

# THE ABOMINATION AWAKENS

*AN ADVENTURE FOR 4TH TO 6TH LEVEL CHARACTERS*



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# THE ABOMINATION AWAKENS

## AN ADVENTURE FOR 4TH TO 6TH LEVEL CHARACTERS



THE ABOMINATION AWAKENS IS A FIFTH Edition adventure for **three to six characters of 4th to 6th level**, optimized for a party of **four 5th level characters**.

The party heads to a well-known smuggler's hideout on a coastal island only to find it empty. A brief investigation will reveal that the smugglers have been slaughtered by a crabfolk abomination which has awoken from its slumber to reclaim its home. What horrors will the party find at the hideout, and what treasures will they decide to take for themselves? This adventure is set off the coast of Rhemora in the Siothas campaign setting, but can be placed in any coastal setting with ease.

## BACKGROUND

The group of professional smugglers known as the Jade Sharks has used the island Gorm's Skerry for years now as a base of operations and inventory storage. Gorm's Skerry is small and technically in international waters, which allows the Jade Sharks to keep valuable goods there to "cool down" so that they can illegally be brought into port under the noses of the authorities. Its proximity to the city-state of Dryessa and the caves beneath the skerry provide ample storage space, allowing them to transport goods quickly and efficiently. The caves, however, hold a festering, violent secret that has just been revealed. Long before the arrival of the Jade Sharks, Gorm's Skerry has been the home of a solitary **crabfolk abomination** (see page 8) known in legends as Yolurai. Yolurai is said to be as old as the island itself, having lived through the rise and fall of many civilizations in the waters surrounding the skerry. Yolurai spends much of his time in hibernation, but every 500 years, the towering, bipedal crab creature awakens from his slumber to feed on the unsuspecting creatures above. It is not the rocks surrounding the island that have wreathed it with old shipwrecks — those are the doing of the ancient abomination that can slice through the hull of a ship with a single strike of its menacing claws. The Jade Sharks recently met their end at the claws of Yolurai. Though some tried to flee in their boats, they were pursued by the abomination and torn to shreds in the water. Their hideout is now home to their zombified corpses. Yolurai is thought by many to be just an old sailor's legend, but the adventurers will soon find that the creature is all too real, just as the Jade Sharks did.

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

There are numerous reasons the adventurers may be drawn to Gorm's Skerry. A few of these reasons are outlined below.

**An Important Retrieval.** The characters have reason to believe that the Jade Sharks are in possession of an item that they need and have hidden it at Gorm's Skerry. This may be an item that belongs to the party that the smugglers may have

stolen, or a local merchant or noble may have hired the characters to recover an item that they expected to receive much earlier.

**Runaway Son.** A concerned mother has learned that her teenage son has run off from home to join the Jade Shark smugglers. She thinks that he can be reasoned with and pleads with the characters to travel to their hideout and convince her son to return home.

**Rival Criminals.** A rival criminal organization has offered the characters 300 gp if they can kill the leader of the Jade Sharks, a man known as "Albatross," and bring back his head as proof of the deed. The rival gang doesn't care how many other Jade Sharks the party has to kill in the process.

## ON THE OPEN WATER

The adventure assumes that the characters can secure passage to Gorm's Skerry from the port of Dryessa. Gorm's Skerry is only a few miles north of the mainland; the party could likely sail there using a rowboat if they had no access to a sailing ship or similar vessel. The party may try to gather a crew to help them investigate the skerry — while it might be easy enough to pay for passage, it will be near impossible to find a crew willing to directly confront the Jade Sharks for fear of retribution. Therefore, the party will be likely to explore the island on their own.

After about an hour at sea, the rocky, sparsely-vegetated outcropping that is Gorm's Skerry appears on the horizon. Moments later, the party spots an empty sailboat drifting with the current. When the party comes close enough to the boat to see it clearly, read aloud the following:

A small, battered and weather-beaten sailboat drifts with the waves, a single oar lodged in its starboard rowlock and its sail wet and tangled around its mast. Part of its hull has been smashed apart, and a half-foot of water has flooded its bottom. A dismembered arm is tangled in a fishing net that hangs over the port side.

