



[ARTICLES HOME](#) > [ARCHIVES](#) > **Serious Fun**

HAPPY, SHINY CREATURES

Posted in **Serious Fun** on December 24, 2002



By Anthony Alongi

[Archive](#)

 SHARE ARTICLE ▼

*This was a perfectly legitimate theme assignment from Aaron, but I found it ridiculous. Creature enchantments?!?! Worse, he told me I couldn't fall back to the safe Enchantress deck, since MS-Jay™ had it. AND I had to focus on Odyssey block! Left to my own creative devices, I had to resort to **Pokémon** references, and Aaron's excellent graphic work, which make an average article work beautifully. I chose this because it should make clear to all readers how hard Aaron works to make us all look good.*

—Anthony

This article first appeared on April 16, 2002.

Here's the challenge for today, Tuesday of Enchant Creature Week. (Set aside for the moment the fact that any day in a span of time dubbed "Enchant Creature Week" already has an uphill climb.)

We're going to talk about all of the great creature enchantment possibilities born of *Odyssey* block's blazing loins. And we're going to do it *without* invoking any green enchantress. This column is not for the faint-hearted, my friends. Read on at your own risk.

Death to Smoochy.

Creature enchantments have been, historically, a walking advertisement for you to lose two cards instead of one. I know that this is not fun. I know this because the group I play with used to include a really nice guy who would put out a [Yavimaya Enchantress](#), then enchant it with [Rancor](#), then enchant it again with [Sigil of Sleep](#), then enchant it again with [Hermetic Study](#), then enchant it with a second [Rancor](#) just for kicks and giggles...and then get quite upset when someone played [Terror](#) (or worse, [Dominate](#)) on it. I think he understood that it would be stupid of us not to do

this; but it was frustrating for him all the same. Some people have fun in Magic through building the “super-creature,” and it’s as painful to have that path to victory taken away as it is to have your [Pernicious Deed](#) invalidated by a stupid card like [Bind](#). (This may or may not have happened to me in the recent past. I really don’t want to talk about it.)

One thing that has gotten better for players who enjoy creature enchantments is, thank heavens, the creature enchantments themselves. While there are nearly irretrievable ones in recent blocks such as [Latulla's Orders](#) (thank you, *Prophecy*, as always) and [Multani's Harmony](#) (quick, tell me in five seconds what that that *Planeshift* card does without clicking on the link, and I’ll send you a pizza), there has been an undeniable improvement in the quality of the average creature enchantment. Much of this comes from Wizards’ mission in offsetting the potential for card *disadvantage* with the potential for true card *advantage*, as with [Sleeper's Robe](#) and [Quicksilver Dagger](#). (For more on R&D’s attempts to improve creature enchantments, go read [Mark's column](#).)

And true to this trend, the creature enchantments in *Odyssey* block are not such a bad bunch, once you look at them long enough (and then scribble in some additional rules text with a Sharpie marker). We’re going to look at creature enchantments in *Odyssey* block from two perspectives: first, those creature enchantments in the block that work well with creatures from the past; and then, those creatures in the block that work well with creature enchantments from the past.

NEW ENCHANTMENTS, OLD FRIENDS

Perhaps the most promising recent creature enchantment for casual play comes from *Torment* -- [Shade's Form](#). This card used to be blue ([False Demise](#), [Puppet Master](#)); but then *Torment's* flavor turned it black and made it better. Whereas [False Demise](#) threatened another player’s creature with imminent death, [Shade's Form](#) can do that *or* make one of your own creatures much better, and not worth killing unless you can do it twice.

What would *Shade's Form* look really great on? For the sake of narrowing the field, I limited the endless choices to those black, common two-drops that did something truly interesting, to start a partial deck for your consideration:

- 4x [Shade's Form](#)
- 4x [Abyssal Gatekeeper](#)
- 4x [Skittering Skirge](#)
- 4x [Swamp Mosquito](#)

Yeah, [Swamp Mosquito](#)! Wouldn't it be great to attack with this horrific *Alliances* common and actually do damage, in addition to a poison counter! And with the ability to come right back into play, you actually have half a chance to kill at least one player through poison.

