

Bard College of Taxonomy

Homebrew by [A Couple of Characters](#).

Bards of the College of Taxonomy pride themselves on their knowledge of the creatures that roam their world, collecting bits of knowledge from sources as diverse as scholarly tomes and peasant tales. These bards travel the world in search of creatures great and small, hoping to learn a bit about all of them. Bards of this college travel with a tome which they refer to as their "Creature Catalog", in which they record creatures they have encountered. The college's members do not typically gather together, preferring to wander the lands in search of a new creature they haven't encountered before.

Your Creature Catalog

Beginning at 3rd level you have a creature catalog which contains detailed information about creatures you have encountered on your adventures. The book contains 6 creatures of your choice when you gain this feature at 3rd level and you can add 2 creatures to your creature catalog whenever you gain a level in this class. The creatures that you add to your creature catalog as you gain levels reflect the research you conduct on your own throughout your travels. While you are holding your creature catalog, you can use it as a spellcasting focus for your bard spells.

Copying a Creature into the Book. When you encounter a creature on your adventures, you can add it to your creature catalog if you can spare the time to discern information about it. Copying a creature into your creature catalog involves inspecting the creature up close. The creature can be alive or dead during this inspection. While studying a creature to put it into your creature catalog, you must spend your action to discern the abilities, defenses, and other hidden things about the creature. This investigation takes 10 minutes per challenge rating of the creature you are inspecting, minimum of 1 minute for CR 0 creatures.

Creating a Backup Creature Catalog. While you possess your creature catalog, you can create a secondary copy as a backup. For each creature you want to copy, the process takes 10 minutes and 1gp to copy into your backup creature catalog.

Replacing the Book. If you lose your creature catalog, you must spend 1 hour and 5gp for each creature that was in your book that you want to copy. The time represents discerning the meaning of your previous notes and memories. The gold covers the cost of the paper, ink, and any book binding you wish to have done.

The Book's Appearance. Your creature catalog is a unique compilation of creatures you have encountered on your adventures. It might be a plain, functional, leather volume that you received as a gift from your master, a finely bound gilt-edged tome you found in an ancient library, or even a loose collection of notes scrounged together after you lost your previous creature catalog in a mishap.

Bonus Proficiencies

When you join the College of Taxonomy at 3rd level, you gain proficiency in Insight and Nature. If you already have proficiency in either of the listed skills, you can instead choose to double your proficiency

bonus for any ability check you make that uses Insight or Nature, choose 1. You also gain 1 language of your choice and gain 1 additional language at 6th and 14th levels.

I Read Your Book

Also at 3rd level, you learn to inspire others in battle against creatures you have documented. A creature that has a Bardic Inspiration die from you and is fighting a creature in your creature catalog can use the bardic inspiration in the following ways:

- The creature can roll the bardic inspiration die and add the number rolled to a weapon damage roll it makes.
- The creature can roll the bardic inspiration die and use their reaction to add the number rolled to their AC against an attack after seeing the roll but before knowing whether it hits or misses when an attack roll is made against the creature.

Keen Observer

Starting at 6th level, if you spend at least 1 minute observing or interacting with another creature outside combat, you can learn certain information about its capabilities.

You learn the following attributes about the creature: Damage Vulnerabilities, Damage Resistances, Damage Immunities, and Condition Immunities. In addition, if you later copy this creature into your creature catalog, it takes half the time it would typically take you to copy it, no additional time for CR 0 creatures.

Master of Insight

By 14th level, your study of creatures has given you an uncanny understanding of how to interact with them and track them. Whenever you make an Animal Handling, Insight, Persuasion, or Survival check on a creature in your creature catalog, you have advantage on the check. In addition, you learn the Charm Monster, Charm Person, Locate Animals or Plants, and Locate Creature spells, and they don't count against your number of spells known. These spells count as bard spells for you.

Contact Us

If you want to know more about our take on this bard college, check out [episode 25](#) of our podcast A Couple of Characters at acoupleofcharacterspodcast.com or wherever podcasts are [found](#)!

If you play a character using the college of taxonomy, let us know how it went by e-mailing us at acoupleofcharacterspod@gmail.com.

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