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Dragon, black, young adult (51–100 yr.): CR 9; Large dragon (water); HD 16d12+48; hp 152; Init +0; Spd 60 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor), swim 60 ft.; AC 24 (–1 size, +15 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +16; Grp +24; Atk Bite +20 melee (2d6+4) or claw +17 (1d8+2) or wing +17 melee (1d6+2) or tail slap +17 (1d8+6); Full Atk Bite +20 melee (2d6+4) and 2 claws +17 (1d8+2) and 2 wings +17 melee (1d6+2) and tail slap +17 (1d8+6); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft. (10 ft. with bite); SA breath weapon, frightful presence, spell-like abilities (*darkness*), spells; SQ blindsense, DR 5/magic, immunity to acid, paralysis and *sleep*, keen senses, SR 17, water breathing; AL (Always) CE; SV Fort +13, Ref +10, Will +11; Str 19, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Languages: Draconic.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +22, Hide +19, Listen +22, Move Silently +19, Search +20, Spot +22, Swim +23; Alertness, Flyby Attack, Hover, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bite).

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day—*darkness* (50' radius).

Typical Sorcerer Spells Known (cast 5/4; caster level – 1st): 0—*detect magic*, *detect poison*, *read magic*, *resistance*; 1st—*endure elements*, *mage armor*.

Blindsense (Ex) [60']: Uses keen sense of smell and hearing to pinpoint creatures or objects (still requires a line of effect).

Breath Weapon (Su): Line of acid (5 ft. high/wide, from adjacent intersection), 80 ft. range, DC 21 Reflex save for half (Constitution-based), 10d4 acid damage.

Frightful Presence (Ex): The ability takes effect automatically whenever the dragon attacks, charges, or flies overhead. Creatures within a radius of 150 feet are subject to the effect if they have fewer than 16 HD. A potentially affected creature that succeeds on a Will save (DC 19) remains immune to that dragon's frightful presence for 24 hours. On a failure, creatures with 4 or less HD become panicked for 4d6 rounds and those with 5 or more HD become shaken for 4d6 rounds. Dragons ignore the frightful presence of other dragons.

Immunities (Ex): Immunity to acid, paralysis effects and *sleep*.

Keen Senses (Ex): Four times human in shadowy illumination, two times normal light, darkvision 120 ft.

Water Breathing (Ex): A black dragon can breathe underwater indefinitely and can freely use its breath weapon, spells, and other abilities while submerged.

Description/Combat: Chromatic dragons form the evil branch of dragonkind. They are aggressive, greedy, vain, and nasty.

Black dragons are sometimes known as skull dragons because of their skeletal faces. Adding to the skeletal impression is the gradual deterioration of the hide around the base of the horn and the cheekbones. This deterioration increases with age and does not harm the dragon. On hatching, a black dragon's scales are thin, small, and glossy. As the dragon ages, they become larger, thicker, and duller, helping it camouflage itself in swamps and marshes.

Black dragons are especially fond of coins. Older dragons sometimes capture and question humanoids about stockpiles of gold, silver, and platinum coins before killing them.

Black dragons prefer to ambush their targets, using their surroundings as cover. When fighting in heavily forested swamps and marshes, they try to stay in the water or on the ground; trees and leafy canopies limit their aerial maneuverability. When outmatched, a black dragon attempts to fly out of sight, so as not to leave tracks, and hide in a deep pond or bog.

Environment: Warm marshes

Organization: solitary or clutch (2–5)

Treasure: Triple standard

Advancement: 17–18 HD