

Mostly Harmless Meetings



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edition of Mostly
Harmless Meetings*

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Mostly Harmless Meetings

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Hello!

Welcome to Mostly Harmless Meetings, a zine of countryside encounters.

Tiring of random encounter tables, filled with monsters and treasures, orcs and gold pieces, semi-anonymous blocks of stats to be defeated and gathered up, I decided to write this collection of vignettes; of ordinary-looking creatures with strange and wonderful backstories; less violent, more whimsical, and hopefully more characterful.

The encounters listed here are largely inspired by English flora, fauna, and folklore, plus a large dose of artistic licence. I like to imagine them inhabiting a fictional version of England's Peak District, surprising the native Peakrills. Elves, dwarves and orcs have no place here. But *everyone* knows that fairies are real, that animals can talk, and that the countryside is a strange, magical place. (Incidentally, while some of the creatures here can clearly talk, you should feel free to extend this ability to the other creatures, if you feel like it).

All of these encounters are system-agnostic, no stats are given. I leave it to you to invent your own implementation details: hit points, saving throws, treasure values and the like, These will depend upon the game rules you use, the type of campaign you run, and the mood you are in.

Some of these encounters may not be appropriate for your group, for the time of day/night, or for the season or landscape in which they are encountered. Feel free to either play the encounter as it is written, use it as inspiration to improvise, or re-roll for a different result.

Some encounters also need pretty specific and unlikely actions in order to play out fully: how likely is it that the characters are going to capture a songbird and eat its heart? (Actually, in campaigns I've played, fairly likely). At your discretion, a character (either player or non-player) may be aware of some obscure piece of folklore associated with countryside plants and creatures. So drop hints if you want to.

Most of all, enjoy reading and playing!

Now, roll a d100, and read on...

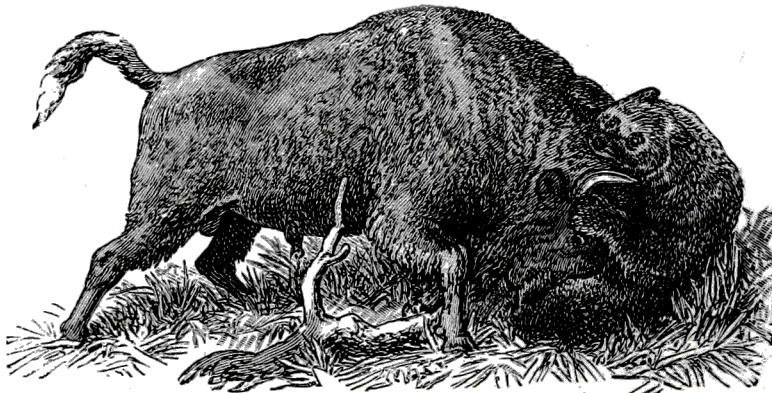
01 ANES

A huge mound crawling with large ants, black with deep red abdomens. Closer inspection reveals a line of these ants are carrying tiny splinters of gold back to their nest. There is more gold buried deep inside the mound. The ants are bringing the gold flakes out of a tiny, perfectly round hole in the ground. This hole widens, the further you dig down.

Also, the ants are edible: if you squeeze their abdomens then a sweet sticky fluid comes out. Delicious and revitalising!

02 Ash

An ash tree entwined with honeysuckle. The tree trunk is split in two. Anyone passing through the gap between the trunks will be healed of all minor ailments, and broken limbs reset. The sap of the tree can be used as a very weak healing potion.



03

Aurochs

A herd of giant cattle with huge, wide horns. They can be driven to clear a path through difficult terrain. Dead, a single auroch would make a mighty feast. Some may be brave enough to try and ride one. Did I say brave? Perhaps foolhardy would be a better word.

04

Badger

A pack of dogs surround an angry badger wearing a leather harness. The badger, Brock Burrows, will see the dogs off eventually but, if helped, will be dour yet grateful to any rescuers. Nearby is a large sett. Crawling in is difficult, but possible for all but the biggest of you. The inside is cosy as a hobbit-hole, well-stocked with food and decorated with paintings of Brock's badger ancestors.

05

Barn Owl

Erminetta Emeline, spinster owl, in white dress, shawl and bonnet, is looking for a life partner. Have you seen a chivalrous owl in a latte-brown cloak wearing a feathered cap? A fortune teller once predicted that Erminetta would meet just such a superhero, and live in eternal happiness forevermore.



06

Bats

Hundreds of bats fill the sky. Some fly just inches from you before sweeping aside. Trained thieves, they'll steal anything small and easily grabbable, e.g. jewellery, hats, small purses.



07

Bears

Bruina, a lost bear cub, sits crying on a tiny knoll. Searching the area eventually reveals a cave, its entrance draped with vines and leaves. Inside are Bruina's parents. They will be suspicious at first, but ultimately grateful.

08

Beavers

Five beavers, building a dam. The smallest of them, Dentifrice, wears a yellow hat. If supplied with tree trunks, they will gratefully carve you ornate wooden staves using their teeth, while Dentifrice stands alongside making appreciative noises.

