

Serpent Archer

In some snake cults, there are lamia who admire serpents for their beauty, some for their wisdom, and some for their abilities as predators. Within this last group are a subset that see a serpent's abilities as weapons to be used and exploited rather than worshiped or emulated. These are the serpent archers, combining the deadly powers of snakes with their own natural aptitude with bows. The serpent archers respect their scaly brethren and practice a strange way of melding their skills with the abilities of the ophidians.

The serpent archer is an archetype of the archer class, available only to lamia archers.

Class Skills: The serpent archer adds Handle Animal to his list of class skills. This replaces Knowledge (Geography) as a class skill.

Snake Charmer (Ex): At 1st level, a serpent archer is especially intuitive when dealing with normal snakes and thus receives a morale bonus on all Handle Animal checks when dealing with normal snakes equal to half his archer level (minimum 1). A typical serpent archer keeps a bag or cage of Tiny snakes that he has tamed (these snakes must be cared for and fed like any other animal).

This ability replaces archer training.

Serpent Arrow (Su): As a move-equivalent action, a serpent archer may remove a Tiny snake from a container (similar to drawing an arrow or bolt from a quiver) and pull its body straight and stiff, suitable for firing from a bow (longbow, shortbow, composite longbow, or composite shortbow) or crossbow (light or heavy). When fired from a bow in this manner, the snake deals normal damage for the bow. If the snake is a poisonous snake, it also injects the target with poison as if she had been bitten by the snake. After being fired in this manner, the snake is stunned for 1 round (normally falling to the ground at the feet of the target). Once the snake recovers, it continues to attack the target.

A hand crossbow can fire a Diminutive snake. Bows made for Large creatures may fire larger snakes, one size category of snake per size category increase of the weapon. For example, a Large short bow (normally a Medium-size weapon) could fire Small snakes (one step larger than a Tiny snake). Larger than normal hand crossbows scale the snake size upward from Diminutive, so a Small hand crossbow could fire a Tiny snake.

If not fired, a drawn snake relaxes from its stiffened state after one round.

A Tiny viper can be purchased in any settlement near the natural habitat of such creatures for 1 gil.

This ability replaces archery style.

Snake Poison (Ex): The serpent archer is familiar with handling snakes and dealing with snake venom. Beginning at 2nd level, he never risks accidentally poisoning himself when handling snakes he has tamed.

This ability replaces hawkeye.

Magic Fang (Sp): Starting at 3rd level, a serpent archer learns how to cast *Magic Fang* at will as a spell-like ability, using his archer level as his caster level, but can only be casted upon serpents. When under the influence of the magic fang spell, a serpent archer's snake arrow is treated as a weapon with the enhancement bonus the spell provides (so a snake-arrow with a +1 enhancement bonus to its bite from magic fang is treated as a +1 arrow).

This ability replaces evasion.

Bonus Bow Feat: At 4th level, and again at 8th, the serpent archer gains a feat from the following list (the serpent archer must still meet all prerequisites for the chosen feat):

Far Shot, Improved Critical (any bow), Improved Precise Shot, Manyshot, Mounted Archery, Pinpoint Targeting, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run, Weapon Focus (any bow).

This ability replaces expert archer.

Rapid Serpent Arrow (Su): Beginning at 5th level, a serpent archer can draw and straighten snakes as a free action up to once per round per two archer levels.

This ability replaces improved archery style.

Greater Magic Fang (Sp): Upon reaching 10th level, the serpent archer can cast *Greater Magic Fang* at will as a spell-like ability, using his archer level as his caster level. This ability works like the magic fang ability.

This ability replaces archery style mastery.