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.Griffin , گریفن , ایک قسم کا شکاری کتا , جس کے بال موٹے ہوتے ہیں.

Griffin

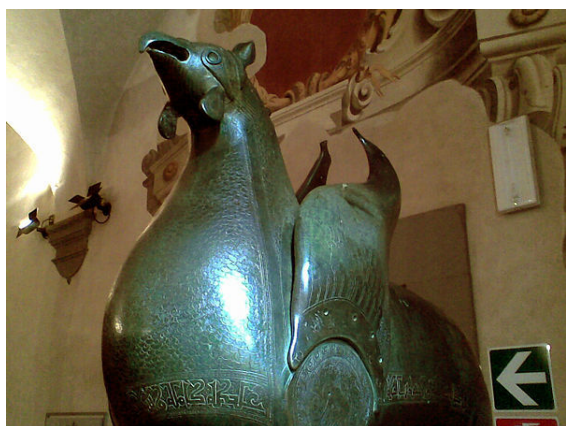
For other uses, see Griffin (disambiguation).

The **griffin**, **griffon**, or **gryphon** (Greek: γρύφων,

Mongolia.^[2] In antiquity it was a symbol of divine power and a guardian of the divine.^[3]



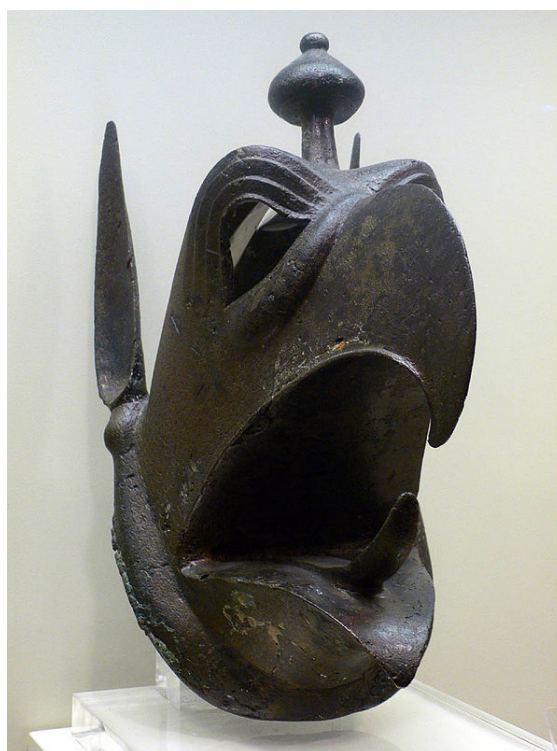
Achaemenid griffin at Persepolis.



The Islamic Pisa Griffin, in the Pisa Cathedral Museum

grýphōn, or γρύπων, *grýpōn*, early form γρύψ, *grýps*; Latin: *gryphus*) is a legendary creature with the body, tail, and back legs of a lion; the head and wings of an eagle; and an eagle's talons as its front feet. Because the lion was traditionally considered the king of the beasts and the eagle the king of birds, the griffin was thought to be an especially powerful and majestic creature. The griffin was also thought of as king of all creatures. Griffins are known for guarding treasure and priceless possessions.^[1] Adrienne Mayor, a classical folklorist, proposes that the griffin was an ancient misconception derived from the fossilized remains of the *Protoceratops* found in gold mines in the Altai mountains of Scythia, in present day southeastern Kazakhstan, or in

1 Etymology



Bronze griffin head from Olympia, Greece. 7th century BC. Olympia museum

The derivation of this word remains uncertain. It could be related to the Greek word γρυπός (*grypos*), meaning 'curved', or 'hooked'. Also, this could have been an Anatolian loan word, compare Akkadian *karūbu* (winged creature), and similar to Cherub. A related Hebrew word is כרוב (*kerúb*).^[4]

2 Form

Most statues have bird-like talons, although in some older illustrations griffins have a lion's forelimbs; they generally have a lion's hindquarters. Its eagle's head is conventionally given prominent ears; these are sometimes described as the lion's ears, but are often elongated (more like a horse's), and are sometimes feathered.

Infrequently, a griffin is portrayed without wings, or a wingless eagle-headed lion is identified as a griffin. In 15th-century and later heraldry such a beast may be called an **alce** or a **keythong**.

