



“Yader’wald” © Kenzer and Co., by Brian and Brendon Frain.

[One of the last things I did for fun out in civilization, before COVID-19 shut down the entire state I live in, was go to Half Price Books, whereupon I found a copy of a Hackmaster monster book I had never heard of. *Hacklopedia: Rustlers of the Night* was one of the last Hackmaster 4e releases, and a compilation of monsters from modules and *Knights of the Dinner Table* back matter. Possibly because it’s a compilation, it has a high concentration of original, and interesting, monsters. I’ll be covering some.]

Yaderwald

CR 8 CE Monstrous Humanoid

This hairy biped has an upturned snout, large ears and horns, and a slavering maw filled with fangs. Its arms and legs both end in nimble hand-like claws.

Yaderwalds, or shadow crouchers, are ferocious creatures of somewhat bat-like aspect. They are subterranean carnivores and ambush predators of great skill, capable of hiding even from enhanced senses. Their favorite tactic is to sneak up on prey while shrouded in a *silence* spell to prevent an alarm from being raised. Since this magical silence impedes their own echolocation, they use this when picking off a single foe more often than when attacking an entire group at once.

For most of their lives, yaderwalds are solitary hunters, but they will come together to mate. Females call in a high pitched register to attract the attention of males, and several male shadow crouchers may spar with each other for some time before the female makes her selection. Males have larger horns than females, and these are used to tussle and display rather than to kill prey. Young are precocial and abandoned soon after being born—litters can be as large as twelve, but they are usually whittled down as the weaker are consumed by the stronger.

A yaderwald is an excellent tracker, and may range for miles in the Darklands in search of prey.

They only come above ground on overcast or moonless nights, and are usually quicker to break off attacks in such unfamiliar territory. Yaderwalds despise drow and attempt to kill and eat them above all other prey. Some sages speculate that this is because the drow created the yaderwalds in a fleshwarping experiment, or that there was an ancient war between their two peoples that led the yaderwalds to abandon permanent settlements.

Yaderwald CR 8

XP 4,800

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +10; **Senses** blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., Perception +16, scent

Defense

AC 22, touch 17, flat-footed 15 (+6 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural)

hp 94 (9d10+45)

Fort +9, **Ref** +13, **Will** +11

Immune fear; **Weakness** light blindness

Offense

Speed 60 ft., climb 40 ft.

Melee 2 claws +15 (1d6+6 plus grab), bite +15 (1d8+6)

Special Attacks pounce, rake (2 claws +15, 1d6+6)

Spell-like Abilities CL 9th, concentration +113/day—*silence* (DC 14)

Statistics

Str 22, **Dex** 22, **Con** 21, **Int** 15, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +15 (+19 grapple); **CMD** 32

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Stealthy, Step Up

Skills Acrobatics +15 (+27 when jumping), Climb +26, Perception +16, Stealth +18, Survival +16, Swim +18

Languages Elven, Undercommon

SQ subtle presence

Ecology

Environment underground

Organization solitary, lek (2-4) or pack (5-8)

Treasure standard

Special Abilities

Blindsight (Ex) A yaderwald's blindsight is based on its hearing. A deafened yaderwald, or one in the area of a *silence* spell, cannot use its blindsight.

Subtle Presence (Ex) A yaderwald can make Stealth checks to hide from creatures with blindsight, blindsense or tremorsense. Instead of automatically noticing the yaderwald in the range of their senses, these creatures must succeed a Perception check instead.