

CHAPTER SEVEN:

Monsters

Heroes need powerful foes against whom to test their skills and prove their mettle. This chapter presents some of the most interesting monsters presented in DRAGON's history. They range from the horrifying bleeder to the crafty dweomervore to the mighty purple dragon.

This chapter includes the following templates: bodak creature, demonically fused elemental, ghastly creature, ghoulish creature, ravenous, seelie court fey, trap haunt, and unseelie fey.

Blackroot Marauder

by James Jacobs, DRAGON #270, April 2000

**Medium Construct**  
**Hit Dice:** 8d10 (64 hp)  
**Initiative:** +1  
**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)  
**Armor Class:** 19 (+1 Dex, +8 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 18  
**Base Attack/Grapple:** +6/+10  
**Attack:** Claw +10 melee (1d4+4 and poison) or thorns +7 ranged (1d6 and poison)

**Full Attack:** 2 claws +10 melee (1d4+4 and poison) or thorns +7 ranged (1d6 and poison)  
**Space/Reach:** 5 feet/5 feet  
**Special Attacks:** Poison, thorns  
**Special Qualities:** Construct traits, DR 5/—, detect good, electricity immunity, natural camouflage, restful state, tremorsense 60 ft.  
**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +4  
**Abilities:** Str 18, Dex 12, Con —, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 10  
**Skills:** Hide +14, Listen +7, Move Silently +3, Survival +8  
**Feats:** Ability Focus (poison), Stealthy, Track  
**Environment:** Any forest  
**Organization:** Solitary or gang (2–4)  
**Challenge Rating:** 5  
**Treasure:** Standard  
**Alignment:** Usually neutral evil  
**Advancement:** 9–14 (Large); 15–24 (Huge)  
**Level Adjustment:** +8

*This foul creature resembles a sapling covered with black leaves and sharp thorns. It is humanoid in shape, with broad, powerful legs and long, willowy arms that end with three fierce talons. The faint outline of a leering, twisted face appears in the beast's bark.*



A swarm of marauders might slowly creep up on an encampment or castle, shifting into position so slowly that their prey fails to notice the gradual rise in the number of trees and the density of the underbrush in the area.

**Poison (Ex):** A blackroot marauder's claw attacks deliver a deadly venom. The poison's initial and secondary damage is 1d8 damage. A DC 18 Fortitude save resist the poison. This DC is Constitution-based and includes a +2 racial bonus and a +2 bonus from the Ability Focus feat.

**Thorns (Ex):** A blackroot marauder can fire a volley of thorns from its body at a single foe within 30 feet. This attack deals 1d6 damage and delivers the marauder's poison.

**Detect Good (Su):** The blackroot marauder can cast *detect good* at will as a free action. It can also maintain its concentration on this spell as a free action. The marauder casts this spell as a 10th-level cleric.

**Natural Camouflage (Ex):** As long as a blackroot marauder remains still, it gains a +8 bonus on all Hide checks made in wooded areas. Its unique appearance allows it to easily blend into its surroundings.

**Restful State (Ex):** Unlike other constructs, the blackroot marauder heals naturally. If it remains stationary in an area with thick, loamy soil capable of supporting tree life, it heals 5 hit points of damage per day.

CREATING A BLACKROOT MARAUDER

An evil cleric with access to the Plant domain or an evil druid can create a blackroot marauder through an involved ritual. The first step in creating a marauder is to locate a young sapling about 7 feet tall. The sapling must grow in the wild. After clearing the area around the sapling in a 15-foot radius, the sapling must then be kept from direct sunlight for one month. At sunrise and sunset for that month, the cleric or druid must pour the blood of an intelligent creature over the sapling's roots. At the end of the month, the cleric or druid must cast *animate plants*, *command plants*, *detect good*, and *poison*. After casting these spells, the cleric or druid

Blackroot marauders lurk within dense forests, usually at the command of a powerful evil cleric or arcane spellcaster. Marauders are spawned in elaborate, expensive rituals first created by cabals of evil clerics and dark druids willing to take any measures to protect their wildlands from others. In lands ruled by evil clerics, blackroot marauders infest forests where they function as guardians, watchers, and hunters. They stalk and ambush elves, gnomes, rangers, and others wilderness warriors who might seek to unseat an evil regime. Unfortunately, the lore needed to produce these beasts has spread far and wide.

COMBAT

Blackroot marauders are deadly foes due to their patience and skill for fading into the terrain in dense, forested areas. A marauder might remain still for weeks on end by a forest trail, silently waiting for its prey to fall into its trap.

illustrated by Warren Mahy

TABLE 7–1: MONSTERS BY CR

CR	MONSTERS
1	Summer unseelie fey gnome
2	Demonically fused small fire elemental, ravenous ghoulish halfling
3	Air demon, bonespitter, ciruja plant, ragewing, spiritus anime
4	Ash demon, grandfather plaque, seelie court dryad, water demon
5	Blackroot marauder, bone tree, earth demon, ghoulish harpy
6	Ice demon, glasspane horror
7	Dweomervore, fire demon, trap haunt elf rogue
8	Bleeder, bodak creature five-headed hydra, bog mummy
9	Fire troll, ghastly hill giant
12	Casurua, chaoswyrd