

X4

Classic Adventure
Module Conversion



Master of the Desert Nomads

By Stan Shinn

For Character Levels 6-9



Classic Modules Today

A D&D 5th Edition Conversion of the Early Edition Adventure Module

X4 MASTER OF THE DESERT NOMADS

By Stan Shinn

Introduction: In 1983, TSR published the module named “Master of the Desert Nomads” with the module code “X4”. It was written by David Cook and illustrated by Jeff Easley and Keith Parkinson, and was the first in a two module series concluding with X5: Temple of Death. It consisted of one 32 page booklet and cover folder with maps. After the introduction of wilderness adventures in X1: The Isle of Dread, X4 was the next module in the X series to fully embrace wilderness adventuring. This conversion guide allows DMs to run the original module with 5th Edition rules and provides a reference sheet for encounters.

An adventure for 6th– 9th level characters

by Stan Shinn



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X4: MASTER OF THE DESERT NOMADS

Introduction

To use this conversion guide you will need a copy of “X4: Master of the Desert Nomads”, originally available in hard-copy and now for sale in Digital format at www.dndclassics.com.

This document gives DMs advice to convert the module to the latest 5th Edition rules and guidance on preparing the adventure. A list of random encounters provide a quick in-game reference. Most creatures refer to stat blocks in the D&D 5e Monster Manual. A few creatures have full stat blocks in the Special Creatures section at the end of this conversion guide.

Page listings may refer to abbreviations: MM (Monster Manual), CR (Challenge rating), and DMG (Dungeon Master Guide). All other page number refer to the locations in the original 'Master of the Desert Nomads' module. Key text is in **bold** for easy scanning. Magic items are noted in *italics*.

Find more information about this and other early edition conversions at www.classicmodulestoday.com.

Reference Sheet

For convenience, there is a Reference Sheet at the end of this document which summarizes the key information you'll need during the game onto one concise sheet. You can print this onto a single, double-sided page (perhaps on colored cardstock) as a handy tool that you can use alongside a hard copy of the module. After reading this document, all you'll need to run the game is the original module, the Monster Manual, the Reference Sheet, and optionally any notes or visuals you've prepared.

Adventure Summary

The adventurers have been recruited by a ruler whose region is under attack by unknown forces. The ruler has amassed an army to deal with the threat, and the adventurers are part of the reserve forces sent to rendezvous at the village of Pramayama. Once there, they discover a map leading to the location of the leader of the attackers. The adventurers are charged by the commander to follow the map to the location, and then determine a course of action from there.. This begins a long journey down river, through rocky, barren land, and across a burning desert to discover the location of a secret pass and the "temple of death" that lies just beyond it. What they do there will be up to them, but could mean ending the attacks without any more loss of innocent lives.

Converting to the Realms

This brief guide outlines a few thematic changes and additions to bring “Master of the Desert Nomads” into the Forgotten Realms world of Faerûn.

Two locations are suggested for the placement of this adventure. The Forgotten Realms wiki has a high resolution map of Faerûn [here](#) that can help you find the locations described below.

The first is in Calimshan, along the Calim River. In this case, the adventurers were recruited by a sultan whose region is suffering the attacks of the Master's forces.

Pramayama can be placed on the eastern side of the Calim River (at the bottom of the M in Calimshan). Guillaume's map will lead the adventurers north about halfway up the river before turning northeast towards the Marching Mountains.

The second location is on the eastern edge of the Anauroch desert. The adventurers were recruited by, depending on era of play, the town of Tilverton or Highmoon.

Pramayama can be placed on the north side of the southernmost river coming down from the Desertsouth Mountains. Guillaume's map will lead the adventurers west on the river until it ends, then will turn northwest towards the Scimitar Spires. The DM may wish to integrate known locations in Anauroch to the adventure, but it isn't necessary.

GM Notes

Special rules and tactics to brush up on prior to the game:

- Leverage **Conversation Reaction table (DMG 245)** for NPC reactions.
- The characters will be provided with one **week** of **food and drink**, and **mounts** for each character. If the supplies run out, the characters must spend time hunting or foraging, or face starvation.
- If the characters spend a day not traveling, they may use the **Survival** or **Nature** skill to collect enough food and water for two days.
- Mounts traveling near the river, on the plains, or in the mountains may graze in the morning and evening and stay fed. When in the desert, mounts must be fed every third day or begin to starve.
- Use the **Fatigue rules** if the characters travel more than **ten hours** a day or have nothing to eat or drink. Use the rules for their mounts if they don't feed them!
- Know how to use **perception** rules for **traps, secret doors, and stealthed creatures**.
- Determine **spell tactics** for spell casters.

