

5E

AB
ABYSSAL BREWS



THE
FISSURE CRAB

Massive, terrifying, fire spewing scuttlers making their home in aquatic, volcanic fissures.

FISSURE CRAB

Deep below the ocean's surface live all manner of beings from docile to demonic. The extreme living situations of the depths cause all manner of beings to call the ocean's their home, but few are as extreme as the fissure crab. Dwelling in the extreme heat of aquatic volcanic fissures, these beings are at home where others wouldn't dare to tread. With temperatures around these fissures rising to immense levels, few were sure how these massive creatures survived until more research was done on their origins.

Their ability to survive in such extreme conditions is thought to be due to two factors. First, and most obvious, their outer shells are extremely hard and thick. Piercing through this crustacean's outer shell is so difficult that many weapons simply bounce off as if striking against rock. Some observers have compared their shells to the hardness of volcanic rocks like andesite. It's an apt comparison as the few species that we have been able to examine have been extremely difficult to dissect without the use of extreme measures.

The second reason for their survival in such an extreme climate is the nature of their blood, or rather what is in place of their blood. Some have postulated that these creatures hail from an elemental plane rather than the material realm as the ichor in their circulatory system is superheated by a

complex chemical reaction in their body. This ichor seems to carry double duty as it transports nutrients and chemicals throughout their body, while also helping in their defense. Glands within their claws as well as near the joints of its legs seem to be able to excrete the ichor at will and the fissure crab uses this to subdue its prey with extreme thermal efficiency.

These massive behemoths prefer the deep waters of the oceans where large prey is plentiful to satiate their appetite. It's odd for them to make their way to inhabited shores, but environmental changes to their typical homes may see them venture further away from their preferred environments and into unwanted areas like populated shores. Some long distance ships have claimed to have seen them sunning themselves on particularly warm days on remote tropical islands.

Another reason for migration seems to be reproduction. While each individual fissure crab tends to be a loner, owing to their massive appetite choking out survivability for other fissure crabs, they do perform an odd migration pattern. Roughly every 50 years, hundreds of the creatures travel to a location of immense underwater volcanic activity where they stay for anywhere from 3-5 weeks insuring the future of their species. Young fissure crabs typically band together for survival until they are of a sufficient size to defend themselves, journeying off to find their own territories.

FISSURE CRAB

Gargantuan monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 190 (15d20+33)

Speed 40 ft., 60 ft. swim

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 21 (+5) | 18 (+4) | 21 (+5) | 5 (-3) | 12 (+1) | 8 (-1) |

Saving Throws STR +9, CON +9

Skills Perception +5

Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning

Senses blindsight 60 ft., Passive Perception 15

Languages understands Primordial but can't speak

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +4

Amphibious. The crab can breathe air and water.

Molten Radiance. A creature that touches the medium fissure crab or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The crab makes two Claw attacks.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8+5) bludgeoning damage plus 6 (1d12) fire damage. If the target is a Huge or smaller creature, it

has the grappled condition (escape DC 17). The crab has two claws, each of which can grapple one target. Grappled creatures take 9 (2d8) fire damage at the end of their turn.

Molten Stream (Recharge 5-6). The crab spews forth a molten stream of superheated ichor in a 150-foot line that is 10 feet wide. Each creature in that area must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save the creature takes 27 (5d10) fire damage and another 6 (1d8+2) fire damage at the end of their turn for the next 1 minute until they use an action to douse the flames, or if they become submerged in water.

Molten Shell (1/Day). The crab covers its exposed parts and shields itself from damage until the start of its next turn. While covered, it gains resistance to all damage types except force damage and its speed becomes 0. At the start of its next turn, it emerges from its shell in a massive burst of heat. Creatures within a 30-foot radius sphere of the crab must attempt a DC 17 Constitution saving throw, taking 27 (6d8) fire damage on a failed save and half as much on a successful one.

Reactions

Scuttle. When the crab takes damage from any source, it can use its reaction to quickly scuttle away moving up to half of its movement speed without triggering attacks of opportunity.

While it isn't common, reports of attacks on merchant and fishing vessels have been reported. It's thought that the creatures have confused boats to be a type of large prey and strike out without understanding what they're attacking. Another hypothesis is that these boats have journeyed too close to their spawning grounds where the creatures become immensely aggressive.

Combat with one of these immense creatures can be a nightmare as they are much faster than they appear. On land they can outpace most humanoids and in the sea, they are even faster, utilizing all of their legs to propel themselves through the ocean with ease. Their massive and powerful claws lash out with unbridled speed and their deadly spit coats areas in sticky, superheated ichor. If you do manage to get close, they have defensive measures to push others away and gain their own advantageous ground again. If you intend on facing one, you should come prepared with fire resistant gear and some devastating firepower of your own to try to get through their armor-like shells.

TACTICS

Fissure crabs are deadly in combat and tend to be much faster than people give them credit for. Use their mobility to dance around the battlefield spreading damage amongst the party and sending some of the softer characters fleeing for their lives. They are immensely tanky and can really take a beating. If you pit them against the party alone, don't hold back on damage as the party can often tear through them with proper spell usage.

- Molten Radiance is a great reason for your party to want to stock up on fire resistance potions and other equipment before getting in a fight. This will cause melee characters to think twice.
- Their claw attacks are particularly deadly as they can grapple a target quite easily. Breaking free from these grapples is no small matter and they deal fire damage each turn. Lock two people down with these often.
- Scuttle is a great defensive measure and will surprise the party as it's more mobility than one would expect from a massive creature like this. Also, they can use it once per turn.
- Molten Stream is on a recharge so use it early! Hopefully you'll have enough time to get a few off before the beast falls.
- Notice their resistance to acid, fire, and lightning.
- Molten Shell is a defensive measure and should be used when the crab gets to low health to provide a surprise.

SUGGESTED PAIRINGS

Fissure crabs are solitary creatures, but that doesn't mean you should use them alone!

- You could sprinkle in some giant crabs as fodder around this one. Perhaps they cling to the fissure crab, using it for transportation and warmth.
- If player characters are fighting in the ocean, consider opportunistic predators like sharks and similar creatures that may try to pick them off on the edges of combat.



MOLTEN CHELAE

Dagger, Very Rare (requires attunement by a rogue)

Fissure crabs dwell in extreme conditions, finding a way to live in deep ocean volcanoes due to their extremely heat resistant shells. This dagger has seemingly been forged from the pincers of one such creature, kept alive by unknown magics. You have a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon.

This dagger still drips the superheated remnants of a fissure crab's deadly grip. Attacks with this weapon deal an additional 1d4+1 fire damage

While attuned to this weapon, the first time you hit a creature that is no more than one size larger than you with a sneak attack using this weapon, they must succeed on a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw or be grasped by the powerful pincers on this weapon. On a failure, the creature is restrained. While restrained in this way, they take 3d8+4 fire damage at the start of their turn. At the end of each turn, they can attempt a DC 18 Strength (athletics) check to try to break free from the grasp, becoming unrestrained on a success. While you have a creature restrained in this way, your speed becomes 0 and you cannot attempt an attack with this weapon.

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