

FIELD GUIDE TO
**GARDEN
DRAGONS**

Artwork by Stanley Morrison

Written by Arwen Lynch

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INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of this field guide is to help other Draco Occoltatum enthusiasts to promptly and accurately identify the garden dragons of their regions as well as other locales. Through the expert fieldwork of Stanley Morrison, this author has researched 46 of the most well known of these creatures. Hard to spot, their camouflage has rendered them unknown to all but the hardest seekers. At long last there is enough information to bring you, intrepid reader, this guidebook.

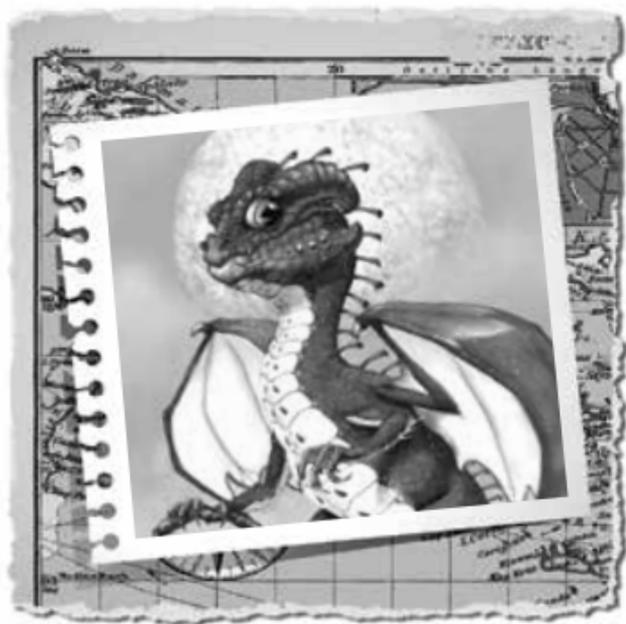
Garden Dragons are members of the kingdom Animalia Mythica, phylum Draconia, class Fablia, and order Draco Occultatum. Two of the sub-orders include: Fructus (the garden dragons) and Vegetabilis (the vegetable dragons). At this time there may be other sub-orders yet undiscovered.

For each dragon, you will be given the image first. Next, the binomial nomenclature will present the common name followed by the

scientific name. Each section will cover the appearance and identification technique as well as the habitat as it is known. The descriptions will be thorough, but you may notice some small differences in the field. Any significant differences should of course be reported to the Royal Dragon Society. Please accompany any reports with your own field notes and illustrations. Field Notes will also be noted along with mystical meanings as ascribed to each member of Draco Occultatum. Of course, there is also advice offered with each creature so you can make the most of your dragon spotting.

This guide is a means to not only catalog these intriguing members of the Animalia Mythica kingdom but also to offer up the wisdom learned from studying them. After first presenting the findings to the aforementioned Royal Dragon Society in journal format, the author and artist now present this Field Guide to Garden Dragons to you. May you use it to guide yourself and to find more dragons.

THE DRAGONS



APPLE DRAGON

(*Draco Malum Delisquious*)

Keyword: Health

Appearance: Shiny of wing, the Apple Dragon is noted for several things. The first is the lustrous sheen to the scale. Although there is a slightly waxy feel to the hide, this creature gleams. Accents of green at the snout and appendages set off the white of the

underwings and abdomen. The eyes are able to rotate 360 degrees, giving it an amazing range of sight. The Apple Dragon sports spines that radiate from its brow all the way to the base of the tail. While there are many varieties, here we see the Delisquious variety known for its sweet smell.

Habitat: This is a decidedly arbor-loving animal. You will rarely find this dragon far from its preferred tree. A social creature, the Apple Dragon prefers to be around its own kind. It congregates in orchards where the sharp-eyed dragon watcher can catch glimpses of it busily flying from tree to tree exchanging the latest news with its brethren.

Field Notes: The spines of this dragon are easily detached without damage to the creature. When it roars, the sound is similar to the buzzing of bees. Typically, a sweet-natured creature, this is one of the most easily tamed of all the garden dragons. They are easy breeders in captivity. The myriad of variety makes this one of the most common of all the dragons.

Mystical Meaning: When the Apple Dragon arrives, it is time to think about your healthy habits. This fellow reminds you to choose nutritious and natural snacks. Maybe also add more movement to your daily activity. Gather with friends to share in the sweetness of camaraderie as well. Look for juicy events to bring you the opportunity to spread happiness in your world. Health is a main ingredient for this dragon. You should make it part of your everyday routine as well.