In heraldry, a griffin always has forelegs like an eagle's hind-legs. A type of griffin with the four legs of a lion was distinguished by perhaps only one English herald of later heraldry as the **Opinicus** where it also had a camel-like neck and a short tail that almost resembles a camel's tail.

3 History

While griffins are most common in the art and lore of Ancient Greece, there is evidence of representations of griffins in Ancient Persian and Ancient Egyptian art dating back to before 3000 BC.^[5] In Egypt, a griffin can be seen in a cosmetic palette from Hierakonpolis, known as the "Two Dog Palette",^{[6][7]} which is dated to ca. 3300-3100 BC.^[8] In Persia, griffins appeared on cylinder seals from Susa as early as 3000 BC.^[9] Griffin depictions appear in the Levant, Syria, and Anatolia in the Middle Bronze Age,^{[10][11]} dated at about 1950-1550 BC.^[12] Early depictions of griffins in Ancient Greek art are found in the 15th century BC frescoes in the Throne Room of the Bronze Age Palace of Knossos, as restored by Sir Arthur Evans. It continued being a favored decorative theme in Archaic and Classical Greek art.



Medieval tapestry, Basel c. 1450

In Central Asia the griffin appears about a thousand years after Bronze Age Crete, in the 5th–4th centuries BC, probably originating from the Achaemenid Persian Empire. The Achaemenids considered the griffin "a protector from evil, witchcraft and secret slander".^[13] The modern generalist calls it the lion-griffin, as for example, Robin Lane Fox, in *Alexander the Great*, 1973:31 and notes p. 506, who remarks a lion-griffin attacking a stag in a pebble mosaic Dartmouth College expedition at Pella, perhaps as an emblem of the kingdom of Macedon or a personal one of Alexander's successor Antipater.

The Pisa Griffin is a large bronze sculpture which has

been in Pisa in Italy since the Middle Ages, though it is of Islamic origin. It is the largest bronze medieval Islamic sculpture known, at over three feet tall (42.5 inches, or 1.08 m.), and was probably created in the 11th century in Al-Andaluz (Islamic Spain).^[14] From about 1100 it was placed on a column on the roof of Pisa Cathedral until replaced by a replica in 1832; the original is now in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo (Cathedral Museum), Pisa.

3.1 Ancient parallels



Bronze griffins from ancient Luristan (Iran) (1st millennium BC) Vorderasiatisches Museum Berlin

There are several ancient mythological creatures that are similar to Griffin. Among them is the Lamassu, an Assyrian protective deity, often depicted with a bull or lion's body, eagle's wings, and human's head.

In Sumerian and Akkadian mythology, there's a demon Anzu, half man and half bird associated with the chief sky god Enlil. This was a divine storm-bird linked with the southern wind and the thunder clouds.

In Jewish mythology, there's Ziz, that is similar to Anzu, as well as to the ancient Greek Phoenix. Ziz is mentioned in the Bible (Psalms 50:11). This is also similar to Cherub. Cherub, or sphinx, was very popular in Phoenician iconography.

In ancient Crete, griffin was very popular, and was portrayed in various media. A similar creature is the Minoan Genius.

In Hindu religion, Garuda is a large bird-like creature that serves as a mount (*vahana*) of the Lord Vishnu. It is also the name for Aquila (constellation).

4 Medieval lore

In legend, griffins not only mated for life, but if either partner died, then the other would continue the rest of



Statue of a griffin at St Mark's Basilica in Venice.



Griffin segreant wearing the mural crown of Perugia

its life alone, never to search for a new mate. The griffin was thus made an emblem of the Church's opposition

to remarriage. A Hippogriff is a legendary creature, supposedly the offspring of a griffin and a mare. Being a union of a terrestrial beast and an aerial bird, it was seen in Christendom to be a symbol of Jesus, who was both human and divine. As such it can be found sculpted on some churches.^[1]

According to Stephen Friar's *New Dictionary of Heraldry*, a griffin's claw was believed to have medicinal properties and one of its feathers could restore sight to the blind.^[1] Goblets fashioned from griffin claws (actually antelope horns) and griffin eggs (actually ostrich eggs) were highly prized in medieval European courts.^[15]

When it emerged as a major seafaring power in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, griffins commenced to be depicted as part of the Republic of Genoa's coat of arms, rearing at the sides of the shield bearing the Cross of St. George.

