

Aarakocra

Aarakocra, also called “Bird Folk,” are avian humanoids that live in mountainous regions. Tribal and insular, they have little tolerance for outsider interference, though they are normally rather inoffensive. Certain aarakocra, however, have taken to worshipping primordials of wind, storm, and sky, and the clannish nature means that the bird folk are not likely to intervene on others' behalf.

Tactics

Natural fliers, aarakocra prefer to attack from range, throwing javelins from high above the ground. Normally, this only subjects them to ranged attacks. They close for melee combat against particularly hated prey, using their final javelin to stab.

Hunters and rangers have a dive attack that they use to throw javelins with special strength and accuracy. Aarakocra rangers have special techniques for taking down prey and keeping them from fleeing, while sky shamans call upon the winds themselves to aid their allies and hinder their foes.

Aarakocra Lore

Nature DC 10: Aarakocra are avian humanoids that dwell in mountains. They are generally not overly aggressive or warlike, though some Primordial cults have been known to arise. They also regard domesticated animals as valid prey, and so are considered a pest (and frequently campaigns of elimination are enacted against them).

Nature DC 15: Aarakocra prefer ranged attacks delivered while flying. They are also exceptionally claustrophobic, and are terrified of any enclosed space (such as a building or a cave).

Nature DC 20: Some aarakocra have the ability to all upon a fairly weak elemental known as a Zephyr that can aid them in various ways, including in combat.

Aarakocra Commoner		Level 1 Minion
Medium Natural Humanoid		XP 25
Initiative +5		Senses Perception +6; keen sight
HP 1		
AC 15		Fort 14, Ref 16, Will 14
Speed 6, fly 6		
⚔ Javelin Stab (standard)		
+6 vs. AC; 1d6 damage		
🎯 Javelin Toss (standard)		
+8 vs. AC; 1d6 damage		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Primordial
Skills Perception +6, Athletics +6, Nature +6		
Str 11 (+0)	Dex 16 (+3)	Wis 13 (+1)
Con 13 (+1)	Int 10 (+0)	Cha 13 (+1)
Equipment Javelins (5)		



Aarakocra Hunter		Level 1 Artillery	
Medium Natural Humanoid		XP 100	
Initiative +3		Senses Perception +6; keen sight	
HP 25			
AC 13		Fort 14, Ref 16, Will 14	
Speed 6, fly 6			
⚔ Javelin Stab (standard; at-will)			
+8 vs. AC; 1d6 damage			
🎯 Javelin Toss (standard; at-will)			
+10 vs. AC; 1d6 damage			
🦅 Dive Throw (standard; at-will)			
Use only while flying. The aarakocra hunter charges. Two attacks, against one or two targets; +11 vs. AC; 1d6 damage each			
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Primordial	
Skills Perception +6, Athletics +6, Nature +6			
Str 11 (+0)		Dex 16 (+3)	
		Wis 13 (+1)	
Con 13 (+1)		Int 10 (+0)	
		Cha 13 (+1)	
Equipment Javelins (5)			

Aarakocra Sky Shaman		Level 2 Controller (Leader)	
Medium Natural Humanoid		XP 125	
Initiative +4		Senses Perception +7; keen sight	
HP 35			
AC 16		Fort 15, Ref 17, Will 15	
Speed 6, fly 6			
⚔ Javelin Stab (standard; at-will)			
+7 vs. AC; 1d6 damage			
🎯 Javelin Toss (standard; at-will)			
+9 vs. AC; 1d6 damage			
🌀 Helpful Winds (minor; encounter)			
Targets one ally. Target is shifted 3 squares, and can make a ranged basic attack with a +2 attack bonus.			
⬅ Tornadic Force (standard; encounter)			
Close blast 3. +6 vs. Reflex; 1d6+2 damage and targets are pushed 3 squares. Miss: Targets are pushed 1 square.			
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Primordial	
Skills Perception +7, Athletics +7, Nature +7			
Str 11 (+1)		Dex 16 (+4)	Wis 13 (+2)
Con 13 (+2)		Int 10 (+1)	Cha 13 (+2)
Equipment Javelins (5)			