ARTICHOKE DRAGON

(*Draco Cynara Cardunculus*)

Keyword: Guarded

Appearance: Generally green all over, this dragon ranges in the softer palette tones of olive and chartreuse. It has fairly sharp spines tracing down its back also including an eye-catching bristling on either side of the jaw. With violet eyes that are deep-set, the Artichoke Dragon does not have 360-degree

vision. However, it makes up for this weakness with an agile bulbous tail that provides a formidable defense. The wings have jagged edges with an almost thorn-like feel to them. This is an easily overlooked dragon due to the camouflage nature of its coloring.

Habitat: The Artichoke Dragon prefers a good strong source of light but can make do in shady areas. They are found in areas of the world with long summers and mild winters. They nest in soil, preferring well-drained areas. This dragon is very particular about how much water it gets, with too much being as detrimental as too little. Look for patches of thistles when seeking this creature.

Field Notes: Their scales, which tend to fall off starting in the second year, are edible and good with butter. The tender heart of this dragon is vigorously protected by a thicket of tiny spikes called the choke. The tail can be held in a tight curl then unleashed with a surprisingly swift force. While this dragon has a nearly inaudible cry, its breath can make the air sweeter.

Mystical Meaning: Your talents may be overlooked just now. Are you hiding them from the world? This is a challenging time for you. You need to look for ways to let others see the real you. Guarding yourself from interactions may have become a habit rather than a necessity. Like the Artichoke Dragon, you could be presenting a spiny exterior making it hard for people to get to your soft center. Try to avoid lashing out until you've really explored why you feel so prickly. It could be that your own mental state is preventing people from seeing how fabulous you are.



ASPARAGUS DRAGON

(*Draco Asparagus Officinalis*)

Keyword: Consistent

Appearance: A very slender dragon, the Asparagus Dragon is a spring green hue. The veined wings are covered in fine feathers. There are residual claws at the top of each wing, but they do not seem to have any functionality. Three long spines protrude from the jaw and brow to the back. The juvenile

dragon can be distinguished by the lack of the brown scales. These begin to emerge in the third month.

Habitat: You will find this dragon in salty, marshy areas. It seems to have a predilection for areas of water—particularly brackish or saline. The creature is most active in the spring, and seems to go into hibernation from July to December. It often hides among tall plants such as the cattail. Observers believe this is so the Asparagus Dragon can employ its erect body to hunt for snails while using the other plants as a camouflage.

Field Notes: When wet, the Asparagus Dragon emits a strong smell of sulfur. This rotten egg smell, while unpleasant, makes looking for this dragon easier in the damp spring. It has been noted that the hide of this particular beast gets very tough as it matures.

Mystical Meaning: The Asparagus Dragon reminds you to find your best time to work. You don't have to be fast at what you do, but you should try to be consistent. Stand up tall so you can see what needs to be done. It is a

good time to create a to-do list, so you can stay on track. Once you've determined your most productive part of the day, you should make plans to be at your desk, your place of work, during that time. Tackling your priorities will bring you satisfaction. Each thing you check off that list is a win.





AVOCADO DRAGON

(*Draco Persea*)

Keyword: Patience

Appearance: This green dragon has a hard ridge growing from its chest all the way to the tip of the tail. Adults will be visibly larger with a rounder shape. The head features very small horns that do not seem to have a purpose. Similarly, the spade-tipped tail

seems to have no function. The only protection here are the powerful front paws.

Habitat: The subtropics are where you will find this unusual dragon. While it must have warmth and humidity, it shuns windy places. This creature is a clumsy flier at best, so it requires calm latitudes. If one is observant, this dragon can often be found on the ground.

Field Notes: If you look for the quetzal bird, you can often find these dragons. The quetzal craves their eggs, which are a hard gray-green with a soft light green inside. The dragonets that do hatch are protected from their enemies by a hard, almost solid body. It is only as they grow that the adults soften into their adult bodies. These dragons are fond of golden ladybugs for their main protein source. Interestingly, they are often spotted en masse at sporting events, most notably the Super Bowl.

Mystical Meaning: The Avocado Dragon calls for patience. Something currently may be quite difficult, but if you allow it time

the situation will mellow. If you force things before their time, you could find it tough going. Step back from the problem. Examine what else needs to happen so that things will fall into place. This is a lesson for you about waiting. Remember that all things mature in their own time. You can't force change without causing harm.





