



“Spiders” by unknown artist, © Wizards of the Coast. Accessed at the Monsters of Faerun Art Gallery [here](#)

[The sword spider isn’t high profile by D&D monster standards. The closest they ever got to a core book was the 2e *AD&D Monstrous Compendium* released towards the end of that edition’s lifespan, tucked away among all of the other spider statistics. But they appeared in the *Baldur’s Gate* video game (and were vicious there), making them iconic for a certain generation of gamers. The 3.0 version, in *Monsters of Faerun*, wasn’t very well designed, having 9 attacks at a +5 bonus and 32 hp as a CR 5. So it would either completely murder a single party member, or miss a whole bunch and then get ganked before it got off a second round of attacks. I hope this version is less swingy and more capable of putting some fear into your parties.

Incidentally, the 3.x D&D Art Galleries are back online! I thought they were lost, but apparently they actually were just down during site repairs. Awesome]

Spider, Sword **CR 7 N Vermin**

This dusty gray spider is the size of a lion. It has two large forward facing eyes and six smaller ones, four arrayed in a line below the large eyes and two on the corners of its head. Its legs appear razor-edged, the chitin hardened into sword-like blades.

Sword spiders are aggressive and powerful pursuit predators. Unusually for spiders, they use their legs to take down prey—their four forelegs have blade-like edges and are used to pierce and slash at prey. Their venom is relatively weak for their size, causing swelling, pain and fatigue. Sword spiders are good parents; the females carry their eggs on their backs, and when they hatch continue to transport them for several weeks, allowing them to feed on kills before she does. Treat the spiderlings as a spider swarm that can share a sword spider’s space without dealing damage to it.

Sword Spiders as Vermin Companions

Starting Statistics: Size Medium; **Speed** 40 ft. climb 40 ft. ; **AC** +3 natural armor; **Attack** 4 claws (1d6), bite (1d4 plus poison); **Ability Scores** Str 10, Dex 21, Con 13, Int —, Wis 12, Cha 8; **Special Attacks** Improved Critical (claw) as a bonus feat, poison (Con based DC)

7th-Level Advancement: Size Large; **AC** +3 natural armor; **Attack** 4 claws (1d8), bite (1d6 plus poison); **Ability Scores** Str +8, Dex –2, Con +4; **Special Attacks** Improved Critical (claw) as bonus feat, pounce, poison (Con based DC)

Sword Spider CR 7

XP 3,200

N Large vermin

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, Perception +1

Defense

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 75 (10d8+30)

Fort +10, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4

Defensive Abilities mindless

Offense

Speed 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee 4 claws +10 (1d8+4/19-20), bite +10 (1d6+4 plus poison)

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

Special Attacks pounce, rend (4 claws, 1d8+6)

Statistics

Str 18, **Dex** 17, **Con** 17, **Int** -, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 25 (37 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Critical (claw) (B)

Skills Acrobatics +11 (+15 when jumping), Climb +12, Perception +9, Stealth +7; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Acrobatics, +8 Perception, +8 Stealth

Ecology

Environment any forests and underground

Organization solitary, pair, cluster (3-6) or family (1 plus 1 spider swarm)

Treasure none

Special Abilities

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 17; *duration* 1/round for 4 rounds; *effect* 1d3 Str damage; *cure* 1 save. The save DC is Constitution based.