

LOUSE – THE 3RD PLAGUE

When the Defiled Box was opened, 10 plagues were unleashed upon the Realms. Louse was the third one to exit. This aberration lurks in deserts, turning fertile earth into an arid landscape. It creates a perpetual sandstorm that weakens the will, and sends its spawns to feast upon the flesh of its preys.



LOUSE, THE 3RD PLAGUE

Huge aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 207 (18d12 + 90)

Speed 40 ft., burrow 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	10 (+0)	21 (+5)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Con +11, Wis +7, Cha +9

Skills Intimidation +9, Perception +13, Stealth +12

Damage Resistances fire

Damage Immunities bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 23

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 18 (20,000 XP)

Blinding Dust. Blinding dust mixed with lice swirls magically around Louse. Each creature starting its turn within 5 feet of Louse, or entering the area for the first time on a turn, must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or be blinded until the end of the creature's next turn.

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

Sand Camouflage. Louse has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in desert terrain.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Louse can use its Devour Sight. It then makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d10 + 6) piercing damage.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage.

Devour Sight. Louse sends hundreds of tiny lice to devour the eyes of its victim. Louse targets one creature within 60 feet of it, that creature must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw, or take 22 (4d10) piercing damage as insects pierce the skin and start crawling. Until the creature, or one of its allies, uses an action to remove the insects, it must repeat the saving throw at the start of each of its turn, taking the damage again on a failure. A creature that fails this saving throw 3 times within 24h becomes permanently blinded as its eyes are devoured by insects.

Insect Breath (Recharge 5-6). Louse exhales insects in an 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 59 (17d6) piercing damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Louse 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. Louse regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Bite. Louse makes a bite attack.

Hide. Louse attempts to hide.

Plague to Dust. Louse magically transforms into a whirlwind of sand, moves up to 60 feet, and reverts to its normal form. While in whirlwind form, Louse is immune to all damage, and it can't be grappled, petrified, knocked prone, restrained, or stunned. Equipment worn or carried by Louse remain in its possession.

Amplify Suffering (Costs 2 Actions). Each creature currently affected by Devour Sight are forced to make another saving throw against it, taking the damage again on a failure.

LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Louse takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects; Louse can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- Louse summons swarms of devouring lice to its aid. All creatures within 60 feet of Louse must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 4d10 piercing damage, as the insects eat their flesh, or half as much damage on a success. Louse then regains hit points equal to half the total damage dealt.
- A violent sandstorm cover the battlefield in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on a point Louse can see within 120 feet of it. The sphere spreads around corners, and its area is lightly obscured. It lasts until initiative count 20 on the next round. Each creature that starts its turn in the cloud must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be blinded until the end of the creature's turn.
- A tremor shakes the lair in a 60-foot radius around Louse. Each creature other than the Louse on the ground in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone and take 2d12 bludgeoning damage.

REGIONAL EFFECTS

The region containing Louse's lair is warped by the abomination's magic, which creates one or more of the following effects:

- Violent sandstorms are frequent in the area within 6 miles of Louse's lair, causing fertile land to be covered by sand and become sterile.
- Swarms of flesh eating lice roam the area within 6 miles of Louse's lair, feasting on each creature that comes near them.
- Random disappearance are reported in villages and towns within 20 miles of the lair. The victims are abducted by Louse during its nightly hunts.

If Louse dies, these effects fade over the course of 1d6 days.

HISTORY

Third to escape the Defiled Box, Louse is a being hell-bent on causing death. Be it of plant life or human life. Once a Dragonborn, Louse was a simple farmer, working hard to help its family. One day a sandstorm came out of nowhere, raining chaos and destruction upon its village for days. Once it was over, nothing but lice were left, devouring the remaining crops, causing its family to starve. Louse saw with each passing day members of its family dying one by one for lack of food. Madness took over it, when it decided to feed on one of the corpses to survive. This sealed the curse and turned it into this aberration.

BEHAVIOR

Louse tries to cause destruction in the lands where the grass is greenest and water the clearest. It will create a nest whence its spawns will emerge to devour flesh. The endless sandstorm created in the vicinity will drown out any fertile land. Once its realm is established, Louse will exit every night, hunting for fresh meat.

IN BATTLE

In battle Louse is a vicious foe. It will first use its breath weapon to weaken foes, and use its legendary actions to hide as much as possible. A group of adventure not equipped with ways to reveal it will quickly die under its onslaught. If cornered it will borrow underground or use its Plague to Dust ability. Once the combat it raging on, if enough creatures are affected by Devour Sight, it will stay hidden underground and use Amplify Suffering to cause all creatures above to die. It's main method of fighting is to strike and burrow before hiding.

GM Note: If you want to add some intensity to your game, upon dying players can get a memory flashback from Louse, showing its past as a dragonborn, and its fall into madness.