

# PROTECTORS OF THE GNARLEY FOREST

## THE GNARLEY RANGERS

**Symbol:** An oak leaf above an acorn

**Background and Goals:** The rangers of the Gnarley are some 200 strong, most of them born woodsmen, with a few half-elves among them. The group has become more cohesive during the Greyhawk Wars, and the group is democratic and has no leaders more cohesive during the Greyhawk Wars. Quite a few of them fought in Furryondy as volunteers and tales of that war have left little doubt in their minds that the threat of evil is present.

The Rangers strive to bring good folk together. They have very warm relations with gnomes, most woodsmen, and with the swanmays and werebears of the Gnarley. They are very cautious in dealings with elves; they are respectful to them, but do not trust them. Cool politeness is the order of the day.

The Gnarley Rangers are concerned with the forest's welfare, not with politics, and they do not care about the territorial squabbles of either Dyvers, Verbobonc, or Greyhawk. They would like to see Celene's influence diminish, but they don't regard the Free City as exactly a bastion of righteousness and morality. However, they are glad to see the militia helping to protect woodsmen, and individual friendships between rangers and militia leaders and officers have begun to blossom.

**Members:** The Gnarley Rangers are pledged to protect the wood and its inhabitants. They hunt down those who seek to do it and its inhabitants harm. They protect the forest from outsiders, especially humanoids from the Pomarj, but also bandits and evil cults skulking in the Gnarley.

The Gnarley Rangers are led by seven Ranger Knights, who meet every two to three months in Corvtaith to share information. Each knight has a particular area of the wood, which may overlap with others, where he has friends and expends most of his protective efforts. More often than not this begins as a vow to the town to protect them. Each knight has his own following of younger rangers who swear a personal allegiance to him or her. In return, each knight undertakes the training of the young rangers as needed, and holds an annual feast for all his juniors each Brewfest.

**Type:** Fighting Company

**Scale:** 10 (regional [Gnarley Forest])

**Affiliation Score Criteria:** Membership in the Gnarley Rangers is open to characters of good alignment with a home region in the Tuflik, Fals, and Velverdyva Trade Route (VTE) metaregion, or whose home region is the Domain of Greyhawk.

Criterion (One Time)	Modifier
Character level	+½/level
Worships Ehlonna as your patron deity	+1
Possesses <i>woodland stride</i> or <i>camouflage</i> as a class ability	+2
Possesses 5-9 ranks in 4 or more Associated skills <sup>(1)</sup>	+2
Possesses 10+ ranks in 4 or more Associated skills <sup>(2)</sup>	+4
Possesses favored enemy (giant, humanoid [orc, gnom, or goblinoid], or monstrous humanoid) <sup>(2)</sup>	Special
Is an elf <sup>(3)</sup>	-2
Is a race other than centaur, gnome, elf, half-elf, halfling, or human.	-4
Member of a metaorganization or affiliation with one or more of the following descriptors: government, military, noble house, or thieves guild; or member of an organization that has access to the one or more of the following executive powers: plunder, raid, terrorize, or war	-10 per org

Criterion (Multiple Use)	Modifier
Plays an adventure set in the Gnarley Forest as a member of the Gnarley Rangers	+1
Causes or fails to prevent the destruction of forest or natural area	-4
Acts against alignment	-4
Associates with evil humanoids or agents of Blackthorn	-8

**Notes:**

- These bonuses stack (do not overlap) with each other; apply only the highest bonus if both criteria apply.
- The bonus is equal to your Favored Enemy bonus. Apply only the highest applicable bonus if you possess multiple favored enemies.
- Members of Clan Meldarin (of the Elven Clans of the Gnarley Forest) do not incur this penalty.

**Titles, Benefits and Duties:** To gain rank within the Gnarley Rangers, you must actively seek to defend the great forest against incursions from evil humanoids and those that would despoil the land. You may not make use of any benefit if it would result in a demotion to a lower rank.

**Score Title: Benefits and Duties** (benefits and duties are cumulative)

**3 or lower** Not affiliated, servant, or junior member with no benefits.

**4-10 Junior Ranger:** Junior Rangers are the youngest defenders of the Great Forest protecting the wood and its inhabitants and hunting down those who seek to do it harm. Learning from their assigned Senior Ranger, they protect the forest from outsiders, humanoids from the Pomarj, bandits and evil cults. The symbol of a Junior Ranger is silver oak leaf. As a member of the Gnarley Rangers, you receive the following benefits:

