

HOW I RUN IT'S TROGLODYTE TUESDAY:

BEAROWL

Most sages and monsterologists agree that Bearowls (pronounced “BEH-rowls”) are the product of a sorcerous crossbreeding of owls and bears that can lay eggs and produce offspring. Whether this bizarre accomplishment is the result of the work of Shevule the Changer, the clown wizard known as Jocose the Farceur, or some other lesser-known practitioner is lost to time. Regardless, these monstrosities have spread out to different areas of the world over the last millennia and some have even evolved into different subspecies and colorations. For example, the Snowy Bearowl is significantly bigger than others of its kind, has white fur and feathers, and inhabits arctic regions.

The typical bearowl, however, is as big as, if not bigger than, a grizzly bear (9 feet in height), but with an enormous owl’s head and beak, and feathers growing out of its fur along its back and arms. The browns, grays, reds, and amber of its fur and feathers give it good camouflage in wooded areas, which it uses to its advantage in hunting. The fact that bearowls can turn their heads 270 degrees (like owls) makes them excellent at spotting prey and potential threats. Furthermore, while the bearowl cannot fly, they are great climbers allowing them to make their dens in hard-to-reach caves in hillsides or in hollows beneath large dead trees.

Silent Hunters. Bearowls are unusually stealthy for their size, but their favored tactic is to await prey high up in a sturdy tree or on a cliff face and then use their feather arms to slow their silent descent to ambush prey, their stunning screech alerting the target when it is already too late to flee. Despite their tendency to hunt solitary prey, bearowls are very aggressive and even downright mean. Once they have decided on the target of their hunt, they loathe to abandon their pursuit even in the face of greater numbers or fire. This obsession becomes fanatical once they have scored a kill, fighting to the death – or even seemingly beyond death – to defend their meal. They are born with a taste for human flesh and have also been known to dig up halfling burrows and gnome-homes for the tasty bits inside.

Notes for the DM. Bearowls should be run like clever but ferocious animals. Their primary intention is to find meat to eat, but they also defend their territory, and seek to eliminate things that cause them pain. As such in combat, while they might start by targeting prey separated from the rest of the party (or their mounts or animal companions), they will quickly change tact to attacking whatever they perceive to be causing them the most harm. Of course, since they have animal intelligence, they may not be able to figure out if that



Bearowl

pain is coming—for example—from a wizard casting spells from a distance. Since bearowls can turn their heads like owls (all the way around), if your group plays with the flanking optional rule, I would make them immune to being flanked.

If you want to make a polar version of the Bearowl, I would make give them advantage for hiding in snowy conditions and maximum hit points.

BEAROWL

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 64 (7d10 + 21)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Saving Throws Str +7, Con +5

Skills Perception (ex) +5, Stealth (ex) +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

Keen Sight and Smell. The Bearowl has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

Ambusher. The Bearowl has advantage on attack rolls against any creature it has surprised.

Grappler. The Bearowl applies its proficiency bonus (+2) to its grapple checks and has advantage on attack rolls against any creature grappled by it.

Relentless (*Recharges after a Short or Long Rest*). If the Bearowl takes 20 damage or less that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Bearowl makes three attacks: one with its beak and two with its claws.

Beak. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit. Hit: 1d10+5 (piercing).

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit. Hit: 1d8+5 (slashing).

BONUS ACTIONS

Stunning Screech. As a bonus action, the Bearowl lets out a blood freezing screech aimed at a single target up to 90 feet away that it can see. The target must make a Wisdom saving throw (DC 11) or be paralyzed in fear until the end of the their turn. Targets that make their saving throw are immune to this particular bearowl's stunning screech until after their next long rest.

Hug. When the Bearowl strikes a medium or smaller target with both claws on the same turn it may start a grapple as a bonus action. If the Bearowl succeeds it does 2d10+5 bludgeoning damage to the grappled target at the start of each of its turns.

REACTIONS

Worrying Beak. As a reaction to grappling a target, the Bearowl can make a beak attack with advantage. If it hits it does an additional 1d10 piercing damage.

Feathery Faller. While the Bearowl cannot fly, it can use the vestigial feathers on its arms to slow its descent. It can use a reaction to glide down up to 60 feet without taking damage, landing on their feet.