AMARUNE'S ALMANAC

Swamps of the Realms

GUILD

Faerûn

Sea of Moving Ice
Icewind Dale
Luskan
Lurkwood
Silver Marches
The High Forest
Evermoors
Neverwinter
The Mere of Dead Men
Waterdeep
Anauroch
The Whale Bones
The Sword Coast
Greypeak Mountains
Ruathym
The High Moor
Cormyr
Vast Swamp
Baldur's Gate
The Western Heartlands
The Dragon Coast
Elturgard
Sea of Swords
Amn
The Moonshae Isles
The Wealdath
Tethyr
Lantan
Calimshan
Trackless Sea
The Shining Sea
Jungles of Chult
Tashalar
Lapaliiya
The Wild Coast
Thindol
Mhair Jungles
Samarach

SOSSAL
GREAT GLACIER
VAASA
NARFELL
DAMARA
RASHEMEN
HORDELANDS
THE GREAT DALE
FLOODED FOREST
ORMANTHOR
THE VAST
IMPILTUR
THESK
SUNRISE MOUNTAINS
SEMBIA
EASTING COAST
SEA OF FALLEN STARS
THAY
AGLAROND
MURGHÔM
TURMISH
CHONDATH
CHESSENTA
PLAINS OF PURPLE DUST
MULHORAND
UNTHER
TYMANTHER
THE YEHIMAL MOUNTAINS
FIRESTEEP MOUNTAINS
BEASTLANDS
THE SHAAR
THE EASTERN SHAAR
GREAT RIFT
ELFHARROW
FOREST OF AMTAR
GREAT SWAMP OF RETHILD
LUIREN
DAMBRATH
HALRUAA
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Definitions

When referencing spells from this book, the superscript "AA6" is used (for example, *druidic practice*[AA6]). Each volume of Amarune's Almanac uses this notation, with the end numeral changed to match the volume of the book. "XGE" is used to denote spells from *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*

If other definitions are used, they will appear here in future volumes.

It is I, Volothamp Geddarm, your humble publisher once again here to introduce you to Amarune's next almanac – a tour of the murky, mucky swamps of the Faerûn.

It likely comes as no surprise that I would not wish to find myself in a bog in any but the most necessary situations. My distaste for the humid and oppressive jungles of Chult are evidence to that. One would be forgiven for mistaking a jungle and a swamp, to be sure. Wet, dark, and dank. Jungles however seem to thrive with life while swamps teem with death and decay. I'm told one big difference is simply the amount of water at ground level. Chult feels plenty wet to me, although Amarune did take the time to remind me it was likely the sweat collected in my boots.

The fens and bogs of Faerûn are oppressive. The Vast Swamp is... vast. The Evermoors are home to the end of many young adventurer's careers—trolls, catoblepas, hags... every imaginable horror, carnivorous and pestilent, seems drawn to the gloomy places. Yet, Amarune and Arclath were brave enough to traverse even these regions. So my cap is off to the brave young duo. Last I faced a troll in a dank mere, the Sage of Shadowdale himself simply stood and laughed, leaving me to save both our skins on my own as I desperately fumbled igniting a torch to fend the beast off. Some help would have been appreciated, but alas, I warded off the beast and can claim the rightful title of 'Savior of the Sage.' I take every opportunity to remind Elminster of that title, so often his eyes suffer strain from the rolling.

My other most notable heroic tale of swamps was when I had used my not-inconsiderable (can't footnote me this time, El!) magic to transmute my shape into that of a puddle to observe a froghemoth for my Volo's Guide to Monsters that I'd stumbled upon. Perhaps more accurately, it had stumbled upon me. As I waited for it to pass, a float of bloodbloaters happened upon my form and for the next eight hours I was stuck! Unable to transform back, lest I disturb the bloaters, I simply took count of my situation and the path that had led me to it, determined not to let that experience ever happen again... Because it was truly an experience. I'd asked Amarune if I could include a recount of how it felt, having such things moving through my watery form but in the end, she felt it was... inappropriate for such a book.

Nevertheless, swamps are desperate places that seem determined to keep outsiders outside. A guide like this will be essential to the survival of anyone who seeks to brave one. But should fate befall you in spite of this, please remember these are not the words of your honest and humble publisher, who would never willfully lead you astray.

