Very rare	Required	<i>Aberration (broodmother) hide</i>	<i>Potent</i>	12,000 gp
		Legendary			<i>Mythic</i>	41,600 gp
<i>Broodslinger</i>	Wondrous item	Uncommon			<i>Frail</i>	800 gp
		Rare	Required	<i>Aberration (broodmother) broodling sac</i>	<i>Robust</i>	2,500 gp
		Very rare			<i>Potent</i>	9,500 gp
<i>Tome of Living Memories</i>	Wondrous item	Uncommon			<i>Frail</i>	750 gp
		Rare	Optional (by wizard)	<i>Aberration (broodmother) eye**</i>	<i>Robust</i>	2,300 gp
		Very rare			<i>Potent</i>	10,000 gp

\*This is the 'off the shelf' purchase cost and can vary significantly from the crafting cost.

\*\*One, two, or three eyes for uncommon, rare, and very rare, respectively.

# HARVESTING

Slkvöl's first corpse has already begun to rot—there are no salvageable parts. If the party manages to slay Slkvöl's reborn form, however, the fresh corpse has plenty to offer to a harvester with a steady hand. You can use the optional Harvesting rules available in *Heliana's Guide to Monster Hunting*.

**Hazard: Biohazard.** Harvesting an aboleth broodmother carries all sorts of risks. Any creature that attempts to harvest or assist in the harvest of the broodmother must make a **VDC Dexterity (Sleight of Hand)** check. On a failure, the creature comes into contact with mucous and must make a save against the broodmother's Infectious Mucous trait.

**Harvest: Broodmother.** The broodmother has the following harvestable components, in addition to the normal components for an aberration. As luck would have it, one of its four eyes has come perfectly detached and can be harvested with a DC of 0. The food component for the unique recipe is a *aberration (broodmother) tentacle (flesh)*.

## BROODMOTHER HARVEST TABLE

Component DC	Components
5	Eye (4 <sup>+</sup> )
10	Tentacle <sup>E</sup> (5)
15	Broodling sac (1)
20	Hide (1)

\*One eye has fallen out; Slkvöl has 3 more available.

<sup>E</sup> Indicates component is edible.

Aboleth broodmothers weave a rich genetic tapestry with the ecosystem in which they settle. A broodmother does not evolve via the mechanisms proposed by many famous zoologists, but rather assimilates the adaptations that other species develop through natural selection. After ingesting an organism, special enzymes within a broodmother's gastric tract extract useful genes and mutations, apportioning them to the relevant organs in the broodmother's form. One of those adaptations was a failsafe: a means of storing its memories, gathering biomass, and reforming itself.

— Dr. Doolots, Anthrozoologist



# APPENDIX A – MAGIC ITEMS

The following magic items are organised first by the hunt in which they're found, and then alphabetically.

## BROODMOTHER'S EMBRACE

*Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)*

This thick, rubbery overcoat sports several writhing tentacles that can biomantically fuse with their wearer, acting as gills, propulsion, and a formidable, concealed weapon. When in danger, the coat can encapsulate you in a protective chrysalis, nourishing you with stored regenerative mucous.

While wearing the coat underwater, tentacles wrap around your throat, fusing with your vascular system and allowing you to breathe underwater. The tentacles also propel you, giving you a swimming speed of **40 feet**.

**Tentacle Lash.** As an action, you can make a melee spell attack (+7 to hit) against a creature within **10 feet** of you. On a hit, the creature takes **3d8** bludgeoning damage, and, if it is Medium or small-

er, must make a **DC 15 Strength saving throw** or be knocked **prone**.

**Chrysalis.** You can use an action to cause the coat to expand and harden, encasing you in a regenerative, chitinous casing which grants you **20** temporary hit points. While encased, your speed is reduced to **0 feet**, you can't take actions or reactions (except the action to emerge from the chrysalis), and you regain **2d6** hit points at the start of each of your turns. You can regain no more than **30** hit points in this way while encased. These effects end when the temporary hit points are lost, after **1 minute**, or when you decide to emerge from the chrysalis as an action, whichever comes first. After you activate this property, you can't do so again until the next dawn.

**Very rare variant:** Increase the swimming speed to **50 feet**. Increase Tentacle Lash's attack bonus to **+8**, reach to **15 feet**, damage to **4d8**, the size category of creatures that must make the **Strength**



BROODMOTHER'S  
EMBRACE

**saving throw** to Large or smaller, and the **DC** to **16**. Increase Chrysalis' temporary hit points to **40**, the hit points regained per turn to **4d6**, and maximum hit points regained to **60**.

**Legendary variant:** Increase the swimming speed to **60 feet**. Increase Tentacle Lash's attack bonus to **+9**, reach to **20 feet**, damage to **5d8**, the size category of creatures that must make the **Strength saving throw** to Large or smaller, and the **DC** to **17**. Increase Chrysalis' temporary hit points to **60**, the hit points regained per turn to **6d6**, and maximum hit points regained to **90**. The coat's many eyes enhance your peripheral vision; while wearing the coat you have **advantage** on initiative checks while not blinded.



## BROODMOTHER'S EYE

*Wondrous item, common (socketable, requires attunement)*

While socketed in an item, the item gains the Intense Stare property.

**Intense Stare.** The socketed aboleth's eye fixes on a humanoid that you can see within **60 feet** of you that isn't hostile towards you, making you seem both alluring and imposing (no action required). For the next **minute**, you have **advantage** on all Charisma (Persuasion and Intimidation) checks made to interact with the creature. After this minute elapses, the creature realizes that you used magic to influence its mood. How it reacts is at the GM's discretion.

Once you use this property, you can't do so again until the next dawn.

## BROODSLINGER

*Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement)*

Known fondly by L'Arsène as Ling's Bane, this forearm-mounted symbiote represents the conquering of the incredibly infectious broodmother strain of aboleths. This blind broodling has been altered to feed off of its host's nutrients, generating powerfully acidic mucous. A small note attached to one tentacle reads:

"Upin Enterprises accepts no responsibility for enslavement caused by accidental generation of new aboleths caused by this item."



BROODMOTHER'S  
EYE

This magic item can hold a maximum of **10 charges**. Whenever you finish a short or long rest, you can expend any number of Hit Dice to charge the *brood-slinger*. For each Hit Die spent in this way, roll each die and add your Constitution modifier. The *brood-slinger* regains a number of charges equal to the total.

