



SALANEK, SPIRIT OF THE DUNES

Long has it been said that the dunes of the desert possess a sort of sentience, a rhythmic pattern in their motions that speaks to the will of the desert itself. Those who travel the rolling waves of the sands know that in that sea of orange and yellow lies a beating heart.

The name Salanek dates back centuries, before the founding of the modern cities that dot the landscape. Long before man or beast sought to tame these harsh environs, the spirit of the dunes roamed shaping the sands to its will.

Some of the first mentions of Salanek tell only of a sandstorm, more harsh than any they had previously seen. Violent winds howl, clouds of orange blot out the sun, and the air becomes thick and choking with particulates. Being in the midst of Salanek's storm is like nothing most have ever experienced and living through it is never a guarantee.

The storm around this elemental stretches for miles and brings devastation to the areas it passes through. Many do their best to hide and hope that the spirit itself will spare their property. Those who are surprised by it

and caught out in exposed areas often don't survive to tell the tale.

Many denizens of the desert seek to appease Salanek, making offerings to it in hopes it will spare their villages and their crops. Some even go so far as to clad themselves in scaled robes and worship Salanek looking to gain a modicum of its power, should it grant them its favor.

What most who would worship Salanek fail to realize is that it cares little for the machinations of man. The dunes are the home and domain of this ancient being. It will shape them to its desire whether that means sparing or razing a population in the process.

Speculation around what this ancient serpent desires should always be taken with caution. Some swear that there are patterns to the moves it makes in the dunes, while others view it only as coincidence. Theories about the beasts' origins are equally shrouded in uncertainty and conjecture.

You may hear the elders talk of the "winding will" referring to the way Salanek moves through the desert. For those that use that term, they have simply accepted that perhaps there is no greater meaning. The will of the serpent is merely what it desires at the moment.

TACTICS

This gargantuan beast is an absolute nightmare for any that wish to fight it. Ranged weaponry is nearly useless in the storm and getting close enough to fight the creature is a difficult task with its ability to burrow.

- Salanek prefers to move below the sands when it can and should maneuver to obtain advantageous positions. This may mean that it takes an opportunity attack, but if it can harry a dangerous spellcaster, it will take that risk.
- Hiding in buildings should not stop Salanek from its assault. It will seek to destroy the structure that the enemy is hiding with using its Sandlash and Lightning strike abilities.

- If Salanek feels overwhelmed, it will use its Blasting Winds followed quickly by its Shifting Sands ability to deal massive damage and put space between it and the creatures assaulting it.
- Use mobility early and often with Legendary actions. A typical turn could consist of a Lightning Strike and a move action to reposition itself for a safer attack.
- Sandlash can be used to great effect to end concentration spells or move prey out of protective and healing field.
- Salanek will flee before it fights to the death. Chasing the creature down isn't easy, but repelling an attack on a protected place is more probable.

SALANEK, SPIRIT OF THE DUNES

Gargantuan elemental, neutral

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 328 (16d20+160)

Speed 40 ft., 120 ft. burrow

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	29 (+9)	30 (+10)	2 (-4)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws WIS +10, CHA +11

Damage Resistances non-magical slashing, piercing, and bludgeoning

Damage Immunities lightning

Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 120 ft., Passive Perception 13

Challenge 21 (33,000 XP)

Legendary Resistance (3/day). If Salanek fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Sand Form. Salanek can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Siege Monster. Salanek deals double damage to objects and structures.

Heart of the Storm. Salanek is always at the center of a sandstorm that is 6 (1d6+3) miles wide. The area covered by the storm takes on a thick, orange tone and is lashed with blinding sand causing the area to be lightly obscured. Violent winds batter the area imposing disadvantage on ranged attack rolls and extinguishing open flames.

Actions

Multiattack. Salanek makes two Sandlash attacks, and one Lightning Strike attack.

Sandlash. Melee Weapon Attack: +16 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. Hit: 22 (3d8 + 9) bludgeoning damage. The target is pushed or pulled 10 ft. in the direction of Salanek's choosing.

Lightning Strike. Ranged Spell Attack: +16 to hit, range 60/120 ft., one target. Hit: 22 (2d12 + 9) lightning damage.

Blasting Winds (Recharge 5-6). Salanek brings forth the fury of pelting winds thick with sand in a 90 ft. cone in front of it. Objects in the area take 49 (9d10) force damage and are flung 20 feet away from Salanek. Each creature in that area must make a DC 22 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 49 (9d10) force damage and is flung 20 feet away from Salanek. If the creature collides with an immovable object such as a wall, it is knocked prone. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and is not flung.

Legendary Actions

Salanek can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The Salanek regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Move. Salanek moves up to its move speed.

Lightning Strike (Costs 2 Actions). The Salanek makes a Lightning Strike attack.

Shifting Sands (Costs 3 Actions). Salanek burrows 10 ft. under the sands and moves up to its burrow speed without provoking opportunity attacks. While moving under the sands it creates a churning wake behind it swallowing small objects and structures smaller than 10 ft. x 10 ft. Any creature that is standing above a space that Salanek moves through must make a DC 23 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is sucked under the sands, taking 45 (7d12) bludgeoning damage and becoming restrained. While restrained in this way, you are considered to be suffocating. A creature restrained by the sands can use an action on its turn to make a DC 18 STR (Athletics) check to free itself from the sands and no longer be restrained. A creature not under the sands can use an action to make a DC 16 STR (Athletics) check to free another creature from the sands. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and is not sucked under the sands.