

EAR SEEKER

CR 4

Ear seekers are small maggot-like insects that occupy decaying wood. As adults, they are harmless as they spend their days deep within rotting logs happily eating the wood. As larvae, the ear seekers can be lethal to warm-blooded creatures.

Female ear seekers lay their eggs in warm, moist areas. Generally, the warm moistness of decaying vegetable matter suits them. On rare occasions, however, they will enter the ear of a living creature and deposit their eggs there.

An adult ear seeker will lay 1d8+8 tiny eggs and then fly off to die. The incubation time of the eggs is 4d6 hours, at which time the tiny larvae hatch and begin to consume the only available food source: the surrounding flesh. Preferring warmth, they will burrow inwards to where the most food and body heat is. The host must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 18) or die in 1d4 days as the ear seekers devour its brain tissue. Even if the save is successful, the host suffers 3d6 points of permanent Intelligence and Wisdom damage.

After satiating themselves, the larvae will turn to pupae. The agony for the host finally ends. This stage lasts about two weeks, at which time adult ear seekers crawl out of the host and fly away.

A *remove disease* spell destroys the eggs and larvae. A *greater restoration* spell will heal the ability damage dealt by an ear seeker.

The Ear Seeker first appeared in the 1e MM (Gary Gygax, 1977).