

MUILEARTACHA

**I yam glad she ain't dead even if she is a exter bad woman.
If they wasn't no bad women, maybe we wouldn't appreciate the good ones.
Anyway, she yam what she yam!"**
- Popeye the Sailor Man

Quote: Greetings, kind sir- could you help an old fish-wife pull in her nets? The catch is good this fine day, but my wee arms aren't as big as yours are, to be sure.

Female to a one of them, there is one ancient Tribe of aquatic Hags that are as feared as any sea-serpent, kraken, or other beast of the deep. The Muileartacha are sea hags and manifestations of the sea's cruelty. While their ancient crone mother was a Goddess of the Sea who could be placated with offerings, these briny beasts will eat the offerings and then consume the poor souls who offer. Thallain to a one of them, they are feared by Outlander Fae of the outer Celtic Lands, who eke their living from the sea. Fishermen, sailors, and the numerous aquatic Hyberborean Kith: all are subject to this Sea Hag's dark appetites.

Capable of transforming into a great scaly sea-monster (appearing different for every one of them) they prowl the cold waters of the Celtic Outlands in search of fat seals, stray sharks, or other savorier fare. This often puts them at odds with the aforementioned aquatic Fae of Hyberborea (Such as Nuckalavee and Fir Gorma), but those kith are wise not to put up too much of a fight. In the darkest and coldest reaches of the deep, everyone can be on the menu, and the hunter can swiftly become the hunted if the next monster is bigger.

Sobriquet: Sea hags.

Appearance: In all Mien the Muileartacha are women with wide staring eyes. Though the Mortal Mien appears little different from any other strange filly of the Celtic Lands. Some run on the shorter side, and many are a little pale, but otherwise there is no secret means to deduce their true nature.

The Fae Mien is similar to their Mortal, but tends to exaggerate their features. Shorter girls become short and dumpy with thick sausage fingers. More slender girls become willowy long and thin with long spidery fingers and toes meant for snatching. They are big eyed, or small eyed, big mouthed with lots of teeth, or small beaky mouths with hooked noses. Despite the variations of the theme, they are still simply Fae creatures, and it is difficult to ascertain their Kith.



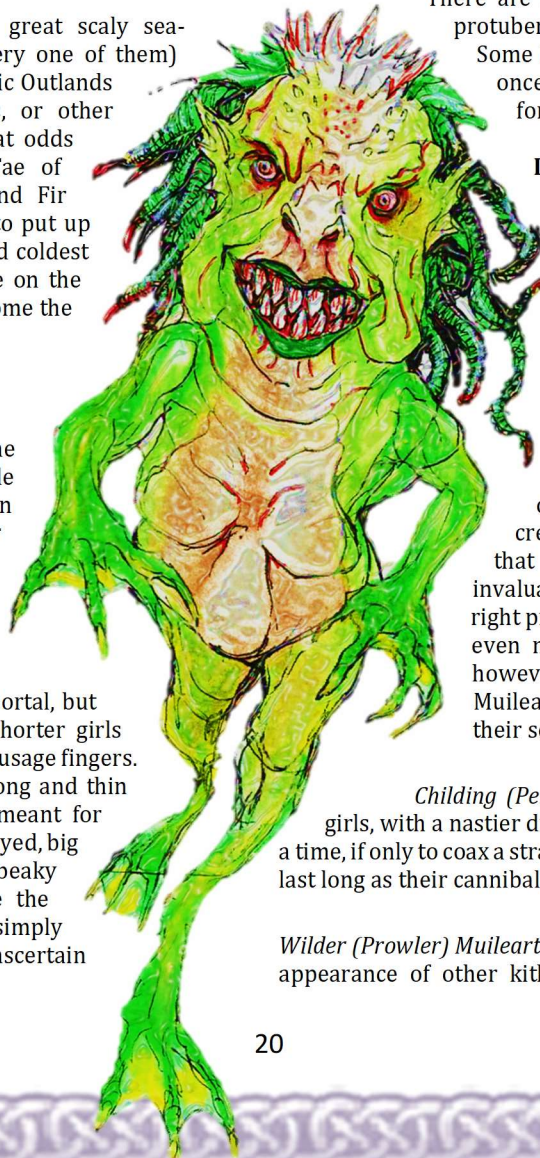
And then there is the sea-monster mien. Once they get in the cold salty deep, and transform, it grows fiendishly wretched and now is complete with all the traits that make a sea-monster so terrible. It takes those aforementioned themes and runs away with them. Those thick sausage fingers are even bigger and club-like, webbed and scaly. Those spidery fingers and toes are wiggly and dexterous, like tentacles. The whole of the body is covered with thick scales, all mottled and green and dead-fish colored. There are spikes, or scales, or thin needle-like protuberances that cover the whole body. Some have a tail. Some don't. The focus is, once again, on the sheer ugly terror this form invokes.