09

Bees

A nest of wild bees buzzing around a tree. If you can drive them away, the nest is full of healing honey. Good luck doing that without getting stung! The only thing the honey will not heal is bee-stings.

10

Bilberries

A hillside covered with bilberry bushes. the longer you stop to feast here, the more vitality you restore. But that blue stain around your mouth will take days to wash away.

11

Blackbirds

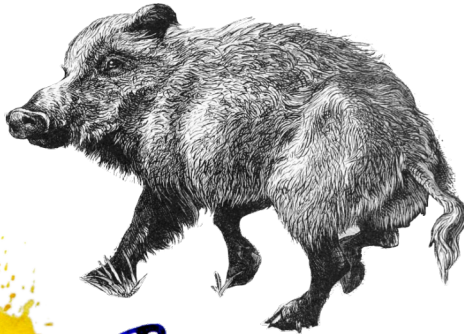
Selby Vallenvogel sits at the bottom of a tree, dressed all in green, eating a slice of black-bird pie. There's plenty to go around, for anyone who wants a slice. It tastes awful, filled with feathers. Selby, however, will pay good money for more blackbirds. Blackbirds are common but they're damned hard to catch.

12

Boar

There's a noise of snorting and stomping some way ahead of you. Investigating, you find a huge boar. It looks at you and winks, with grey-blue eyes, before trotting a short distance away.

Wherever you go, the boar will always stay just out of reach. It will clear paths straight through thick undergrowth. Occasionally, it will snuffle out truffles which, when eaten, have various effects. If you have a copy of *Fungi of the Far Realms*, from the Melsonian Arts Council, use this for inspiration; if not then the fungi will either increase or decrease, at random, one characteristic.



13

Buttercups

A field of buttercups. For every 100 gathered, you can make an actual cup of butter.

14

Butterflies

From a hole in a lightning-struck dead tree trunk emerges an endless stream of colourful butterflies, each one with a different pattern from the others. These would probably be worth a lot of money to a collector (especially if captured alive). Or you could just sit back, watch them, and appreciate their beauty.

15

Carnival

Dozens of animals, of several different types, dancing around and around in a circle. You may wish to roll on this table multiple times to determine which types of animal are there; species normally antagonistic to one another will gladly dance together in peace.

As soon as any one of them spots you, they all freeze. All eyes turn to you. If you move away they all start dancing again, but whenever you move back towards them they will freeze once more. If you get too close then the party breaks up and they all go running off in different directions. Left at the circle's centre is a chair-sized rock which pulses with a pleasant warmth.

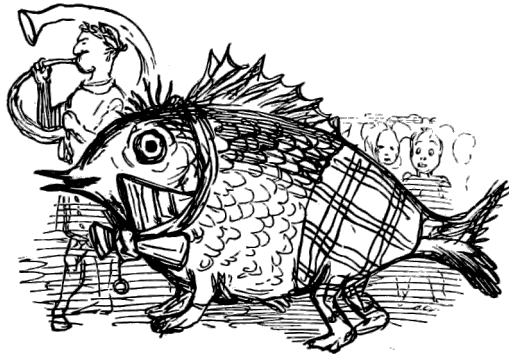


16

Carp

A carp lies marooned in the grass, a fish out of water. Its mouth is opening and closing slowly, as though it's trying to tell you something.

If placed back in water it will swim away, singing "don't worry, be happy" in a cheery voice. Hearing such spirited singing, you cannot help but feel better about yourself.



In all probability something of this sort.

17

Cockroaches

Cockroaches. Everywhere. Horrible things.

18

Crows

Two crows take it in turns to fly up high then drop something small down onto a rock below. It's a ruby, slightly scuffed.



19 Deer

An ancient stag with a cherry tree growing out of its head, right between its antlers. It would be a shame to shoot it, but venison and cherry sauce... it's just *such* a tasty treat.

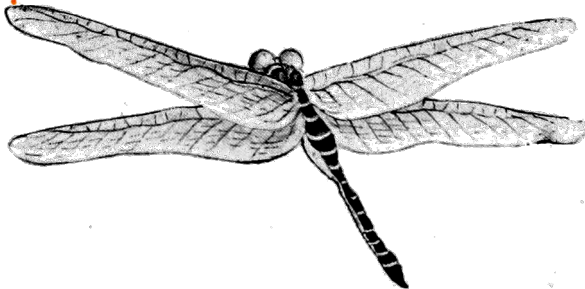


20 Dove

A dove flies down, and hands (beaks?) you a willow branch. Anyone holding this branch can walk on water.

21 Dragonflies

A pair of dragonflies flit from perch to perch, occasionally breathing fire. If you can capture one and keep it fed on insects, it makes a charming alternative to a tinder box, as well as a fascinating conversation-starter.