Volothamp Geddarm

The following D&D books provided material and inspiration:

Ed Greenwood, Julia Martin, Jeff Grubb. *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting 2nd edition (revised), A Grand Tour of the Realms.* 1993

Ed Greenwood. *Volo's Guide to the North.* 1993

Eric Haddock. *Cormyr.* 1994

James Butler, Elizabeth T. Danforth, Jean Rabe. *Elminster's Ecologies: The Cormyrean Marshes.* September, 1994

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Ed Greenwood. *The City of Ravens Bluff.* November 1998

Ed Greenwood, Sean K. Reynolds, Skip Williams, Rob Heinsoo. *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting 3rd edition.* June, 2001

Neverwinter Nights (videogame) June, 2002

Ed Greenwood, Jason Carl. *Silver Marches.* July, 2002

Thomas Reid. *Shining South.* October, 2004

Brian R. James and Ed Greenwood. *The Grand History of the Realms.* September, 2007

Alex Clippinger, Micah Watt, Scott Bean. *Faiths of the Forgotten Realms.* June, 2018

Steve Fidler. *Mythic Encounters: The Bullywug Ascendant.* July, 2020

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Foreword

The part of the Forgotten Realms most often seen in lore is the continent of Faerûn, and although it has its deserts, some of them vast, and its frozen areas, too, most of the landscape is well-watered. Springs bubble up nigh everywhere, you're never far from streams running their merry bubbling ways to rivers or lakes of size, and ponds beyond number elude almost all maps.

So, too, do the smaller bogs, the marshy areas far more numerous than most folk care to count, from saltwater and brackish fenlands to inland swamps larger than many dales and city-states. 'No-go' areas for all caravans and almost all beasts of burden, places imbued in popular legend not just with diseases and sinister denizens that reach out tentacles to drag unwary intruders down, but monsters that prefer to dwell alone, from hags to particular sorts of dragons, and giant stinging insects to swarming bloodsucking creatures. Not to mention quicksand, vortices that drag down even the large and strong, and malicious inhabitants who lure wayfarers to unpleasant dooms.

In short, good places to stay well away from.

Yet those who do dwell in and near marshes will tell you of their bounty, from fish and frogs for the cooking-fire to reeds for thatching roofs, and bog-muck that makes crops grow with almost frightening speed and vigor to a rich array of abundant, life-saving medicinal plants—to say nothing of herbs for dishes bound for even the finest dining tables. So, sparsely-tapped wells of bounty that are best stayed well away from.

To this, Elminster feels the need to add (with the proviso that he has nothing at all against adventurers, and wishes to eliminate or retire almost none of them) that swamps across the Realms seem to hold almost indecent amounts of treasure, from the spellbook- and magic item-laden tombs of liches who wanted to be left alone, and so inhabited firm plots of ground deep in swamps that had winding and treacherous unmarked 'safe' ways in and out to them, to unintended donations of wealth caused by royal treasuries or the wealth of nobles or merchant costers being whisked away from battle-danger or brigands by hasty folk unfamiliar with local terrain, who blundered into bogs and lost all they were carrying—or more.

And that 'more' heralds another all-too-prevalent feature of the swamps of Faerûn: hauntings. Undead in their spectral, bony, or rotting glory (if that's the best word, which I doubt) lurk and linger above these oft-noisome and always wet areas, some of them seemingly determined to harvest the living to join them.

When I (perhaps foolishly) pressed the Sage of Shadowdale for more details of treasures and hauntings, he told me of an entire wagon-train of the Bold and Bright trading coster, that headed southeast from Scornubel in the high, hot summer of 1346 DR bound for distant Westgate, and somehow blundered into a swamp. Never to be seen again, not a guard, merchant, paying passenger, ox, or wagon. Losses blamed on brigands at the time, but trackers sent out by the coster found no signs of violence, just wagonwheel ruts heading into...black and still water. The cargo included gnome-crafted jewelry set with many fine-cut gems, exotic cordials for drinkers of discernment, and sealed-in-oil hand tools of superior dwarven make. Not to mention, it is rumored, some secret magic concealed in cavities within more mundane-seeming trade goods.

