

Icelandic Reedhaunter

The [Icelandic Reedhaunter](#) is not *precisely* Undead. Instead, its favored habitats are swamps saturated with necromantic energy, which means that the bird's *feathers and epidermis* are Undead. The Reedhaunter itself is a thoroughly inoffensive small brown bird from the order *Passeriformes* that eats death-aspected seeds and zombie insects. They have, as one might expect, no particular natural predators; but the species' fertility is very low (as one might **also** expect).

It appears that the Icelandic Reedhaunter has hyper-evolved (a common cross-species reaction to strong magical fields) into its odd quasi-Undead state as a protective mechanism: while alive the bird 'smells' like other Undead creatures, which means that it is generally safe from attack from them. Upon death the Reedhaunter rapidly dissolves into a thoroughly nasty (but non-toxic) ooze that still acts as an effective repellent of Undead. More accurately, a single bird's worth of ooze can make up to three normal-sized people 'smell' like Undead for twenty four hours, thus protecting them from aggressive Undead attacks. There is also some suggestion that the ooze

might be useful for treating Undead infections, but that has yet to be confirmed.

Note that this species is not unique to Iceland; variants have been found in numerous necromantic sites worldwide. The Icelandic Reedhaunter was first identified during the ill-fated First Hjörleifshöfði Excavation of 1967, and only revealed to the orinthological world after someone finally made it back alive from the only slightly less ill-fated Fourth Hjörleifshöfði Excavation of 2003*. Efforts to breed any Reedhaunter species in captivity (and away from necromantic energy fields) have all ended poorly; and often, all over the walls.

*The Second Hjörleifshöfði Excavation of 1974 was just as ill-fated. The *Third* Hjörleifshöfði Excavation was **so** ill-fated that it somehow rewrote the timeline and eliminated all physical evidence of the Third Hjörleifshöfði Excavation from history. Do not think too deeply on the implications of that last sentence, for the sake of your own sanity.

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