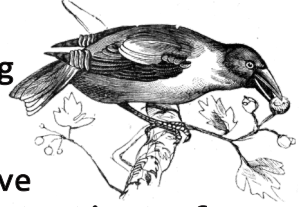


22

Finches

Two finches, green and red, cracking fat walnuts with their beaks.

They're flighty, fleeing quickly at the slightest disturbance. They leave behind them a tottering pile of the *tastiest* of nuts.

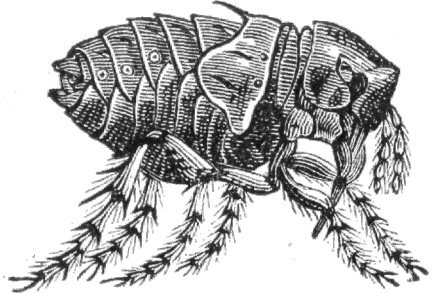


23

Flea

"Hey! Hey, you! Yes, you, lofty! Wanna know the prince's darkest secrets?"

At first, the voice appears to come from nowhere. It takes some search to find the talking flea inside your underwear. The flea is an incorrigible gossip, passing on all manner of stories about the people it has lived upon. Some are even true.



24

Forget-me-nots

A patch of forget-me-nots. Resting among them improves your memory for several days.

25

Foxes

Four foxes, wearing hunting clothes, sat around a dining table. Most of the food is unpalatable, some even poisonous to humans. But there is a blue Spode serving dish full of parsnips, buttered and roasted in honey. The parsnips make the eater stronger, but also cause them to fart frequently and intensely. The smell... *the smell!*



26

Frogs

Three frog fops—Artorio Groak, Fensome Ribblet and Cranmer Belch—are holding a singing contest. They ask you to judge a winner. If you refuse they accuse you of being lowly riff-raff, and hop off offishly.

If you agree to judge, the winner will be very grateful. For a few hours, at least. The losers will plot against you. Wars have been started over less!



27

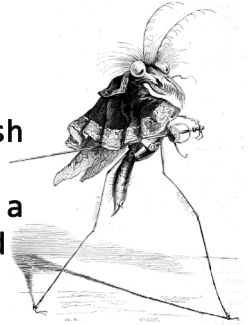
Glow-worms

A panoply of glow worms seem to float above you, bobbing up and down in the darkened sky. They're about thirty feet up, and a fine net and a very long lob might capture some. They could be used as a natty alternative to a regular torch.

28

Gnat

A gnat the size of a human, wearing rakish clothes, strides up with a gangly gait. Buster Bizzyneste hopes to hitch up with a group of adventurers. Buster is loyal and bold beyond measure, but has an exaggerated sense of chivalry which can soon become tiresome.



29

Goshawk

A giant goshawk prowls the skies, alert to any motion. Hide your pets and gnomes, or the hawk may well conclude they'd make an ideal meal.

30

Grass Snake

A long green slinky snake stretched out lethargically. Half-hidden in the grass, it's enjoying a spot of sun. A major trip hazard, each person or beast walking over it is at risk of taking a fall.

31 Grouse

Three giant grouse form a semi-circle, strutting as though they own the place. They do, and if you make a sudden move you'll find them hurling themselves, all feathers flapping fast, directly in your face. Something on the feathers triggers sneezing fits, which will recur any time the sufferer gets close-up to a bird.

32 Gulls

Noisy seagulls wheel and dip above you in the air. Their droppings rain down, and splatter the ground with white patches. This guano is a mild irritant.

Whenever you sleep after seeing the gulls you will dream of being carried out to sea. The dream-gulls show you distant, ancient shipwrecks, filled with old-world treasure watched over by wraiths unimagined by anyone living today.



33

Hare

A hare nests in a hollow hidden just before your feet. It shoots out, surprising you, unbalancing you. It runs in a wide arc one-hundred yards across, and then stops, staring back at you with crimson eyes.



If killed, the hare makes an adequate meal, but incomprehensible pools of blood drain out of it as it's butchered. More blood than any animal ought to contain. Anyone handling the body will be covered in bloodstains for weeks and weeks.

34

Harvestman

Gerd Opilio, a huge harvestman (don't say spider!) strides towering high on stilts, herding a flock of goats. Gerd is a friendly soul, with a bag full of sweetmeats, and will gladly trade goats for trinkets. The goats, however, are unbearable, any time they're away from Gerd.



35

Hawthorn

An old hawthorn tree, blown sideways by the wind. Its trunk lies parallel with and just inches above the ground.

Pressed into the tree are hundreds of coins, coins from all the ages, all denominations and designs. A significant amount of money could be prised from the tree, but this theft invites a curse which grows with every coin retrieved.

On the other hand, hammering a new type of currency into the tree grants a minor wish, its strength depending largely upon the rarity and value of the loot.



36

Hazel

A twisting hazel tree, surrounded by nuts. Anyone nibbling these nuts will gain a snippet of intelligence.

Living in the tree are Chit and Kerncrak, a pair of erudite squirrels. They've consumed so many nuts in their lifetime that they know almost everything. Their favourite pastime is discussing obscure philosophy.

