

WATER STALLIONS

Water horses are a shapeshifting fey that prefers to live near freshwater environments. They can use their supernatural charms and adhesive bodies to capture humanoids and drag them deep into the water, where they can drown and devour their victims. They use their shapeshifting abilities to assume the forms of beautiful horses. However, when they are submerged in water, their true form is revealed. Their shining manes transition to slimy reeds, and their once beautiful skin turns greenish and sallow.

One type of male water horse, known as a nykur, is particularly known for its brazen confidence and desire to be noticed by humanoids. It goes out of its way to display its beauty and strength, using its magical charms to leave onlookers awestruck. Though nykurs are usually predatory, often using their charms and cunning to hunt humanoids, they are typically not malicious by nature.

However, some nykurs undergo a dark transformation from a narcissistic predator into a sadistic serial killer known as a water stallion, or in some cases referred to as an each-usige. This transformation might result from the water horse betraying and consuming its former fey master or spending a long period in corrupted waters. A shift may also occur if a water stallion has been spurned and rejected to the point that hatred and resentment have warped its very being. Whatever the case, these water stallions possess power and malevolence beyond that of any other water horse.

Brutal Serial Killers. Whereas other water horses kill primarily for food, the water stallion takes sadistic pleasure in the art of murder.

They are never satisfied with their body count, and they will take any opportunity to increase it regardless of whether they need the food or not. This brutality makes it nearly impossible for other creatures to subdue water stallions and use them as servants or allies. As a result, even other water horses shun them. Water stallions will prey upon and tyrannize their former kind if given the opportunity.

Obsessive Stalkers. While water stallions possess an unquenchable desire for murder, they can still hide their true nature by using their fey charms and shapeshifting ability. Worse still, they can shapeshift into humanoids, allowing them to better pursue and deceive their victims. However, they still possess the egotistical needs of a nykur. They will typically assume the form of a handsome, charming young man. However, their malevolent nature transforms simple attention-seeking into twisted stalking and mind games. The water stallion will often fixate on a single individual he sees as the worthiest of his attention and will then relentlessly stalk and attempt to charm this creature. The more the individual rejects the water stallion, the more aggressively he pursues his target. The ultimate goal is to seduce his victim and lure them back to his watery lair, where they can be devoured. If his charms fail, the spurned and furious water stallion will resort to force and attempt to abduct his target.

Undying Evil. The malevolence of a water stallion is so great it can sometimes continue to sustain its life even after its body has been broken. A defeated water stallion's body unravels into a mass of slime and seaweed with a grizzly horse skull floating at its center. Putting a final end to a water stallion is very difficult without the aid of cold iron, and some adventurers craft holy symbols made of cold iron specifically to aid in the destruction of this monstrous fey.



A WATER STALLION'S LAIR

A water stallion will typically make its lair at the bottom of a lake or loch, surrounded by kelp or other aquatic plants. Here it keeps the remains of victims along with other macabre trophies. While in its lair, the stallion can cloud the waters and turn plants against its attackers, pulling and entangling them so it can better toy with its victims. A water stallion in its lair has a challenge rating of 13 (10,000 XP).

LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the water stallion can take one lair action to cause one of the following effects, even while incapacitated. It can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- The water stallion casts the *entangle* spell (Charisma is its spellcasting ability) at its lowest level requiring no components and with a spell save DC 17. The water stallion doesn't need to concentrate on the spell, which ends on initiative count 20 of the next round.
- A plant in the lair shoots out and grabs a creature within 30 feet of it. That creature must succeed on a DC 18 Strength saving throw or be pulled into the plant's space.
- The water stallion casts the *fog cloud* spell (Charisma is its spellcasting ability) at its lowest level requiring no components. The spell doesn't require concentration and ends on initiative count 20 of the next round.

MYTHIC ENCOUNTER

If you wish to make the encounter with the water stallion an even greater threat, you can turn it into a mythic encounter.

In this scenario, the water stallion uses its unravel trait to heal back all its hit points and will lose its charming presence as its form unravels into a mass of slime and seaweed. Its mythic actions are then added to its list of available legendary actions. A water stallion mythic encounter is equivalent to two creatures with its CR in the same encounter, as such award double the XP awarded for a non-mythic encounter.

If you plan to use this type of encounter, players should be provided clues that the water stallion's weakness to cold iron. They may have the opportunity to learn of this before the fight. For example, there may be a drowned body in its lair with a cold iron item on it. Alternatively, an NPC who was about to become the water stallion's latest victim might provide a source of cold iron to the players during the fight.

When the water stallion uses its unravel trait, you can use the following description.

The water stallion's body unravels into dark reeds, that don't fall to the ground but instead twist and weave in the air as though held by an unseen current. Amongst the mass of reeds, you see globs of slime that were the creature's bones and organs just a moment ago. But the horse's skull remains, suspended in the mass of slime and seaweed, emitting what sounds like a man's malevolent laughter mixed with a horse's angered neighing.



WATER STALLIONS IN ADVENTURES

The following table provides you with some ways you can incorporate a water stallion into your adventures.

