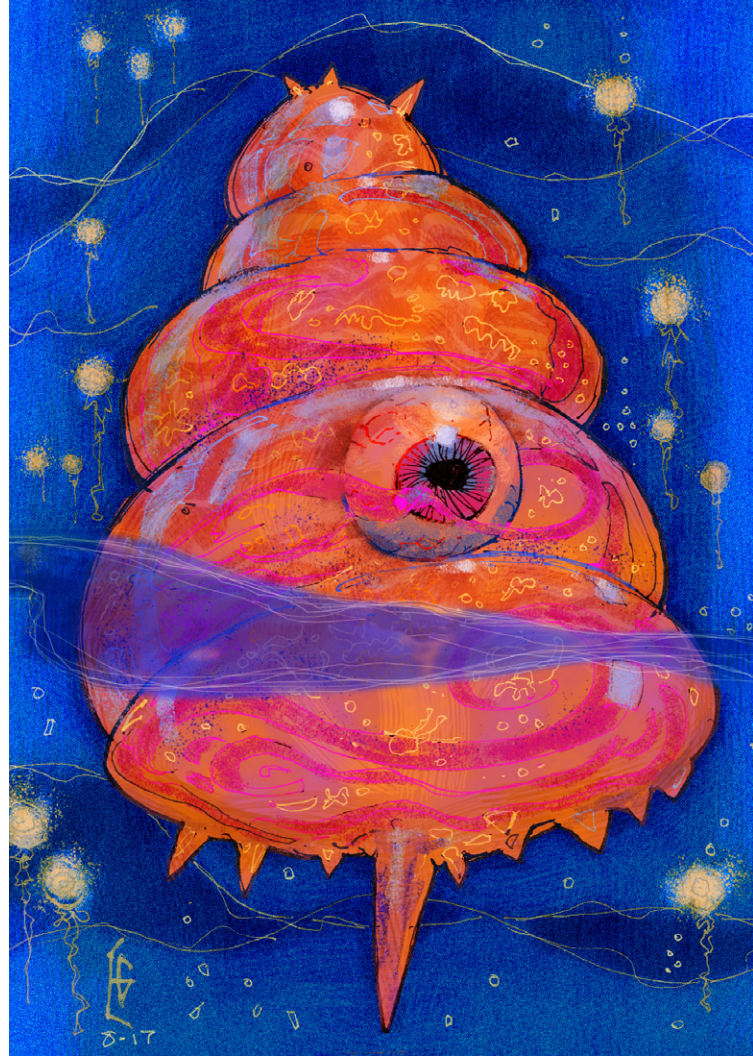


TERRORS ^{OF THE} DEEP

ABOLETHIC SERVITORS

WHEN THE aboleths work their sinister wills in the world, they do not risk spoiling millennia-spanning schemes by revealing their presence. Instead, they use loathsome servitor aberrations, such as the all-seeing oculites or the poisonous slitherwhites. Thanks to their connections to realms outside the Material Plane, humanoid creatures can conjure and direct such creatures as well.



WRITING BRANDES STODDARD
COLOR ART ELLIS GOODSON
EDITING JAMES J. HAECK
LAYOUT ERIC LIFE-PUTNAM

Maw Swarm

In the lightless depths of the sea and the unthinkable realms far beyond our reality, there exist living humanoid mouths, trailing exposed muscles and bloody viscera. They cluster by inexplicable instinct into swarms of hundreds, and scour the deeps as a wandering, all-consuming hunger.

Torn from the Drowned. When drowned humanoids sink to the depths of the sea, aboleths and other horrors find them. The transformations that are worked upon these bodies are too numerous to list and too awful to contemplate, but one form of them separates the maw and gullet from the corpse without ending its drive to consume. The aboleths lure maw swarms into areas they want to purge of all living matter, so that they can inhabit the area themselves.

Maw Swarm Story Hooks

The proud ship *Fairweather* is found drifting out at sea, with no sign of the crew, but clear signs of violence. The authorities assume that pirates were responsible and order reprisals. A month later, however, the bodies of the crew wash up on shore, their faces disfigured beyond even normal decomposition. As events unfold, it becomes clearer that the aboleths directed the attack to gather the dead for new maw swarms.