37

Heather

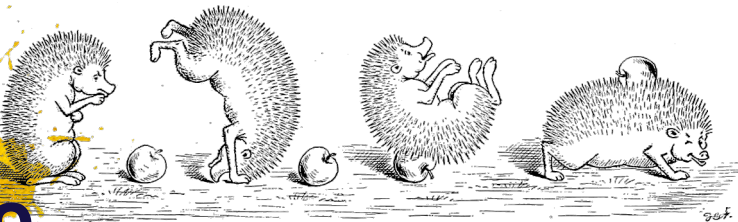
Swards of heather, ten-feet deep, and purple as an emperor. You must leap from tuft to tuft or fall into a forest of woody stalks.

38

Hedgehog

A ball a yard's diameter rolls erratically through the countryside. It can easily be stopped, and will be seen to consist of tatty scraps of paper: reward posters, promissory notes, shopping lists, love letters, and more.

The ball is, in fact, a hedgehog, Spike, papers stuck to his quills.. Spike is curled-up and very sleepy. Peeling away the paper which surrounds him will make him very peeved at being disturbed.



39

Hemlock

A swathe of hemlock, chest-high plants with tiny white umbellifer flowers. Anyone not familiar with this deadly poisonous plant is liable to mistake it for tasty parsley.

40

Hoverflies

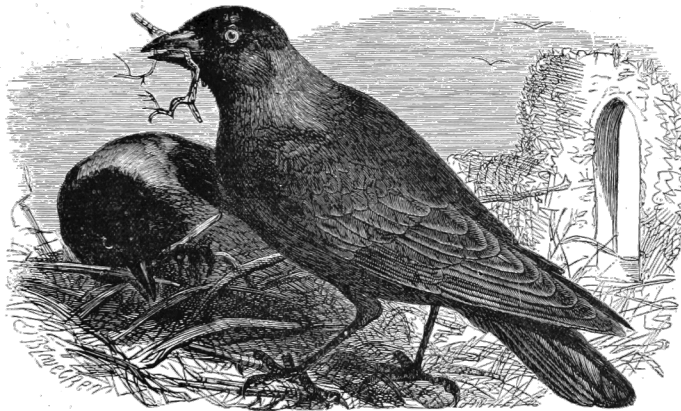
A swarm of bees approaches, and and will harry you wherever you go.

Allow them to get close and they will land upon and gently lick you, thousands of little tickly tongues. It turns out that they are not bees, they are harmless hoverflies.

41

Jackdaws

A multitude of beady-eyed black birds are pecking in the soil. The worms they're pulling from the ground are elastic and quite long. You could use them as bungee cords, at a stretch.



42

Jays

Three jays are burying something. It's not acorns.

43

Kestrel

A kestrel orientates itself like a hovering compass in the sky. It always points the same direction, towards the source of your true desire.

44

Lammergeier

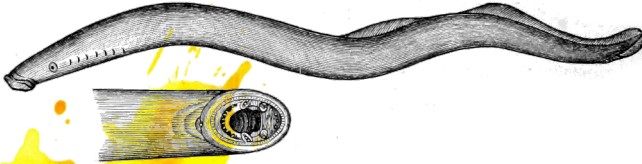
A huge vulture, a lammergeier, rides the thermals high, high, high up overhead. If anything's killed the 'geier glides down, to peck and squelch inside the carcass.



45

Lampreys

Three eel-like creatures writhe rapidly across the ground. Their unholy teeth-filled maws are terrifying, they're so very very ugly. They'll clamp onto you or your pack animals, but they're not after your blood. All they really want is to be returned to swim somewhere in a body of water.



46

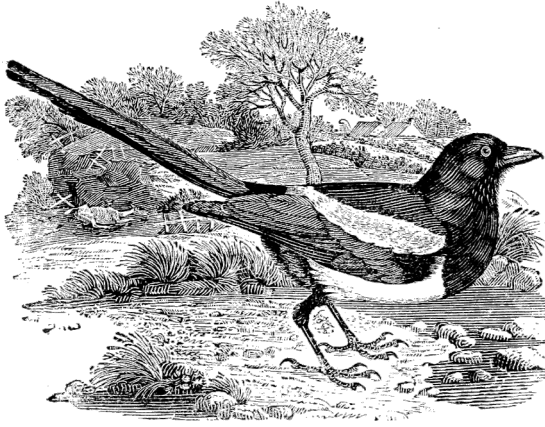
Lichen

Green bushy lichen, covering everything and quivering, even when there is no wind. If soaked in water and shaken dry it slowly turns blood red, and can be stored & used to staunch wounds.

47

Lizard

A lizard basking in the tepid rays of sun that settle on a stone wall. It darts into a crack if it's disturbed. It turns out all the cracks within this wall contain some kind of trinket.



48

Magpies

Roll d8

1 *One for sorrow*

You become unaccountably, inconsolably melancholy. Whenever something bad happens to someone or something around you, describe how you feel. If you witness a death, you are beside yourself with grief. If you cause one, you shake with sadness, unable even to see straight.