The boat belonged to a pair of Jade Shark members who attempted to flee the skerry after they realized that the gang was no match for the abomination that had begun to slaughter them. They were quickly pursued by the monster and were both dragged from the boat and killed in the water just a few hundred feet away from the shore of the island. Though the boat has taken on some water, it is not yet in danger of sinking any time soon. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check of the dismembered arm suggests that it was torn away from the shoulder, as if with a set of sharp teeth or serrated blade. Time of death is difficult to determine but likely within the past few days.

**Treasure: Coin Cache.** Lodged under the thwart of the boat is a small wooden box containing 57 gp and an onyx gemstone worth 25 gp. Characters outside the boat notice the box with a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check.

## SKERRY'S SHORES

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When the characters approach the shores of the Skerry, read aloud the following:

A small network of sagging docks reach outwards from the skerry, and a half-dozen wooden cabins are nestled closely together on the beach. Flotsam and jetsam carried by the rhythmic waves lap against the rocks. A ramshackle hut rests atop a tiny islet a few dozen feet from the shore.

**Corpse Ashore.** Characters with a passive Perception of 10 or higher notice a corpse missing its right arm lying on the beach approximately 100 feet east from the cabins. This was once the Jade Shark member who was dragged from the boat the party encountered previously; the tide has washed him ashore. A character who investigates the corpse easily notices that its injury is consistent with the arm aboard the boat. It looks to have been a human male in his mid-thirties dressed in linen pants and shirt. Its chest has been torn open, and several ribs and its heart are missing.

## SKERRY CABINS

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Each of the cabins was constructed by the Jade Sharks, who operate a side business of fishing and smoking out of the skerry. Unless otherwise stated, their features are described as follows:

**Ceilings, Walls, and Floors.** The cabins are constructed from cedar logs and beams with thatch roofs. Ceilings are 7 feet high and walls are 1 foot thick.

**Doors.** Doors are made from cedar planks and swing outwards on their hinges. Locked doors can be opened with a successful DC 13 Dexterity check using thieves' tools or a DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check.

**Light.** The cabins are unlit.

The following locations are keyed to the map of Gorm's Skerry:

## SI. STOREHOUSE

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The front and back doors to this building are locked. When the characters enter, read aloud the following:

This storehouse is well-stocked. Wooden shelves hold rations, mundane supplies, and construction tools. Piles of timber are stacked neatly against the north wall. A pile of crates is organized in the southwest corner of the room.

This single-room storehouse holds nothing of particular value. The crates in the corner of the room hold fishing

gear such as nets, fish, and supplies necessary for boat maintenance.

## S2. OUTHOUSES

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These two wooden stalls contain holed benches that drop directly into the water below. An interior wall in the left stall is carved with the words "Tom was here."

## S3. DAMAGED CABIN

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The door to this cabin has been smashed in and lies on the ground. A section of the doorframe has been torn away to create a gaping hole in the west wall of the structure.

A table and chairs have been toppled over near the east wall. A cooking stove, bed, and some shelving fill the rest of the room. A corpse with its chest cavity ripped open lies on the ground in a pool of dried blood.

The cabin contains little other than mundane cooking supplies and spare clothing.

**Corpse.** The corpse belongs to a Jade Shark member that attempted to hide from the crabfolk abomination as it pursued the fleeing smugglers from the caves below the shore. Like the body on the beach, this corpse is also missing its heart.

