



Fig. 1: Red eyes above the river.
House-style plate.

CRYPTID № 3
MoTHMAN

Thirteen months of a red-eyed, winged figure over Point Pleasant, West Virginia, and then a bridge fell. Here is its legend, and two ways to loose it on your table.

“Nobody called it a warning until the bridge was already in the river.”

THE LEGEND

Two young couples were parked by the abandoned TNT plant on the night of November 15, 1966, when their headlights caught something the size of a man standing in the dark: grey, winged, with two eyes that threw the light back the color of blood. It lifted off the ground and paced their car down the road at highway speed before it broke away. They drove straight to the sheriff, and he believed them enough to write it down.

The town fed the story for thirteen months. A red-eyed, winged figure was seen over the river and out among the hollow concrete domes of the old munitions works; a newspaperman, reaching for a headline the same autumn *Batman* was on every television, called it the *Mothman*, and the

name stuck harder than the thing ever did. Skeptics had a good answer: a sandhill crane, far out of range, stands nearly as tall as a man, wears bare red skin around its eyes, and throws that same glare back from headlights. It explains nearly everything, to everyone who wasn't there.

Then, on December 15, 1967, the Silver Bridge failed (one hairline flaw in one steel link) and dropped rush-hour traffic into the Ohio River. Forty-six people died, and the sightings all but stopped that week. Nobody in 1966 had called the creature a warning; the town assembled that reading afterward, in grief, deciding the red eyes out at the TNT plant must have been trying to tell them something they couldn't read in time. The honest catch is that we only call it an omen because we already know how the story ends, and forty-six empty chairs make people go looking for a reason.

For D&D 5E

STAT BLOCK

Mothman

Large aberration, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 133 (14d10 + 56)
Speed 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16	18	18	12	20	16
(+3)	(+4)	(+4)	(+1)	(+5)	(+3)

Skills Perception +11, Stealth +7
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 21
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP) **PB** +3

For Every Other Game

CREATURE CARD

Mothman

No stat lines. Just what it is and how to point it at your players, whatever system you run. It's an *omen* more than a predator: it appears before catastrophe, and is only understood as a warning once the catastrophe has already happened.

HOW IT BEHAVES

- **An omen, not a predator.** It shows up, it's seen, it's gone, and something terrible follows. The horror is the sequence, not the claws.

Flyby. The mothman doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of a creature's reach.

Harbinger. It can't be surprised and has advantage on initiative. It's drawn to gathering catastrophe and turns up before one, but what it senses reaches anyone else only as dread, never a place, a cause, or an hour. Reading the omen is left to those who witness it, and they can be wrong.

Dread Gaze. When a creature that can see its eyes starts its turn within 30 ft., the mothman can force a DC 14 Wisdom save; on a failure the creature is frightened until its next turn. A creature can avert its eyes to skip the save, but takes disadvantage on attacks against the mothman until its next turn.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Two Talons attacks.

Talons. *Melee Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing.

Snatch. *Melee Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one Large or smaller target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing and grappled (escape DC 15); the mothman can fly at half speed carrying it and drop it from any height.

Omen-Shriek (Recharge 5-6). A cry pitched below hearing. Each creature in a 30-ft cone makes a DC 16 Wisdom save, taking 22 (5d8) psychic damage on a failure (half on a success); a creature that fails is also frightened 1 minute (repeat save each turn to end).

- **It fixates before it frightens.** The dread is being *chosen*: it watches one person, it's waiting by the road again, it knew where they'd be.
- **Always a glimpse.** Headlights, a lightning flash, a security feed, then nothing. Never give the long, clear, resolving look.

WAYS TO USE IT

- **The harbinger clock.** Every sighting means catastrophe is coming nearby. The adventure is decoding *where and what* before it lands, with the creature a wordless, unreliable compass.
- **The false omen.** They've learned to trust the sightings, so feed them one that points the wrong way. The real disaster hits where they weren't looking.
- **The thing that followed one PC home.** It picked someone. It's outside again tonight. No demand, no attack, just the eyes and a countdown.
- **Just a great monster.** Forget Point Pleasant. A winged, red-eyed watcher that turns up before a place dies drops into any setting: the omen a doomed fort keeps glimpsing, a villain's summoned death-knell. Take the silhouette and the dread; leave the history on the shelf.

Vanish (Reaction). When a creature ends its turn with a clear line of sight to it, the mothman flies up to its speed without provoking; if it ends in darkness, dim light, or total cover, it's invisible until it attacks or the start of its next turn.

DIFFICULTY DIAL

- **Scarier:** let the first omen come true no matter what they do, so the next sighting lands with real weight.
- **Safer:** make the warning readable and the disaster preventable, and the creature becomes a grim ally, not a verdict.

THE NEXT CRYPTID CRAWLS INTO YOUR INBOX.

New entries in the Cryptid Codex (folklore, a 5E stat block, and a system-neutral card), free, straight from the Scoundrels to you.

Join the Hunt at scoundrelgames.com/join

Always free. One cryptid a week. Unsubscribe anytime.

Scoundrel Games is an independent tabletop RPG publisher founded around a kitchen table nearly thirty years ago. We make books, not subscription adventures and a community hub for the whole hobby. In the old TSR spirit of craft and shared stories. *Where every adventure begins.*