2 *Two for mirth*

You become unaccountably, irrepressibly euphoric. Whenever something good happens to someone or something around you, describe how you feel. Seeing random acts of kindness makes you beside yourself with joy. Being kind yourself makes you cry with laughter, unable to even see straight.

3 *Three for a funeral*

Somebody's going to die soon, right? Probably within 4 hours. It could be you, I cannot say.

4 *Four for a birth*

Your belly swells up and within 4 hours new life emerges from you. I can't say what kind of a creature it will be, but it's bound to have feathers.

5 *Five for heaven*

Ecstatic visions enfold you. Take a boost to your morale.

6 *Six for hell*

Abominable visions enclose you. Take a hit to your morale.

7 *Seven for the devil, his own self*

Do I need to explain this any further?

8 *Maggieeddon!*

Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds*. Birds, birds, birds, everywhere, in your face and in your hair. Terrifying.

49

Mice

Mice have been eating your supplies. If you catch one and feed it posh cheese then it may become your pet. It will bring you luck.

50

Midges

Thick clouds of midges, very like that marsh in The Lord of The Rings. Impossible to concentrate, just itching and swatting the things away. They really are quite awful.

51

Moles

A string of dead moles hang from a bush, apparently a deterrent to others of their species.

I've no idea why you'd want to do this, but if you wear them as a necklace then your feet become capable of feeling vibrations from any source of movement within a mile. In an urban environment this gives you very itchy feet. Plus, of course, anyone who smells your stinky necklace will retch and give you a very wide berth.

Fig. 1.

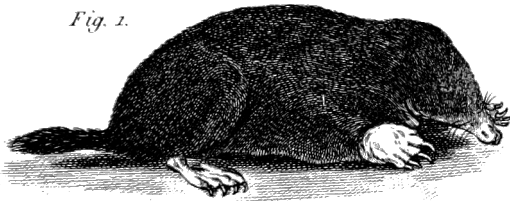


Fig. 3.

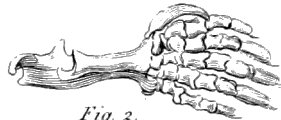


Fig. 2.



52

Mosquitoes

There are mosquitoes in these parts; many, many mosquitoes. Some are as big as your hand, while others are so small that they're almost invisible. Roll for mosquito size on a d4: 1 tiny / 2 normal / 3 large / 4 terrifying.

Once a mozzie lands, you've got five seconds to swat it off before it inflicts a bite. Its bite will itch to buggery.

- Anything that you swat it with will have a creepy bloodstain on forevermore.



53

Moss

Varieties of sphagnum moss in all the colours of the rainbow. If you jump up and down, they're all bouncy and make a noise that's something like "schloop, schloop-schloop!"



54

Moths

Clothes moths. Unnoticeable until small holes start to appear in your clothing and baggage. Soon, everything begins to fall apart.

55

Newt

A giant, orange-crested newt which burps up gems when its belly is tickled.

56

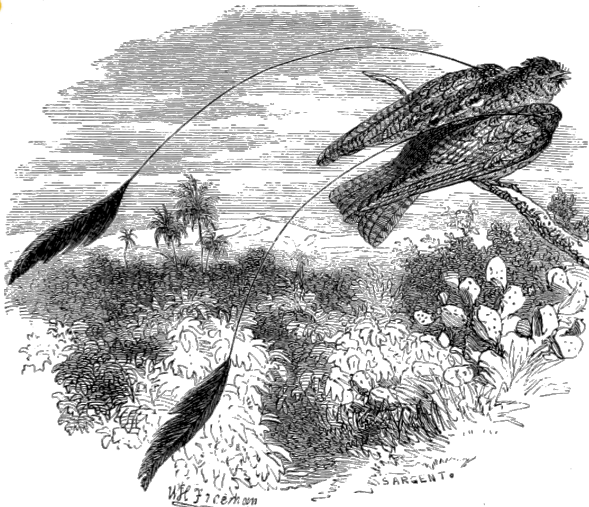
Nightingale

A nightingale sings. Its song is hypnotic. It's hard to resist following the heartbreaking melody, deeper and deeper into dark and danger.

57

Nightjars

The eerie sound of several nightjars (“goatsuckers”) calling from the distance, a hollow “chonk, chonk, chonk”. Anyone who hears them becomes just a teeny-tiny bit more eccentric, and feels like sucking goats.



THE GOATSUCKER.

58

Oak

A circle of twisted, ancient oaks. Creeping up the trees and within the circle are carpets of soft, thick moss, unnaturally, soothingly green. This place has a good, *good* feeling.

It's difficult not to sleep here, even when you strive to stay awake. The next day you'll feel invigorated, better than you have in years.

