

# Ba'atun

DARK CLOUDS GATHER (UK7) - 9151

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<b>CLIMATE/TERRAIN:</b>	Cold mountains
<b>FREQUENCY:</b>	Very rare
<b>ORGANIZATION:</b>	Swarm
<b>ACTIVITY CYCLE:</b>	Any
<b>DIET:</b>	Carnivore
<b>INTELLIGENCE:</b>	Average to Genius (8-18)
<b>TREASURE:</b>	10% E, Qx5
<b>ALIGNMENT:</b>	Lawful evil

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<b>NO. APPEARING:</b>	8-64 plus leaders
<b>ARMOR CLASS:</b>	4
<b>MOVEMENT:</b>	9, Fl 21 (C)
<b>HIT DICE:</b>	2+1
<b>THACO:</b>	17
<b>NO. OF ATTACKS:</b>	3
<b>DAMAGE/ATTACK:</b>	4-9/4-7/4-7
<b>CRIT. HIT/FUMBLE:</b>	25%(+25%)/75%
<b>SPECIAL ATTACKS:</b>	See below
<b>SPECIAL DEFENSES:</b>	See below
<b>MAGIC RESISTANCE:</b>	Nil
<b>SIZE:</b>	M (5'-6')
<b>MORALE:</b>	Champion (15-16)
<b>XP VALUE:</b>	270
Flight leaders	2,000
Swarm leaders	5,000
Priests	variable
Queen	variable

BA'ATUN have large white, bat-like wings. Their fur is an icy blue color and they have red rumps. Facially, ba'atun resemble baboons with long snouts and sharp fanged teeth set in red maws. Their eyes are bright blue and red rimmed. The ba'atun have their own language and are not normally able to speak anything else.

History: From where the ba'atun first came no one is sure. Some claimed they were demons made from snow, while others thought they were exiles, banished from a frozen parallel world. What little is known to a few erudite sages, is that several millennia ago they arrived in the Spinneridge Mountains with their constant companions — death and destruction. For a brief period it looked as though the mountains and surrounding lands would fall to their onslaught.

An alliance between the aarakocra, the cloud giants



and the arch-mage Devral halted the ba'atun attacks and succeeded in imprisoning their leader Yesorkh Pahyeh. During the following centuries the days of the ba'atun terror were forgotten. Now they have returned, and are once again preparing to spread their evil.

In CT 1003, the Band of the Glass Griffon, an adventuring company from Eirbron, nearly eradicated the ba'atun species in the epic adventure bards recall as "Dark Clouds Gather." The leader of the ba'atun, Yesorkh Pahyeh, was slain in the final confrontation. A few ba'atun not slain by the band have over the past several years allied with the Empire of Roland and been working to rebuild the old power of the species. It is rumored that a new ba'atun leader has emerged.

**Combat:** Ba'atun bite with their sharp vicious teeth (1d6+3) and rend with their dirty claws (1d4+3/1d4+3). (Ba'atun have an average Strength of 18/75 and Dexterity 16. Their Strength and Dexterity bonuses have already been added to their damage and critical hit dice). They are not able to attack more than one target per round. When attacking, ba'atun emit a loud piercing and chilling screech which affects all creatures within 60 feet. Creatures hearing the screech must save vs. Spells at +4 or be struck by fear and unable to take any offensive actions for a round. Each round that the screeching lasts, characters must make a successful saving throw (before initiative is determined) to be able to act. Only one saving throw per round is re-

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quired, no matter how many ba'atun there are.

Ba'atun make all saving throws vs. cold attacks at +2, and take either half or no damage from such attacks. They are allowed a saving throw against ice storm spells and other cold-based spells which normally allow no saving throw, with success resulting in half damage. Against fire attacks, ba'atun suffer a -2 penalty to saving throws.

**Habitat/Society:** The ba'atun have allied with the Empire of Roland and now serve as elite scouts in the Spinneridge Mountains.

Ba'atun are organized into squads of eight, each led by a 3 Hit Dice wing sergeant. Two squads form a flight (led by a flight leader), and two flights make up a swarm (led by a swarm leader).