**Spikes.** Your unarmed strikes deal **1** additional piercing damage on a hit.

**Mucous Spit.** As an action, you can cause the *brood-slinger* to spit a globule of acidic mucous at a target within **60 feet** of you. Make a ranged spell attack (+5 to hit). On a hit, the target takes **2d6** acid damage. You can expend charges immediately before making the attack roll to enhance the mucous in the following way (no action required):

**Splashing Mucous (1 Charge):** Hit or miss, acid splashes onto adjacent creatures. The target, and each creature within **5 feet** of the target, must succeed on a **DC 13 Dexterity saving throw** or take **1d4** acid damage.

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**Rare variant:** Increase the maximum charges to **15**, the additional piercing damage of Spikes to **1d4**, and the **DC** to **15**. Increase Mucous Spit's attack modifier to **+7** and acid damage to **3d6**. Increase Splashing Mucous' acid damage to **2d4**. You gain a new way to enhance Mucous Spit: Parasitic Mucous. You can only enhance the mucous using one option at a time.

**Parasitic Mucous (2 Charges):** Parasites with the potential to poison infest the mucous. On a hit, the target must succeed on a **DC 15 Constitution saving throw** or be infected with a parasite and become **poisoned**. While poisoned, the creature can't regain hit points. An affected creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success.

**Very rare variant:** Increase the maximum charges to **20**, the additional piercing damage of Spikes to **2d4**, and the **DC** to **16**. Increase Mucous Spit's attack modifier to **+8**, and acid damage to **4d6**. Increase Splashing Mucous' acid damage to **3d4**. You gain new ways to enhance Mucous Spit: Parasitic Mucous and Infectious Mucous. You can only enhance the mucous using one option at a time.

**Infectious Mucous (4 Charges):** An infectious disease pervades the mucous. On a hit, the target must succeed on a **DC 16 Constitution saving throw** or be infected and **poisoned** as if by the *contagion* spell. Roll a **d6** to determine *contagion*'s disease at random.



BROODSLINGER



## TOME OF LIVING MEMORIES

*Wondrous item, uncommon (optional attunement by a wizard)*

The pages of this book are littered with the shifting memories of all the aboleth broodmother's eyes have seen. This deluge of information includes historical occurrences, the gods, and all things arcane, in addition to several spells. Unfortunately, the script is a shifting mire of letters that only the most astute can decipher.

**Knowledge from Beyond.** Over the course of a minute, you can attempt to discern information from the broodmother's memories. Make a **DC 10 Intelligence** check. On a success, you gain proficiency in **Arcana, History, Nature, and Religion** for the next **10 minutes**. On a failure, you take psychic damage equal to your level.



**Shrouded Spells.** In a similar manner, you can spend **10 minutes** attempting to cast one of the following spells, requiring no material components and without expending a spell slot. At the end of the 10 minutes, make an **Intelligence** check. The DC equals 10 plus the spell's level. On a success, you cast the spell. On a failure, you don't cast the spell and you take psychic damage equal to twice the spell's level.

- *Identify* (1st level)
- *Augury* (2nd level)
- *Clairvoyance* (3rd level)

**Optional Attunement.** A wizard can attune to this item, which becomes augmented with the Knowing Tome property for the duration.

**OA: Knowing Tome.** You can use this tome as a spellbook and an arcane focus. While you use it as your spellbook, you may cast the following spells as if you had them prepared: *comprehend languages* and *detect thoughts*.

---

**Rare variant:** Add the following Shrouded Spells:

- *Divination* (4th level)
- *Legend lore* (5th level)

When you cast spells from the Shrouded Spells property using this tome, it is the disembodied voice of Slkvol the broodmother that answers. The Knowing Tome property becomes augmented as follows: While you use this tome as your spellbook, you can prepare 1 additional wizard spell and you know the *guidance* cantrip, which is a wizard spell for you.

**Very rare variant:** Add the following Shrouded Spells:

- *Divination* (4th level)
- *Legend lore* (5th level)
- *Contact other plane* (5th level)
- *Find the path* (6th level)

When you cast spells from the Shrouded Spells property using this tome, it is the disembodied voice of Slkvol the broodmother that answers. The Knowing Tome property becomes augmented as follows: While you use this tome as your spellbook, you can prepare 2 additional wizard spells and you know the *guidance* cantrip, which is a wizard spell for you.

TOME OF LIVING  
MEMORIES



## MAGICAL MEALS

A monster's components can be cooked into magical food. After spending 1 hour cooking the required components, you can succeed on a **Constitution (cook's utensils)** check against the meal's **DC** to craft the meal. *Heliana's Guide to Monster Hunting* presents more detailed rules on cooking.

When you consume a magic meal, which takes **10 minutes**, you gain its effects, which last for **8 hours** or until dispelled by the *dispel magic* spell or similar magic.

### ABOLETH RAMEN

*Aberration (broodmother) tentacle; DC 12*

When you make a melee weapon attack on your turn, your reach with it is greater than normal. This distance increases with rarity, as determined by the party's level.

Level	Rarity	Increased Reach
1-4	Uncommon	5 ft.
5-10	Rare	5 ft.
11-16	Very rare	10 ft.
17-20	Legendary	10 ft.

ABOLETH  
RAMEN



# APPENDIX B — SPELLS

This appendix lists the spells that can be found throughout this hunt, arranged alphabetically.

**Biomancy.** Biomantic spells revolve around living matter and its manipulation. If you'd rather not use the school of biomancy in your world, you can elect to use the alternative school of magic supplied with each biomancy spell.

## DEPTH CHARGE

*3rd-level evocation*

**Casting Time:** 1 action  
**Range:** 90 feet (20-foot-radius sphere)  
**Components:** V, S, M (some metamorphic rock)  
**Duration:** Instantaneous  
**Class:** Druid, Sorcerer, Warlock, Wizard

With a boom that can be heard 300 feet away (or 1000 feet in a liquid), a pulse of thunder ripples out from a point you choose within range. Each creature in a **20-foot-radius sphere** centred on that point must make a **Constitution saving throw**. A target takes **7d6** thunder damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. This damage increases to **9d6** if the affected creature is submerged in a liquid.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, the damage increases by **1d6** for each slot level above 3rd.