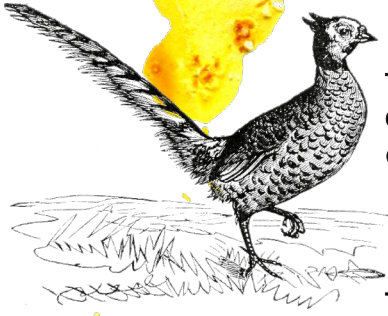
In the night, fairies play practical jokes, a different one on every person sleeping. You may find your shoelaces tied together; hair plaited with nettles or braided with somebody else's; clothes may be swapped, or altered with incredibly dainty needlework. Sleeve-ends may be sewn up, gussets removed or tightened; the words "KICK ME" or "I'M A DOLT" embroidered in finepoint on somebody's back.

A very detailed search reveals fairies, sleeping in acorn cups, strewn among the trees.



59

Pheasants



Half-a-dozen giant pheasants, pecking the ground for something to eat. Extremely stupid, they're easy to catch, and once caught can be eaten. One pheasant makes a feast for fifty people.

You could also try to ride one, they don't seem to mind. But getting them to follow directions is far from easy.

60

Pike

A pike is buried, head-first in the ground. *Why?*



61

Pine Marten

Doctor Phantopholous P. Conifer, carrying a valise, wearing a stetson and stethoscope. The doctor's on an urgent call-out, but could be persuaded to look at your ailments, if you *really* think it's necessary.

62

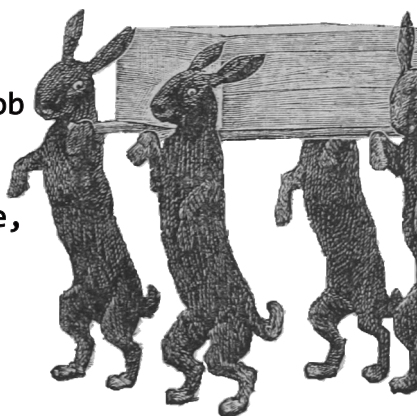
Pony

A pony the size of an elephant, but it only moves at the speed of a duck. It can carry all your belongings without breaking a sweat.

63

Rabbits

Four rabbits carry a coffin. Flopsy, Mopsy, Cottontail and Grob are off to bury their cousin Peter. They demand that you play a suitable tune. No not *that* tune, Peter *hated* that.



64

Rats

Thirteen rats lie dead on the ground. Their tails, all twisted together, spell a word of power. When copied, by scratching it into bare earth, it summons King Rat who does one rat-like favour for whomever summoned it.

65

Raven

A majestic raven is, in fact, the monarch Hopkirk Fawley. Imprisoned in bird form a thousand years, if attacked or captured Hopkirk will strike any bargain for freedom. Hopkirk knows the location of long-forgotten silver and gems, buried with the worms beneath a cornfield.

66

Red kites

Four red kites circle above, scavenging for food. If fed on scraps, they'll each give up a feather, which gives the gift of faltering flight.

67

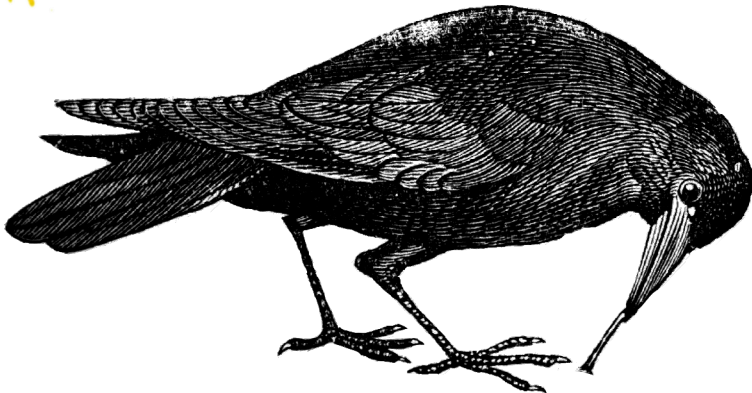
Robin

Sir Roger Redbreast, Robin, Esquire. Roger is extremely short-sighted, and even more extremely territorial. He hurls himself at anything red. These attacks are harmless but, still, incredibly annoying.

68

Rooks

237 rooks land in a tree nearby. The noise is deafening. Anyone within half-a-mile can communicate only in sign-language.



69

Rowan

An ancient rowan tree, festooned with ripe red berries. Sticks cut from this tree will prevent food and drink from spoiling when used as a stirrer. If the stick still has berries attached then, while grasped in the hand, it provides a very small amount of protection from evil... until the berries fall off.

If you do not politely ask the tree before cutting its wood then its spirit will place a curse on you.

70

Shape

A huge dark shape glides overhead. That's it.

71

Sheep

A flock of sheep. They look up at you briefly and tut, as though they know exactly what you're about.

Upstream is the festering corpse of a ram. Putting on its skull confers the power of premonition.

72

Shrike

A copse of blackthorn trees. Insects and small animals still twitch, impaled upon the thorns. The copse is home to a pair of shrike or "butcher birds". They're feisty things and will fly, fluttering, into your face, driving you closer and closer to the thorns...