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Maw Swarm

Medium swarm of Tiny aberrations, unaligned

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 104 (16d8 + 32)

Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover), swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	3 (–4)	10 (+0)	6 (–2)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Deep Speech

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Whispers of the Weird. The maw swarm murmurs and whispers constantly, speaking secrets in languages beyond mortal comprehension. A creature that starts its turn in the maw swarm’s space or enters it for the first time on its turn must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw, suffering 10 (3d6) psychic damage on a failed save.

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature’s space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny maw. The swarm can’t regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Aberrant Physiology. The maw swarm does not need to breathe or sleep.

ACTIONS

Bites. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 0 ft., one creature in the swarm’s space. *Hit:* 17 (4d6 + 3) piercing damage, or 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage if the maw swarm has half its hit points or fewer.

Oculite

When a sentient creature suffers complete liquefaction from an aboleth's mucous cloud, but retains a modicum of mental integrity, the aboleths isolate them in hollowed-out crystal spheres. There, they undergo a metamorphosis that lasts 24 hours, finally solidifying as an unblinking eye. The eye is about two feet in diameter, and encased in a four-inch-thick crystal shell.

Probing Eye. Oculites serve their aboleth creators absolutely, but they are no longer sapient in any recognizable sense. They are often set to patrol a region or scout out an area. When they return to their controller, the aboleth telepathically scans the oculites' memories for anything of interest. Their memories are eidetic and clear; some humanoid spellcasters have had success using detect thoughts and greater magics on oculites.

Oculite Story Hooks

As the characters finish clearing out and looting a dungeon, a group of oculites arrives to watch them. The oculites do not engage, and withdraw when challenged, likely piquing the characters' curiosity. If the dungeon is aquatic, this likely signals that aboleths are preparing to sweep in and obliterate anything that remains. If not, the oculites are a forward scouting force for a spellcaster powerful enough to conjure them, intending to lure the characters into an ambush.

On behalf of an unsettling employer, the characters seek out an unusually large crystal ball in a nearby dungeon. When they find it, the inside of the orb appears cloudy and indistinct. In the course of investigating it, the long-dormant oculite stirs and becomes visible again. It bides its time and observes as the group returns it to their employer, who has the ability to telepathically interrogate it.

Oculite

Small aberration, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 76 (17d6 + 17)

Speed 5 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover), swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Skills Perception +3

Damage Vulnerabilities thunder

Damage Resistances radiant

Condition Immunities deafened, prone

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages understands Deep Speech but can't speak

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Crystalline Entity. The oculite does not need to eat, sleep, or breathe.

Refraction. When the oculite takes radiant damage, one creature of the oculite's choice within 30 feet takes the same amount of damage.

ACTIONS

Energy Ray. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (5d6) fire damage.

Slitherwhite

The tentacles of the aboleths are more than they seem. Through certain alchemical processes that only an alien intellect can comprehend, the tentacles are duplicated through budding. The aboleth have learned that they can create servitors by amputating several such additional tentacles and grafting them together into a living knot of writhing flesh. The tentacles gradually fade to white, as the abolethic mucous cloud alters them until they exude their wastes as virulent toxins.

Mindless Servitors. Slitherwhites are not appreciably sapient; they possess complex sensory ability, but only the faintest modicum of cognition. This is entirely sufficient for them to receive simple telepathic commands from the aboleths, who use them for experimentation and waste disposal. They can also undergo further transformation into slithering crowns.

SLITHERWHITE STORY HOOKS

When aboleths need a guard for a passageway that will bar all passage for anyone but aboleths and slithering crowns, they fill the area with a dozen or more slitherwhites, often tethering or anchoring them to the sides of the passage. Depending on the needs of the encounter, this might be framed as a fight against overwhelming numbers, or as a careful avoidance, in which the characters navigate the narrow path where none of the slitherwhites can reach.