Aarakocra Ranger		Level 1 Elite Skirmisher	
Medium Natural Humanoid		XP 200	
Initiative +3		Senses Perception +6; keen sight	
HP 46			
AC 13; 15 vs. opportunity attacks		Fort 15, Ref 16, Will 15	
Saving Throws +2			
Action Points 1			
Speed 6, fly 6			
⚔ Javelin Stab (standard; at-will)			
+8 vs. AC; 1d6 damage			
🎯 Javelin Toss (standard; at-will)			
+10 vs. AC; 1d6 damage			
🏹 Dive Throw (standard; at-will)			
Use only while flying. The aarakocra hunter charges. Two attacks; +11 vs. AC; 1d6 damage each			
Hunter's Quarry (standard; at-will)			
Once per round, the aarakocra ranger can designate the nearest creature as quarry. This designation lasts until the end of combat, or until a new quarry is designated. Once per round, the aarakocra ranger deals +1d6 damage on attacks against their quarry.			
🏹 Hobble (standard; encounter)			
+ 10 vs. AC; 2d6 damage and target is slowed and takes ongoing 5 damage (save ends both).			
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Primordial	
Skills Perception +6, Athletics +6, Nature +6			
Str 11 (+0)	Dex 16 (+3)	Wis 13 (+1)	
Con 13 (+1)	Int 10 (+0)	Cha 13 (+1)	
Equipment Javelins (5)			

Zephyr		Level 1 Skirmisher (Leader)	
Small Elemental Magical Beast (air)		XP 100	
Initiative +5		Senses Perception -2	
Steady Winds aura 2; each ally within the aura with a fly speed gains hover, and can use a healing surge once per encounter			
HP 30; Bloodied 15			
AC 16		Fort 12, Ref 14, Will 12	
Immune disease, poison			
Speed 8, fly 8 (hover)			
⚡ Grasping Winds (standard; at-will)			
+6 vs. Reflex; 1d10+3 damage and the zephyr slides the target 2 squares			
⚡ Gale Blast (move; recharge ⏏ ⏏)			
The zephyr shifts 5 squares and attacks each enemy it moves adjacent to (one attack per creature); +6 vs. Fortitude; the target is knocked prone			
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Primordial	
Skills Stealth +8			
Str 7 (-2)	Dex 17 (+3)	Wis 7 (-2)	
Con 14 (+2)	Int 4 (-3)	Cha 14 (+2)	

Aarakocra Characters

A race of sky-worshipping, tribal, avian folk, with a mastery of the wilds.

RACIAL TRAITS

Average Height: 5'6"-6'2"

Average Weight: 70 lbs – 100 lbs

Ability Scores: +2 Dexterity, +2 Wisdom or Charisma

Size: Medium

Speed: 6 squares, fly 6 squares

Vision Keen Sight

Languages: Common, Primordial

Skill Bonuses: +2 Perception, +2 Athletics

Aarakocra Weapon Training: +1 bonus on attacks with thrown weapons.

Keen Sight: A creature with keen sight can see even fine detail at range. Concealment is negated against a creature with keen sight, and total concealment acts only as concealment.

NOTE: Aarakocra characters have a fly speed. If one of the players selects this race, you should pay close attention to the obstacles and traps you choose – flying characters are not effectively impeded by pits, cliffs, bodies of water, or other land-bound obstacles. They also can escape from melee attacks rather effectively. Used ranged and area effects, and other flying creatures. Many DM's regard flight as too potent, especially at heroic tier. Aarakocra are thus optional: allow them if you want, but keep their flight in mind.

New Powers

PC's who qualify may pick up these powers while training with the aarakocra. They have a thing or two to teach martial and primal characters, even from a low level. Characters may pick up these feats by retraining, or by spending a feat to learn one, if they can meet the prerequisites.

