

DIFFERENT SPECIES OF DRAGON.  
WESTERN DRAGONS.

While it is likely that all of these Western dragon species are closely related, the keen dragonologist will note a number of interesting differences between them. For example, while the rich flame of the European dragon is produced from a combustible venom [see Chapter III], that of the knucker does not ignite at all. Frost dragon venom, on the other hand, sprayed in a mist through Arctic air, has a corrosive action that is similar in almost every respect to the effects of frostbite.

UNLIKE most reptiles, Western dragons spend much time caring for their egg-incubated young after they hatch, and a firm bond develops quickly between chick and parent.

*No doubt but there is none other beeste comparable to the mightie dragon in awesome power and majestic, and few so worthe of the diligent studies of wise men—Gildas Magnus, Ars Draconis, 1465.*

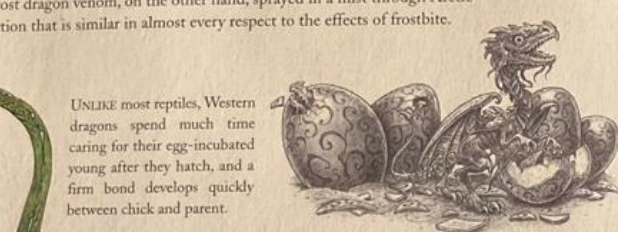


WHILE some authorities claim the knucker is simply a junior form of the European dragon, this is almost certainly not the case. Indeed, its preference for damp holes and low-lying locations is in contrast to that of their larger cousins who prefer rocky, mountain areas. Also, although knuckers do hoard treasure, they will attack with venom rather than fire.



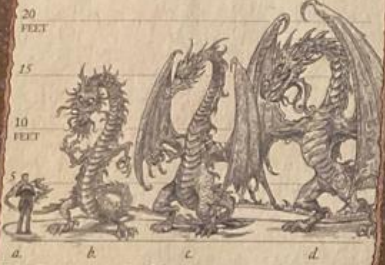
**KNUCKER** *Draco troglodytes*  
FOUND in damp, wealden locations, near food sources such as rabbit warrens. Serpentine in appearance these creatures have only vestigial wings and cannot fly.

LAIR OR NEST—A deep pond, well or 'knucker hole'. DIMENSIONS [ADULT]—30 feet long; 3 to 6 feet high. COLORATION—Leathery brown, dull red, greenish blue. FORMS OF ATTACK—Venomous bite, constriction. FOOD—Rabbits, deer, farm animals, stray children.



PROMINENT features of the European dragon:  
a. 'arrowhead' tail—hardened for use in fighting  
b. thick spines c. large bat-like wings  
d. clawed talons e. scales f. horns  
g. fanged teeth b. eyes—all dragons have a truly phenomenal sense of sight

THE somewhat perilous science of dragometry— or dragon measurement—has few living exponents. However, we can assert that adult wyverns are the tallest of dragons, standing some 20 feet or so in height, as may be seen in the following diagram.



**EUROPEAN** *Draco occidentalis magnus*  
KNOWN to most people through their ability to breathe fire and their love of treasure, this species is now confined to a few remote areas. Effective at using language, they shed their skins triennially.

LAIR OR NEST—A mountain or sea cave in a remote area. DIMENSIONS [ADULT]—45 feet long; 13 to 17 feet high. COLORATION—Red, green, black or occasionally gold. FORMS OF ATTACK—Flame, tail, claws, horns. FOOD—Cattle, sheep, humans [the latter only if no other food available—due to bitter flavour].



**FROST** *Draco occidentalis maritimus*  
ANNUAL Arctic—Antarctic migrators, frost dragons fly thousands of miles each year to ensure that they spend the greater part of the year in their favoured dark, winter climates hunting for food.

LAIR OR NEST—A sea-facing cave hollowed out from a glacier or iceberg. DIMENSIONS [ADULT]—40 feet long; 12 to 15 feet high. COLORATION—Pure white, or white tinged with blue or pink. FORMS OF ATTACK—Fearsome 'frosty blast', tail, claws, horns. FOOD—Giant squid, polar bear, orca, walrus, leopard seal.

