

Busiris RPG – City Bestiary

Introduction

There are creatures and races that exist in, under and around the City of Busiris, that regard the arrival of the Empire with sinister intent.

Some are mindless, yet dangerous, beasts. Others have a malign intelligence to match that of the incomers into what they regard as their territory.

The Under-city of Busiris

Although the Empire is well established in the City there is still a lot it does not know about the ruins upon which it is built. The ruins are those of the seven cities that came before it, and in each layer there are many tunnels and chambers that still survive and are in use.

Some of these have been taken over by smugglers and tomb-robbers, others by demonic cults such as the Ushakhti. These are usually close to the surface. Deeper down there are creatures that prey on the lost, the greedy and the foolish.

Tunnel Scarab Swarm

Scarabs beetles are common in Busiris. Most are very small and eat dung and small invertebrates. Tunnel Scarabs are larger (3" long) and live in hives. Within the tunnels under the city there are thousands of these aggressive predators.

Individually they are weak, but a hunting swarm is a truly deadly thing. Holy Light and flaming torches can hold a swarm at bay, but will not stop it in the long run. It will pursue anything holding a light source or that the swarm can see.

Race: Scarab Profession: n/a

STR [2], DEX [2], INT [0], SPT [0].

Agility [4], Fighting [4], Perception [2], Speed [4], Toughness [8].

Weapons: Tiny mandibles. The swarm attacks as a single entity getting one attack/turn.

Armour: None

Carrion Lizards

Between three and six feet long, these are pack predators that hunt small mammals in the dark. They may take on a lost human, and will fight to defend their nest.

They can walk up walls and even hang from the ceiling. They can see into the infrared which is how they track their warm-blooded prey. A family of Lizards may number between three and eight.

Race: Reptile Profession: n/a

STR [1], DEX [3], INT [0], SPT [1].

Agility [6], Fighting [6], Perception [5], Speed [6], Stealth [5], Toughness [5].

Special Abilities/Spells: Walk on walls, Infrared vision.

Weapons: Bite

Armour: Light (scales)

Other Kit: They often take shiny objects such as silver and gems back to their nest to decorate it.

Tomb Cobra

These large and powerful snakes hunt through the tombs and tunnels in and around Busiris. They have venomous fangs, the ability see into the infrared and a hypnotic power.

Race: Snake Profession: n/a

STR [4], DEX [4], INT [1], SPT [2].

Agility [10], Fighting [10], Perception [6], Speed [8], Stealth [6], Toughness [10].

Special Abilities/Spells: Infrared vision. The pattern under the Cobra's hood affects anyone who looks at it like a Daze spell. Once affected by a specific Cobra's pattern you cannot be affected by that one again.

Weapons: Bite, poisonous (Strength 3).

Armour: Medium (scales).

Tomb Worms

These look like an enormous (up to 8' long) lamprey eels, but they live in the dust and darkness of the under-city. Here they scavenge the dead, and will usually retreat from living creatures unless cornered or surprised.

Race: Annelid Profession: n/a

STR [3], DEX [3], INT [0], SPT [1].

Agility [6], Fighting [7], Perception [1], Speed [6], Stealth [4], Toughness [5].

Special Abilities/Spells: Draining Bite. If a Tomb Worm causes a wound in combat they cling on and continue to drain their prey. The next turn the wounded victim will be KO'd and the turn after that they will be dead.

Weapons: Bite.

Armour: Medium (scales).

Ichneumon

Imagine a wasp four feet long with a vicious sting and a long curved proboscis. It is a deadly hunter with a vile method of reproduction. It paralyzes its victims and then uses its proboscis to inject up to eight eggs into them. These hatch in 2-3 days and the larvae feed off their still-living victim.

Race: Insect Profession: n/a

STR [3], DEX [4], INT [1], SPT [2].

Agility [8], Craft [5], Fighting [8], Perception [6], Speed [8], Stealth [6], Toughness [8].

Special Abilities/Spells: It can fly, hover and walk on walls.

Weapons: Sting [+1]. This injects a poison (strength 2) that paralyzes its victims.

Armour: Light (chitin).

Cave Mirks

Small rodents that look like voles and live in nests of several hundred individuals. Although tiny and apparently harmless they are one of the deadliest creatures in the under-city.

They usually live by eating Scarabs, but will take bigger prey if they can kill it.

Race: Rodent Profession: n/a

STR [1], DEX [3], INT [0], SPT [0].

Agility [6], Fighting [1], Perception [1], Speed [4], Stealth [8], Toughness [1].

Special Abilities/Spells: Chittering. Cave Mirks that feel threatened chitter – make a small, annoying chirping sound. Every Mirk within earshot then joins in creating an overwhelming cacophony.

Creatures inside a 'Mirk Chorus' go quickly mad, temporarily losing one point of INT per turn. Those who reach zero INT go berserk and attack anyone they can see until they or their victims are dead, or the Mirks stop chittering.

When everyone is dead, the Mirks feed...

Weapons: None

Armour: None

Giant Centipedes

Up to 2' long these will generally only attack if cornered or surprised. They feed off Cave Mirks and Scarabs.

Race: Invertebrate Profession: n/a

STR [1], DEX [1], INT [0], SPT [1].

Agility [6], Fighting [6], Perception [3], Speed [4], Stealth [4], Toughness [4].

Special Abilities/Spells: Infrared vision. Can walk up walls.

Weapons: Bite – no damage, but poisonous [Strength 1].

Armour: None.

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The Unquiet Dead

Both in the Under-city and amongst the tombs and crypts of the Necropolis there are many creature that although dead still plague the living. Some are animated by magic, some hang on through sheer malice and some have far stranger stories.

