

# MEDUSAE

The medusa is a fell monstrosity, one driven to isolation by its dread gaze, which petrifies those who meet it, freezing them in a rictus of pain and agony. In place of hair, the medusa's scalp sprouts foot-long venomous serpents.

## MEDUSA LORE

**Arcana DC 10:** Creatures petrified by the medusa can be cured with the spell Greater Restoration.

**Arcana DC 15:** While medusae do reproduce sexually, there are reports of humans being turned into medusae by powerful curses.

**History DC 15:** Certain adventurers have reported using mirrors and trickery to subject a medusa to its own gaze.

**History DC 25:** The males of the species, called maedar, are exceedingly rare. Their touch can both shatter stone and cure petrification, a terrifying combination in a medusa's lair.

**Nature DC 10:** The medusa's gaze can turn any creature who meets it to stone. A creature that averts its gaze is protected.

**Nature DC 15:** The blood of a slain medusa, for up to 24 hours after its death, can be applied to the lips of a petrified creature to cure it.

**Nature DC 25:** Medusae can reproduce with humans, though male offspring borne of these unions are vanishingly rare. The child of a medusa and a human is always a medusa, indicating the presence of a heritable curse, rather than divergent evolution.

**Religion DC 15:** Medusae are rarely religious, but are held in high esteem by cults of Shekinester and Sseth.

**Religion DC 20:** There are a number of instances recorded of human women being turned into medusae by vengeful divinities, though the much rarer males of the species all appear to be natural born.

## MEDUSA ARCHER TACTICS

The medusa tries to separate the party through stealth and subterfuge, preferentially targeting those most insistent on averting their gaze, especially any that are employing a mirrored shield or something analogous. The medusa is sure to at least disarm any who fall unconscious where she can reach, in case they are later healed by allies.

## MEDUSA SHROUD OF ZEHIR TACTICS

If each opponent is averting their eyes, the medusa skirmishes in and out of the melee with its shortsword attacks, heedless of attacks of opportunity, trying to spend as much time as it can hidden. If the medusa cannot hide, it uses its Flurry of Bites to try to finish off the weakest-looking creature that is not averting its gaze. If it is not hidden and its Flurry of Bites is unavailable, the medusa targets a creature that is averting its gaze with its shortsword.

## MAEDAR TACTICS

The maedar opens a fight with its Hand From Stone, attacking from within the walls and floor until it is dragged into the open or until a medusa petrifies one of the party, at which point it emerges to try to shatter them. While in the open, the maedar stays within 15 ft. of a medusa in order to use its Mighty Shove reaction, if the opportunity arises.



## MAEDAR

Medium monstrosity, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 16 (Natural Armor)

**Hit Points** 105 (14d8 + 42)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

**Skills** Insight +5, Perception +5, Stealth +4

**Damage Immunities** Poison

**Condition Immunities** Petrified, Poisoned

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 15

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Stone Glide.** The maedar can burrow through magical or nonmagical stone. While doing so, the maedar doesn't disturb the material it moves through.

**Curative Touch.** A creature touched or attacked by the maedar is cured of petrification, unless it is using its stone glide ability to move through the creature.

### Actions

**Shattering Fist.** Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 25 (6d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage. A restrained or petrified creature takes an additional 4d6 (14) damage. If this damage reduces a petrified creature to 0 HP, it shatters.

**Hands from Stone.** While the maedar is burrowing through stone, it may reach out and grab a creature. One creature within 5 ft. must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or be grappled. While grappling a creature in this way, the maedar's speed is 0 and it has three-quarters cover.

### Reactions

**Mighty Shove.** As a reaction to a creature missing the maedar with a melee attack, the maedar may force the creature to succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be pushed up to 10 feet and fall prone. If the creature was averting its gaze and ends this movement within 10 feet of a medusa, the creature must immediately save against its gaze.

## MEDUSA ARCHER

Medium monstrosity, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 15 (Natural Armor)

**Hit Points** 127 (17d8 + 51)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

**Skills** Deception +5, Insight +4, Perception +4, Stealth +5

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 14

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

**Petrifying Gaze.** When a creature that can see the medusa's eyes starts its turn within 30 feet of the medusa, the medusa can force it to succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be restrained. The restrained creature repeats this saving throw at the end of its next turn, ending the effect on a success, or becoming petrified on a failure. The medusa is not immune to its own gaze.

Unless surprised, a creature can avert its eyes to avoid the initial saving throw at the start of its turn. If the creature does so, it can't see the medusa until the start of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again.

**Curative Blood.** The medusa's blood, for 24 hours after its death, can be applied to the lips of a petrified creature to remove the petrified condition.

### Actions

**Multiattack.** The medusa makes three attacks, only one of which can be with its snake hair.

**Snake Hair.** Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage plus 14 (4d6) poison damage.

**Shortsword.** Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage. This attack deals an additional 7 (2d6) damage if made with advantage.

**Longbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) poison damage.

### Reactions

**Compel Gaze.** As a reaction to a creature that is averting its eyes missing the medusa with a melee attack, the medusa may force it to meet her eyes. The creature must immediately save against her petrifying gaze.

# MEDUSA SHROUD OF ZEHIR

*Medium monstrosity, lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 16 (Natural Armor)

**Hit Points** 142 (19d8 + 56)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	19 (+4)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)

**Skills** Deception +6, Insight +6, Perception +6, Stealth +8

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 14

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 9 (5,000 XP)

**Petrifying Gaze.** When a creature that can see the medusa's eyes starts its turn within 30 feet of the medusa, the medusa can force it to succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be restrained. The restrained creature repeats this saving throw at the end of its next turn, ending the effect on a success, or becoming petrified on a failure. The medusa is not immune to its own gaze.

Unless surprised, a creature can avert its eyes to avoid the initial saving throw at the start of its turn. If the creature does so, it can't see the medusa until the start of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again.

**Curative Blood.** The medusa's blood, for 24 hours after its death, can be applied to the lips of a petrified creature to remove the petrified condition.

**Hidden Killer.** The medusa can hide as a bonus action if all hostile creatures are averting their gaze. If the medusa starts its turn hidden, its attacks score a critical on a 19 or 20 this turn.

## Actions

**Multiattack.** The medusa makes three attacks with its shortsword.

**Shortsword.** Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage. This attack deals an additional 10 (3d6) damage if made with advantage. On a critical hit, the target is disarmed, dropping one item of the medusa's choice that it is holding.

**Flurry of Bites (Recharge 5-6).** One creature within 5 feet must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 42 (12d6) poison damage and be poisoned for 1 minute, or half as much on a success. A poisoned creature repeats this saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success.

## Reactions

**Compel Gaze.** As a reaction to a creature that is averting its eyes missing the medusa with a melee attack, the medusa may force it to meet her eyes. The creature must immediately save against her petrifying gaze.

## ENCOUNTER GROUPS

A typical encounter might include a Medusa Archer and its pet Wilt-Eye Basilisks, or a Medusa Shroud of Zehir, its Maedar mate, and half a dozen Stone Cursed.

### CR 12 Encounter 3,700 XP

- 1 Medusa Archer (CR 6)
- 2 Wilt-Eye Basilisks

### CR 18 Encounter 7,300 XP

- 1 Medusae Shroud of Zehir (CR 9)
- 1 Maedar (CR 4)
- 6 Stone Cursed (CR 1)