And this wagon-train is typical of many swamp-related lost caravans. Yet they are few compared to the legions of peddlers, each with a few heavily-laden mules, that tavern tales insist met their ends in this bog or that marsh. The mucky bottoms of some wetlands must be heaped deeply with drowned riches, if even half what's said in taprooms across Faerûn is true.

And then there are the wilder tales, like the accounts of a hidden kingdom of will-o'-wisps deep in this or that large swamp, or the beholder hive that sends marsh-hunters and other humans who blunder into their demesne forth as mind-controlled thralls to raid and slay and steal on behalf of the eye tyrants.

And then there are the swamp-dwelling dragons...

What adventures await! With the aid of this useful, well-researched almanac, the latest in Amarune's intrepid explorations of the Realms, its wet and muddy places await you. So, er, enjoy!

Ed Greenwood
{Creator of The Forgotten Realms}

Shiah "Cinder" Irangladen

Introduction

My name is Amarune Lyone Armala Whitewave, and I have been blessed, or cursed, with a very interesting life. Though I've accomplished many endeavors of my own volition, perhaps one of the most remarkable times in my life was when I was possessed by the disembodied spirit of my great-great-grandfather, Elminster, the Sage of Shadowdale. That is not to downplay my own accomplishments as a burglar, dancer, mercenary, or Chosen of Mystra, but if I were to select any one event in my life that continues to deeply impact me to this day, my time sharing my thoughts with great-great-grandpa would rise to the top.

Though Elminster is no longer with me, shreds of him remain. There are times when I have difficulty differentiating between his memories and my own, and places that I have never visited before seem vividly familiar to me. There are also times I'll visit a place that Elminster had not seen since before the Spellplague or the Second Sundering, and I'll be shocked at the changes it's endured, even though I should have no reference point to judge it against.

What you're reading now as Amarune's Almanac began as my personal diary, collecting notes and observations of the places I traveled as I struggled to sort out my own memories from Elminster's. Through the support of my lover (and editor), Arclath Delcastle, I've slowly transformed my scattered thoughts into a record that I hope will be of some aid, or at least intrigue, to my readers.

Had I not been tossed to the winds by several events in my life, I might have lived and died within twenty miles of where I was born, like so many other people. I hope that this book encourages people to seek out the wonders of Faerûn to see for themselves, to explore beyond the horizon, and fuel the curiosity that asks what's on the other side.

Between Mortals and Nature

Swamps are, beyond a shadow of doubt, one of the least pleasant geographical features through which one can travel. They're muggy, they flood, they're full of deadly creatures, and it's easy for disease and rot to flourish. I will not go so far as to say that no civilization can be found in them; gnolls, lizardfolk, bullywugs, trolls, and the like are able to carve out niches successfully in swamps, in large part due to their flexibility. By living with nature, taking what the swamp provides, and not trying to change it into something it isn't, these civilizations can flourish on their own terms.

I find that the folly of many humans, dwarves, and gnomes in particular is their desire to control nature. Once upon a time, I'd not have given it a second thought. After all, a swamp is a useless, gross, muggy space that could be used for something more valuable! If only you were to drain it through proper damming and redirection techniques, you could claim all of that rich muddy soil as arable farmland. Having grown up in cultures that consider themselves the owners of land and not the residents of it, it never occurred to me just how much hubris it required to maintain these ideas.

Dante Ezio Cifaldi

Swamps, Marshes, Bogs, or Fens?

Not everything in this book strictly suits the textbook definition of a swamp. Indeed, a more accurate description would be to call them all wetlands or quagmires, but wetlands don't conjure up the same thrilling and mysterious imagery as a swamp. I'd say this is one of the few debates I've ever had with our dear publisher, but I wouldn't consider it a sticking point.

A swamp, technically speaking, is a flooded plane laying under several feet of water, and filled with woody plants, shrubs, and trees. It might be fed by a river flowing into it, or perhaps by water springing up from underground, but it may not be enough to stave off stagnation. The soil is rich in nutrients, and if drained by a change in the terrain or by artificial intervention, it often makes for excellent farmland.