Visuals

Suggested visuals to create:

- Sketch a crude map to represent **Guillame's map** to the **temple (pg. 6)**.
- Have a battle map ready for the **Bandit Attack (pg. 11)**.

Random Encounters

Settled Lands

Roll 1d20

1-2 Bandits (30)	9 Ogres (8)
3 Bugbears (14)	10-14 Commoners (20)
4 Gargoyles (6)	15 Giant Wasps (12)
5 Gnolls (20)	16 Giant Spiders (8)
6 Hellhounds (8)	17-19 Militia: 20 guards, 1 veteran
7 Lions (8)	20 Zombies (20)
8 Guards (8)	

Asanda River

Roll 1d8

- 1** Hydra (1)
- 2-4** Giant frogs (6)
- 5-6** Swarm of quippers (4)
- 7** Swarm of bats (4)
- 8** Young black dragon (1)

Sind Desert

Roll 1d20

Plain of Fire		Desert Hills
1-3 Basilisks (3)		Cockatrices (5)
4 Young blue dragon (1)		Cyclops (1)
5 Efreeti (1)		Enemy Patrol #3

6-10 Enemy Patrol #1	Enemy Patrol #2
11-14 Enemy Patrol #2	Enemy Patrol #1
15-17 Enemy Patrol #3	Hill giants (4)
18 Salamanders (2)	Gorgons (2)
19-20 Giant Scorpions (4)	Wyverns (2)

Enemy Camp

Roll 1d6

- 1** Bugbears (8)
- 2** Guards (20)
- 3** Hill giant (1)
- 4** Gargoyles (4)
- 5** Officers (use veteran, 3)
- 6** Juggernaut, 10 guards, 1 veteran

Planned Encounters

Settled Lands

- 1. The Mysterious Man:** Souleater, use Vrock.
- 2. The Evil Patrol:** 1 mage, 1 wyvern, 3 trolls.

Asanda River

- 1. Monsters from Below:** 6 giant crabs, 1 giant crocodile.
- 2. The Watchers of the River:** 25 scouts, 1 gladiator (long sword instead of spear); 20 orcs, 8 bugbears, 2 weretigers.
- 3. The Malakaz:** Characters trapped by the Malakaz must succeed at a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or fall into a deep sleep that won't end until dawn. One character a night that is affected by the deep sleep is targeted by the Malakaz randomly. That character must succeed at a DC 12 Charisma saving throw or be affected by a Feeblemind spell. The feeblemind effect lasts until the characters leave the Malakaz. Characters can escape the Malakaz by casting Dispel Evil (works automatically), or Dispel Magic (roll against a 6th level effect).

Caravan Track

The Caravan: Caravan Master (commoner), Captain of the Guard Ahmed Khel (gladiator, long sword instead of spear), 2 sergeants of the guard (veterans), 40 guards (guards), 12 merchants (commoners).

- 1. Bandits on the Way:** 100 bandits, 1 veteran.

- 2. The Lost Oasis:** Tabi (use quasit).

The Buried Temple. B: 1 poisonous snake, **D:** Amber golem (use stone golem), **F:** 2 mummies, **G:** Tabi (use quasit), Nagpa (use spirit naga).

- 3. Friend or Foe:** 40 dervishes (use bandits), Talel el Hareidhin (use priest).

Sind Desert

- 1. The Hibernating Monster:** 1 hydra.

- 2. The Enemy on the March:** 20 goblins, 20 dire wolves (use worgs), 5 nomad soldiers (use bandits). Enemy camp random encounters.

Gates of the Pass

1. Guardians of the Pass: Madman (use commoner).

The Evil Abbey

B5: 1 bhut.

D: 10 giant rats.

F2: 2 bhuts.

G: Frost salamander (use salamander, but replace fire with cold).

H1: 1 ochre jelly.

H2: Yellow mold (**DMG 105**).

J3: 4 bhuts.

J5: If any of the herbs are used on a character, that character must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed saving throw, or half that on a successful saving throw.

K2: 2 bhuts.