Tomb Guard

These are volunteers who chose to accompany their master into his tomb when he died. They took terrible oaths and then their throats were cut.

Their sacrifice means that if anyone should try to disturb their master's rest they will rise to defend him and his possessions.

Race: Skeleton Profession: Soldier

STR [2], DEX [2], INT [1], SPT [4].

Agility [4], Fighting [8], Perception [5], Shooting [8], Speed [4], Toughness [8].

Special Abilities/Spells: When you KO a Tomb Guard you have not finished it. You must remove its skull from its body or on the next turn it will reform and rise again.

Weapons: Swords, Axes and Bows are all common.

Armour: Light or Medium, some have shields as well.

Other Kit: Many have jewellery, gifts from their master.

Ushakhti Warriors

The vile cult of the Ushakhti often raids fresh graves and tombs to raise the dead as their servants and protectors. These rotting zombies are relentless and strong, though very stupid.

Race: Undead Profession: Soldier

STR [8], DEX [1], INT [1], SPT [1].

Agility [2], Fighting [9], Perception [2], Speed [2], Toughness [10].

Special Abilities/Spells: Immortality. When you wound a Warrior you have lopped off a limb or perhaps its head. When you KO it you have lopped off most of its limbs and head. However, it, and its parts, are still alive, and can be repaired by an Ushakhti Necromancer. Fire is the only weapon that will break the Warrior's immortality. You must burn the remains to ensure its eternal rest.

Weapons: Bare hands, they are too stupid to use weapons.

Armour: Heavy, their flesh is no longer mortal.

Ka

The spirit of a sorcerer who died and was not sent onto the afterlife by a priest can become a Ka, a dispossessed spirit hungering for life. If it KO's a victim on the next turn it will possess its victim's body, which immediately becomes a Ka-vessel(see below).

Race: Spirit Profession: Sorcerer

STR [1], DEX [1], INT [6], SPT [4].

Agility [2], Fighting [7], Lore [12], Perception [10], Speed [2], Stealth [5], Toughness [5].

Special Abilities/Spells: It typically has six spells in its memory.

Weapons: Chilling Touch. This attack ignores the victim's armour.

Armour: Incorporeal. Only iron or an enchanted weapon can harm a Ka.

Ka-vessel

These are created as explained above. The tragedy of possession is that the body immediately begins to rot, and in about six or seven days will fall apart and the Ka will once more become dispossessed.

Race: Possessed creature Profession: Sorcerer

STR [*], DEX [*], INT [6], SPT [4]. * whatever the victim had before he became possessed.

Agility [DEX x 2], Fighting [STR + 6], Lore [12], Perception [10], Speed [STR + DEX], Stealth [DEX + 4], Toughness [STR + 4].

Special Abilities/Spells: Same spells as the Ka had before.

Weapons: Same as the victim had.

Armour: Same as the victim had.

Other Kit: Same as the victim had.

Note: If a Ka-vessel is killed the Ka becomes dispossessed once more and the victim dies. If the victim's friends can KO and restrain the Ka-vessel they can take it to a Temple for exorcism. The exorcism ritual will send the Ka to the afterlife. This is not cheap but it is effective.

An Adventurer who is exorcised counts as wounded for one day for each day he was possessed as his body recovers. No healing can speed this up.

Note that the Temple of Afet will simply destroy the Ka-vessel. They don't do exorcisms. Afeti Priests and Nubians are immune to possession because of their training and special talismans.

Death Scarabs

Scarabs are everywhere, a few though have wandered into places of great magic, such as the tombs of powerful sorcerers. This has changed them into fist sized, black scarabs that can unleash spells at their enemies.

By the way they are aggressive and fiercely territorial.

Race: Scarab Profession: n/a

STR [2], DEX [2], INT [0], SPT [4].

Agility [4], Fighting [4], Lore [2], Perception [4], Speed [4], Toughness [6].

Special Abilities/Spells: Pick two spells for each Death Scarab.

Weapons: An individual Death Scarab cannot harm an Adventurer with its mandibles.

Armour: None, however they are Immortal [see Ushakhti Warriors].

Carrion Eaters

Once these were hungry tomb robbers or beggars, who found that the flesh of the recent dead was both nutritious and changed them to become more powerful.

They are a menace in every Necropolis and the Temple Guard of Afet spend a lot of time hunting them down.

Carrion Eaters work in packs of five to ten individuals and are very cunning.

Race: Undead Profession: Tomb Robber

STR [4], DEX [2], INT [1], SPT [2].

Agility [4], Craft [5], Fighting [6], Lore [2], Perception [4], Shooting [4], Speed [6], Stealth [10], Toughness [6].

Special Abilities/Spells: Carrion Eaters often surround their lairs with vicious traps.

Weapons: Clubs made from bones and teeth. Slings.

Armour: Light (rags and scavenged bits of mail).

Other Kit: Tools to make traps.

Free Ghola

The Ghola are flesh-constructs. They are the reanimated bodies of slaves that have died in service through age, accident or disease. Some of these manage to free themselves and then go underground. They are often aggressive because they fear recapture.

Race: Ghola Profession: Slave

STR [4], DEX [3], INT [1], SPT [1].

Agility [6], Craft [4], Fighting [6], Lore [2], Perception [4], Persuasion [2], Shooting [4], Speed [7], Stealth [4], Toughness [8].

Special Abilities/Spells: None.

Weapons: Whatever they could scavenge.

Armour: Light. Ghola are inured to pain and hardship and their flesh is strong.

Other Kit: Whatever they could scavenge.