

Terror from Above. The deep crow's most fearsome attack is the bite of its mandibles, which can seize and hold almost any creature. Their preferred attack is a snatch-and-grab that sees a deep crow flying off with a living victim before its companions have any chance of counterattack. Provided the doomed prey doesn't struggle, the deep crow takes it back to its lair to be devoured at leisure. Creatures that do struggle might be repeatedly dropped from a height to soften them up a bit.

Family Ties. Deep crows live alone for an unknown length of years, emerging from the lair only to hunt, to look for potential threats, and to mate. Mating is a once-in-a-lifetime urge that sees each deep crow involved in the pairing produce a cluster of four to eight eggs. Incubation lasts a year, followed by a year during which the fledgling deep crows stay close by their parent's side. The young then set out to establish lairs of their own.

Unknown and Inscrutable. The mindset of these intelligent yet alien creatures is a mystery, but some who have encountered them relate that they are quick to hold a grudge. For years. Of even greater importance, they can teach their chicks to harbor the same resentments, instilling a cross-generational hatred of chosen foes that can last for centuries.

ANCIENT DEEP CROW

So little is known of the deep crows that even less is known of their monstrous leviathan cousins, the ancient deep crows. Whether these gargantuan specimens are elder deep crows grown to great size or some higher form that holds lesser deep crows in thrall remains to be determined. Ideally by someone else. Seriously, stay away from these things.

A DEEP CROW'S LAIR

Deep crows and ancient deep crows roost in places both deep and warm, favoring sites with access to exposed lava. The spires of volcanic rock the creatures prize as roosts are common in such places, whose ambient warmth provides constant temperature regulation for the creature's eggs.

REGIONAL EFFECTS

The region containing an ancient deep crow's lair is transformed by the creature's presence, which creates one or more of the following effects:

- Supernatural shadow turns all bright light to dim light in underground regions within 6 miles of the lair.
- Intermittent, echoing caws can be heard coming from all directions within 6 miles of the lair.
- Subterranean beasts within 1 mile of the ancient deep crow's lair serve as the creature's eyes and ears, alerting it to the presence of intruders and making it all but impossible to surprise the ancient deep crow.

If the ancient deep crow dies, these effects fade immediately.

ANCIENT DEEP CROW

Huge monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 187 (15d12 + 90)

Speed 20 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	16 (+3)	23 (+6)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Con +11, Wis +7

Skills Perception +7, Stealth +13

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages Deep Crow

Challenge 15 (13,000 XP)

Magic Resistance. The ancient deep crow has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Shadow Stealth. While in dim light or darkness, the ancient deep crow can take the Hide action as a bonus action.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The ancient deep crow makes three attacks: one with its mandibles and two with its claws.

Mandibles. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d10 + 6) piercing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 19). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the ancient deep crow can't use its mandibles on another target.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage.

Shadow Caw. The ancient deep crow releases an ear-splitting caw. Each creature within 60 feet of the crow and able to hear it must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, a creature takes 10 (3d6) psychic damage.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The ancient deep crow 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 ancient deep crow regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Detect. The deep crow makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

Shadow Caw (Costs 2 Actions). The ancient deep crow uses Shadow Caw.

Wing Attack (Costs 2 Actions). The ancient deep crow beats its wings. Each creature within 10 feet of the deep crow must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or take 13 (2d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. The ancient deep crow can then fly up to half its flying speed.