Marshes, meanwhile, are constantly fed by flowing water, either from a coast or from streams or rivers. The water may only be a few inches deep, or a few feet at most, and the mineral-dense soil is perfect for soft grasses to grow in, along with reeds, cattails, and lily pads. Marshes are often teeming with life, like otters and wading birds.

A bog, on the other hand, feels almost like a lich's favored wetland. Bogs feature scant nutrients in the soil, and little fresh water, mostly from rain rather than being fed by any flowing sources. Slow-decaying plant material forms a layer of acidic peat, which can serve as an excellent fuel source. However, a side effect of these acidic conditions is that bodies lost within a bog are often remarkably well preserved. Corpses have been found in bogs decades or even centuries after their deaths, with their skins tanned like a leatherworker's process, still intact.

A fen is similar to a bog, low in nutrients, and yet the peat is alkaline rather than acidic, often flourishing with grasses, sedges, and mosses.

Swamps and Sorceries

Just as so much of our world has been influenced by magic following the Spellplague and the Second Sundering, swamps seem particularly predisposed to magical taint. I theorize that because so many wetlands are made from the runoff of lakes, rivers, oceans, or springs, the magic 'runoff' of these places can condense in a swamp more easily. Water elementals and living spells seem all the more prevalent in a swamp, along with unnatural insects and aberrations.

The dangers of a swamp become amplified a thousand-fold when you realize that the fog is not simply a fog, but a living spell of cloudkill, seeking to chase you down and pour itself down your nostrils, forcing its way into your lungs and choking you to death. There is a reason you will find bog bodies, or skeletons floating in the mud of a swamp. There have been many places in the world that I felt were trying to kill me, but swamps seem to be more active murderers than most.

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR, ARCLATH DELCASTLE

Swamps have absolutely no redeeming qualities. There, I said it. Now that you possess Amarune's Almanac Volume 6, you no longer have any need to visit a swamp. Treasure this book, and thank us by purchasing every other volume, as we have saved you from wet socks, insect stings, putrid smells, life-threatening diseases and embarrassing rashes.

If you, like so many other adventurers, still feel the need to see these things for yourself, or question whatever ruins, tombs, crypts, and towers might be buried under mud or lost in the fog, then I implore you, please do so with the utmost care. Heed every warning my dearest Amarune has written, and take to heart every story of danger or discomfort she recorded. Know that reading a passage about a blisteringly hot swamp or a chilly bog cannot begin to express what it's like to actually be there, and I mean that in the worst way possible.

Though Amarune may consider it hubris to try to turn a swamp into something else, I consider it a service to the world. I strongly reiterate, swamps have absolutely no redeeming qualities.

Player Options

Presented here are two subclasses, one for the Druid class and one for the Ranger class. These subclasses represent the denizens of the harsh environment of the swamp. The Circle of the Fen, who embody the terrain and weaponize it against their foes; and the Bogshadow ranger archetype who live and die within the darkness of the forgotten fens, striking out with poisons and poultices created from the swamp itself.

Circle of the Fen

Buried deep within the vast wetlands of Faerûn are those who have learned to live in the hostile and oppressive environment; not just live—but thrive—among the tangled lattice of vine and growth. In most fen-faring civilizations—from the lizardfolk of the Vast Swamp to the halflings of the Adder Swamp—the immense reverence for the land required to live in harmony here lends itself to the mystic arts of druidism. Transforming into the form of creatures whose natural adaptations use the unique landscape to their advantage, becoming one with the land itself, and harnessing the latent trouble of the wetland into a weapon against those who would encroach upon it are just a few of the ways these druids benefit from the land around them.

The wetlands also provide a bounty of unique properties in their flora, which enable druids, alchemists, and ne'er-do-wells to create all manner of potent potables—potions, poultices, and poisons—to aid or incapacitate their foes.

Circle Spells

Your mystical connection to the land infuses you with the ability to cast certain spells. At 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th level you gain access to circle spells connected to the wetlands of Faerûn.

Once you gain access to a circle spell, you always have it prepared, and it doesn't count against the number of spells you can prepare each day. If you gain access to a spell that doesn't appear on the druid spell list, the spell is nonetheless a druid spell for you.