K3: Cleaning the statue, praying, or being generally respectful will gain that character the benefit of a Bless spell for the next 10 minutes.

K5: 2 bhuts, 3 ghouls.

K7: 1 giant poisonous snake.

K8: 1 bhut, 1 cave bear.

L3: 1 bhut.

N1: 3 wights.

N4: Dressla the Thief (use spy).

N6: Mond (use gladiator, but AC 21, long sword +2 instead of spear).

The Catacombs

1A: Vampire, use 1 wight instead.

2: Rock python, use 1 giant poisonous snake.

3: Old abbot, use 1 commoner.

5: Giant leech, use 1 water weird.

8: 1 bhut, 2 bugbears.

Magic Items

1. *Amulet of finding* (See Special Items)
2. *Battle axe +2*
3. *Chain mail +2*
4. *Girdle of giant strength* (Replace with gauntlets of ogre power)
5. *Horn of blasting*
6. *Long sword +1*
7. *Long sword +2*
8. *Mace +1*
9. *Mace +2*
10. *Plate armor +2*
11. *Potion of heroism*
12. *Potion of longevity*
13. *Ring of animal control* (replace with ring of animal influence)
14. *Ring of djinni summoning* (consider replacing with a ring of evasion or resistance)
15. *Ring of invisibility* (consider replacing with cloak of elvenkind)
16. *Ring of protection*
17. *Ring of spell storing*
18. *Scarab of protection* (consider replacing with necklace of

adaptation)

19. *Shield +1*

20. *Shield +2*

21. *Spear of panic* (See Special Items)

22. *Wand of fear*

23. *Wizard scroll of comprehend languages, continual flame, see invisibility*

Traps

- **Drugged Meal (pg. 20):** The target must make a DC12 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned. While poisoned, the target is unconscious. The target may make another saving throw every hour. On a successful saving throw, the poison ends.

Monsters

1. **Bandits:** (MM 343, CR 1/8, 25 XP)
2. **Bhut:** (See Special Creatures)
3. **Black dragon, young:** (MM 88, CR 7, 2900 XP)
4. **Blue dragon, young:** (MM 91, CR 9, 5000 XP)
5. **Bugbears:** (MM 33, CR 1, 200 XP)
6. **Cave Bear** (polar bear variant, MM 334, CR 2, 450 XP)
7. **Chimera:** (MM 39, CR 6, 2300 XP)
8. **Cockatrices:** (MM 42, CR 1/2, 100 XP)
9. **Commoners:** (MM 345, CR 0, 0-10 XP)
10. **Cyclops:** (MM 45, CR 6, 2300 XP)
11. **Efreeti:** (MM 145, CR 11, 7200 XP)
12. **Enemy Patrol #1:** 20 gnolls, 5 harpies, 1 mage.
13. **Enemy Patrol #2:** 30 goblins, 10 bugbears, 2 trolls.
14. **Enemy Patrol #3:** 1 fire giant, 5 harpies, 1 chimera, 1 veteran.
15. **Fire Giant:** (MM 154, CR 9, 5000 XP)
16. **Gargoyles:** (MM 40, CR 2, 450 XP)
17. **Ghouls:** (MM 148, CR 1, 200 XP)
18. **Giant Crabs:** (MM 324, CR 1/4, 50 XP)
19. **Giant Crocodile:** (MM 324, CR 5, 1800 XP)
20. **Giant Frogs:** (MM 325, CR 1/4, 50 XP)
21. **Giant Poisonous Snake:** (MM 327, CR 1/4, 50 XP)
22. **Giant Rats:** (MM 327, CR 1/8, 25 XP)
23. **Giant Scorpions:** (MM 327, CR 3, 700 XP)
24. **Giant Spiders:** (MM 328, CR 1, 200 XP)
25. **Giant Wasps:** (MM 329, CR 1/2, 100 XP)
26. **Gladiator:** (MM 346, CR 5, 1800 XP)
27. **Gnolls:** (MM163, CR 1/2, 100 XP)
28. **Goblin:** (MM 166, CR 1/4, 50 XP)
29. **Gorgons:** (MM 171, CR 5, 1800 XP)
30. **Guards:** (MM 347, CR 1/8, 25 XP)
31. **Harpies:** (MM181, CR 1, 200 XP)
32. **Hellhounds:** (MM 182, CR 3, 700 XP)
33. **Hydra:** (MM 190, CR 8, 3900 XP)
34. **Juggernaut:** (See Special Creatures)
35. **Lions:** (MM 331, CR 1, 200 XP)
36. **Mage:** (MM 347, CR 6, 2300 XP)
37. **Mummies:** (MM 228, CR 3, 700 XP)
38. **Ochre Jelly:** (MM 243, CR 2, 450 XP)
39. **Ogres:** (MM 237, CR 2, 450 XP)
40. **Poisonous Snake:** (MM 334, CR 1/8, 25 XP)
41. **Priest:** (MM 348, CR 2, 450 XP)