By the 12th century the appearance of the griffin was substantially fixed: "All its bodily members are like a lion's, but its wings and mask are like an eagle's."^[16] It is not yet clear if its forelimbs are those of an eagle or of a lion. Although the description implies the latter, the accompanying illustration is ambiguous. It was left to the heralds to clarify that.

5 Heraldic significance



A heraldic griffin passant.

In heraldry, the griffin's amalgamation of lion and eagle gains in courage and boldness, and it is always drawn to powerful fierce monsters. It is used to denote strength and military courage and leadership. Griffins are portrayed with rear body of a lion, an eagle's head, with erect ears, and feathered breast, with forelegs of an eagle, including claws. These features indicate a combination of intelligence and strength.^[17]

In British heraldry, a male griffin is shown without wings,



Heraldic guardian griffin at Kasteel de Haar, Netherlands

its body covered in tufts of formidable spikes, with a short tusk emerging from the forehead, as for a unicorn.^[18] The female griffin with wings is more commonly used.

6 In architecture



A Soldier Fighting A Griffin In The 'Alphonso' Psalter

In architectural decoration the griffin is usually represented as a four-footed beast with wings and the head of an eagle with horns, or with the head and beak of an eagle.

The statues that mark the entrance to the City of London are sometimes mistaken for griffins, but are in fact (Tudor) dragons, the supporters of the city's arms.^[19] They are most easily distinguished from griffins by their membranous, rather than feathered, wings.

7 In literature

For fictional characters named Griffin, see *Griffin (surname)*

Flavius Philostratus mentioned them in *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana*:

Griffins are used widely in Persian poetry; Rumi is one such poet who writes in reference to griffins.^[22]

In Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy*, Beatrice meets Dante in Earthly Paradise after his journey through Hell and Purgatory with Virgil have concluded. Beatrice takes off into the Heavens to begin Dante's journey through paradise on a flying Griffin that moves as fast as lightning.

Sir John Mandeville wrote about them in his 14th century book of travels:



Griffin misericord, Ripon Cathedral, alleged inspiration for The Gryphon in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

John Milton, in *Paradise Lost* II, refers to the legend of the griffin in describing Satan:

In *The Son of Neptune* by Rick Riordan, Percy Jackson, Hazel Levesque, and Frank Zhang are attacked by griffins in Alaska.

In the *Harry Potter* series, the character Albus Dumbledore has a griffin-shaped knocker. Also, the character Godric Gryffindor's surname is a variation on the French *griffon d'or* ("golden griffon").

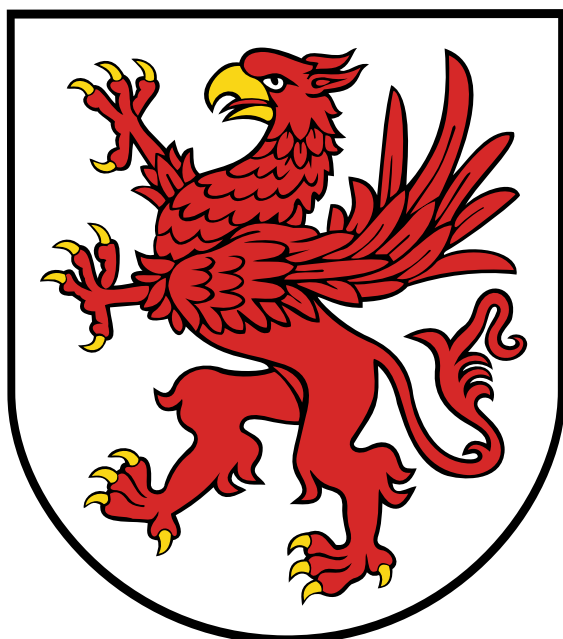
Pomponius Mela- " In Europe, constantly falling snow makes those places contiguous with the Riphean Mountains so impassable that, in addition, they prevent those who deliberately travel here from seeing anything. After that comes a region of very rich soil but quite uninhabitable because griffins, a savage and tenacious breed of wild beasts, love- to an amazing degree- the gold that is mined from deep within the earth there, and because they guard it with an amazing hostility to those who set foot there." (Romer, 1998.)