## RIPTIDE

*2nd-level transmutation*

**Casting Time:** 1 action  
**Range:** 300 feet  
**Components:** V, S  
**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 minute  
**Class:** Druid, Sorcerer, Warlock, Wizard

Choose one creature you can see within range that is in at least 2 feet of water and choose a direction. Turbulent currents wrap around the creature. For the duration, the target must make a **Strength saving throw** at the start of each of its turns. On a failure, it is dragged **30 feet** in the direction you chose, and its swimming speed is reduced to **0 feet** until the start of its next turn. On a success, the creature can move normally until the start of its next turn.

As a bonus action on your turn, you can change the direction of the underwater currents. The spell ends early if the creature is ever out of the spell's range, or is no longer in water at least 2 feet deep.

## SWARM

*Biomancy\* cantrip (\*can be replaced with conjuration)*

**Casting Time:** 1 action  
**Range:** 90 feet  
**Components:** V, S, M (a spider sac)  
**Duration:** 1 round  
**Class:** Druid, Sorcerer, Warlock

Choose a target within range; a cloud of minuscule poisonous spiders floats on gossamer strands towards it. The target must succeed on a **Dexterity saving throw** to avoid the spiders or become **poisoned** until the end of its next turn.

This spell deals poison damage on a failed saving throw when you reach certain levels. When you reach 5th level, a creature takes **1d10** poison damage; at 11th level this increases to **2d10**; and at 17th level this increases to **3d10**.

## WATER WHIP

*Transmutation cantrip*

**Casting Time:** 1 action  
**Range:** 60 feet  
**Components:** V, S  
**Duration:** Instantaneous  
**Class:** Druid, Sorcerer, Wizard

Choose a source of water that you can see within range that has a volume of at least 4 pints. Make a **melee spell attack** against a creature within **30 feet** of the source of water. On a hit, the target takes **1d6** slashing damage and, if the creature is Large or smaller, you can force it to make a **Strength saving throw**, pulling it up to **10 feet** towards the source of water on a failure.

The spell's damage increases by 1d6 and the distance it can pull a target increases by 5 feet when you reach 5th level (**2d6** and **15 feet**), 11th level (**3d6** and **20 feet**), and 17th level (**4d6** and **25 feet**).

# APPENDIX C – CREATURES

## THE BROOD

Aboleth broodmothers weave a rich genetic tapestry with the ecosystem in which they settle. A broodmother's influence over its domain can be so absolute as to create a sort of hive mind out of the creatures it bends to its will.

**Alternate Evolution.** A broodmother does not evolve via the mechanisms proposed by many famous zoologists, such as Charlotte Darloss and Jane Lemarck, but rather assimilates the adaptations that other species develop through natural selection. After ingesting an organism, special enzymes within a broodmother's gastric tract extract useful genes and mutations, apportioning them to the relevant organs in the broodmother's form. One of those adaptations was a failsafe: a means of storing its memories, gathering biomass, and reforming itself.

### BROODLING

A broodmother's workers are its broodlings. These ray-like amphibians scour the swamp looking for targets with high biomass or interesting features. Once such a creature is found, a broodling releases a pheromone, gathering its brethren and enhancing their hive-mind intellect. With a sting, the broodlings inject a toxin that makes a creature more suggestible and less willful. Then, the gathered mass of broodlings use their augmented intelligence to submit the creature to their will. Once entranced, the creature willingly follows the broodlings to the broodmother's lair, where the matriarch decides how best to extract its assets.

### BROODLING

*Tiny aberration, lawful evil*

**Armour Class** 12

**Hit Points** 13 (3d4 + 6)

**Speed** 10 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

**Condition Immunities** charmed

**Senses** blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** telepathy 120 ft., understands Deep Speech but can't speak

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus** +2

**Amphibious.** The broodling can breathe air and water.

**Hive Mind.** Broodlings' minds connect to other broodlings within **5 feet** of them, forming a chain of thought. The broodling gains a **+3 bonus** to Intelligence checks and saving throws, and to its Entrance **save DC** for each other broodling in such a chain.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The broodling makes two attacks: one with its Bite and one with its Sting.

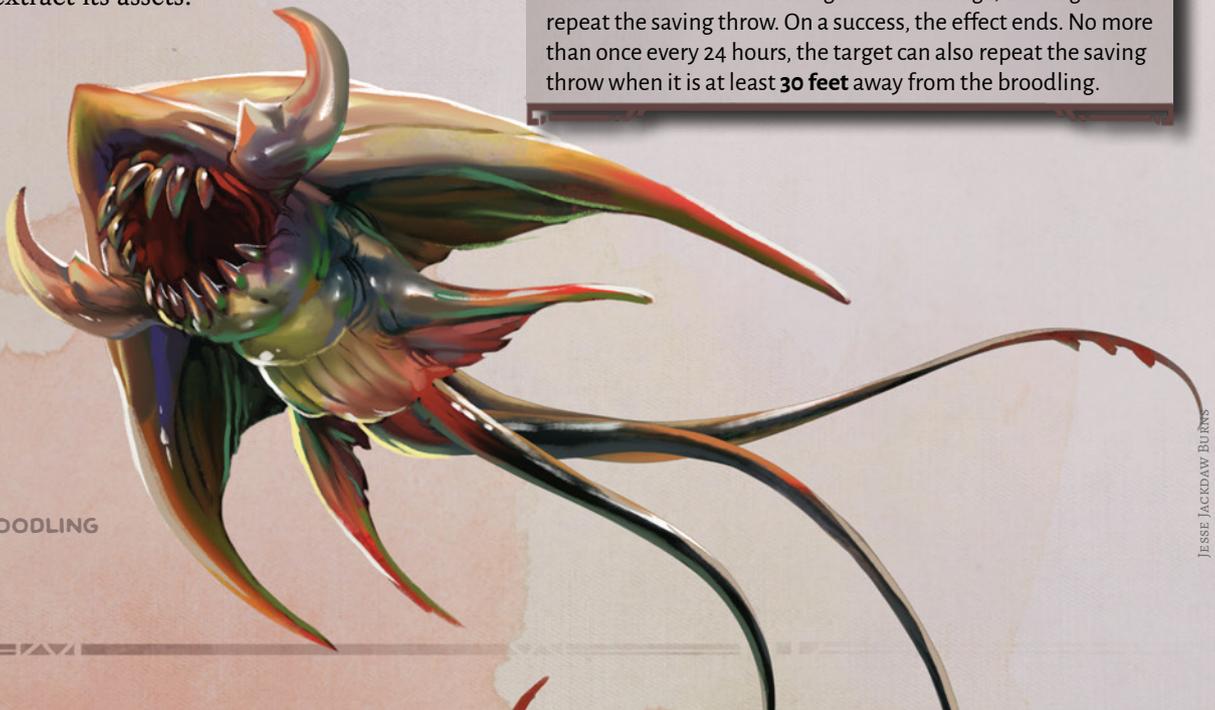
**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* **+4** to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (**1d4 + 2**) piercing damage.