Dive Throw	Martial Striker Attack 1
<i>You charge forward, using your momentum to launch attacks from both hands.</i>	
Prerequisites: Fly speed	
At-Will * Martial, Weapon	
Standard Action	Ranged Weapon
Targets: One or two creatures	
Attack: Dexterity vs. AC, two attacks	
Requirement You can only use this power at the end of a charge, in place of a basic melee attack.	
Hit: 1[W] per attack.	
Increase damage to 2[W] at 21st level.	

Helpful Winds	Primal Leader Utility 2
<i>A sudden gust pushes your ally out of harm's way, and speeds their attack on.</i>	
Prerequisites: trained in Nature	
Encounter * Primal	
Minor Action	Ranged 10
Target: One ally	
Effect: The target shifts three squares and makes a ranged basic attack with a bonus equal to your Wisdom modifier (if capable of making a ranged basic attack).	

Tornadic Force	Primal Controller Attack 1
<i>A blast of wind shoves your enemies around</i>	
Prerequisites: trained in Nature	
At-Will * Primal, Implement	
Standard Action	Close blast 3
Targets: All creatures within the blast	
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex	
Hit 1d6 + Wisdom modifier damage and the targets are pushed 3 squares.	
Miss: The targets are pushed 1 square	

Ritual: Summon Zephyr

Player characters can learn to summon zephyrs as well. Zephyrs serve for an entire task, and can join the PC's in combat, but it is considered a companion character. This is the ritual that aarakocra employ, usually aiding each other in the summoning.

Summon Zephyr

You call upon a wind elemental to aid you.

Level: 1

Component Cost: 1 healing surge

Category: Summoning

Market Price: 75 gp

Time: Short Rest

Key Skill: Nature

Duration: Until your next extended rest

You summon a zephyr companion who serves your party until your next extended rest. The zephyr can engage in combat, but it can also do other things.

Note: Like aarakocra, zephyr companions have flight. If you consider flight too potent for player characters to use, you should not allow this ritual.

Zephyr Companion

Level 1 Striker

Small Elemental Magical Beast (air)

XP —

Initiative +5

Senses Perception -2

Steady Winds aura 2; each ally within the aura with a fly speed gains hover, and can use a healing surge once per encounter

HP 26; **Bloodied** 13

AC 16

Fort 12, **Ref** 14, **Will** 12

Immune disease, poison

Speed 8, fly 8 (hover)

⬇ **Grasping Winds** (standard; at-will)

+6 vs. Reflex; 1d10+3 damage and the zephyr slides the target 2 squares

⬇ **Gale Blast** (move; encounter)

The zephyr shifts 5 squares and attacks each enemy it moves adjacent to (one attack per creature); +6 vs. Fortitude; the target is knocked prone

Alignment Unaligned

Languages Primordial

Skills Stealth +8

Str 7 (-2)

Dex 17 (+3)

Wis 7 (-2)

Con 14 (+2)

Int 4 (-3)

Cha 14 (+2)

Encounters & Adventures

Aarakocra are encountered in mountainous terrain, frequently with other avians, creatures of the air and storms, or, occasionally, other humanoid species.

Blood Hawk (MM2): Common allies and hunting companions of the aarakocra, these creatures are used as many might use hunting dogs. The aarakocra don't raise these creatures, but have a common goal in the hunt.

Dust Devil (MM2): These spinning dervishes sometimes accompany the aarakocra shamans. It is said that zephyrs, after about a decade, turn gradually into dust devils.

Goliath (MM2): The mighty goliath may befriend tribes of aarakocra, and the two work well together in their mountain homes. The aarakocra often use goliath tribes to secure the mountain paths to their nesting sites.

Dwarf (MM): Aarakocra and dwarves rarely get along very well, each regarding the lifestyle of the other as completely terrifying. Aarakocra may battle dwarves who try to mine in their territory. However, dwarves close to the Primal power source may sympathize more with the bird folk, and so ally with them against the miners.