Circle of the Fen Spells

Druid Level	Spells
3rd	*backflow* [AA6], *darkness*
5th	*healing leeches* [AA6], *stinking cloud*
7th	*decompose* [AA6], *locate creature*
9th	*insect plague*, *swamp den* [AA6]

Swamp Beast Forms

At 2nd level, you can use your Wild Shape to transform into a beast that calls swamps home with a challenge rating as high as ½ (you ignore the Max CR column of the Beast Shapes table, but must abide by the other limitations there).

The maximum CR of your swamp forms increases when you reach certain levels in this class. The max CR becomes 1 at 6th level, 2 at 10th level, and 3 at 14th level.

Land Transmutation: Bog

The acrid smell of bog gas wafts in as the ground becomes spongy and unreliable. Starting at 2nd level, you can expend a use of your Wild Shape feature as an action to magically transmute the area within 60 feet of you into a dense wetland bog. The ground becomes a mixture of soft loamy peat, hard calcified stones, and deep wells of water. The area becomes difficult terrain. You can manipulate the area the following ways:

Claudio Casini

Pitfall. If a creature you can see moves more than 15 feet within the bog, you can use your reaction to have an unseen pool of deep mud appear beneath its feet. The target must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw against your druid spell save DC or fall into the pit, becoming restrained. The target, or another creature within 5 feet of it, can use its action to pull themselves free.

Fog Cloud. You can cast the spell *fog cloud* at its lowest level without expending a spell slot, targeting a point within the area.

The terrain created by this feature is real and not an illusion, but is otherwise magical. This effect lasts a number of hours equal to half your druid level (rounded down). The area then reverts to its normal form unless you expend another use of this feature. You can revert the area to its normal form earlier by using a bonus action.

Cloud of Irritants

At 6th level, you can call a cloud of biting and noxious insects to infest the area. As a bonus action, you surround yourself in a cloud of irritants. Creatures (other than you) that start their turn within 5 feet of a cloud must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or take 2d4 poison damage. When a creature takes this damage, a new cloud spreads to that creature, surrounding it as well. A creature in the area of more than one cloud is affected only once. A creature can use its action to disperse the cloud that is surrounding them. If a creature affected by a cloud dies, the cloud surrounding them immediately disperses. You can use your bonus action to dismiss any number of clouds.

Silt Stride

Starting at 10th level, you can submerge yourself in loose terrain such as sand, mud, or shallow water and reemerge in another similar location within 100 feet. The area you enter and exit must be at least the same size as you. You must use 5 feet of movement to enter the ground. You know the possible exit points within range, even if you could otherwise not see them and, as part of the same move you used to enter the ground, you can exit from one of those points. You appear in the closest unoccupied space within 5 feet of that point, using another 5 feet of movement. If you have no movement left, you appear within 5 feet of the area you entered.

Once you use this feature, you can't do so again until you finish a short or long rest, or until you expend a use of your Wild Shape feature.

Swamp Thing

At 14th level, you can expend two uses of your Wild Shape feature as an action to transform into the bog itself for 1 hour. The area within 60 feet of you becomes transmuted into a bog, as described in your Land Transmutation: Bog feature. This area is centered on you, and moves with you. The detritus and vines of the swamp coalesce around you, increasing your size to Huge (unless it was already larger), and granting you temporary hit points equal to your druid level x 5. You have resistance to nonmagical bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage while you have these temporary hit points. In addition, you gain the following benefits for the duration.

Fen Fury. You can use your action to make a melee spell attack against one or two creatures you can see within 20 feet, dealing 4d6 bludgeoning damage on a hit. Each target you hit must succeed on a Strength saving throw against your druid spell save DC, or be tossed up to 30 feet in a direction of your choice, falling prone where they land.

Engulf. As an action, you can move up to your remaining speed. While doing so, you can enter Large or smaller creatures' spaces. Whenever you enter a creature's space, the creature must make a Dexterity saving throw against your druid spell save DC. On a successful save, the creature can choose to be pushed 5 feet back or to the side of you. A creature that chooses not to be pushed suffers the consequences of a failed saving throw. On a failed save, you enter the creature's space and the creature becomes engulfed. The engulfed creature can't breathe, is restrained, and takes 4d6 bludgeoning damage at the start of each of your turns. When you move, the engulfed creature moves with you. An engulfed creature can try to escape by taking an action to make a DC 12 Strength check. On a success, the creature escapes and enters a space of its choice within 5 feet of you.