- Associated Skills:** The following skills are associated with the Gnarley Rangers: Handle Animal, Hide, Knowledge [Geography], Knowledge [Nature], Move Silently, and Survival. You receive a +1 circumstance bonus to checks made with Associated Skills in the Gnarley Forest, Celene, and the Wellwood. You also receive an equivalent circumstance penalty to all Charisma-based skills (except Handle Animal) made in any urban environment.
- Communication:** The Gnarley Rangers have a system of nonverbal communication that helps them in times of clandestine activity against humanoid invaders. See the **Sign Language** section for more information. You receive a bonus to Sense Motive equal to your Associated Skill bonus when attempting to recognize signals from **Sign Language**.
- Equipment:** You receive access to purchase the following equipment: Forestwarden Shroud<sup>RW</sup>, Honey Leather<sup>RW</sup>, Forestier's Cloak<sup>A&EG</sup>, and Hammock<sup>A&EG</sup>.
- Gnarley Region:** All adventures set within the Gnarley Forest, the Wellwood, or Celene cost one (1) less TU (to a minimum of 1 TU per adventure).
- Influence:** Members of the Gnarley Rangers receive influence with their home region. See the **Influence** section for more information.
- Service:** You are required to spend time patrolling the Gnarley Forest, ensuring that evil humanoids are rooted out before they can gain a foothold. You must spend 1 extra TU after any adventure. This TU cost is waived for playing adventures set within the Gnarley Forest.

**11-20 Gnarley Ranger:** The archetypical Gnarley Ranger, you are a defender of the Great Forest, protecting the wood and its inhabitants and hunting down those who seek to do it harm. You watch over travelers through the forest, making sure that they treat the forest with respect, and your patrolling has given you insight and knowledge of the forest that carries you to greater responsibilities. The symbol of the Gnarley Ranger is a silver oak leaf pair above an acorn worn as an amulet.

- Alternate Class Features:** You may spend 1 Affiliation Point or 1 Influence Point to gain access to one of the following alternate class features:  Champion of the Wild<sup>CC</sup> or  Spiritual Connection<sup>CC</sup>. You may use this ability multiple times, each time gaining access to a different class feature.
- Associated Skills:** Your bonus with Associated Skills increases to +2
- Commando:** The ways of the Gnarley Rangers are the ways of stealth in the Gnarley Forest. You may spend (1) Affiliation Point or one (1) influence Point to gain access to the first two levels of the Commando<sup>HB</sup> prestige class.
- Ehlonna's Way:** You gain access to the feat *Ehlonna's Way*<sup>DR316</sup>
- Equipment:** You receive access to purchase the following equipment: Boot Sheath<sup>A&EG</sup>, Sashling<sup>RW</sup>, Wrist Sheath<sup>A&EG</sup>
- Lodge:** By spending 5 TU, you may build yourself a hunting lodge somewhere in the Gnarley Forest to serve as a refuge or base of operations. This lodge corresponds to a Residence [Simple House], as detailed in the Dyvers Town & City Project and the Verbobonc Town Project. If you are a resident of Dyvers or Verbobonc, you may choose to locate the lodge near an approved Town Project town and participate in the Town Project. You do not pay any annual taxes on the residence. All other requirements for participating in a Town Project must be met. For more information on Residences in Verbobonc, see *Verbobonc Town Project: Player's Guide and Sourcebook*. For more information on residences in Dyvers, see *Dyvers Town & City Project: Player's Guide and Sourcebook*.
- Service:** You may spend 3 Affiliation Points after any adventure to waive the TU requirement for **Service** for that adventure.

(Continued on page 2)



This certificate certifies that

A character played by

Signature of Player

RPGA Number

Date

AR

Has fulfilled the requirements for membership in this Verbobonc regional metaorganization. Membership must be renewed annually at the beginning of each calendar year. Keep all previous certificates of membership along with this one so an accurate account of your membership can be verified.

Signature of DM

RPGA Number

Date

This certificate is the property of the Triads of the Tuflik, Fals, and Velverdyva Trade Route metaregion and may be amended, changed, revoked, or rescinded at any time. The certificate must be returned to a Triad member upon request. This certificate has \$0 cash value and cannot be traded, sold, or given away. If access to the benefits on this certificate are lost, void should be written across the text of this certificate.



# PROTECTOR OF THE GNARLEY FOREST

## THE GNARLEY RANGERS

(Continued from page 1)

**Playing a Gnarley Ranger:** Like all of nature's guardians, Gnarley Rangers vary widely in attitude. But the one ideal they all share is a reverence for nature and a fierce love for the great forest. This reverence and love takes the form of a desire to protect the forest home, whatever the cost. As an organization, the Gnarley Rangers are somewhat secretive, however social intrigue and politics are not their strong suit, preferring the canopy of trees to the panoply of a noble's court or the bustle of a city.

Though they wield considerable influence within the Gnarley Forest, the Gnarley Rangers are not a wealthy organization. So they must make due with limited resources in both materials and personnel. This does not hinder them in combat as much as one might believe, as the Gnarley Rangers are masters of hit-and-run tactics and sabotage of enemy encampments. When engaging the despoilers of nature, the concept of noble or honorable combat is meaningless. The goal is to stop the enemy—whatever the cost—without allowing them to hurt you or the land around you any more than they have. Ranged combat accomplishes this goal best—along with stealth.