- 42. **Quasit:** (MM 63, CR 1, 200 XP)
- 43. **Salamanders:** (MM 266, CR 5, 1800 XP)
- 44. **Scouts:** (MM 349, CR 1/2, 100 XP)
- 45. **Spirit Naga:** (MM 234, CR 8, 3900 XP)
- 46. **Spy:** (MM 341, CR 1, 100 XP)
- 47. **Stone Golem:** (MM 170, CR 10, 5900 XP)
- 48. **Swarm of Bats:** (MM 337, CR 1/4, 50 XP)
- 49. **Swarm of Quippers:** (MM 338, CR 1, 200 XP)
- 50. **Trolls:** (MM 291, CR 5, 1800 XP)
- 51. **Veteran:** (MM 350, CR 3, 700 XP)
- 52. **Vrock:** (MM 64, CR 6, 2300 XP)
- 53. **Water Weird:** (MM 299, CR 3, 700 XP)
- 54. **Weretigers:** (MM 210, CR 4, 1100 XP)
- 55. **Wights:** (MM 300, CR 3 (700 XP)
- 56. **Worgs:** (MM 341, CR 1/2, 100 XP)
- 57. **Wyverns:** (MM 303 CR 6, 2300 XP)
- 58. **Zombies:** (MM 316, CR 0.25 (50 XP)

Special Creatures

Bhut

Medium monstrosity (bhut, shapechanger), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 75 (10d8+30)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Stealth +4

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

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from magical weapons wielded by good creatures

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Shapechanger. The bhut maintains a human form from dawn to dusk, and its true form from dusk to dawn. When it dies, it doesn't change form.

Unknowable. Divination spells will not reveal a bhut's true form or nature.

Actions

Multiattack. The bhut makes three attacks: two with its claws, and one with its bite.

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

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 8 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 14 (4d6) poison damage and be poisoned for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the poison on a success. On a successful saving throw, the target

takes half poison damage and isn't poisoned.

Bhuts are evil shapechangers that feed exclusively on humanoids. They appear as normal humans during the day, but change at night, becoming feral looking with sharp claws and long fangs. Bhuts prefer to live near settlements, where they work together to maintain a facade of innocence. They usually pose as good hearted, but reclusive, folk such as monks, extended families, or traveling pilgrims.

Juggernaut, wooden

Huge construct, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 172 (15d12+75)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	6 (-2)	20 (+5)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't adamantine

Damage Vulnerabilities fire

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands Common but can't speak

Challenge 10 (5900 XP)

Immutable Form. The juggernaut is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Magic Resistance. The juggernaut has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects, except magical fire.

Actions

The juggernaut makes one crush attack per round by rolling over targets in a 30 foot wide area. It can hit up to 6 medium or 3 large targets.

Crush. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 0 ft., up to 6 medium size targets. *Hit:* 61 (10d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

Special Items

Amulet of Finding

Wondrous item, uncommon

This iron amulet is formed into the shape of a skull. With an amulet of finding you can see through the eyes of any other amulet of finding, merely by concentrating on the particular amulet desired. Distance is no obstacle, but you must have seen the other amulet you wish to link to.

Vision via an amulet is normal. You can't use any other type of vision, even if it's standard for your race (such as darkvision). Preventing someone from seeing through your amulet is as simple as covering the amulet, or putting it in a bag or pouch.

Spear of Panic

Weapon (spear), rare

This spear has a blackened wooden shaft and a silvery-blue head. It confers no bonuses to attack or damage, but counts as magical.

On your turn, at no action cost, you may cause the spear to grow longer, granting it the Reach property. You may also cause the elongated spear to return to normal size, but only once on your turn.

When you strike an undead creature with the spear, it must make a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw, or flee from the wielder as if turned. Up to 3 undead at a time may be affected by the spear, however the turn effect will not function again until less than 3 are affected.

