



“Hound of the Gloom” by Steve Ellis, © Wizards of the Coast. Accessed at the Lords of Madness Art Gallery [here](#)

[Lords of Madness might have been my favorite splatbook of the 3.5 era. It was chock full of good flavor and usable mechanics for some of D&D’s most iconic creatures, and it did a good job supplementing a few second-tier baddies.

The hound of the gloom had a pretty nice piece of art, but wasn’t much mechanically in the original. It didn’t even have any darkness themed abilities, with a name like that! So this conversion is much altered.]

Gloombeast

CR 9 NE Aberration

This creature is an enormous, bestial quadruped. Its hide is a rubbery gray substance, and its head is covered in bony ornamentation. A mane of thrashing tentacles grows from around its neck, two of which end in disturbingly human-like hands.

Gloombeasts are mysterious creatures native to the Darklands that combine aspects of bear, big cat and octopus. A gloombeast is a savage and wandering predator of the subterranean realm, although they may emerge on moonless or overcast nights to hunt above ground. Despite their monstrous appearance, gloombeasts are somewhat intelligent and can speak, but rarely have much to say to anything other than their own kind.

Unusually for the predators of the lightless realm, gloombeasts are more feared by their subterranean neighbors than by surface folk. A gloombeast is invisible when viewed with darkvision, making them superb ambush hunters. Some Darklands humanoids, such as troglodytes or morlocks, see gloombeasts as a sign of divine punishment and make sacrifices to the creatures in order to appease them. Drow and duergar both typically post immense bounties for a slain gloombeast. The only subterranean people who do not view the gloombeasts with horror and hatred are the dark folk, which can see them normally. Some gloombeasts even live within powerful dark folk communities, serving as the front line of defense against an incursion by other races.

The origins of gloombeasts are a mystery, and by all accounts appears to be a recent phenomenon. Their shapes and abilities of stealth have led some to suggest that they are an offshoot of shadow mastiffs. Other hypotheses include an origin as a fleshwarping experiment or a recent creation of the aboleth. Gloombeasts do not speak of their own origins, and it isn’t known if they themselves know where they come from.

A gloombeast grows to be eight feet long and stands five feet high at the shoulder.

Gloombeast CR 9

XP 6,400

NE Large aberration

Init +5; **Senses** Perception +18, see in darkness, scent

Defense

AC 22, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (-1 size, +5 Dex, +7 natural, +1 dodge)

hp 114 (12d8+60)

Fort +11, **Ref** +9, **Will** +11

Defensive Abilities invisible to darkvision, tentacle mane

Offense

Speed 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee bite +15 (1d8+7), 2 talons +15 (1d8+7/19-20 plus poison)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks pounce

Statistics

Str 24, **Dex** 20, **Con** 20, **Int** 9, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 32 (36 vs. trip)

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (talon), Power Attack, Stealthy

Skills Climb +22, Escape Artist +14, Perception +18, Stealth +20, Survival +10

Languages Undercommon

Ecology

Environment underground

Organization solitary or pair

Treasure incidental

Special Abilities

Invisible to Darkvision (Su) A gloombeast is always treated as invisible to creatures using darkvision. This invisibility is not broken by the gloombeast's attacks. A creature with the see in darkness ability can see a gloombeast normally.

Poison (Ex) Talon—injury; *save* Fort DC 21; *duration* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d4 Dex; *cure* 1 save. The save DC is Constitution based.

Tentacle Mane (Ex) Whenever a gloombeast is struck with a melee weapon, it may make a Combat Maneuver check to disarm its opponent without provoking an attack of opportunity. This is not an action, but it does use one of the gloombeast's attacks of opportunity for the round. A weapon so disarmed falls into a square adjacent to the gloombeast.