## S4. ACCOUNTANTS CABIN

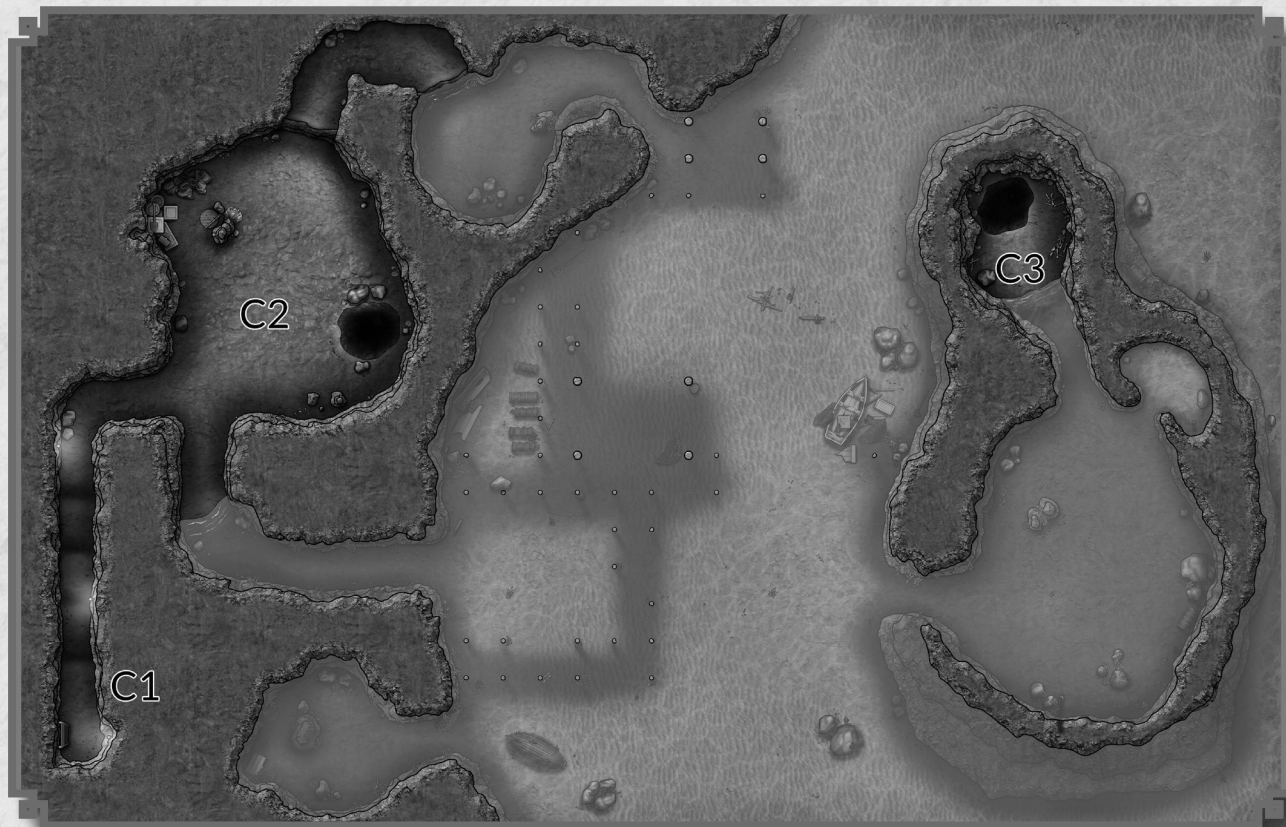
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A partition wall divides this cabin into two rooms. A pair of tables, chairs, a cooking stove, wardrobe, and two beds fill the interior. The tables are covered with notebooks, loose documents, and writing materials.

