

TSUCHINOKO (HAMMER CHILD)

TSUCHINOKO LORE

Animal Handling 20: While they are rarely seen, the presence of nearby tsuchinoko can often be detected from the loud snoring they produce while sleeping, or by the chirping, gecko-like barks they produce to ward off intruders to their territory.

If not appeased by leaving immediately or offering strong wine, they can become quite aggressive, slamming their small bodies into creatures at great speed or biting with their deadly venom.

History DC 15: It is often claimed that tsuchinoko are intelligent and able to speak, though most commonly lie or senselessly mimic other creatures. This remains unverified, however, as no tsuchinoko has ever been taken alive for study, despite the many rewards posted for their capture.

Nature DC 10: Tsuchinoko, also called "hammer children" for their mallet-head-shaped midsection, are elusive creatures that nest in holes along riverbanks, far from inhabited areas.

Though often mistaken for overfed snakes due to their viper-like fangs and tubular shape, recovered tsuchinoko specimens appear to have eyelids, indicating that they are actually more closely related to lizards.

Nature DC 15: While tsuchinoko ordinarily crawl in a manner resembling inchworms, when agitated they will tumble, leap, and flip end-over-end, moving with a shocking degree of speed and control. Some have even been known to swallow their tails in a hoop-shaped threat display, somehow making them even faster.

Nature DC 20: Those envenomated by a tsuchinoko will often suffer falls of unnatural violence in the immediate aftermath, leading many to suggest that the safest course of action for those bitten is to simply lie down and attempt to crawl away.

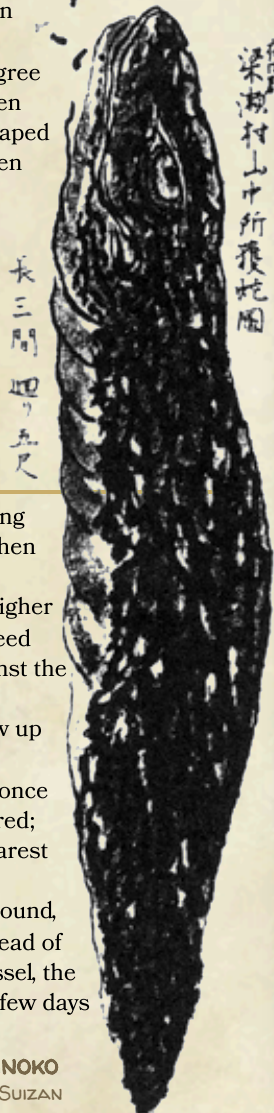
TSUCHINOKO TACTICS

Tsuchinoko let out a series of loud, chirping barks upon detecting a potential threat, then immediately use their Swallow Tail and tumbling movement to circle around to higher ground, initiating combat by rolling at speed downhill and using their Body Bash against the nearest creature.

If the creature does not flee, they follow up by spitting out their tail and using their Lockvenom Strike. They roll into a hoop once more and attempt to flee if seriously injured; downhill if on a slope, or toward their nearest burrow otherwise.

If an interloper pours alcohol on the ground, the tsuchinoko will drink the alcohol instead of attacking. If the alcohol is put out in a vessel, the tsuchinoko may follow the creature for a few days in hopes of more.

TSUCHINOKO
KURODA SUIZAN



TSUCHINOKO

Tiny monstrosity (bakemono), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 49 (11d4 + 22)

Speed 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	5 (-3)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

Skills Athletics +2, Deception +3, Perception +4

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Sylvan

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Tumbling Movement. Whenever the tsuchinoko moves 5 feet using its movement speed, it can jump up to 10 feet in a different direction without spending additional movement.

Actions

Lockvenom Strike. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 1 piercing plus 7 (2d6) poison damage and the target is Cursed until the end of its next turn.

The Cursed creature's body straightens and stiffens; while the creature is not prone, it has disadvantage on attacks against creatures smaller than it and can move only by hopping.

Body Bash. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: The target takes 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage, plus 1 additional bludgeoning damage for each 5 feet the tsuchinoko moved directly towards the target this turn.

Reactions

Stiffened Slip. When a creature affected by the tsuchinoko's Lockvenom Strike enters a space, the tsuchinoko can cause it to tumble end-over-end.

The target continues moving up to 30 feet in the same direction, then falls prone and takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage for each 10 feet it moved in this way.

Swallow Tail. When the tsuchinoko misses with its Lockvenom Strike or targets an empty space, it can swallow its tail, rolling into a hoop shape.

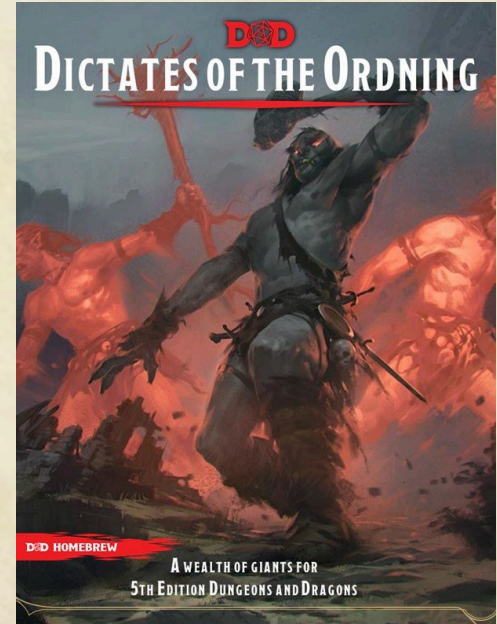
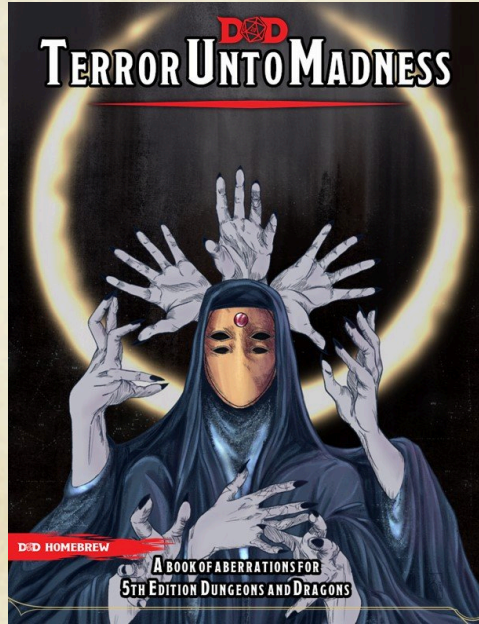
Until it ends this effect as a Bonus Action, it can't use its Lockvenom Strike and gains the following effects.

- Its speed is doubled when moving downhill.
- It can jump in any direction using its Tumbling Movement.

ART CREDITS

- Tsuchinoko by Kuroda Suizan
- Bisk, Goblin King by [Rae Elderidge](#)

YOU FOUND THE FREE BOOKS!



I'VE GOT A SUBREDDIT!

Want more monsters like this? Come check out [r/bettermonsters](#), where I post all my work. Don't see something there? Drop a request and I'll usually get it to you within a day if I've got something on hand, and I'll shoot you a message when it's ready if not.

THE PART WHERE I SHILL MY PATREON

Want to support the creation of content like this? I post new monsters with lore and tactics to my patreon five times a week, joining the more than 1300 already there, indexed in a big PDF along with formats for Foundry and 5eTools.

Multiple "Become a patron" buttons are placed throughout the illustration, including one on the glowing orb, one on a stack of coins, one on a book, and one on a scroll.