**Sting.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* **+4** to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage and the creature must succeed on a **DC 12 Constitution saving throw** or have **disadvantage** on Wisdom saving throws until the end of the broodling's next turn.

**Entrance (1/Day).** The broodling targets one creature it can see within **10 feet** of it. The target must succeed on a **DC 6 Wisdom saving throw** or be magically **charmed** by the broodling until the broodling dies or until it is on a different plane of existence from the target. The charmed target is under the broodling's control and can't take reactions.

Whenever the charmed target takes damage, the target can repeat the saving throw. On a success, the effect ends. No more than once every 24 hours, the target can also repeat the saving throw when it is at least **30 feet** away from the broodling.

BROODLING



## ABOLETH BROODMOTHER

Due to the plethora of adaptations a broodmother has assimilated, it only vaguely resembles the form it had when it first arrived on the Material Plane. What still remains is its indelible memory and its desire to entrance living things.

### REGIONAL EFFECTS

The region containing an aboleth broodmother's lair is warped by millenia of tinkering with the flora and fauna, creating one or more of the following effects:

- Never-before-seen fauna, often sporting sacs of unborn broodlings, proliferate within 6 miles of the lair.
- Creatures in contact with water within 6 miles of the lair feel a compulsion to move towards the lair's centre.
- Within 1 mile of the lair, thickets of dense vegetation allow passage only for the broodmother, broodlings, or creatures controlled by either. Each 5-foot-cube of thicket has an AC of 15, 50 hit points, **vulnerability** to cold damage, **resistance** to bludgeoning damage, and **immunity** to piercing, poison, and psychic damage.

## LESSER ABOLETH BROODMOTHER

*Large aberration, lawful evil*

**Armour Class** 15 (natural armour)

**Hit Points** 127 (15d10 + 45)

**Speed** 15 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Con +6, Int +6, Wis +4

**Skills** Athletics +7, History +9, Perception +7

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17

**Languages** Deep Speech, telepathy 120 ft.

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus** +3

**Amphibious.** The aboleth can breathe air and water.

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If the aboleth fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Infectious Mucus.** The aboleth is surrounded by infectious mucus. A creature that touches the aboleth or that hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it must make a **DC 14 Constitution saving throw**. On a failure, the creature is diseased. For the first hour of the disease, the creature takes 2 (1d4) necrotic damage if it ends its turn out of water (it must be at least neck-deep to avoid this damage). After the first hour and until the disease is cured, a creature is unable to gain the benefits of a short or long rest if it does not spend the rest at least neck-deep in water.

A creature that fails the saving throw by 5 or more becomes a host of a broodling egg that hatches in **3d6** days.

**Probing Telepathy.** If a creature communicates telepathically with the aboleth, the aboleth learns the creature's greatest desires if the aboleth can see the creature.



### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The aboleth makes two Tentacle attacks and uses Birth, if available.

**Tentacle.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage and the target must make a saving throw against the aboleth's Infectious Mucus trait.

**Birth (Recharge 4-6).** The aboleth produces a broodling in an unoccupied space within **5 feet** of it.

**Entrance (3/Day).** The aboleth targets one creature it can see within **30 feet** of it. The target must succeed on a **DC 14 Wisdom saving throw** or be magically **charmed** by the aboleth until the aboleth dies or until it is on a different plane of existence from the target. The charmed target is under the aboleth's control and can't take reactions, and the aboleth and the target can communicate telepathically with each other over any distance.

Whenever the charmed target takes damage, the target can repeat the saving throw. On a success, the effect ends. No more than once every 24 hours, the target can also repeat the saving throw when it is at least 1 mile away from the aboleth.

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The aboleth can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time, and only at the end of another creature's turn. The aboleth regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Jet.** The aboleth spurts out a pall of ink, heavily obscuring a **20-foot-radius sphere** of water centred on the aboleth until the start of its next turn. It then moves up to its swimming speed.

**Tentacle.** The aboleth makes one Tentacle attack.

**Suction Drain (Costs 2 Actions).** The aboleth attempts to grapple one creature within **10 feet** of it with a special tentacle. A creature charmed by the aboleth automatically fails this check. If the aboleth succeeds on the check, the creature takes 14 (4d6) necrotic damage and the aboleth regains a number of hit points equal to half the damage dealt. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

## LAIR ACTIONS

So long as the aboleth broodmother or one of its offspring is alive and within the lake, it can evoke the ambient magic to take lair actions. The DCs and damage of the lair actions and environmental hazards depend on the level at which you run the hunt.

### VARIABLE LAIR ACTION STATISTICS

Hunt Level	VDC	Vmod	Vdam
5th	13	+5	5 (2d4)
11th	15	+7	10 (3d6)
17th	17	+9	21 (6d6)

**Lair Actions.** On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the aboleth takes one of the following lair actions; the aboleth can't take the same lair action two rounds in a row. See the table above for the damage and save DC.

- ♦ **Tempestuous Turbulence.** The water within the lair writhes and swirls, causing 6-foot-tall waves to crash over all the low-lying islands. Each creature in the water, or on the ground less than **5 feet** above the water's surface, must make a **VDC Strength saving throw** or be pulled up to **20 feet** into the water.