Another "hidden gem" in *Torment* is [Stupefying Touch](#). Close your eyes for a moment (this exercise is most satisfying while reading Rosewater's column) and imagine all of the creatures your group plays that require an activation cost to do something horrible. [Masticore](#)? [Nomad Decoy](#)? [Thrashing Wumpus](#)? [Shivan Dragon](#)? [Insidious Bookworms](#)? (Whoops...that's a carryover from the cheap, black creature thing above. Pretend that didn't happen; there's a good lad.) Now imagine shutting your imaginary creature down -- without killing it, of course, since just killing it wouldn't be funny -- and then drawing a new card for your trouble. Presto, you have a winner. You can open your eyes, now.

But how about a real killer? Something that will make your friends say, "Damn, [Tattoo Ward](#) would be an *excellent* metagame against that deck!" Well then, folks, [Traveling Plague](#) is what you're looking for. A slow, grinding path to threshold for somebody -- hey, *maybe* that somebody can be *you!* -- the Plague (along with its land-roving kin, [Steam Vines](#)) is the kind of card that's meant purely in fun, as a way to give each aggrieved party the chance to show who they're most annoyed with this turn. And just like I promised, [Tattoo Ward](#) looks spiffy against it. If you're going to do this creature enchantment thing, people, do it with feeling, or step aside for someone who can:

ENCHANTLIKEAFIEND.DEQ



DECKLIST

STATS

SAMPLE HAND

SORT BY:

Creature (13)

4 Will-o'-the-Wisp
4 Skittering Skirge
4 Junún Efreet
1 Painbringer

Sorcery (1)

1 Replenish

Enchantment (22)

4 Breeding Pit
 4 Shade's Form
 2 Brilliant Halo
 2 Maggot Therapy
 2 Patriarch's Desire
 2 Traveling Plague
 2 Unnatural Hunger
 2 Animal Boneyard
 2 Tattoo Ward

Land (24)

3 Kjeldoran Outpost
 12 Swamp
 9 Plains

60 Cards

Don't let the expensive cards fool you: you can play this deck without [Junun Efreet](#) and [Kjeldoran Outpost](#) and do *just* as well, guaranteed! But if you're lucky enough to have an Efreet, check it: you put the Efreet's upkeep on the stack. You then pump the Efreet using [Shade's Form](#) to a 6/6. (Since it has a [Brilliant Halo](#) on it, it's really a 7/8.) Then you activate the [Animal Boneyard](#) you've strategically placed on your [Kjeldoran Outpost](#) to gain 8 life.

Anthony's strategic insight knows no bounds.

The Efreet comes back because of the Form's effect. Halo comes back to your hand, ready to play again. And best of all: *you don't have to pay the Efreet's upkeep again until your next turn*. Mise. Sure, it can't attack until then either; but if you're quibbling about small details like that, then I can't help you.

The single [Painbringer](#) is so you have a use for all of the enchantments that will eventually end up in your graveyard, if you play this deck. The single [Replenish](#) is an intentional slap in the face of all those combo-[Replenish](#) players who won't believe you're using a \$15 card to bring back stuff like [Maggot Therapy](#) and [Tattoo Ward](#).

I'm also curious to see whether or not [Traveling Plague](#) would be funny in conjunction with [Humility](#) and/or [Humble](#). I suspect that it would be; but I haven't had time to test that...yet.

Before we move on to the next section, let me give due credit to three other creature enchantments in *Odyssey* block that may be worth your time in casual play:

- [Seton's Desire](#), an interesting twist on [Lure](#) that may allow your creature to survive more than one attack;
- [Floating Shield](#), which you can use to "threaten" protection from a second color for any creature on the board; and

- [Psionic Gift](#), a reprint of [Hermetic Study](#), which makes decks based on [Horseshoe Crab](#) ping a bit more reliable.