Control Water. You can cast the spell *control water* at its lowest level without expending a spell slot, targeting a point within 60 feet instead of the spell's normal range. You can cast *control water* this way once each time you transform using this feature.

Bogshadow Archetype

Within the murky waters and through the dense, sweeping canopies of the bogs and swamps of Faerûn, the bogshadow rangers hunt the horrors that dwell within the overgrowth. Bogshadows are rough and tumble even amongst rangers, as they are forced to deal with some of the least refined environments and foes; ones that test the stomach as much as the mettle. Trolls, hags, blighted plants, and the bloated undead all lurk within the dark swamplands. Without the elusive bogshadows, those bordering the swamps would never see them coming.

Bogshadow Magic

Starting at 3rd level, you learn an additional spell when you reach certain levels in this class, as shown in the Bogshadow Spells table. The spell counts as a ranger spell for you, but it doesn't count against the number of ranger spells you know.

Bogshadow Spells

Ranger Level	Spells
3rd	*entangle*
5th	*pass without trace*
9th	*stinking cloud*
13th	*control water*
17th	*cloudkill*

Dirty Camouflage

At 3rd level, you know how to best avoid the dangers of the swamps. You gain a +5 bonus to Dexterity (Stealth) checks to hide in water or dense foliage. Additionally, you can hold your breath for 15 minutes.

Toxic Coats

At 3rd level, you can use your connection with the boglands to enchant one of your weapons with fetid poisons or diseases. By spending 1 minute with a weapon, you can coat the weapon in a magical toxin. As this toxin is made partially from your own magical reserves, when you use this feature on a second weapon while one is already coated, the poison disappears from the first piece.

Choose a damage type for the toxin: acid, necrotic, or poison. The next time a creature takes damage from the weapon within the next hour, the target takes an additional 2d6 damage of the chosen type.

Additionally, you become proficient in your choice of the herbalism kit or the poisoner's kit, and add double your proficiency bonus when making checks that use this proficiency. If you use either of these kits while preparing the toxin, the damage die of the toxin increases to d8s.

Hearty Resilience

At 7th level, your body has become more physically resilient, and it can drive itself even through adversity. You gain resistance to poison damage and are immune to disease. Additionally, whenever you make a Constitution saving throw, you can choose to add a d6 to the roll. You can do this after you see the result of the roll but before the DM tells you if you succeeded.

You can use this reaction a number of times equal to your Wisdom modifier. You regain any expended uses when you finish a long rest.

Enhanced Toxin

At 11th level, the potency of your toxin goes up. The damage dealt by your Toxic Coats feature increases to 4d6. Whenever you deal damage to a creature using your Toxic Coats feature, it must succeed on a Constitution saving throw against your spell save DC or be afflicted by one of the following effects based on the damage type of the toxin. The effect lasts for 1 minute, but the creature can repeat the Constitution saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Acid. At the start of each of the creature's turns, it takes 3d4 acid damage.

Poison. The creature is poisoned.

Necrotic. Whenever the creature takes damage, its maximum hit points are reduced by the same amount, including the damage of the triggering attack. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest.

Lurker

At 15th level, you are able to sink into the earth and rise elsewhere. When a creature misses you with an attack, you can use your reaction to sink into the earth and arise in an unoccupied space on the ground within 15 feet of you. Alternatively, you can select an unoccupied space in water within 30 feet of you.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest, or until you use your action to cast a ranger spell.

