

BIRD OF PARADISE



One of the most highly recognized and greatly sought after magical creatures in all the world, a bird of paradise is an awe-inspiring sight at the best of time, and a literal godsend in the darkest. These creatures are innately sensitive to magic, requiring it to survive, and seemingly capable of seeking it out wherever it exists.

Plumes of Magic. Birds of Paradise are beautiful, elegant birds found across many worlds and in almost every environment, but are still exceedingly rare creatures at best. Birds of Paradise come in many different varieties, with several shapes and color variations, but all hold in common an immunity to all but the strongest of magic, and the ability to store weaker spells for their own use. No bird of paradise has ever been seen to eat organic material. Instead, the birds seem to fly with little direction, seeking out even the most minuet sources of magic. Once a bird of paradise has found such a spot, they dust the object with their feathers, apparently absorbing the magical energy, and by doing so, sustaining themselves as well. Because birds of paradise are known to absorb magic through their feathers, poachers often pay highly for their plumage, mistakenly believing them to be filled with residual magical power. In truth, the feathers are merely beautiful trinkets. While some magic can often be detected from the feathers, normally matching the same school of magic as their last meal, the feathers themselves hold no power. Any bird of paradise which has its plumage removed loses the ability to absorb magic, rendering it both susceptible to magical harm, and unable to sustain itself properly. It is speculated that birds of paradise are capable of eating when pushed, but most birds who lose their feathers simply waste away, having essentially starved to death.

Unknown Origins. The origin of these birds is unclear, as is that of their vague and sometimes misleading name. Some speculate that the birds are a natural byproduct of magical environs, a mutation of normal avians which resulted in a species adapted to thrive in areas with high concentrations of magic. While this theory helps to rationalize the great variety of their appearance and habits, it does little to explain the paradox of their wide range but limited population. Another theory posits the idea that the birds, like some famous magical creatures, were created by mages seeking to develop a living magical battery. As to why the birds are found in so many places, and why the secret of their creation is then entirely unknown, is another problem. Some mages believe the birds may actually be native to the same plane as the mysterious Rakshasas, with whom they share a limited immunity to certain spells, speculating that wherever this plane is, it must be rife with magic for the birds to live on.

Familiar Popularity. Because of the birds' ability to both absorb and release minor spells, many wizards would gladly pay enormous sums for a bird of paradise to train as a familiar, particularly spellcasters adept in combat. While the birds themselves are rather frail, the chance for the bird to deflect a dangerous spell is incredibly valuable, extending a war wizard's lifespan by the few precious seconds needed to make a difference. However, even more scholarly spellcasters are fond of the birds, both for their use in storing spells for magical experimentation, and for the birds' quality as a companion. Being very gentle and kind creatures, one treated well will gladly stay nearby to a spellcaster capable of caring for them. Unfortunately, a bird of paradise is often notoriously difficult to care for, requiring special attention and care, lest they cease to feed on the magic given to them and begin to waste away without the spellcaster's notice.

BIRD OF PARADISE

Small beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 12 (5d6 - 5)

Speed 10 ft., fly 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Charisma +4

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages —

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Limited Magical Immunity. The bird of paradise can't be affected or detected by spells of 6th level or lower unless it wishes to be. It has advantage on saving throws against all other spells and magical effects.

Mana Storage. When targeted by a spell of 1st level, the bird of paradise is able to absorb the spell, storing it for later use. If the bird of paradise is targeted by another spell of 1st level, it may choose to either keep the previous spell or absorb the new one. If it chooses to absorb the new spell, the previous spell is lost with no effect. The bird of paradise loses any stored spells after it finishes a long rest.

Actions

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit* 2 (1d4) piercing damage.

Cast Spell. The bird of paradise casts a single spell which it has stored. The bird of paradise uses Charisma as its spellcasting ability, or the original attack roll or saving throw of the spell, whichever is higher.