This is not to say that members of the Gnarley Rangers are without honor—quite the contrary. However, a Gnarley Ranger places the safety of the forest and those who inhabit nature's environs above any concern for whether the tactics used to ensure that safety are respectable or proper.

**Enemies and Allies:** The Gnarley Rangers have many enemies, first and foremost are the Blackthorn. Others include humanoids of the Pomarj, evil cultists and bandits. The call upon the following as allies: gnome clans, followers of Ehlonna, members of the House Guard for Baron Corbin Deleveu of Verbobonc, and some others within the region of Dyvers. While relations with the Elven Clans of the Gnarley Forest are fairly cool, the Gnarley rangers do have friendlier dealings with Clan Meldarin.

**Gnarley Ranger Sign Language:** The Gnarley Rangers have their own two part system of communication. The first is effectively a language, comprised of parts vocal and non-verbal signals. This language concerns events and phenomena important in the woodlands and to the ethos of good. Thus, if one ranger looks at someone and then casts his gaze down and to his right, a second ranger viewing this will know that the first ranger considers that person evil or dangerous. An almost imperceptible (to non-rangers) clenching of a fist accompanying this shift in gaze indicates that the ranger feels the person is certainly evil or very dangerous. The Gnarley Ranger language is complex and subtle, and other non-Gnarley rangers have to make a Sense Motive check (DC 20) to recognize the signals. This verbal/nonverbal mixed language has a broad vocabulary, but doesn't handle much in the way of abstract concepts.

The second part of this communication system is a complex set of signals in the form of terrain markers: scratches left on trees, a wedge cut out of a capped fungus, interweaving of small branches or ferns, and the like. These signals generally indicate fairly simple things, often warnings relating to dangerous terrain or monsters (kech, orcs, etc.).

Gnarley Rangers of Junior rank or above are proficient in this signaling system, and non-Gnarley rangers will not be able to recognize it. A successful Sense Motive (as mentioned above) will allow the perceiver to get the general gist of the signal. Most Gnarley woodsmen know something of this signaling system, since rangers often leave signs to warn them of perils and hazards.

Characters that are not members of the Gnarley Rangers receive a -4 circumstance penalty when attempting to understand Ranger sign language and communication.

### INFLUENCE

Members of the Gnarley Rangers are capable of exercising influence in their home region to further the goals of their group. However, each region has different rules regarding the use and acquisition of influence. The following rules for acquiring and using influence apply, based on your home region:

**Dyvers:** Dyvers regional characters receive influence points with the Gnarley Rangers according to the following progression:

- ☛ **Junior Ranger:** one (1) influence point per year
- ☛ **Gnarley Ranger:** two (2) influence points per year
- ☛ **Senior Ranger:** three (3) influence points per year
- ☛ **Ranger Knight:** four (4) influence points per year.

**Verbobonc:** Verbobonc regional characters may use your affiliation with the Gnarley Rangers as influence with this metaorganization. Spending 1 Affiliation point earns you 1 standard Influence point with the Gnarley Rangers.

**Other regions:** Contact your regional Triad for rules on exercising influence from the Gnarley Rangers in your home region.

**Score Title: Benefits and Duties (benefits and duties are cumulative) (cont'd)**

**21-30 Senior Ranger:** The Senior Rangers are among the most experienced defenders of the Great Forest. Between one to three Senior Rangers serve under each Ranger Knight. Guiding the Junior Rangers and the Gnarley Rangers, they protect the wood and its inhabitants—hunting down those who seek to do it harm, especially humanoids from the Pomarj, bandits and evil cults. The symbol for the Senior Rangers is a golden acorn with two silver leaves.

- ☛ **Associated Skills:** Your bonus with your Associated Skills increases to +4
- ☛ **Commando:** You may spend (1) Affiliation Point or one (1) influence Point to gain access to the next 3 levels in the Commando <sup>HP</sup> prestige class.
- ☛ **Service:** You may spend 2 Affiliation Points after any adventure to waive the TU requirement for **Service** for that adventure.

**31+ Ranger Knight of the Gnarley Forest:** The Ranger Knights are the greatest defenders of the Gnarley Forest. The symbol of the Ranger Knights is a golden acorn with two silver leaves surrounding a moonstone.

Attaining the rank of Ranger Knight requires campaign documentation jointly issued by the regional Triads for Dyvers and Verbobonc.

Only seven Ranger Knights are known to exist and one can only become a Ranger Knight upon the death of an existing Knight. Upon attaining enough Affiliation points to qualify for this rank, you must contact the regional Triads for Dyvers and Verbobonc. If no vacancy exists among the Ranger Knights, you may not progress past the rank of Senior Ranger until or unless a vacancy occurs. However, you may continue earning Affiliation Point.