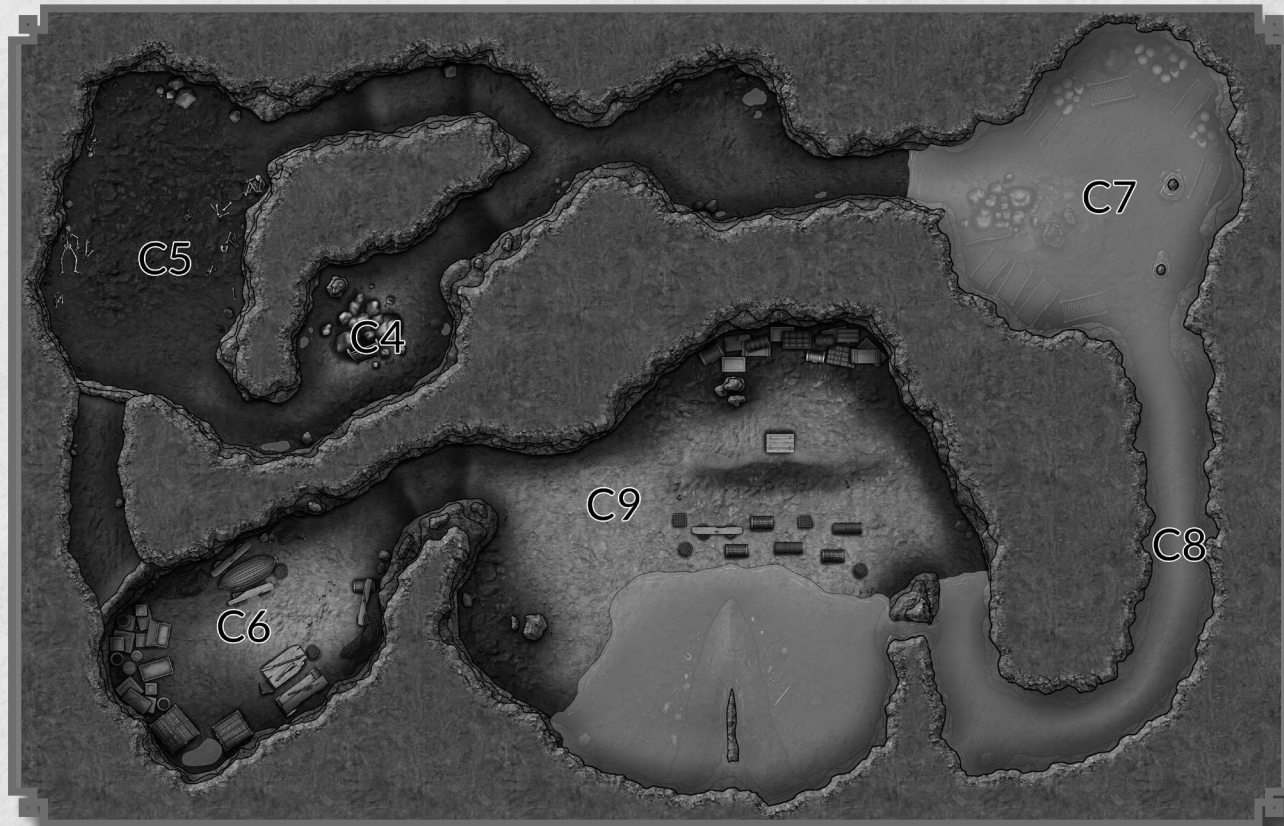
## SKERRY'S SHORES



## SKERRY SEABED



## SKERRY CAVERNS



This cabin is where the Jade Shark accountants did most of their work. A character who investigates the documents on the tables finds that they are inventory and shipping records for the gang. A character who makes a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check realizes that the amount of inventory being recorded on the skerry should easily exceed what could reasonably be kept within the cabins, and therefore another storage location must exist.

**Treasure: Strongbox.** Tucked under one of the desks is an iron strongbox. The box is locked, requiring a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools, a DC 22 Strength (Athletics) check, or the key found on one of the bodies in area C5 to open. Inside the strongbox is 157 gp.

**Accountant's Journal.** Among the more mathematic documentation on the tables in this cabin is a leather-bound journal fitted with a bronze clasp. A character who takes a few minutes to read through the journal finds it to be a near-daily diary of an accountant working for the smugglers. The journal includes the following relevant information that may help the party determine what happened at the Skerry:

- The smugglers had begun to hear an infrequent, low rumbling that sounded like it was coming from "below". Most dismissed it as harmless volcanic activity.
- Some of the men began to spread rumors and joke about a monstrous creature that lurked below the island.

The author of the diary felt increasingly nervous and uncomfortable as the occasional rumbling increased in frequency.

- The last entry describes that the captain has ordered a meeting in the usual spot. The author of the diary wonders what it could be about.

### S5. SMOKEHOUSE

Wooden racks laden with fish are suspended over stone hearths in the north wall of this cabin. Buckets of stinking fish as well as shelves of fishing gear fill the south end of the room. A bare wooden table is flanked by two chairs.

The Jade Sharks use this cabin for smoking fish and other small game. It has little of value inside.