Isidore of Seville- "The Gryphes are so called because they are winged quadrupeds. This kind of wild beast is found in the Hyperborean Mountains. In every part of their body they are lions, and in wings and heads are like eagles, and they are fierce enemies of horses. Moreover they tear men to pieces." (Brehaut, 1912) ^[24]

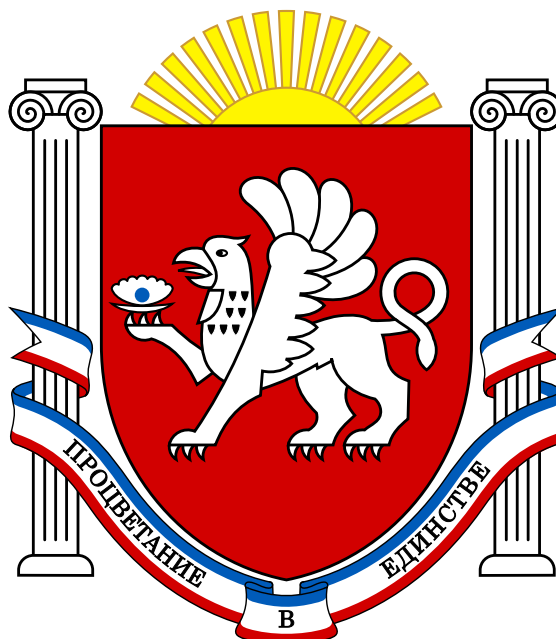
8 Modern uses

The griffin is the symbol of the Philadelphia Museum of Art; bronze castings of them perch on each corner of the museum's roof, protecting its collection.^{[25][26]} Similarly, prior to the mid-1990s a griffin formed part of the logo of Midland Bank (now HSBC).

The griffin is the logo of United Paper Mills, Vauxhall Motors, and of Scania and its former group partners SAAB-Aircraft and Saab Automobile. The latest fighter



The red Griffin rampant was the coat of arms of the dukes of Pomerania and survives today as the armorial of West Pomeranian Voivodeship (historically, Farther Pomerania) in Poland.



the Coat of arms of Crimea



Similarly, the coat of arms of Greifswald, Germany, in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, also shows a red griffin rampant — perched in a tree, reflecting a legend about the town's founding in the 13th Century.



Rogue taxidermy griffin, Zoological Museum, Copenhagen



Flag of the Utti Jaeger Regiment of the Finnish Army

produced by the SAAB-Aircraft company bears the name of "Gripen" (Griffin), but as a result of public competition. General Atomics has used the term "Griffin Eye" for its intelligence surveillance platform based on a Hawker

Beechcraft King Air 35ER civilian aircraft^[27]

The “Griff” statue by Veres Kalman 2007 in the forecourt of the Farkashegyi cemetery in Budapest, Hungary.



“Griff” Statue in the forecourt of the Farkashegyi Cemetery Budapest

Griffins, like many other fictional creatures, frequently appear within works under the fantasy genre. Examples of fantasy-oriented franchises that feature griffins include *Warhammer Fantasy Battle*, *Warcraft*, *Heroes of Might and Magic*, *Dungeons and Dragons* (see *Griffon (Dungeons & Dragons)*), *Ragnarok Online*, *Harry Potter*, *The Spiderwick Chronicles*, *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic*, and *The Battle for Wesnoth*.

8.1 School emblems and mascots

Further information: List of griffins as mascots and in heraldry

Three gryphons form the crest of Trinity College, Oxford (founded 1555), originating from the family crest of founder Sir Thomas Pope. The college’s debating society is known as The Gryphon, and the notes of its master emeritus show it to be one of the oldest debating institutions in the country, significantly older than the more famous Oxford Union Society.^[28] Griffins are also mascots for VU University Amsterdam,^[29] Reed College,^[30] Sarah Lawrence College,^[31] the University of Guelph, and Canisius College.

The official seal of Purdue University was adopted during the University’s centennial in 1969. The seal, approved by the Board of Trustees, was designed by Prof. Al Gowan, formerly at Purdue. It replaced an unofficial one that had been in use for 73 years.^[32]

The College of William and Mary in Virginia changed its mascot to the griffin in April 2010.^{[33][34]} The griffin was chosen because it is the combination of the British lion and the American eagle.