- ♦ **Plague Tide.** The water begins to bubble, filling the lair with noxious, aerosolised droplets. A creature is affected even if it doesn't need to breathe. Each creature must succeed on a **VDC Constitution saving throw** or become **poisoned**. If running this hunt at 11th or 17th level, the creature is poisoned as if it had failed a saving throw against the *contagion* spell (no concentration required). A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect for it on a success.
- ♦ **Aqua Phantasm.** Water in the aboleth broodmother's lair magically becomes a conduit for the unspeakable horrors the broodmother has witnessed in its vast memory. Each creature of the broodmother or broodlings' choice within the lair's waters must succeed on a **VDC Wisdom saving throw** or take **Vdam** psychic damage and become **frightened** of the huddled mass of creatures (wave 1), the chrysalis (wave 2), or the broodmother (wave 3) until the end of its next turn.



# ABOLETH BROODMOTHER

Large aberration, lawful evil

**Armour Class** 17 (natural armour)

**Hit Points** 210 (20d10 + 100)

**Speed** 15 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)

**Saving Throws** Con +10, Int +9, Wis +7

**Skills** Athletics +10, History +14, Perception +12

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 22

**Languages** Deep Speech, telepathy 120 ft.

**Challenge** 16 (15,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +5

**Amphibious.** The aboleth can breathe air and water.

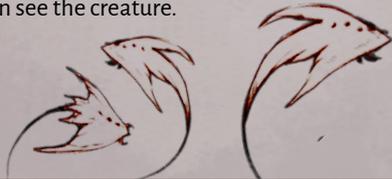
**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If the aboleth fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Infectious Mucus.** The aboleth is surrounded by infectious mucus. A creature that touches the aboleth or that hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it must make a **DC 18 Constitution saving throw**. On a failure, the creature is diseased. For the first hour of the disease, the creature takes 4 (**1d8**) necrotic damage each time it ends its turn out of water (it must be at least neck-deep to avoid this damage). After the first hour and until the disease is cured, a creature is unable to gain the benefits of a short or long rest if it does not spend the rest at least neck-deep in water.

A creature that fails the saving throw by 5 or more becomes a host for **1d4** broodling eggs that hatch within **3d6** days.

**Mother of the Swarm (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).** If the aboleth would be reduced to 0 hit points, its current hit point total instead resets to **210**, it regains any expended uses of Legendary Resistance, it births **2** broodlings, and it gains **210** temporary hit points as a flurry of swamp fauna swarms over it to protect it. Additionally, the aboleth gains a **+5 bonus** to its attack and damage rolls and can now use the options in the “Mythic Actions” section for **1 hour**. Award a party an additional 41,000 XP (56,000 XP total) for defeating the aboleth after its Mother of the Swarm activates.

**Probing Telepathy.** If a creature communicates telepathically with the aboleth, the aboleth learns the creature’s greatest desires if the aboleth can see the creature.



## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The aboleth makes three Tentacle attacks and uses Birth, if available.

**Tentacle.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* **+10** to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (**2d8 + 5**) bludgeoning damage plus 4 (**1d8**) acid damage and the target must make a saving throw against the aboleth’s Infectious Mucus trait.

**Birth (Recharge 4-6).** The aboleth produces a broodling in an unoccupied space within **5 feet** of it.

**Entrance (3/Day).** The aboleth targets one creature it can see within **30 feet** of it. The target must succeed on a **DC 17 Wisdom saving throw** or be magically **charmed** by the aboleth until the aboleth dies or until it is on a different plane of existence from the target. The charmed target is under the aboleth’s control and can’t take reactions, and the aboleth and the target can communicate telepathically with each other over any distance.

Whenever the charmed target takes damage, the target can repeat the saving throw. On a success, the effect ends. No more than once every 24 hours, the target can also repeat the saving throw when it is at least 1 mile away from the aboleth.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The aboleth can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time, and only at the end of another creature’s turn. The aboleth regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Jet.** The aboleth spurts out a pall of ink, heavily obscuring a **20-foot-radius sphere** of water centred on the aboleth until the start of its next turn. It then moves up to its swimming speed.

**Tentacle.** The aboleth makes one Tentacle attack.

**Suction Drain (Costs 2 Actions).** The aboleth attempts to grapple one creature within **10 feet** of it with a special tentacle. A creature charmed by the aboleth automatically fails this contested check. If the aboleth succeeds, the creature takes 21 (**6d6**) necrotic damage and the aboleth regains hit points equal to half the damage dealt. The target’s hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

## MYTHIC ACTIONS

If the aboleth’s Mother of the Swarm trait has activated in the last hour, it can use the options below as legendary actions.

**Gestate.** The aboleth recharges and uses Birth. It must use a different legendary action before it can use this one again.

**Rapid Suction Drain.** The aboleth uses its Suction Drain legendary action option. It must use a different legendary action before it uses this one again.

## LESSER BROOD CHRYSALIS

Large aberration, lawful evil

**Armour Class** 16 (natural armour)

**Hit Points** 171 (18d10 + 72)

**Speed** 5 ft., swim 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	5 (-3)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

**Saving Throws** Con +7, Wis +5

**Skills** Perception +5

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned, prone

**Senses** blindsight 90 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 15

**Languages** Deep Speech, telepathy 120 ft.

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

**Amphibious.** The chrysalis can breathe air and water.

**Legendary Resistance (1/Day).** If the chrysalis fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Regenerative State.** The chrysalis' hit points reset to its maximum at the start of its turn.

**Sticky Mucus.** When a creature hits the chrysalis with a melee attack, it must succeed on a **DC 15 Strength saving throw** or become disarmed as its weapon stays stuck to the creature. A creature can use an action to make a **DC 15 Strength (Athletics)** check, freeing a stuck weapon within its reach on a success. If the attack requires that the attacker touch the aboleth (GM's discretion), then the attacker becomes **grappled (escape DC 15)** on a failed save. While it is grappled, it can't use that limb. If the attack is a bite, then the creature can't speak while it is grappled in this way.

**Transitional State.** The chrysalis turns into a lesser aboleth broodmother at the start of its fourth turn after becoming a chrysalis, ending any grapples it is a part of.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The chrysalis makes three Sticky Ectoplasm attacks. Each attack must be against a different target.

**Sticky Ectoplasm.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 30/90 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) acid damage and the target's speed is reduced by **15 feet** until the target uses an action to remove the ectoplasm. A creature whose speed is reduced to 0 feet by this effect is **restrained (escape DC 15)**.

