

National Treasure Hall

Statue of Karura

National Treasure

Karura is one of the Eight Kinds of Mythological Beings, representing a bird or birdlike being that devours snakes. It is derived from Hindu, Buddhist and Jain mythology in India, and based on Garuda, the mythical bird of Hinduism. Karura is thus depicted as an armored warrior with a prominent beak and avian eyes but humanlike ears and hair. Like Garuda, Karura is the enemy of *nāgas* (snakes or dragons), and this statue is a companion piece to the statue of Sakara.

The fine details on the armor and robes have survived the ravages of time, but the statue is missing its left hand. The work is dated to 734 and was made by the hollow-core dry-lacquer sculpting technique.