The 367th Training Support Squadron’s and 12th Combat Aviation Brigade feature griffins in their unit patches.

The mascot of St Mary’s College, one of the sixteen colleges in Durham University.

The mascot of Glenview Senior Public School in Toronto is the Gryphon, and the name is incorporated into its sporting teams.

The mascot of the L&N STEM Academy in Knoxville, Tennessee, a public science, technology, engineering and math high school serving grades 9-12, is the Gryphon. The school opening in August 2011. The Gryphon is also incorporated into the school’s robotics team.

The mascot of Charles G. Fraser Junior Public School in Toronto is the Griffin, and an illustration of a griffin forms the school’s logo.

The mascot of Glebe Collegiate Institute in Ottawa is the Gryphon, and the team name is the Glebe Gryphons.

The griffin is the official mascot of Chestnut Hill College in Pennsylvania. The griffin is the official mascot of Gwynedd Mercy College in Pennsylvania.

Also Griffin is the Official mascot of Maria Clara High School, known as the Blue Griffins in Poblacion cluster of Calocan City Philippines, which excels in Cheerleading.

The mascot of Leadership High School in San Francisco, CA was chosen by the student body by popular vote to be the Griffin after the Golden Gate University Griffins, where they operated out of from 1997-2000.

8.2 In professional sports

The Grand Rapids Griffins professional hockey team of the American Hockey League.

Suwon Samsung Bluewings’s mascot ‘Aguileon’ is Griffin. Name ‘Aguileon’ is compound using the Spanish, *aguila* means eagle, *leon* means lion.

8.3 Amusement parks

Busch Gardens Williamsburg’s highlight attraction is a dive coaster called “Griffon”, which opened in 2007. In 2013, Cedar Point Amusement Park in Sandusky, Ohio opened the “GateKeeper” steel roller coaster which features a griffin as its mascot.

9 Use of the word for real animals

Some large species of Old World vultures are called griffines, including the griffon vulture (*Gyps fulvus*). The scientific name for the Andean condor is *Vultur gryphus*, Latin for “griffin-vulture”.



The Gryf coat of arms of the knightly family Gryfici. Used by ca. 481 Polish noble families.

10 Origin

A theory, postulated primarily by Adrienne Mayor, is that the griffin originated with ancient paleontological observations brought by long-distance traders to Europe along the Silk Road from the Gobi Desert in Mongolia, where white fossils of *Protoceratops* are naturally exposed against reddish ground. Such fossils, seen by ancient observers, may have been interpreted as evidence of a half-bird-half-beast.^{[35][36]} Over repeated retelling and drawing recopying its bony neck frill (which is rather fragile and may have been frequently broken or entirely weathered away) may become large mammal-type external ears, and its beak may be treated as evidence of part-bird nature and lead to bird-type wings being added.

11 See also

- Hybrid creatures in mythology
- List of hybrid creatures in mythology
- Hippogriff, legendary horse-eagle hybrid
- Sphinx, mythical creature with lion's body and human head
- Pegasus, winged stallion in Greek mythology
- Chimera, Greek mythological hybrid monster

- Lamassu, Assyrian deity, bull/lion-eagle-human hybrid
- Anzû (older reading: Zû), Mesopotamian monster
- Simurgh, Iranian mythical flying creature
- Ziz, giant griffin-like bird in Jewish mythology
- Sharabha, Hindu mythology: lion-bird hybrid
- Snow Lion, Tibetan mythological celestial animal
- Yali, Hindu mythological lion-elephant-horse hybrid
- Nue, Japanese legendary creature
- Pixiu or Pi Yao, Chinese mythical creature

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13 Further reading

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- This article incorporates text from a publication now in the public domain: Wood, James, ed. (1907). "article name needed". *The Nuttall Encyclopædia*. London and New York: Frederick Warne.

14 External links

- The Gryphon Pages, a repository of griffin lore and information
- The Medieval Bestiary: Griffin
- Four Footed Winged Raptors Gryphons of Greece, Europe and the Near East, source texts in Greek, Hebrew, and Old English, with new English translations.

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15.1 Text

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