## BROODMOTHER CHRYSALIS

The broodmother's chrysalis is its failsafe. After gathering a sufficient volume of biomass within the huddle of charmed creatures, the broodlings encapsulate the huddle, creating a hard, sticky casing that protects the internal workings. In this temporary transitional state, the aboleth is almost unkillable. It metabolises the constituent creatures

## BROOD CHRYSALIS

Huge aberration, lawful evil

**Armour Class** 18 (natural armour)

**Hit Points** 184 (16d12 + 80)

**Speed** 5 ft., swim 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	5 (-3)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

**Saving Throws** Con +9, Int +7, Wis +6

**Skills** Perception +6

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned, prone

**Senses** blindsight 90 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 16

**Languages** Deep Speech, telepathy 120 ft.

**Challenge** 12 (8,400 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +4

**Amphibious.** The chrysalis can breathe air and water.

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If the chrysalis fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Regenerative State.** The chrysalis' hit points reset to its maximum at the start of its turn.

**Sticky Mucus.** When a creature hits the chrysalis with a melee attack, it must succeed on a **DC 17 Strength saving throw** or become disarmed as its weapon stays stuck to the creature. A creature can use an action to make a **DC 17 Strength (Athletics)** check, freeing a stuck weapon within its reach on a success. If the attack requires that the attacker touch the aboleth (GM's discretion), then the attacker becomes **grappled (escape DC 17)** on a failed save. While it is grappled, it can't use that limb. If the attack is a bite, then the creature can't speak while it is grappled in this way.

**Transitional State.** The chrysalis turns into an aboleth broodmother at the start of its fourth turn after becoming a chrysalis, ending any grapples it is a part of.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The chrysalis makes three Sticky Ectoplasm attacks. Each attack must be against a different target.

**Sticky Ectoplasm.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, range 30/90 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (3d8 + 5) acid damage and the target's speed is reduced by **15 feet** until the target uses an action to remove the ectoplasm. A creature whose speed is reduced to 0 feet by this effect is **restrained (escape DC 17)**.

at an astonishing rate, almost immediately repairing any wounds it may sustain.

**Killable Chrysalis.** If you wish to run this monster as something that can be killed (in place of a transitional state), remove both the Regenerative and Transitional State traits.

BROOD  
CHRYSALIS



## GREATER BROOD CHRYSALIS

*Huge aberration, lawful evil*

**Armour Class** 20 (natural armour)

**Hit Points** 262 (21d12 + 126)

**Speed** 5 ft., swim 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	5 (-3)	22 (+6)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

**Saving Throws** Con +12, Int +10, Wis +8

**Skills** Perception +8

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned, prone

**Senses** blindsight 120 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 18

**Languages** Deep Speech, telepathy 120 ft.

**Challenge** 18 (20,000 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus** +6

**Amphibious.** The chrysalis can breathe air and water.

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If the chrysalis fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Regenerative State.** The chrysalis' hit points reset to its maximum at the start of its turn.

**Sticky Mucus.** When a creature hits the chrysalis with a melee attack, it must succeed on a **DC 20 Strength saving throw** or become disarmed as its weapon stays stuck to the creature. A creature can use an action to make a **DC 20 Strength (Athletics)** check, freeing a stuck weapon within its reach on a success. If the attack requires that the attacker touch the aboleth (GM's discretion), then the attacker becomes **grappled (escape DC 20)** on a failed save. While it is grappled, it can't use that limb. If the attack is a bite, then the creature can't speak while it is grappled in this way.

**Transitional State.** The chrysalis turns into an aboleth brood-mother at the start of its fourth turn after becoming a chrysalis, ending any grapples it is a part of.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The chrysalis makes four Sticky Ectoplasm attacks. Each attack must be against a different target.

**Sticky Ectoplasm.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* **+12** to hit, range 40/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (**3d10 + 6**) acid damage and the target's speed is reduced by **15 feet** until the target uses an action to remove the ectoplasm. A creature whose speed is reduced to 0 feet by this effect is **restrained (escape DC 20)**.

# SWALLYBOGS

Swamp natives, swallybogs are an easily deceived race of amphibious humanoids prone to deifying any intelligent life. Amazed by even the most rudimentary of modern technologies, such as metal, swallybogs will quickly deify creatures that bring even a modicum of comfort or order to their lives. Their culture follows a loose hierarchy based on morphological adaptations encountered along their tumultuous lifecycle.

**Early Life.** Within holy *swabologs*—birthpools, in common—swallybogs begin their life as limbless tadpoles, void of sex or gender. When food is scarce, these tadpoles can become cannibalistic, ensuring only the strongest (or most devious) survive. Some more barbaric tribes purposefully limit food input to bring about this struggle—known as a *florbracka*—ensuring the strength of the next generation.

**Emergence & Growth.** After a year, these tadpoles absorb their tails and sprout limbs, clambering through the vines and mud to breathe air for the

first time, an event known as the *Guppening*. If a swallybog reaches adulthood, an uncommon occurrence in the alligator-filled waterways of swamps, it undergoes a moulting. From its old skin, the swallybog emerges as a sharpfin.

These muscular swallybogs have fins to increase their underwater movement, and adopt the smaller, forward-facing eyes of a predator. These individuals are the guards and hunters of the swallybog people, and are the most likely to encounter wandering adventurers. Importantly, all sharpfins are male.

**Matriarchy.** The eldest members of any swallybog tribe are the females, known as gillwranglers. Once a year, gillwranglers oversee a phlegm-spitting contest amongst the sharpfins, choosing the strongest to sire the thousand or so eggs each releases into the *swabolog*.

## SWALLYBOG

Medium humanoid (swallybog), neutral

**Armour Class** 13 (hide)

**Hit Points** 19 (3d8 + 6)

**Speed** 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

**Skills** Stealth +3

**Damage Resistances** poison

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** Swallybog

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus** +2

**Amphibious.** The swallybog can breathe air and water.

**Gullible.** The swallybog has **disadvantage** on Wisdom (Insight) checks.

**Standing Leap.** The swallybog's long jump is up to 20 feet and its high jump is up to 10 feet, with or without a running start.

**Swamp Camouflage.** The swallybog has **advantage** on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in swampy terrain.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The swallybog makes two attacks, either with its Blowgun or its Trident.

**Blowgun.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 25/100 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage plus 5 (2d4) poison damage.

