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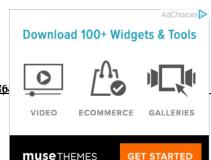
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The griffin, griffon, or gryphon (Greek: γρύφων, grýphōn, or γρύπων, grýpōn, early form γρύψ, grýps; Latin: gryphus) is a legendary creature with the body, tail, and back legs of a lion; the head and wings of an eagle; and an eagle's talons as its front feet. As the lion was traditionally considered the king of the beasts and the eagle was the king of the birds, the griffin was thought to be an especially powerful and majestic creature.



The griffin was also thought of as king of the creatures. Griffins are known for guarding treasure and priceless possessions. Adrienne Mayor, a classical folklorist, proposes that the griffin was an ancient misconception derived from the fossilized remains of the Protoceratops found in gold mines in the Altai mountains of Scythia, in present day southeastern Kazakhstan, or in Mongolia. In antiquity it was a symbol of divine power and a guardian of the divine. Some have suggested that the word griffin is cognate with Cherub.

Category: Animal Symbolism (/category/13).