BANANA DRAGON

(*Draco Musa Acuminata*)

Keyword: Gather

Appearance: The adult is a bright yellow while the juvenile is green. The Banana Dragon is always found in large groups called bunches. They typically sleep with their tails entwined. This inverted head pose helps them blend into the banana trees where they live. The three-pronged tail is a

useful defense mechanism, as fully mature Banana Dragons can release their individual tips. Those can leave a bruise, so be cautious.

Habitat: Tall leafy tropical plants attract this garden denizen. A spot where shade is equal to the amount of sun will be their preferred habitat. They avoid trees that lose their leaves in cold weather. Some types of this creature will even interlace leaves together to create caves within the foliage.

Field Notes: The Banana Dragon hatches green in color. It slowly turns to the bright yellow over the first few days. As the Banana Dragon matures it may display brown spots. You can tell the age of a Banana Dragon by the color, as the older it gets, the more brown it shows. The Banana Dragon is considered a member of the berry tribe rather than the fruit tribe.

Mystical Meaning: When Banana Dragon shows up, call on your friends. Here is a creature who loves to gather. You should look for your group, your chosen family, your bunch. You can thrive within the right

group of people. Remember that this doesn't mean all of them. Just focus on the ones who support you in your own personal brand of expression. The others you find appealing are the ones to join with. Put your energy into them instead of those who make you feel like splitting. Time to bring your community together.





BLACKBERRY DRAGON

(*Draco Rubus Ursinus*)

Keyword: Timing

Appearance: A glistening dark purple, these dragons are often mistakenly identified as being black when they are actually the very deepest violet. The young are an engaging mix of greens, yellows, reds, oranges and purple with the purple eventually taking

over. Even for fully mature adults the tail may often be lighter in color, and sometimes even yellow or white. The breastplate will remain creamy except in older dragons. The underside of the wings remains green deepening in color with age. The spinal column sprouts very sharp thorn-like protrusions. It is not recommended to capture this species by hand when nets are available.

Habitat: Look for this dragon in low-lying brushy areas. They love the sun so they choose to congregate at the edges of woods and in open fields. The preferred locale will have dense leaves with thorny vines. Tread carefully, poison ivy is known to cozy up to the Blackberry Dragon.

Field Notes: The Blackberry Dragon prefers to swarm with others of its ilk. The scent of this creature is very alluring, but if caught, it can leave a dark stain on the skin. In certain places, this dragon can be found eating the fruit it is named for. Full of iron and vitamin C, the berries fill the dragon with strength of body and mind to help make good decisions.

Mystical Meaning: Timing is the issue when the Blackberry Dragon shows up. It is common wisdom that every problem can be solved by striking at the right moment. This dragon takes time to mature. It can be quite sour-tempered as a young dragonet while the more mature creatures tend to have sweeter dispositions. Wait before you launch into an argument. Hold back. If you give your opponent time to make mistakes, they will. However, if you leap in too soon, you will be the one caught up in thorns and vines you may not have noticed. A wait-and-see approach is your very best bet right now. Work on your strategy while you let your opposition have just enough rope to hang themselves.



BLUEBERRY DRAGON

(*Draco Vaccinium*)

Keyword: Goals

Appearance: Blueberry Dragon is known for its bulbous eyes, which can see in any direction. Very small spinal attributions exhibit as rounded bulbs with erect points. These points are not sharp. This creature has only one defense mechanism noted at this time. If grabbed by hand, it can emit a dark spray

that will leave an indelible blue mark. A soft approach garners the best observations of this gentle dragon.

Habitat: Anywhere with good drainage and direct sun is home to the Blueberry Dragon. Most easily found in the summer, the Blueberry Dragon may be a species that hibernates. At this time, the Royal Dragon Society has not been able to locate any den or other location of this possible heterothermic creature, though it is thought to prefer hilly areas.

Field Notes: Blueberry Dragon is used to having people stare. With those chameleon-eyes, it can stare back from any direction. It is a very hard-working dragon which is why the grasshopper follows him. It loves friends as long as they are inclined to labor alongside this dragon. The favorite season is summer. Will stain if handled roughly. Has a sweet aroma that goes along with its sweet nature. Field observers note that if one sits still long enough, this creature will land on a human. It seems to have a very inquisitive nature.

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