Lifestyle: Muileartacha maintain distance from most everyone. In their mortal lives, humans know "not to go mess with that old biddy what lives in the shack on the beach." They are distrustful of strangers, and even those few who claim them as friends prefer to communicate by meetings far away from the Sea hag's home turf - it just seems safer that way.

When it comes to dealings with other Fae, the Muileartacha live by one credo "Is it a next meal?" That isn't to say that a Muileartacha couldn't prove to be invaluable for a motley of others. For the right price, they can serve as guides, advisors, even mentors. That price is usually steep, however, and few are willing to meet a Muileartacha's demands in exchange for their services.

Childing (Perturbed) Muileartacha are nasty little girls, with a nastier disposition. They may feign gentility for a time, if only to coax a stranger closer to the water. But it doesn't last long as their cannibalistic nature takes over.

Wilder (Prowler) Muileartacha often take the time to play up the appearance of other kith. Short and pudgy ones may claim



Boggan as their Kith, the willowy ones Sluagh. The most attractive of them (a rarity in itself) may even claim Sidhe. Again, this doesn't last long under scrutiny.

Grump (Miser) Muileartacha are the most patient. They can swim deep deep below the choppy cold waves and wait. And they can wait a very long time if need be.

Glamour ways: Muileartacha prefer hot Glamour from those frightened folks caught in the cold Hungry Waves but are also aware of tiny fonts of natural Glamour deep below. Called Grottoes in Sea-Speech, the smart Muileartacha is careful when utilizing these hot-spots. Plenty of Rokea and other sea-beasts also visit them.

Unleashing: Cantrips cast by the Muileartacha carry with them the pungent miasma of rotten fish and kelp, and a cold clammy wind that blows across the scene.

Affinity: Nature

Birthrights (Endowments):

Sea Beasts: The Muileartacha may seem normal when on land, but once in the water, they can let their true selves shine. When standing in the sea, they can shed their Mien and appear as their true self- the dripping, kelpy, scaly sea-hags of legend.

They lose appearance in this form (based on seeming, Perturbed -1, Prowlers -2, and Misers -3), but gain teeth and claws that do Str +2 damage.

In addition, they spend one glamour to shape-shift into an even greater and scaliere scaled amalgamation of piscine horror and hag-headed sea-beast. Every Muileartacha's appearance is as different as the next, with colors, textures, and number of fins or tentacles. The stats in this form are Str+2, Dex +3, Sta +4, and Per +2 (but only down in the dark briny deep).

Frailty (Vulnerabilites):

Hot Cravings: Bloodthirsty Monsters each and all, the Muileartacha are dependent on warm flesh and blood for sustenance. While more mundane sea fare is usually enough to keep the hunger at bay, at least once a month, the craving for sentient flesh becomes unbearable. Dependant on Seeming, a

certain amount of meat (mortal, fae, or otherwise) must be imbibed. Perturbed must eat at least 3 times a month, Prowlers twice, and Misers, as patient as they are, can get by on at least one sentient meal a month. Skipping such a meal garners them a point of temporary Banality. But many Muileartacha never really have to worry about that, there are plenty of dupes near the water...

Old Doona beckons from the bracken; she'll fill you in on all the gossip if you but come a bit closer...

Bugganes: They think they're so tough up there on the land, get one along the shoreline and we'll duke it out halfway...

Effigies: We know hunger, they know madness, they're similar, but not the same...

Finmen: Old magicks, they have. Older than even us. Eat 'em if you think it's safe, but steer clear otherwise.

Fir Gorma: They claim the reason for staying close to the surface is to better cling at the keels of passing ships. The truth is they're afraid of us what are down deep...

Glashtyn: The whole of the Kiths think us monsters for eating the wee ones, but what these blue bonnie bairns do is far worse... They're nice to folk.

Grey-neighbours: There's monsters like us, who admit that we're going to eat you. And then there's monsters like this, who stare with wide-open eyes and drawl on about how they'll let you go. Which one would you rather get caught by?

Grigs: It takes a whole handful to make a proper pop-over. And the whole time you're trying to fold them into the crust, they're singing all sorts of buggery nonsense. Sometimes I wonder if they're worth it.

Gunna: Liars and thieves, and not nearly as clever as they make themselves out to be.

Gyl: Annoying ass little poppets that dance and skip across our waves chasing after a lover. If I'd ever catch one, I'd put 'em out of their misery something quick.

Nuckalavee: Of course they think they're the biggest and meanest. They always are until we get in there with them.

Sea bishop: Nasty holier-than-thou bible-spewing jack-anapes. Eat their face first, so's as to not hear their prayers.

River Hags: Peg and Meg and Jenny Green-Teeth, a bunch of wicked tarts what gots Concordia all up in arms. Keep in mind, that there's a reason they prefer the shallow rivers and all. It's their afearing of us out in the brine.