Adventure Seed: The Hunting Wars

In this adventure, aarakocra have recently moved to mountains outside of a village of farmers, who have had their cows, goats, horses, and other herd animals attacked and killed. Pets have gone missing, and even a few children have been plucked up. The creatures are brand new to the townsfolk, and they've never seen the "bird-folk" before. As far as the town is concerned, this is as bad as goblins or orcs moving in next door. The PC's are initially hired by the village elder to eliminate the threat, just as they would eliminate a goblin warren. It's possible (and perfectly fair) to run this as a standard chain of combats, but it's also possible to negotiate with the aarakocra.

Hook 1: The horses of the PC's are picked off while they are camping, or delving into a dungeon. They discover the remains of

their animals, and the supplies they had, picked clean.

Hook 2: The PC's hear the sad story of a local family whose child was carried off by "vicious, vulture-creatures" as the parents watched, helpless to intervene.

Hook 3: The PC's are passing by a farm with grazing cattle, when they witness an aarakocra killing right in front of their eyes.

Encounter 1: The Attack (Level 1)

Summary: The PC's try to drive off a band of aarakocra hunters who are in the middle of a hunt.

Monsters: Aarakocra Hunter (2), Aarakocra Ranger, Blood Hawk

Location: An open field, with some exposed stones

Features

- There are 5 cattle. The more cattle the PC's save, the bigger their reward. The aarakocra try to kill and take 3.
- Cattle may stampede (+5 vs. Reflex; 2d10+3 damage), provide soft cover, or high ground.
- The aarakocra do not fight to death. Once the Hunters are slain or the Ranger is slain, the others flee.

Development: The PC's can follow the trail of blood from the slaughtered cattle (if any were killed) via a skill challenge.

Variations: If the aarakocra are meant to be pure villains, you may have them attack a family. If they do this and are not meant to be villains, it might be hard for PC's to sympathize with them, though this could also play up the "alien" nature of the creatures.

Encounter 2: The Camp (Level 2)

Summary: The PC's track the hunting birds to a settlement.

Monsters: Blood Hawk (2), Aarakocra Hunter (2), Aarakocra Sky Shaman, Aarakocra Commoner (4)

Location: A forested vale

Features

- The aarakocra use the branches above to rain down damage, and fly low across the battlefield. PC's can cause them to fall (and take falling damage) by breaking the branches with a standard action.
- Trees provide cover; bushes provide concealment.
- The aarakocra do not fight to death. Once the Sky Shaman and the Hunters are slain, the rest flee.

Development: PC's who can speak Primordial overhear the aarakocra's confusion at being attacked. They seem to think the PC's are stealing their "prey" (the cattle). PC's can negotiate with the aarakocra to leave here as a skill challenge, if they can speak the language. Otherwise, the fleeing aarakocra can lead characters to the main nesting area with a skill challenge similar to the last one, but slightly more difficult without the bleeding corpse of cattle to follow.

Encounter 3: The Nest (Level 3)

Summary: The PC's find the aarakocra nesting site, and are attacked en masse as invaders.

Monsters: Aarakocra Ranger (2), Aarakocra Sky Shaman, Aarakocra Commoners (9)

Location: A valley in between high, stony cliffs, where the nests sit.

Features

- The high ledges give those higher up cover from attacks from below.
- Fallen rocks can provide cover for land-bound characters.
- The aarakocra do not fight to death. Once the Sky Shaman, the Rangers, and half of the Commoners are slain, the rest flee, taking the noncombatant fledglings with them.

Development: Again, speaking Primordial can allow the PC's to identify the fact that they are seen as intruders to a nesting site here, allowing them to negotiate using a skill challenge. Success in the skill challenge identifies that the aarakocra were driven off of a nearby mountain, where dwarves have begun mining with explosive powders, decimating the aarakocra's normal nesting site.

If they don't speak primordial, the Sky Shaman does speak Common, but only responds if spoken to. Otherwise, it simply regards the PC's as monstrous raiders.