73

Skylark



A skylark flying high over the countryside. Anyone who concentrates can meld minds with the lark, scrying the landscape for miles around.

74

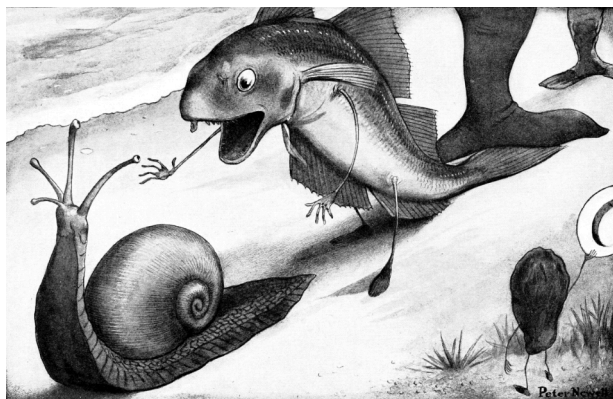
Slow worm

A snake slithers out from under a rock. Except... it's not a snake, it's a slow worm. Anyone who kills it is cursed with bad luck.

75

Snails

Two snails are having a race, moving so fast you can barely see them both for slime. Walking on the slime slows your movement, but does allow you to walk up walls until you wash your shoes.



76

Sparrowhawks

Two sparrowhawks chase a bird with stunning rainbow feathers, feathers like nothing nobody never seen before. In an instant they catch the bird, eat it, and then fly away. Left on the ground are a fan of fabulous feathers, worth silly money to a feather collector.

77

Sparrows

Seven sooty sparrow miners troop up out of the ground. They sport hard-hats with torches glued to the front.

The sparrows offer coal in exchange for grain. Surprisingly for their species, these sparrows are terrified of heights, and love their life below the ground. Hi-ho!



78

Spider

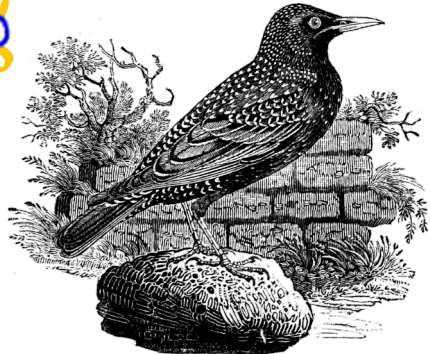
Grimly Fiendish, a spider, sits inside a web. Grimly tips a top hat to you and bows down low. You are offered a fly.

The flies are remarkably tasty: sweet and nutty, creamy and smooth, and more revivifying than their size would suggest. Grimly will gladly repair any clothing or bags you may have, provided you procure an endless supply of flies.

79

Starling

A starling imitates machines that will not be around for another thousand years. Sounds a bit like freeform techno. If you dance to it, you'll impress the starling, but nobody else.



80

Stoat

Langley Smooter, the world's longest stoat, wears a jauntily-angled bowler hat. Langley's head and forelegs pass by, but it takes a full five minutes of body before their hind legs arrive. As Langley disappears into the distance you hear a tiny fart. Toot-toot!



81

Sundew

A giant sundew, a flesh-dissolving plant, has d8 random small beasts and birds stuck to its dewy surface.

82

Swallows

A flight of swallows, swooping and dipping, to-and-fro.

Inside each swallow's body are two tiny stone-like balls. The red one cures insanity, while the black brings luck. But killing one of these speedy birds makes you frighteningly susceptible to fire: just standing too close to a flame may make your hair catch alight!

83

Swans

Seven graceful birds are looking for advice. They weren't always swans, and would like to know how they can regain their geesey former forms. Life as a goose was just so much more fun than life as a swan. Swan society is unbearable, swans are so stuck-up.



84

Tawny owl

An owl calls from a nearby tree, followed by one further away, then another. Follow the sound of the calls and you will see an owl flying backwards. It lands in a hole high up in a tree. Buried beneath the tree is a gold tablet bearing the inscription "nobody gives a hoot".

85

Thrush

A song thrush perches on the highest branch of a pine tree, singing the tune of the first subject of Mozart's symphony in G-minor. There is no suggestion of unauthorised accent on the ninth note of the phrase. Whatever that means!

86

Ticks

You feel an itch just above your ankle. Reaching down to scratch it, you see d6 fat blobs dug into your leg and sucking blood. If you pull them straight out then they won't prove a problem, but try to twist or burn them and you'll only end up hurting yourself, and risking an infection.

87

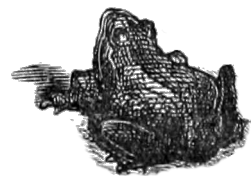
Tits

A pair of blue tits twittering around the trees. *Stop laughing at the back:* these birds' name is short for "titmouse", and is not as funny as you think. Although if you feed fat balls to the tits, you'll feel mildly euphoric for the rest of the day.

88

Toad

A toad blocks the way ahead. Horses and pack animals will not approach it, and act skittishly for the entire day after seeing it.



