



Fig. 1: Perched in the high desert at dusk. House-style plate.

CRYPTID № 4

THE CHUPACABRA

The cryptid of the modern age, born on television in 1995, draining goats by dawn, and changing shape as it crossed the border. Here is its legend, and two ways to loose it on your table.

“Most monsters are older than anyone can remember. This one has a birthday.”

THE LEGEND

Most monsters are older than anyone can remember. This one has a birthday. In the spring of 1995, farmers around Canóvanas, Puerto Rico began finding livestock dead at dawn: goats, sheep, chickens, stiff and unmarked but for two or three neat punctures at the neck and, the story insisted, drained of every drop of blood. A radio personality named the culprit by its job description: *el chupacabra*, the goat-sucker, and the name traveled faster than anything with claws ever could.

Then a woman in Canóvanas described what she saw at her window (upright, grey, spined down the back, with enormous dark eyes), and that single account shaped nearly every drawing that followed. There is a catch the folklorist Benjamin Radford chased for years: shortly before her

sighting she had watched the film *Species*, whose monster is a near-perfect match. It doesn't prove she invented anything. It does suggest the most famous monster of the modern age may have been co-authored by a movie.

By the time it reached the mainland it had changed shape entirely. The Texas chupacabra is a low, hairless, fanged dog, the kind that gets photographed dead on the shoulder of a county road. And every time one is collected and tested, the DNA says the same thing: a coyote or dog, ravaged by sarcoptic mange into something monstrous. The blood-draining, the part everyone remembers, never survives a careful look. The legend has never once cared. It's the cryptid of the modern age, assembled in real time out of dead livestock, a blockbuster, and a nickname.

For D&D 5E

STAT BLOCK

The Chupacabra

Medium monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 52 (7d8 + 21)

Speed 40 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13	17	16	4	13	6
(+1)	(+3)	(+3)	(-3)	(+1)	(-2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Challenge 3 (700 XP) PB +2

Pack Tactics. The chupacabra has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of its

For Every Other Game

CREATURE CARD

The Chupacabra

No stat lines. Just what it is and how to point it at your players, whatever system you run. A nocturnal, blood-draining livestock predator with two famous faces (a spiny upright thing and a hairless fanged dog), and half the horror is never being sure which one is out there.

HOW IT BEHAVES

- **It hunts the herd, not the heroes.**

The first sign is always livestock: penned animals dead by morning, drained, barely marked. It turns on

allies is within 5 ft. of the creature and isn't incapacitated.

Blood Frenzy. The chupacabra has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that doesn't have all its hit points.

Standing Leap. Its long jump is up to 20 ft. and its high jump up to 10 ft., with or without a running start.

Bristled Hide. A creature that hits the chupacabra with a melee attack while within 5 ft. of it takes 2 (1d4) piercing damage from its spines.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The chupacabra makes one Bite attack and one Claws attack.

Bite. *Melee Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing, and if the target is Medium or smaller the chupacabra attaches. While attached it doesn't attack; at the start of each of its turns the target takes 7 (2d6) necrotic from blood loss, the chupacabra regains that many hit points, and the target's hit point maximum drops by that amount until a long rest (it dies if this hits 0). Detach by moving 5 ft.; a DC 13 Strength check pries it off.

Claws. *Melee Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing.

people only when cornered or starving.

- **It comes in numbers.** One is unsettling; a pack is a real problem: coordinated night-raiders that swarm the weak and scatter from a stand-up fight.
- **The body is ambiguous.** Small wounds, the blood "gone," the tracks wrong. Let the party and the terrified farmers argue: a monster, or just a sick coyote?

WAYS TO USE IT

- **The farm under siege.** Animals die every night and a frightened frontier community hires the party to sit up in the dark and end it. A perfect low-level stakeout-into-ambush.
- **Monster or mange?** A cryptid, a diseased predator, or someone's cover story for rustling. The investigation *is* the adventure, and any of the three can be the truth.
- **The thing they made.** Something got out of a lab, or off a ship, and it's breeding, and someone official wants it very quiet.
- **Cut it loose from the herd.** Forget Puerto Rico and Texas. A small, hairless, spined, blood-draining pack predator drops into *any* setting: dungeon vermin, desert scavengers stalking a caravan, warped alien fauna. Keep the silhouette and the

drained bodies; leave the history on the shelf.

DIFFICULTY DIAL

- Scarier: keep it unseen for a session (just the drained animals and the wrong tracks) before the first one leaps into the firelight.
- Safer: let the folklore be the key: it's half-blind and desperate, and a party that works out it's a *sick animal* can trap it, cure it, or drive it off.

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.

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