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[Thanks to Frank Herbert's *Dune*, you can't have a desert without worm monsters in it. *Sandstorm* has two, of which the dunewinder is the more interesting. Weirdly, the flavor text calls it out as being related to the remorhaz, even though it bears much more similarity among core D&D monsters to the frost worm (no legs, breath weapon, death throes). So I fixed it.]

Dunewinder

CR 10 N Magical Beast

This mighty creature looks something like an elephant-sized grub. Its body is covered in bristles and flaps, some of which seem to push it along and others seemingly more offensive in nature. Its maw is filled with multiple saw-like rows of teeth, each moving independently.

Dunewinders are desert relatives of frost worms. Like them, they are infused with elemental power, in this case, that of fire. They live as ambush predators of sandy wastes, and can survive a long time between meals. As such, when food is available they are ravenous, and often consume huge amounts of meat at a time. Their gullets are relatively small, so they cannot swallow prey whole. Instead, they grab it, pull it next to their barbed skin, and shred it into manageable chunks. The spines of a dunewinder ooze sticky green venom that causes blood to clot in place. When slain, the internal fires within the creature erupt, causing the dunewinder to explode in a shower of super-heated blood and venomous spines.

Dunewinders spend most of their lives beneath the ground, feeling vibrations in order to detect prey. If they need to travel quickly, they dig their way to the surface and move in a serpentine fashion like a sidewinder snake, resulting in characteristic tracks. They only come together in order to mate, which is done in a perfunctory fashion. Dunewinders are simultaneous hermaphrodites, and both partners typically impregnate the other. Eggs are laid in a leathery cocoon deep beneath the ground and abandoned. Dunewinders have few predators except each other, and cannibalism is a common source of mortality for dunewinder young.

Dunewinder CR 10

XP 9,600

N Huge magical beast (fire)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Perception +10, tremorsense 60 ft.

Defense

AC 24, touch 10, flat-footed 22 (-2 size, +2 Dex, +14 natural)

hp 126 (12d10+60)

Fort +13, **Ref** +10, **Will** +8

Immune fire, poison

Defensive Abilities barbed defense; **Weakness** vulnerable to cold

Offense

Speed 50 ft., burrow 20 ft.

Melee bite +18 (2d6+12 plus grab)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Abilities breath weapon (12d6 fire, 60 ft. line, Ref DC 21, 1/hour), constrict (2d6+12 bludgeoning and piercing plus poison), death throes

Statistics

Str 27, **Dex** 17, **Con** 21, **Int** 2, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +22 (+24 bull rush, +26 grapple); **CMD** 34 (36 vs. bull rush, cannot be tripped)

Feats Awesome Blow, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Vital Strike

Skills Perception +10, Stealth +4 (+12 in deserts); **Racial Modifiers** +8 Stealth in deserts

SQ dune winding

Ecology

Environment warm deserts

Organization solitary

Treasure incidental

Special Abilities

Barbed Defense (Ex) A creature striking a dunewinder with a natural weapon, unarmed strike, touch attack or melee weapon attack must succeed a DC 18 Reflex save or take 1d6+4 points of piercing damage and be exposed to the creature's poison. Melee weapons with the reach property do not endanger their wielder in this way. The save DC is Dexterity based.

Death Throes (Su) When a dunewinder is killed, it explodes, dealing 6d6 points of piercing damage and 6d6 points of fire damage to all creatures in a 60 foot radius (Reflex DC 21 halves). A creature that takes any damage from this is also exposed to the dunewinder's poison. The save DC is Constitution based.

Dune Winding (Ex) A dunewinder does not treat any form of sand as difficult terrain.

Poison (Ex) Barbed defense or constrict—injury; *save* Fort DC 21; *duration* 1/round for 4 rounds; *effect* 1d4 Con damage; *cure* 2 saves. The save DC is Constitution based.