

TORTUGARANA

Where there once was a rocky, verdant hill now stands an enormous, primordial turtle. Its serene expression is at odds with the strange moaning you now realize is coming from its shell—a striated, wind-carved fortress of alien tunnels and towers.

TORTUGARANA

CR 13

Usually CN Gargantuan Magical Beast

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; low-light vision; scent; **Listen** +7; Spot +1

Languages Aquan

AC 30, touch 5, flat-footed 30

(-1 Dex, -4 size, +25 natural)

hp 212 (17HD)

Immune charms and compulsions

Fort +17, **Ref** +9, **Will** +11

Spd 20 ft., Swim 30ft., Burrow 10ft.

Melee bite +25 (4d6+18 and snatch)

Space 20ft.; Reach 15ft.

Base Atk +17; Grp +41

Special Actions power attack, improved sunder (sunder 3.5PH Pg.158), sonic explosion

Abilities Str 34, Dex 8, Con 25, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 7

Feats Cleave, Improved Natural Armor, Improved Sunder, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Snatch

Skills Hide -5 (+7 in swamps or forests, +19 if ambushing), Spot +5, Knowledge: Local +7

Environment large swamps, marshes, and coastal or tropical forests

SQ perfect camouflage, mimic, defensive spikes, immunity to charms and compulsions, scent

Organization solitary

Treasure ½ standard, no mundane, no art

Advancement 18-24 HD (Gargantuan); 25+ HD (Colossal)

Sonic Explosion (Su) Once every 1D4 rounds a tortugarana can fire a bead of concentrated magical energy up to 500 feet from the myriad tunnels in its shell. When the bead strikes an object it explodes in a 20-foot radius spread. The blast causes 6d8 sonic damage (Ref save DC 25 for half) to creatures within the blast. On a failed reflex save any creatures of medium size or smaller are also picked up and thrown 1d4 x 10 feet outwards by the blast, suffering 1d6 damage per 10 feet travelled, plus 1D6 damage if a hard surface is struck midflight. In addition, all creatures caught in the blast must succeed on a Fort save DC 25 or be *deafened for 1d4 days.

* **Deafened** (Page 300 3.5e DMG) -4 penalty to initiative, automatically fail listen checks, and has a 20% spell failure chance for any spells with verbal components. [Note that being deafened multiple times would likely result in the state becoming permanent. ~RPG Ike]

Mimic (Su) By forcing air through the tunnels in its shell a tortugarana can make a number of different sounds, and even throw them so they originate elsewhere (as the Ghost Sound spell cast by a 1st level sorcerer. This ability is most often used to confuse prey before striking.



Perfect Camouflage (Ex) A tortugarana that has had at least one minute to settle into an ambush spot ignores its -12 size modifier penalty to hide checks, looking very much like a small hill (note that tortugarana may still be rather conspicuous outside of the marshes and forests that they favour).

Defensive Spikes (Ex) The reptilian spikes and protrusions covering a tortugarana are excellent natural protection, making telling blows hard to line up. This provides the benefits of light fortification, or a 25% chance to negate a critical hit or sneak attack, and instead be damaged normally.

Skills Tortugarana have a +12 racial bonus to hide checks in swamplands or heavy forests.

The tortugarana (singular and plural) are an ancient race of powerful ambush predators that are convinced—with good reason—of their superiority to most other creatures. They are largely content when their bellies are full, and approach combat with a detached interest, as though the attacks of lesser creatures are amusing.

Tortugarana resemble dire animals taken to extremes, being great tortoises completely covered in irregular horny growths, spikes, and other protrusions. Their shells look like dark cities carved from stone, horn, and ore, with spires and tunnels big enough for a gnome to crawl through. Their shells are also a source of magical energy for the tortugarana, and it is within these spiralling passageways that their sonic explosions are created and expelled during combat, and sometimes courtship. These passageways also allow them to mimic many sounds, from bird calls, to wolves howling, to the moaning of an injured humanoid. Lichens, mosses, algae, and sometimes trees seed the shells of these monsters, making them almost impossible to discern from the surrounding forest when at rest.

While rare, Tortugarana take territories spanning for many miles. They are lax in patrolling these territories, but are often terrible and merciless when encountered, and even the most powerful, well-prepared hunting parties often find that at least one comrade has been killed or taken by the battle's end, usually with the tortugarana escaping underground or underwater with its prey. Tortugarana eat nearly anything, and it is speculated that arms, armor, and magic items are important for the proper growth and maintenance of their shells. Since tortugarana can live for up to a millennium, primitive tribes of lizardfolk and kuo-toa often worship a neighboring tortugarana, believing it unique. These tribes make regular offerings of fresh meat, fruits, and vegetables, which delights the vain creature to no end, and provides little reason for it to move on to another territory, propagating its own legend.

Tortugarana speak Aquan, and when content (right after a large meal) can be quite talkative, and even helpful, but they will always expect payment for their good humour.

TACTICS

A Tortugarana is a superb ambusher, choosing a well-travelled spot and digging down a foot or two nearby, trusting to their camouflage to keep them hidden. The creature may remain like this for days waiting for an appropriate meal—an entire flock of birds, a family of herd animals, or a merchant caravan—and either strike immediately with its massive jaws, or use its mimic ability to confuse prey before using the sonic explosion to take down as many creatures as it can all at once.

While not terribly intelligent, tortugarana are canny enough to target obvious spellcasters with their sonic explosions, even readying actions to do so in preparation for their spells. A tortugarana may snatch bothersome prey and tunnel underground, leaving them there while it returns to the fight (a PC trapped underground like this will



likely suffocate or be crushed to death by the earth unless they can magically escape). If prey deigns to hurt a tortugarana badly enough (less than 100 hp remaining), most tortugarana will settle for a small meal, snatching a single target and burrowing away.