OLD ENCHANTMENTS, NEW FRIENDS

One of the more interesting ways to look at creature enchantments in casual play is to find new creatures that may find additional power in old, forgotten enchantments. Some of these creature enchantments are not, in fact, that old; but they're almost certainly forgotten. Here are four that shouldn't be:

Sisay's Ingenuity: Throw this on a [Possessed Aven](#), and own the board. Actually, it's good on any of *Torment's* "possessed" creatures, as well as [Repentant Vampire](#); but for color consistency, the aven may be your best bet.

Squee's Embrace: If the upkeep for a [Wayward Angel](#) at threshold is a bit too much, this enchantment can give you an extra turn to think. (It gives you even more time to think if you've sacrificed an [Iridescent Drake](#).)

Zephid's Embrace: It's too bad the [Beloved Chaplain](#) dies so easily to easily to [Tremor](#) and [Terror](#)... but hark! What's that? The adorable fellow has just sprouted wings, gotten larger, and can't be targeted anymore. Short of a [Hurricane](#) or [Wrath of God](#), this guy will be administering to sick animals all game long.

Laccolith Rig: I know this gets played on a [Gurzigost](#), but I can't figure out if it's your own, or your opponent's.

In addition, there are old enchantments that "fit the theme" of many new decks you may be considering: [Animate Dead](#) in your [Chainer, Dementia Master](#) deck; [Oubliette](#) in your [Faceless Butcher](#) deck; [Mark of Fury](#) in your [Need for Speed](#) deck...all right, I think I've given this topic *more* than the respect it deserves.

I'll just leave you with one last thought. [Holistic Wisdom](#) gives you the unbridled power to pitch useless global enchantments, like [Opposition](#), [Pernicious Deed](#), and [Aegis of Honor](#), in order to retrieve any of the overpowered monsters I've mentioned above. But don't blame me if you can't catch the irony in that theory.

All kidding aside, creature enchantments *are* getting better. Seek out the creative opportunities, and remember that the point is to have fun! And occasionally, our idea of fun ought to include the creature that's piled under so many other cards, you can't tell if the original creature is a [Thran Golem](#) or Pikachu.

Anthony may be reached at seriousfun@wizards.com.

Posted in **Serious Fun** on December 24, 2002

 **SHARE ARTICLE** ▼

FEATURED ARTICLES

DAILY MAGIC UPDATE

NOVEMBER 14, 2017

The November 14, 2017 Update

Blake Rasmussen

CARD IMAGE GALLERY

NOVEMBER 14, 2017

Unstable

Wizards of the Coast

CARD PREVIEW

NOVEMBER 13, 2017

Unstable Mechanics

Matt Tabak

EVENTS

GRAND PRIX PORTLAND

Show up or tune in for Grand Prix Portland, broadcast on [Twitch.tv/magic](https://www.twitch.tv/magic).

➤ [LEARN MORE](#)

PRODUCTS

Ixalan is yours to uncover!

➤ [EXPLORE IXALAN](#)

MTG ARENA



Closed beta is now in sight!

[➤ SIGN UP NOW!](#)

LATEST SERIOUS FUN ARTICLES

SERIOUS FUN

Hedron Alignment

by, Bruce Richard

SERIOUS FUN

Eternal Pilgrim

by, Bruce Richard

ARTICLES
SERIOUS FUN ARCHIVE



WHERE TO PLAY AND BUY



Find a location to buy or play
Magic: The Gathering near you.

Enter your city or postal code

FIND NOW !



Select your language:

English

WIZARDS BRAND FAMILY

MAGIC | D&D | WPN | DUEL MASTERS | AVALON HILL

[Terms of Use](#) | [Code of Conduct](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Customer Service](#) | [Cookies](#)



© 1995-2017 Wizards of the Coast LLC, a subsidiary of Hasbro, Inc. All Rights Reserved.