

## Magebane

by Ed Greenwood (from the "Dragon's Bestiary", Dragon Magazine #140)

FREQUENCY: Rare (Uncommon in Pandemonium)

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: 5 (see below)

MOVE: 13"

HIT DICE: 2+ (see below)

% IN LAIR: Nil

TREASURE TYPE: Nil

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 11-14 (10 + 1d4)

SPECIAL ATTACKS: Tail (see below)

SPECIAL DEFENSES: See below

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 75% (see below)

INTELLIGENCE: Animal to low

ALIGNMENT: Neutral

SIZE: S (up to 3' long, wingspan to 5')

PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil

Attack/Defense Modes: Nil/nil

LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: Variable

A magebane is a mysterious creature found in ruins, tombs, subterranean places, and wilderness caves in the Prime Material plane. It is also found in Pandemonium and perhaps other planes as well.

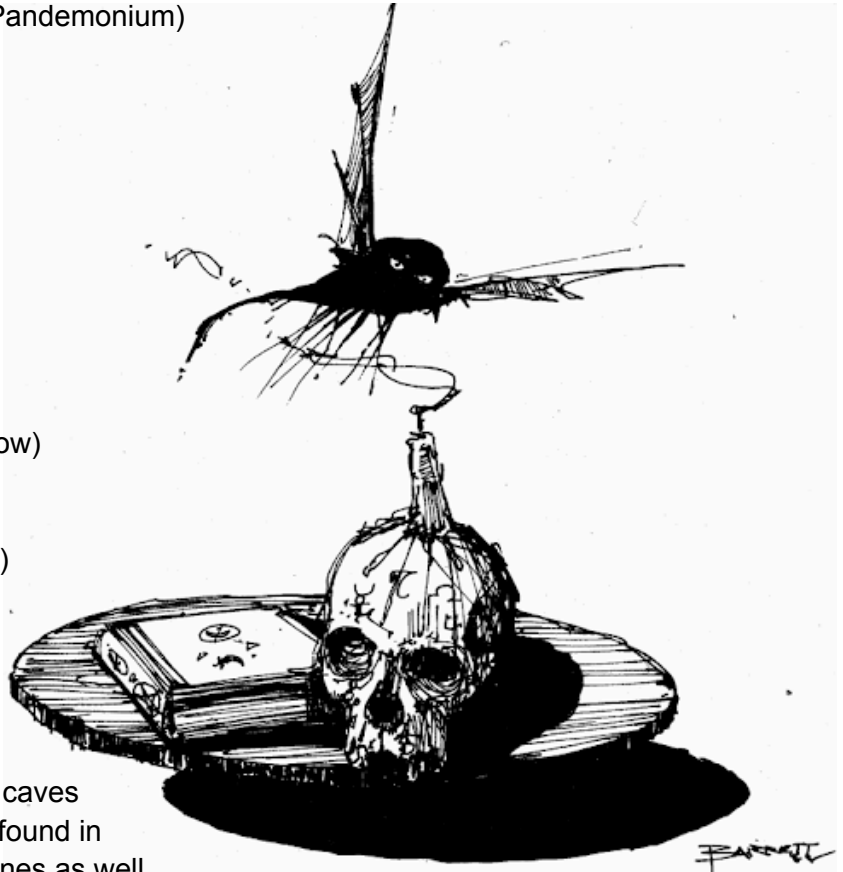
Magebanes are solitary creatures who are attracted by the use of magic nearby (their means of sensing magic is presently unknown). Magebanes follow any spell-caster who thus attracts their attention, seeming to prefer magic-users over other types of dweomer-crafters. A magebane shadows its chosen mage, flitting about nearby behind the chosen one.

The magebane is invisible (unless *true seeing* or other means are employed to reveal invisible creatures) to all beings except its chosen spell-caster. Thus, those who attack it suffer a -4 penalty to hit until the magebane is made visible.

Furthermore, the magebane feeds upon spells cast by the chosen one. The effects of this feeding depend on the magical source. Whenever the chosen spell-caster casts any spell (or cantrip); there is a 60% chance that the magebane robs the spell of all (1-2 on 1d6) or part (3-6 on 1d6) of its magical energy. When a magebane drains all of a spell's energy, the spell is lost and does not take effect (as per a rod of absorption). When only part of a spell's energy is drained, the spell effect occurs but with lessened force, having one or more of the modifications listed hereafter. The modifications to the spell are determined by rolling 1d8 with the following results: 1-3 = modification 1; 4-6 = modifications 1 and 2; 7 = modifications 1, 2, and 3; and 8 = all four modifications.

These modifications are listed below:

1. Spell has a minimum duration.
2. Spell does minimum damage.



3. Targets of spell gain +2 on their saving throws.
4. Spell affects a lesser area or volume of matter.

At the DM's option, spells of the highest levels (7th, 8th, and 9th) may be largely immune to the feeding of a particular magebane and thus, if not entirely drained, will work at full efficacy.

Magebanes are silent and do not seek to unnecessarily reveal themselves to their chosen spell-caster (as they are most easily seen and slain by that spell-caster). As a result, their presence may be unknown to the spell-caster or the latter's party for some time. A magebane is 100% resistant to any spells directed at it by its chosen spell-caster and 75% resistant to the spells of others. Note that harmless spells affecting an area, or spells enabling the spell-caster to more easily attack the magebane physically, take effect unless randomly eaten by the magebane. The magebane cannot recognize a spell being cast nor read the intentions of a spell-caster.

A magebane may switch its chosen spell-caster if it encounters a powerful alternative to its present one; otherwise, the only way to get rid of one is by slaying it. A magebane will seldom move from one party member to another. It seems to shun the presence of former chosen ones.

A magebane never attacks its chosen one, taking instead an interest in the safety of the spell-caster. In some cases, the magebane may actually swoop down (invisibly) to rake with its claws at anyone launching a physical attack upon its chosen one. This includes missile-fire attacks, but not spells (the effects of which the magebane seems unable to anticipate) or psionics. In the latter case, a magebane cannot detect psionics, and in turn cannot be psionically contacted or attacked.

A magebane will, however, defend itself against attacks from its chosen spell-caster or other creatures by means of its claws. It may also attack with the sting of its tail, which delivers a jolt of magical energy similar to that delivered by a *Magic Missile* (2-5 hp damage, no saving throw; a successful to hit roll required for tail to strike and the sting to occur).

Like a rod of absorption, a magebane uses its magical energy for growth and sustenance, gaining roughly 1 permanent hp for every six spells fully drained and powering its activities as a consequence. The magebane stores the rest of the magic drawn from its chosen one to dispense via its tail, which therefore has a limited number of stings; usually a dozen or so and one dying burst. If slain, a magebane explodes in a burst of magical force, doing 2d6 hp physical damage to all within 1" and causing all spell-casters within 4" to save vs. spells at -2 or be blasted into a state of *Feeblemindedness* (as by the fifth level magic-user spell). Precise details of how a magebane absorbs and converts magical energy remain a mystery.

Magebanes are small, black, amorphous creatures who have two cold blue eyes (9" infravision, seemingly keen normal vision), bat wings, and 10 or more long, black claws on their undersides. A magebane's body tapers into a needle-like tail. Magebanes have no visible mouths, and their means of reproduction and other biological activities are unknown. Mages report that magebanes are affected by poison.