**Trident.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage, or 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.



## GILLWRANGLER

Matriarchs of the tribe, gillwranglers are the wisest, fiercest, and most intelligent (although that isn't saying much) of all swallybogs. With this final moulting comes a change in brain chemistry, granting more rational decision-making and a strong grasp of magic. Their druidic magics are often the focus of any ritual or celebration.

**Combat.** Before a hunt, a gillwrangler blesses sharpfins with enhanced jumping, allowing them to silently leap onto their prey. If endangered, a gillwrangler can summon swarms of insects and whirlpools, whipping foes with lashes of water. Gillwranglers are also the tribe's healers, using swamp plants and magic to prevent wounds from festering.

### SWALLYBOG GILLWRANGLER

Medium humanoid (swallybog), neutral

**Armour Class** 16 (natural armour)

**Hit Points** 90 (12d8 + 36)

**Speed** 20 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	19 (+4)	14 (+2)

**Saves** Dex +5, Con +6, Wis +7

**Skills** Nature +2, Perception +7, Stealth +5

**Damage Resistances** poison

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17

**Languages** Common, Druidic, Swallybog

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

**Amphibious.** The swallybog can breathe air and water.

**Gullible.** The swallybog has **disadvantage** on Wisdom (Insight) checks.

**Spellcasting.** The swallybog is a 10th level spellcaster and can cast the following spells, requiring no spell components and using Wisdom as the spellcasting ability (**spell save DC 15**, +7 to hit with spell attacks):

At will: *druidcraft*, *shillelagh*, *water whip*<sup>\*</sup>, *jump*  
3/day each: *cure wounds*, *moonbeam*<sup>c</sup>, *riptide*<sup>c\*</sup>, *thunderwave*  
2/day each: *control water*<sup>c</sup>, *depth charge*<sup>\*</sup>, *dispel magic*  
1/day each: *insect plague*<sup>e</sup>, *mass cure wounds*, *polymorph*<sup>c</sup>

<sup>\*</sup>See Appendix B; **bold** indicates combat spell; <sup>c</sup> indicates concentration.

**Standing Leap.** The swallybog's long jump is up to 20 feet and her high jump is up to 10 feet, with or without a running start.

**Swamp Camouflage.** The swallybog has **advantage** on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in swampy terrain.

### ACTIONS

**Quarterstaff.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage, or 5 (1d8 + 1) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.

## SHARPFIN

Sharpfins are distinguished by the fin-like plume that rises from the top of their heads. Masters of net-based combat, sharpfins will leap out of the shadows, entangling their quarry in a net, before finishing the job with their tridents.

### SWALLYBOG SHARPFIN

Medium humanoid (swallybog), neutral

**Armour Class** 16 (hide armour, shield)

**Hit Points** 90 (12d8 + 36)

**Speed** 25 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	7 (-2)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)

**Skills** Athletics +5, Stealth +4, Survival +3

**Damage Resistances** poison

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** Swallybog

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

**Amphibious.** The swallybog can breathe air and water.

**Gullible.** The swallybog has **disadvantage** on Wisdom (Insight) checks.

**Net Master.** Being within 5 feet of a hostile creature doesn't impose disadvantage on the swallybog's ranged attack rolls. Making an attack with a net doesn't limit the number of non-net attacks the swallybog can make (included in actions).

**Standing Leap.** The swallybog's long jump is up to 20 feet and its high jump is up to 10 feet, with or without a running start.

**Swamp Camouflage.** The swallybog has **advantage** on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in swampy terrain.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The swallybog makes three attacks: one with its Net and two with its Trident.

**Trident.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, or 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack, plus 5 (2d4) poison damage.

**Net.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 5/10 ft., one target. *Hit:* the target is **restrained** if it is Large or smaller. A creature can use its action to make a **DC 10 Strength** check, freeing itself or another creature within its reach on a success. Dealing 5 slashing damage to the net (**AC 10**) also frees the creature without harming it, ending the effect and destroying the net.

# APPENDIX D — FAMILIARS

If you are using the optional Tamer class in *Heliana's Guide to Monster Hunting*, this familiar can be crafted from the remains of unique monsters. The GM may also allow a character that is not a tamer to take this familiar as a companion, replacing all mentions of “tamer” with “character”.

## ABOLING

**Type:** Aberration

**Creature Component:** Aboleth or broodmother aboleth

**Bonus Tamer Improvement:** Genetic Memory and +2 Hit Dice

Encoded within aboleth ichor are the memories of its donor, secreted amongst the fluid's genetic code. In its base state, an aboling makes a functional

amphibious companion, with a minor ability to sense the motives of other creatures. Upon bonding and training with a tamer, an aboling can fulfil its potential as a mind reader and repository of knowledge, sharing insights and information its progenitor acquired over its long life.

If any of the aboling's traits or actions require saving throws, it is always against the aboling's **save DC**, as calculated below.

**Save DC** = 8 + the tamer's proficiency bonus + the aboling's Constitution modifier

**TAMER LEVEL**

### GENETIC MEMORY

PREREQUISITE: BECOME COMPANION

*"I seem to know more now."*

1

### SLIME

PREREQUISITE: —

*"They're a slippery one..."*

### ENTRANCE

PREREQUISITE: —

*"They're quite charming..."*

3

### INKJET

PREREQUISITE: —

*"Ink! Run away..."*

### RUBBERY HIDE I

PREREQUISITE: —

*"Tough as calamari..."*

### MULTIATTACK

PREREQUISITE: —

*"Tentacles everywhere."*

5

### INFECTIOUS MUCOUS

PREREQUISITE: SLIME

*"and... I wouldn't touch them."*

### FORTIFIED MIND

PREREQUISITE: —

*"A fortified mind palace."*

9

### RUBBERY HIDE II

PREREQUISITE: RUBBERY HIDE I

*"...tanned in giant's piss."*

### ENTHRAL

PREREQUISITE: ENTRANCE

*"...one might say... dominating..."*

13

### PROBING MIND

PREREQUISITE: ENTHRAL

*"...and ever present."*

17



## MONSTER TRAINER

If you are a tamer, you can grant the aboling the following improvements using your Monster Trainer feature in addition to those normally available for your companions.