### S6. CAPTAIN'S CABIN

The organized interior of this cabin suggests a homeliness that is betrayed by the body that lies facedown in the middle of the room between the table, hearth, and cooking area. The corpse wears a shirt of fine silk, and a tricorne hat lies on the ground a few feet away from its head. A thick streak of blood leads from the corpse, past a partition wall and beyond the bed, and through a doorway into a smaller storage area.

**Encounter: The Corpse of Albatross.** The corpse in this cabin is what remains of the leader of the Jade Sharks, Albatross. The inside of the tricorne hat is embroidered with the word "Albatross." When the smugglers' meeting was interrupted in the caves below by the abomination, Cletus was mortally wounded by the creature in the opening seconds of the attack. Albatross attempted to flee back up to shore through the entrance in this cabin but succumbed to his wounds shortly after he ascended the ladder. He is now a **ghast** who springs to life and attacks the first creature to come within 5 feet, fighting until he is destroyed.

**Treasure: Albatross.** Tucked into one of the captain's pockets is a *stone of good luck*. It was not enough to save his life.

**Open Trapdoor.** Inside of the cabin's smaller storage room is an open trapdoor. A ladder descends six feet into an unlit cavern below (C1).

## S7. DOCKMASTER'S HUT

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A simple desk and a bulletin board occupy this small cabin. On top of the desk is a leather-bound book.

The Jade Shark dockmaster worked out of this cabin, keeping track of their small fleet of ships and coordinating passage for the gang when necessary. The book on the desk contains the details of this work.

## S8. DESTROYED CABIN

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This cabin has been torn apart and remains barely standing. Scraps of wood litter the ground and its interior has been torn to shreds. Blood spatters the area.

A Jade Shark member who attempted to hide in this cabin was slaughtered by the abomination and tossed into the water after his heart was removed.

**Islet Pool.** The pool of water on this islet extends downwards to the caves below the shoreline (C3). The abomination pursued the Jade Sharks using this access point.

## SKERRY CAVERNS

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The natural caverns below the skerry provided the Jade Sharks with the perfect place to store their smuggled goods. Unbeknownst to them, the caverns were also the home of the hibernating crabfolk abomination. Some portions of the caverns are dry, while others are completely flooded with water. Though wall-mounted sconces in parts of the cavern hold torches, the torches are not currently lit.

**Drowned Smugglers.** The zombified remains of the Jade Sharks lurk in the caverns. They use **ghast** statistics, though their swim speed is 30 feet. Their chest cavities have been torn open and their hearts have been removed.

The following locations are keyed to the map of the Skerry Caverns:

## C1. ENTRANCE TUNNEL

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A ladder at the southern end of this tunnel ascends to the captain's cabin above. The tunnel itself is five feet wide, and travels for approximately 45 feet before opening into a larger cavern beyond.

## C2. EXCAVATION SITE

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Crates, barrels, and digging supplies are stacked against the walls of this natural cavern. Tools lie scattered near the west portion of the wall, and rubble suggests that the cavern is in the process of being expanded. A ladder descends down a hole near the east wall. A passageway extends to the north.

**Ladder.** The ladder in this cavern descends into the second level of the caverns (area C4).

## C3. NATURAL TUNNEL

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A subsurface cavern under the shoreline connects to a natural tunnel that leads to the second level of the caverns (area C7). The crabfolk abomination used this tunnel to exit the caverns and pursue the members of the Jade Sharks to the shore. The tunnel's walls are rough but slippery, descending 10 feet into the waters below. A successful DC 14 Strength (Athletics) is required to climb down the tunnel and drop into the water below, the level of which is 1 foot lower than the exit of the tunnel in the cavern ceiling. Hitting the water from a higher distance creates a splash loud enough to alert the **crabfolk abomination** (see page 8) in area C9.

## C4. LOWER LEVEL ACCESS

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A ladder in the middle of this chamber provides access to the upper levels of the cave system. Passageways extend to the east and west.

## C5. PRISONER'S CAVERN

Decayed and skeletal corpses are chained to the north wall of this chamber. Small fish bones are scattered about. Two more freshly slain corpses with open chest cavities lie on the ground in pools of dried blood.

Those who wronged the Jade Sharks were kept as prisoners in this room who eventually starved to death after the gang stopped feeding them discarded fish parts.