WATER STALLION ADVENTURES

d6

Plot Hook

A water stallion, who has taken on the persona of the local hunter and has become the town's darling, has

- 1 taken a particular interest in one of the player's characters. He insists he must marry this player character.

A fey who watched over a loch has been betrayed and devoured by its former nykur steed. The steed, now a

- 2 water stallion, rules over the loch and has corrupted the waters and local wildlife with its malevolent presence.

A farmer asks the players to aid him in trapping and

- 3 slaying a water stallion that seduced and murdered his daughter.

The players arrive at a lakeside inn they've been to

- 4 before, only to find all the residents missing. The only clue is a set of human tracks that turn into horse tracks just before reaching the edge of the lake's waters.

Townsfolk are gossiping about a traveling salesman

- 5 who has been seducing and fleeing town with the local young women. Once they leave town, they are never heard from again.

One or more water horses are being hunted by a water

- 6 stallion, and they seek out the players' help.

ART CREDIT

- Kelpie - Lisa Steinberg
- Kelpie Sketch - Alexandrevla

WATER STALLION

Large fey, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 136 (16d10 + 32)

Speed 60 ft. (30 ft. in humanoid form) swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	22 (+6)

Saving Throws Wis +8, Cha +10, Int +6, Dex +7

Skills Perception +8, Deception +10, Performance +10

Senses darkvision 90 Ft. passive Perception 18

Languages Aquan, Common, Elvish, Sylvan

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +4

Unravel (Mythic Trait; Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).

If the stallion is reduced to 0 hit points, it doesn't die or fall unconscious. Instead, it regains 136 hit points, and its body loses integrity, becoming jelly-like as masses of writhing seaweed spring out of it. Additionally, the range of all its attacks extend to 20 ft., it loses the use of its Change Shape and Charming Presence features, and the charmed condition on all creatures that it has charmed ends immediately.

While in this state, the stallion has resistance to all damage not inflicted by cold iron weapons. If a holy symbol made of cold iron has adhered to its body, it loses this resistance. The stallion can use one of its attacks to remove this symbol from its body unless it is held there by supernatural means other than its Adhesive ability.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day) If the stallion fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Amphibious. The stallion can breathe air and water.

Adhesive. Anything touching the stallion adheres to it. A Large or smaller creature adhered to the stallion is also grappled by it (escape DC 17). Ability checks made to escape this grapple have disadvantage.

Charming Presence. When a creature starts its turn within 200ft. of the stallion, and they both can see each other, the stallion can force it to make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the creature becomes charmed and drops whatever it's holding. A creature charmed this way is incapacitated and spends each turn moving towards the stallion by the most direct route available in an attempt to mount it. It doesn't avoid opportunity attacks, but the target can repeat the saving throw before moving into damaging terrains, such as lava or a pit.

A charmed target can also repeat the save at the end of each of its turns. It has disadvantage on the save if it can see the stallion; otherwise, it has advantage. If a target takes damage caused by the stallion, the charm ends. A target that breaks free of the charm is immune to this ability for the next 24 hours. A creature that isn't surprised can avert its eyes to avoid the saving throw at the start of its turn. If it does so, it can't see the stallion until the beginning of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again. If it looks at the stallion in the meantime, it must immediately make the save.

Actions

Multiattack The stallion makes two attacks; one with its hooves and one with its bite. In humanoid form, it makes two slam attacks.

Hooves. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 15 (3d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 15 (3d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 18 (3d8 + 5) piercing damage.

Suffocating Grasp. Each creature attached to the stallion and submerged in water must make a DC 17 Constitution. On a failed save, a creature takes 33 (6d10) necrotic damage and starts to suffocate if it can't breathe water. On a pass, it takes half as much damage and does not begin suffocating.

Change Shape. The stallion polymorphs into a large terrestrial beast, a medium male humanoid, or its true form. It has the same statistics in each form. Equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies or is submerged in water.

Legendary Actions

The stallion can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The stallion regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Bite. The stallion makes a bite attack.

Change Shape. The stallion uses change shape.

Sea Weed Hair. The stallion lashes out with seaweed, forcing each creature of its choice that it can see within 20 feet of it to make a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be pulled within 5 feet of it and adhered to it.

Check (Costs 2 Actions). The stallion makes a skill check that would normally require an action.

Move (Costs 2 Actions). The stallion moves up to half its speed without provoking attacks of opportunity.

Reconstitute (Costs 3 Actions). If the stallion is suffering from one or more conditions that require it to make a saving throw to end, it may immediately make a save against each condition. A successful save for any of the throws will end the condition immediately. The only saving throws that this action can be used for are saves that are made at the end/start of its next turn or using its action. It can use this action while incapacitated.

Mythic Actions

After activating its mythic Unravel trait, the stallion can use the options below as legendary actions for 1 hour.

Suffocating Grasp (Costs 2 Actions). The stallion uses Suffocating Grasp.

Falling Reeds (Costs 3 Actions). Whip-like seaweed thrashes out around from the stallion. Each creature within 40 feet and not behind full cover must make a DC 17 Strength saving throw. On a failure, the creature is pulled within 5 feet of the stallion and adhered to it.