### GENETIC MEMORY

**Prerequisite:** become a tamer's companion

**Type:** Passive (tamer)

While the aboling is summoned, its tamer has **proficiency** in the History skill. If the tamer is already proficient in this skill, it can add double its proficiency bonus whenever it makes an ability check using this skill. It cannot benefit from a feature that doubles its proficiency bonus with a skill more than once. The aboling gains this improvement when it becomes a companion; it doesn't cost an improvement.

### ENTRANCE

**Prerequisite:** 3rd-level tamer

**Type:** Active (action)

As an action, the aboling can target one creature it can see within **30 feet** of it. The target must succeed on a **Wisdom saving throw** or be magically **charmed** by the aboling for **1 hour**. This effect ends early if the aboling dies, is recalled, is on a different plane of existence from the target, or if you or your companions do anything harmful to the target. The charmed creature regards the aboling as a friendly acquaintance. When the effect ends, the creature knows it was charmed by the aboling.

Once the aboling uses this action, it can't do so again until its tamer finishes a short or long rest.

### SLIME

**Prerequisite:** 3rd-level tamer

**Type:** Passive (companion)

The aboling has **advantage** on any ability checks or saving throws it makes to avoid or escape being grappled or restrained.

### INKJET

**Prerequisite:** 5th-level tamer

**Type:** Active (action)

As an action, the aboling can squirt ink at a creature within **10 feet** of it. The creature must succeed on a **Dexterity saving throw** or be **blinded** until the start of its next turn. The aboling can then move

up to half its speed as part of the same action. If this action is taken underwater, immediately before the aboling moves, it creates a **5-foot-radius sphere** of heavily obscured water that lasts until the start of its next turn.

After the aboling uses this action, it can't do so again until **10 minutes** have passed.

When the aboling's tamer reaches 13th level in the tamer class, the aboling can choose to target all creatures within **10 feet** of it, instead of just one creature.

### MULTIATTACK

**Prerequisite:** 5th-level tamer

**Type:** Active (action)

As an action, the aboling can make two Tentacle attacks.

### RUBBERY HIDE I

**Prerequisite:** 5th-level tamer

**Type:** Passive (companion)

The aboling gains a **+2 bonus** to its AC while it isn't wearing armour.

## ABOLING

*Tiny aberration, neutral evil*

**Armour Class** 12 (natural armour)

**Hit Points** 4 (1d4 + 2)

**Speed** 25 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	9 (-1)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)

**Skills** Arcana +4, History +4, Insight +2, Perception +2

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** understands emotions and imagery but doesn't speak, telepathy 30 ft.

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus** +2

**Amphibious.** The aboling can breathe air and water.

### ACTIONS

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

**Detect Thoughts (1/Day).** The aboling learns the surface thoughts of one creature it can see within **30 feet** of it for the next **minute**. It can attempt to probe deeper into the same creature's mind, using an action to force the target to make a **DC 12 Wisdom saving throw**. If it fails, the aboling gains insight into its reasoning (if any), its emotional state, and something that looms large in its mind (such as something it worries over, loves, or hates). If it succeeds, the effect ends. Either way, the target knows that the aboling was probing deep into its mind.

## **FORTIFIED MIND**

**Prerequisite:** 9th-level tamer

**Type:** Passive (companion ☞ tamer)

The aboling gains proficiency in Intelligence saving throws. While it is summoned, its tamer also has **proficiency** in Intelligence saving throws. If its tamer already has this proficiency, the tamer instead gains proficiency in Charisma saving throws.

## **INFECTIOUS MUCOUS**

**Prerequisite:** 9th-level tamer, Slime

**Type:** Active (bonus action)

As a bonus action, the aboling can secrete infectious mucous that lasts until the end of its next turn, choosing one of the diseases from the *contagion* spell. For the duration, each time the aboling hits a creature with a tentacle attack, the creature must succeed on a **Constitution saving throw** or be affected by the *contagion* spell for **1 hour** (concentration not required). In addition, a creature that is grappling the aboling, or a creature that the aboling has grappled, must make a **Constitution saving throw** at the start of each of the aboling's turns as if it had been hit by a tentacle attack.

Once the aboling uses this bonus action, it can't do so again until its tamer finishes a short or long rest.

## **ENTHRAL**

**Prerequisite:** 13th-level tamer, Entrance

**Type:** Active (action)

As an action, the aboling can target one humanoid or beast it can see within **30 feet** of it. The target must succeed on a **Wisdom saving throw** or be magically **charmed** by the aboling for **1 minute**.

The charmed target follows the aboling's commands and can't take reactions. While charmed in this way, the aboling and the target can communicate telepathically with each other over any distance. The aboling can specify a simple and general course of action, such as "Attack that creature," "Run over there," or "Fetch that object." If the creature completes the order and doesn't receive further direction from the aboling, it defends and preserves itself to the best of its ability.

On its subsequent turns, the aboling must use its action to maintain this effect, or the effect ends. Whenever the charmed target takes damage, the target can repeat the saving throw. On a success, the effect ends. This effect also ends early if the aboling dies, is recalled, or is on a different plane of existence from the target.

Once the aboling uses this action, it can't do so again until its tamer finishes a short or long rest.

## **RUBBERY HIDE II**

**Prerequisite:** 13th-level tamer, Rubbery Hide I

**Type:** Passive (companion)

The aboling gains a **+2 bonus** to its AC while it isn't wearing armour. This improvement is in addition to the bonus from Rubbery Hide I.

## **PROBING MIND**

**Prerequisite:** 17th-level tamer, Enthral

**Type:** Passive (companion)

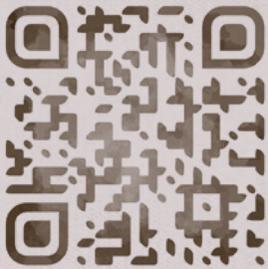
The aboling is always under the effects of the *detect thoughts* spell while it is summoned and can relay these read thoughts directly to its tamer while the aboling is within **100 feet** of the tamer.



# APPENDIX E — SOUNDS

Did you hear that twig break? I swear I just heard a kobold chittering. Was that a vat of boiling Mut-x or are you hungry?

Fresh from the College of Ambience is the bard, Michaël Ghelfi, who's created a wonderful catalogue of ambiences for each monster hunt. Immerse your senses in these vibrant, layered soundscapes as you track, hunt, and harvest!



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