**Encounter: Drowned Smugglers.** The two corpses in this room are **drowned smugglers** that spring to life when a creature enters the chamber. The smugglers fight until they are destroyed.

**Treasure: Strongbox Key.** One of the corpses holds a key to the strongbox in area S1.

## C6. MAIN STORAGE

A rope ladder descends down the north ledge of this chamber to connect it to the raised passageway to the north. Blood-spattered crates, barrels, sacks, and pallets fill the chamber. The ceiling is also spattered with blood.

Here, the Jade Sharks store their contraband and other important items before they can be smuggled into port. Multiple smugglers attempted to flee through this room from the meeting area but were quickly caught and slaughtered by the abomination.

**Treasure: Smuggled Goods.** The majority of the containers in this chamber hold contraband items that are valuable, but only to certain buyers in hard-to-transport quantities, such as spices, mundane but illegal weaponry, certain fabrics, alcohol, and tobacco. However, there are a few smaller items of value that the characters will find if they take time to search through the containers, including:

- A jade statue of a shark worth 50 gp.
- Two *potions of greater healing*.
- Two *potions of water breathing*.

## C7. CRAB TRAPS

Scattered around the floor of this flooded chamber are wooden crab traps, half of which contain crabs. Several bloated and decaying bodies float in the water against the chamber's ceiling. Passageways extend to the west and south.

There are eight bodies total in this chamber, though none of them are zombified. The smugglers used this chamber for crab fishing, as numerous small connecting tunnels to the beach beyond make the crabs abundant.

## C8. FLOODED PASSAGEWAY

This 5-foot-wide passageway is completely flooded.

**Hazard: Stingweed.** A tendrilled, poisonous plant known as "stingweed" grows on the walls of this chamber. The stingweed is dense and unavoidable, and creatures who attempt to swim through the chamber must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, taking 16 (4d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half that amount on a successful one. A creature who fails this save by 5 or more becomes paralyzed for one minute.

## C9. MEETING AREA

This large cavern is partially flooded with water at its southern end. A raised lip in the stone creates a natural stage in the middle of the room, atop which is a simple wooden podium. Crates, barrels, and wooden planks are arranged into improvised seating in front of the podium, though much of this seating is askew or knocked over. Bloodstains and spatter paint the floors, walls, and ceiling of the cavern. A flooded passageway leads to the south.

**Encounter: Crabfolk Abomination.** The **crabfolk abomination** (see page 8) that slaughtered the Jade Smugglers lurks in the southern pool of this chamber. Shortly after a creature enters the room, the abomination emerges from the water and attacks relentlessly, pursuing any fleeing creatures onto the shore of the beach if necessary. After one round of combat, two **drowned smugglers** crawl out of the same pool and join the fray, attacking until they are destroyed.

## AFTERMATH

If the characters successfully slay the crabfolk abomination and clear the skerry of any remaining drowned smugglers, the island may eventually be reoccupied by a similar group or pirate gang. If the characters wish to take all of the Jade Sharks' smuggled goods with them, they'll need to find appropriate buyers in port — any random merchant will be extremely hesitant to purchase the contraband. At GM discretion, the party may be able to search for information to locate a Jade Shark contact in port that will facilitate their sale of the smuggled goods. Conversely, if the characters flee the island and the abomination remains alive, it is only a matter of time before it begins to expand its territory and attack nearby ships. The surrounding waters may soon become too dangerous to traverse and ships must take alternate routes to avoid the monster. Bounties will be put on its head, and other adventuring groups will venture out into the waters in the hopes of slaying the beast.

# CRABFOLK ABOMINATION

*Huge beast, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 157 (15d12 + 60)

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)	7 (+2)

**Skills** Athletics +9, Perception +4

**Senses** blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 7 (2,900 XP)

**Amphibious.** The abomination can breathe air and water.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The abomination makes two claw attacks.

**Claw. Melee Weapon Attack:** +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. **Hit:** (3d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 14). The abomination has two claws, each of which can grapple only one target.

**Caustic Spit. Ranged Weapon Attack:** +9 to hit, reach 50/100 ft., one target. **Hit:** (7d6 + 6) acid damage.



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