89

Treecreepers

A flash of brown and white. Two treecreepers are winding their way up an oak tree, pecking grubs from under the bark as they go. One turns and... you could almost swear it winks at you.

They nest inside a tiny hole, far, far up the trunk. The hole is, in fact, a portal to another dimension, although you'd have to get your face up pretty close to figure this out. Doing so would risk something other-dimensional flying straight out into your eye.

90

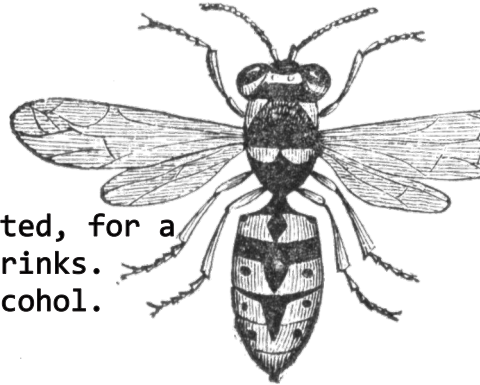
Vole

A vole wearing a monocle sticks its head out of its hole. "Can you keep it down out there?" asks Molesworth Voluté.

91

Wasps

Dozens of wasps, drunken and rowdy. They want to sting, just for the sheer sake of stinging. They may be distracted, for a while, with sugary food and drinks. Or, even better, with more alcohol.



92

Weasel

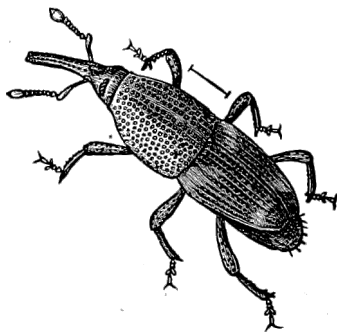
A weasel trips and floofs across the ground ahead. It looks ridiculous. With erratic, irrational movements, a ginger, white and black motley, and its fluffy tail, it looks more suited to being an entertainer at a child's party.

A children's entertainer is, in fact, exactly what the weasel is. Maybelline Mustelaint is late for Corvey Floodwick's fourth birthday party, and is becoming more and more stressed. Can you help Maybelline make it there quicker?

93

Weevils

Your rations are full of weevils. The food is still, barely, edible. In fact, the weevils may provide some extra protein. But the crawling writhing mass makes you feel just a little bit sick.



94

Whale

The skeleton of some behemoth lies upon on the ground. How on earth can it have got here?

Further investigation reveals another, human skeleton inside what must once have been its stomach. A collector would pay a few coins each for the bones of the beast, or a fortune for the entire thing, if only it could be transported in one piece.

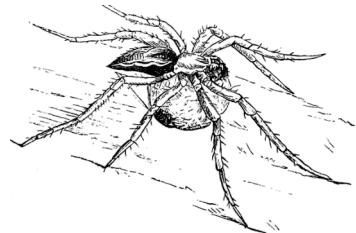
If magic is used to speak to the human skeleton, they tell a tragic tale of shipwreck on a far off island with a fountain. The island sank beneath the waves: turns out it was the whale.

95

Windmills

Everywhere, monsters, attacking you! You fight and fight and fight and fight them, somehow always *just* avoiding death.

After an unspecified amount of time, you realise that the "monsters" were just funny-looking rocks, huge erratics left here by an ice-age long ago. Any damage taken during the fight is restored.



96

Wolf spider

A wolf spider, with a large egg-sac attached beneath its abdomen. It is pursuing a flock of 60 sheep spiders.

The sheep spiders can be shorn for their tiny fleeces. Shearing them all will give enough wool to make a waistcoat for a weasel.

97

Wolves

Two wolf cubs, mewling, gosh they're cute! The parents are nowhere to be found. If adopted, the wolves learn to speak human languages, and go on to found a city. Or, perhaps, a football club.

98

Woodpecker

There must be woodpeckers in the trees nearby, you can hear them knocking. Whenever you approach one though, it stops, and the knocking resumes from somewhere else.

Anyone prepared to follow the knocks for an hour, climb high enough, and search for a *long* long time, can probably find a woodpecker's hole. Inside: a wooden carving of a maggot. The maggot gives its holder the ability to utterly disgust someone, once per day.

99

Wren

The king of birds, the wren, sings from a branch. Its call is almost deafening, making it impossible to hear conversation or anything else. It's also very annoying.



If hunted or harried, the wren can rapidly summon thousands of assorted small birds to come to its aid. In fact, it might even summon them just for fun.

00

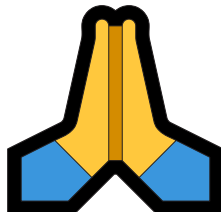
Writer

The writer Daniel Sumption is making a catalogue of animals and plants. Have you seen any that are not already in the catalogue?

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Everyone involved in #SideQuest 2021 for inspiration, courage and support.



In loving memory of Toto Bow Sumption, 2009-2022
(mostly harmless)





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