Slitherwhite
Medium aberration, unaligned
Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 71 (13d8 + 13)
Speed 20 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)

Saving Throws Dex +3
Condition Immunities prone
Senses blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages understands Deep Speech but cannot speak
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Aberrant Physiology. The slitherwhite has no mouth, instead absorbing all of its sustenance through its skin. It can breathe air and water. It has disadvantage on saving throws against gaseous or cloud-based effects, as it cannot hold its breath.

ACTIONS
Tentacle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage plus 3 (1d6) poison damage.

SLITHERING CROWN

The aboleths send huge numbers of slitherwhites into the incomprehensible realms beyond our world, to bring back what they can or to feed the formless intelligences that dwell there. One time in a thousand, a slitherwhite survives and returns to the Material Plane, having merged with other slitherwhites to form a loosely woven circle of wriggling, whitish flesh. In the center of that ring, there burns a point of light that is unbearable to look upon—a scintilla of malicious radiance.

Dire Oracles. The minds of the slitherwhites merge into a keen intellect, shaped by realms where time, space, and causality have little meaning. The aboleths value the combat potential of slithering crowns, but far more, they value their oracular insight into the past, the present, and possible futures. When doing so does not contradict orders from their masters, or when conjured by a humanoid spellcaster, slithering crowns can be propitiated with offerings of prophetic verses, pearls, and fire coral of the highest quality. They bargain with surprising honesty for their assistance, but the cost for their extraplanar insight is steep.

SLITHERING CROWN STORY HOOKS

When aboleths conquer an aquatic settlement or tribe, they often install a slithering crown as something like a viceroy—a symbol of their presence and power, and a voice nominally guaranteeing that the settlement or tribe pays tribute to their sovereignty, in whatever form. When the characters arrive in a merfolk village, everything seems fine at first, but the merfolk resist requests to speak to the village’s leader. A swift and terrible retribution falls upon the settlement if the characters interfere with or slay the slithering crown.

Slithering Crown

Large aberration, lawful evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 130 (20d10 + 20)

Speed 10 ft., fly 20 ft., swim 40 ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +4

Damage Resistances psychic

Condition Immunities frightened, prone

Senses blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Deep Speech (cannot speak), telepathy 30 ft.

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Aberrant Physiology. The slithering crown has no mouth, instead absorbing all of its sustenance through its skin. It can breathe air and water. It has disadvantage on saving throws against gaseous or cloud-based effects, as it cannot hold its breath.

Many Minds. The slithering crown has a composite mind made of multiple slitherwhites. It has advantage on saving throws to resist being charmed.

Alien Insights. A slithering crown can cast *contact other plane*. Once used, it regains the ability to do so after one week.

ACTIONS

Constrict. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 13). A creature that starts its turn grappled by a slithering crown must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw, suffering 13 (3d8) radiant damage and becoming frightened on a failed save. On a success, it suffers half damage and is not frightened.

NEW SPELL

This spell is added to the warlock and wizard spell lists.

CONJURE DEEP ABOMINATION

6th-level conjuration

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: 60 feet

Components: V, S, M (one fresh eyeball per creature summoned, which the spell consumes)

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 hour

You summon aberrations from the depths of the sea that appear in unoccupied spaces that you can see within range. Choose one of the following options for what appears:

- ▶ One aberration of challenge rating 4 or lower (friendly to you but not your companions)
- ▶ One aberration of challenge rating 3 or lower (friendly to you but not your companions)
- ▶ Two aberrations of challenge rating 2 or lower (friendly to you and your companions)
- ▶ Four aberrations of challenge rating 1 or lower (friendly to you and your companions)

A summoned creature disappears when it drops to 0 hit points. If the spell ends for any other reason, the creature immediately becomes hostile to all non-aberration creatures it can see. Summoned creatures are neutral toward you and your companions unless the option you choose specifies otherwise.

Roll initiative for the summoned creatures as a group, which has its own turns. While they are friendly, they obey any verbal commands you issue to them (no action required by you). If you don't issue commands to them, or if they are neither friendly nor hostile to you, they defend themselves from hostile creatures, but otherwise take no actions. Unfriendly or neutral deep aberrations are willing to negotiate, though their requests are typically distasteful. The GM has the creatures' statistics.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using an 8th-level spell slot, you choose one of the summoning options above, and twice as many creatures appear. 🐉