Flight leaders have an AC 5, and 5 Hit Dice. A flight leader's strength and skill gives him a +1 bonus to damage on all attacks. A flight leader carries a sling and three web stones, which, upon hitting a creature or surface, create small sticky webs in a 5' diameter area (similar to a web spell but needing no anchor points, duration five turns). Once per day, a flight leader can fire shards of ice from his hand, at a creature up to 50 feet away. The shards cause 2d8 points of damage (a saving throw vs. breath weapon halves damage).

Swarm leaders have 7 Hit Dice, AC 1, and a +2 bonus on to hit and damage rolls. A swarm leader usually carries 1d3 ice javelins, which are considered to be +2 magic weapons for purposes of creatures hit only by magical weapons (though, they bear no enchantment), and which do 1d6 points of damage against small or man-size creatures and 1d8 against large-size or greater creatures. In addition, a successful hit causes the weapon to explode in a volley of icy splinters which inflict an extra 2d8 points of damage to all within 10 feet of the blast (a saving throw vs. breath weapon halves damage; creatures wearing magic armor gain a +1 bonus to save per plus of the armor).

As well as being able to fire shards of ice from their hands (cf., flight leaders), swarm leaders have the ability, once per day, to create a ray of cold. The ray is a cone 50 feet long and 20 feet wide at the base, and causes 3d8 points of damage to all creatures within it. A successful saving throw vs. breath weapon results in half damage.

A ba'atun lair will usually have a temple where bloody rites are celebrated regularly by a ba'atun high priest. The high priest has the abilities of a 7th-level

cleric and can create a ray of cold and ice shards once per day (see above). In addition to the high priest, there will be a 4th-level priest and 1d4+1 2nd-level acolytes (2+1 HD). Ba'atun clerics shave their heads, exposing the pink skin beneath. They also color their bodies with blood-red ochre to intimidate their enemies.

**Ecology:** As flying creatures, ba'atun need large amounts of animal protein to sustain themselves. They are cunning, relentless hunters and their prey seldom escapes once it has come within their sight. They favor aarakocra meat over all others.

**Ba'atun queens:** Once every generation or so, an exceptional ba'atun is born. These "albino" specimens are deemed by the ba'atun to be blessed by their deity and are always female. Queens are larger, smarter (genius intelligence) and stronger than normal ba'atun. Queens are always 9th to 15th level fighters, priests or wizards and have the following statistics: **AC 0; MV 12, Fl 24 (C); HD 9+; #AT 3; Dmg 6-11/6-9/6-9; Sz M (6'5" tall).** Queens have the ability to use ice shards, cold ray and wall of ice (as the spell) once per day. Queens are 90% likely to possess 1d4 magic items. The last such queen was Yesorkh Pahyeh.

Yesorkh Pahyeh was an "albino" with black colorations. She had the abilities of a 15th-level wizard and like all queens possessed was born with the power to possess a victim once per week as an innate ability (as a *magic jar* spell)

Using this power a queen can possess the body of any creature within 10 yards of her who fails a saving throw vs. spells.

When possessing a creature, a queen is able to cast spells as long as the possessed creature has a humanoid form. Any special abilities of the possessed creature are also usable by her. A queen is not able to call upon exact memories of the creature, but certain memories will be known to her.

Any creature possessed by a queen remains under her control until she returns to her own body. When returning to her own body, a queen's life-essence is visible as a shadow-like which moves at a speed of Fl 48 and cannot be harmed by any means. A queen can be driven from her victim by an *exorcism* spell or a *remove curse* cast by a priest of 8th level or higher. When a queen abandons a possessed body, the victim collapses in a state of shock for 1d10 turns.

**The source of the Ba'atun follows:**

**Advanced Dungeons & Dragons Official Game Adventure: Dark Clouds  
Gather (Module UK7)**

**by Jim Bambra and Phil Gallagher**

**artwork by Brian Williams**

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**New layout and editing by Steve Stewart**

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