

5E

AB
ABYSSAL BREWS

THE **BRINEROT**

Clawing sludge ready to consume
the whole crew.

BRINEROT

The ocean is home to many a terror that it keeps below its wavy surface. It's no small wonder that those who sail the seas are the superstitious type as you need some amount of luck to keep you afloat and intact. There are some horrors though that barely any yet know about, with one particularly terrifying creature being a Brinerot. Lurching oozes that swim just as freely as they claw along floorboards, squeezing themselves through any space they can manage in the mindless pursuit of more food to maintain its grimy form.

Brinerots are thought to be formed as a byproduct of pollution flowing from cities on the waterfront, but little is known about the actual mechanics of bringing one to life. Many have remarked on their similarity to the black tar used to seal the hulls of boats, but any correlation is subject to heavy speculation. Some have even jokingly suggested they're formed as the result of excrement from particularly powerful wizards, but little has ever been proven when it comes to their origins. What is known is that they roam the sea and shores looking for any it can devour to feed its ever present hunger.

Brinerot are a particular menace for long distance sea travelers as they can latch themselves to the bottom of a ship and slowly work their way along the hull until they either surface on the deck, where they are often confused for a

puddle of spilled pitch, or work their way through cracks and crevices they find in the hull. Once inside a ship, they can cause all manner of horror. Some crew mates have reported not hearing a thing, merely waking up to find one of their companions fully consumed in the bunk next to them leaving little behind but bone and discarded remnants. Others have woken up to horrified screams as they try to free their smothered companions from the Brinerot's grasp.

While they are most dangerous to sailors, they have been known to venture close enough to shore to occasionally pull swimmers under the murky waves. Once a Brinerot has a swimmer in its grasp, little can be done to save them from their fate as the Brinerot specializes in pulling creatures under the waves and simply waiting until the creature falls unconscious to consume it. They also occasionally make their way on shore, presenting themselves as a puddle of ichor or tar to lull creatures into getting close to them.

While they lack a brain or any form of anatomical structure typical of most creatures, they seem to understand that patience is one of their best opportunities to attract prey. They will find a trafficked area and simply wait, appearing much like any other spill of tar. Once a creature approaches, they will strike, wrapping them in their clawing sludge, pulling them within and consuming them whole. They also have been known to sit on ceilings waiting for their pray to walk underneath of them only to fall on top of the creature

BRINEROT

Medium ooze, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 65 (10d8+20)

Speed 30 ft., 30 ft. swim, 30 ft. climb

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws CON +6

Skills Stealth +7, Athletics +5

Damage Resistances force, poison

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses blindsight 90 ft., Passive Perception 12

Languages -

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Ambusher. In the first round of a combat, the brinerot has advantage on attack rolls against any creature it surprised.

False Appearance. While the brinerot remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a puddle of tar, unless an observer succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

Formless Blob. The brinerot can enter an enemy's space and stop there. It can also move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Grasping Sludge. The brinerot can grapple up to 4 targets at a time.

Suffocating Grappler. When a creature that needs to breathe begins their turn while being grappled by the brinerot, they must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or take 1d6 untyped damage. This damage cannot be mitigated.

Actions

Grip. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8+3) bludgeoning damage. When a creature is hit by this attack, the brinerot attempts to grapple them.

Consume. The brinerot attempts to consume a creature that it has grappled. The creature must attempt a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be fully consumed. A consumed creature can't breathe, is restrained, and takes 3d6 bludgeoning damage at the start of each of the brinerot's turn. When the brinerot moves, a consumed creature moves with it. Other creatures can use an action to attempt to wrestle a consumed creature free from the brinerot by succeeding on a DC 14 Strength (Athletics) check. If a consumed creature dies, the brinerot grows one stage in size, to a maximum size of large, and regains 3d8 hit points.

Liquify (Recharge 4-6). When threatened, the brinerot can melt itself into a more liquid form allowing it to fit through any sized space during the turn in which it took this action. At the end of its turn, it reforms into its normal sludge-like form.

using their considerable weight to pin them to the floor and consume their body.

While many of them are of medium size some have been known to grow larger after being particularly well fed. Some claim to have seen massive Brinerots in the sea that have even tried to feed on whales and other large ocean fauna. It's unknown if these tales are accurate or merely the musings of drunken sailors trying to scare fisherman away from their preferred fishing grounds.

A certainty is that Brinerots are terrifying creatures to come across. Occasionally a ghost ship crashes ashore somewhere, reeking of death but missing its crew. It's thought that at least some of these may have been the victims of schools of Brinerots working together to consume the crew one by one. A horrifying prospect for those that make their home on the seas. Perhaps it might be best to second guess that puddle of tar you saw below deck and draw a sword rather than a mop.

TACTICS

Brinerots are particularly patient hunters and prefer to bide their time until their prey is alone or otherwise unaware. They will set up ambushes for creatures and lay in wait for hours without a need for air or food. They will scour every inch of a boat's hull in order to find a way to squeeze in.

- Brinerots are particularly difficult to subdue being immune to many debilitating conditions. Don't be afraid to show this early when the wizard tries their magic.
- Brinerots are ambushers and will often attack when the party is unaware or separated. This can be particularly lethal when combined with their Consume ability.
- While the Brinerot can grapple multiple creatures at one time, it can only try to consume one a turn. Think about these when considering actions and try to consume creatures before going for more grapples.
- Formless blob allows Brinerots to squeeze into spaces, use this to make them an unwelcome addition to a fight when they drop from above or seep in from below.
- Liquify is a quick escape skill letting them flee should their hit points drop low.
- Don't forget about their suffocating grappling as this can quickly wear down even seasoned adventurers.

SUGGESTED PAIRINGS

Brinerots are ocean hunters and should be used either on the sea or on the shore close to the sea. Other sea creatures could be appropriate.

- Using multiple Brinerots in a single encounter can turn deadly quickly. Consider this before adding many together.
- As they are ambushers, it wouldn't be out of place to have one drop on a party member while another fight is happening.



DECKHAND'S DANCE

Boots, Uncommon

Watching the machinations of a well run ship can almost be like watching a well choreographed dance as deckhands flit about up and down their rigging. The rocking and swaying of the ocean waves seemingly is not a problem for their well seasoned sea legs. It's not all experience though as some of them have a trick up their sleeve, and on their feet, in the form of magicked boots that have been altered with retractable spikes on the soles for just the right amount of grip when you need it.

While wearing these boots, you can use a bonus action to click the heels of them together to extend or retract the spikes in the soles of them. While the spikes are retracted, these act as normal boots.

While the spikes are extended you gain the following benefits. Your movement speed is lowered by 5 feet, but you gain a climbing speed equal to your walking speed. You are unaffected by difficult terrain that is caused by non-magical conditions. Unarmed attacks that involve your feet deal an additional 1d4 piercing damage.

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