X4 Master of the Desert Nomads Reference Sheet

Random Encounters

Settled Lands

Roll 1d20		
1-2	Bandits (30)	9 Ogres (8)
3	Bugbears (14)	10-14 Commoners (20)
4	Gargoyles (6)	15 Giant Wasps (12)
5	Gnolls (20)	16 Giant Spiders (8)
6	Hellhounds (8)	17-19 Militia: 20 guards, 1 veteran
7	Lions (8)	20 Zombies (20)
8	Guards (8)	

Asanda River

Roll 1d8	
1	Hydra (1)
2-4	Giant frogs (6)
5-6	Swarm of quippers (4)
7	Swarm of bats (4)
8	Young black dragon (1)

Sind Desert

Roll 1d20		
	Plain of Fire	Desert Hills
1-3	Basilisks (3)	Cockatrices (5)
4	Young blue dragon (1)	Cyclops (1)
5	Efreeti (1)	Enemy Patrol #3
6-10	Enemy Patrol #1	Enemy Patrol #2
11-14	Enemy Patrol #2	Enemy Patrol #1
15-17	Enemy Patrol #3	Hill giants (4)
18	Salamanders (2)	Gorgons (2)
19-20	Giant Scorpions (4)	Wyverns (2)

Enemy Camp

Roll 1d6	
1	Bugbears (8)
2	Guards (20)
3	Hill giant (1)
4	Gargoyles (4)
5	Officers (use veteran, 3)
6	Juggernaut, 10 guards, 1 veteran

Magic Items

1. Amulet of finding (See Special Items)
2. Battle axe +2
3. Chain mail +2
4. Girdle of giant strength (Replace with gauntlets of ogre power)
5. Horn of blasting
6. Long sword +1
7. Long sword +2
8. Mace +1
9. Mace +2
10. Plate armor +2
11. Potion of heroism
12. Potion of longevity
13. Ring of invisibility (replace with ring of animal influence)
14. Ring of djinni summoning (consider replacing with a ring of evasion or resistance)
15. Ring of invisibility (consider replacing with cloak of elvenkind)
16. Ring of protection
17. Ring of spell storing
18. Scarab of protection (consider replacing with necklace of adaptation)
19. Shield +1
20. Shield +2
21. Spear of panic (See Special Items)
22. Wand of fear
23. Wizard scroll of comprehend languages, continual flame, see invisibility

Traps

Drugged Meal (pg. 20): The target must make a DC12 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned. While poisoned, the target is unconscious. The target may make another saving throw every hour. On a successful saving throw, the poison ends.

Monsters

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50. **Trolls:** (MM 291, CR 5, 1800 XP)
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52. **Vrock:** (MM 64, CR 6, 2300 XP)
53. **Water Weird:** (MM 299, CR 3, 700 XP)
54. **Weretigers:** (MM 210, CR 4, 1100 XP)
55. **Wights:** (MM 300, CR 3 (700 XP)
56. **Worgs:** (MM 341, CR 1/2, 100 XP)
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58. **Zombies:** (MM 316, CR 0.25 (50 XP)

Special Creatures

Bhut

Medium monstrosity (bhut, shapechanger), chaotic

evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 75 (10d8+30)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Stealth +4

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

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from magical weapons wielded by good creatures

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Shapechanger. The bhut maintains a human form from dawn to dusk, and its true form from dusk to dawn. When it dies, it doesn't change form.

Unknownable. Divination spells will not reveal a bhut's true form or nature.

Actions

Multitattack. The bhut makes three attacks: two with its claws, and one with its bite.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hir:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hir:* 8 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 14 (4d6) poison damage and be poisoned for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the poison on a success. On a successful saving throw, the target takes half poison damage and isn't poisoned.

Juggernaut, wooden

Huge construct, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 172 (15d12+75)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	9 (-1)	20 (+5)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't adamantite

Damage Vulnerabilities fire

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands Common but can't speak

Challenge 10 (5900 XP)

Immutable Form. The juggernaut is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Magic Resistance. The juggernaut has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects, except magical fire.

Actions

The juggernaut makes one crush attack per round by rolling over targets in a 30 foot wide area. It can hit up to 6 medium or 3 large targets.

Crush. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 0 ft., up to 6 medium size targets. *Hir:* 61 (10d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage.