

Monsters, Minions, And Marauders

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The Review:

Reviewed By Gordon Feiner

The Upside:

Monsters, Minions & Marauders is a source book of Fantasy monsters. It details eighty-nine creatures, plus options for variants and templates that can be added to give well over a hundred unique combinations of fantasy creatures for your adventurers to fight.

The book is cleanly organized, and very easy to read. the illustrations that come with each entry are very well done. The contents run from the standard fantasy fair of various giants, dragons, orc and goblins to other more unique creatures such as the Banewolf, Butatsch, Orobon and many other unusual things.

There are two parts of the book that stand out - and they aren't write ups of creatures. The first is the Summary Table at the very back. This is a quick list of pertinent combat stats for every major monster entry in the book. The other is the Appendix that has a number of Package Templates that can be applied to any monster, or even used by PCs.

Other nice touches include a section of prebuilt Human Adversaries for a quick set of NPCs should the GM need some. And many monster entries, notable for sentient species, come with an entry on a notable member of that species, though these entries are specific to the Turakian Age Campaign Setting they are easily adaptable to any game. These entries of individual monsters make this particular Fantasy Creature book stand out above others.

The Hero System Bestiary is an excellent companion book to this.

The Downside:

The first downside is more of a nit pick than an actual detraction from the book. There are nine monster entries that do not have any picture to go with them, personally I find art work for a creature book to be an essential aspect. There are even two repeated images in the very back of the book that could have dedicated to space for creatures who didn't have room in their write up for the image. But as I said, that's more a nit pick than any detraction from the book itself.

If there is one true complaint I have about this book is that it doesn't contain enough Monsters. the majority of creatures in it are humanoid types that serve well as NPC (or even PC) optional races instead of just Monsters to set upon your PCs. Sure there are plenty of beasts in here, but I would have liked to have seen more. That fact almost makes it necessary to have the Hero System Bestiary which is a collection of nothing but beasts (both fantastic and real).

The Otherside:

While many of the creatures detailed here are standard Fantasy fair, many are not. Making this a decent choice for non-Hero gamers to pick up to find something your Players have never encountered, or possibly even heard of. Another item that non-Hero gamers might like are the descriptions of individuals of note for many of the sentient creatures in the book as you can never have enough NPCs ready to pull out of your GM hat.

Overall, this is an excellent book of monsters and creatures for any game. Even if it was specifically designed for a Turakian Age game the entries are generalized enough that only changing a few names here and there would be needed to fit these creatures into your campaign of choice.

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