Amarune's Almanac: Swamps of the Realms Spells

Spell Level	Spell	School	Ritual	Druid	Ranger
1st	*druidic practice*	abjuration	✓	✓	✓
1st	*pond scum*	conjuration	✓	✓	✓
1st	*rot*	necromancy		✓	
2nd	*backflow*	transmutation		✓	✓
3rd	*firefly messengers*	illusion	✓	✓	✓
3rd	*healing leeches*	conjuration	✓	✓	✓
4th	*decompose*	necromancy	✓	✓	✓
5th	*swamp den*	conjuration	✓	✓	✓
7th	*conjure shambling mound*	conjuration		✓	
8th	*dancing lights*	enchantment		✓	
9th	*poison geyser*	evocation		✓	

Additional Rules

Druid: Spellcasting

As a druid, your affinity for the world you are in allows you to quickly tap into its latent magic and call upon its power and knowledge. You can swap a druid spell you have prepared for a druid spell with an Environment component that matches the biome you are currently in by spending 1 minute per spell level in deep meditation. This spell must be a spell you would otherwise normally be able to prepare. This can be performed during a short rest.

Ranger: Natural Explorer

Upon picking a favored terrain with your Natural Explorer feature, Rangers gain a subset of spells associated to that terrain. These represent skills you've mastered as a Ranger, boons granted from the land itself, or simply tricks you've picked up out of necessity. Each spell listed can be cast once. You must complete a long rest before you can cast one of these spells again.

When you gain new favored terrains at 6th and 10th level, you do not learn the spells associated to those lists immediately. Instead, during a long rest you can choose to swap the spells you gained from one favored terrain to instead learn the spells from another.

Favored Terrain: Swamp spells

Ranger Level	Spell
2nd	*pond scum* [AA6]
5th	*backflow* [AA6]
9th	*healing leeches* [AA6]
13th	*decompose* [AA6]

Spellcasting

Component: Environment (E)

Some spells require the caster to be in a specific biome or surrounded by specific terrain, specified in parentheses in the environment entry, before they can be cast. Some features may allow substitutes or replacements for this component and in this case the effect is created from whatever natural materials are available around it. The damage type of the spell does not change unless decided otherwise by the DM.

Spells

Druidic Practice

1st-level abjuration (ritual)

Classes: Druid, Ranger
Casting Time: 1 hour
Range: Touch
Components: V, S, M (25 gp worth of herbs, leaves, and roots, which the spell consumes), E (any natural environment)
Duration: Instantaneous

You perform an ancient druidic ceremony that calls upon the land itself. When you cast this spell, choose one of the following practices, the target of which must be within 10 feet of you throughout the casting.

Forosnai. You touch a willing creature and send them on a spiritual pilgrimage. The target falls unconscious, waking up after 1 hour, if they take damage, or someone uses an action to shake or slap them awake. The exact nature of this pilgrimage is unique to the individual and can result in learning new knowledge about an ancestor or past life or receiving guidance from a deity. The exact information learned is up to the DM. A creature can benefit from this practice once each year, during the season of their birth.

Geasa. You touch a willing creature, and choose a creature type: aberrations, beasts, celestials, constructs, dragons, elementals, fey, fiends, giants, monstrosities, oozes, plants, or undead. Alternatively, you can choose one race of humanoid (such as elves or tiefling). A ward is placed on the target, preventing it from being slain by a creature of the chosen type. If an attack by a creature of that type would reduce the target to 0 hit points, the target is instead reduced to 1 hit point and the ward ends. The ward ends early if the target is reduced to 0 hit points by a creature of any other type. A creature can benefit from this rite only once.

Imbue. You touch a mundane plant or piece of wood. Magical energy suffuses the object throughout the ritual, preserving its form and allowing it to be used as a druidic focus.

Purify (Creature). You touch a willing creature, who becomes occluded by a mystical smoke that smells of sage. As the smoke clears, you make a DC 20 Wisdom (Insight) check. On a successful check, the target is restored to its original alignment.

Purify (Object). You touch an object that has been diseased or blighted by a nonmagical source. The blight is removed, restoring it to its original state.

Pond Scum

1st-level conjuration (ritual)

Classes: Druid, Ranger
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self
Components: V, S, M (a bit of wet moss), E (swamp)
Duration: 1 hour

Your body becomes coated in a thick layer of wet scum, akin to that which is found on the surfaces of swamps or ponds. For the duration of the spell, you have advantage on saving throws against spells that deal fire damage, advantage on checks to escape a grapple, and you count as being submerged if you require water to breathe.

At Higher Levels. If you cast this spell using a spell slot of 2nd level or higher, the duration of the spell increases by 1 hour for each spell slot level above 1st.

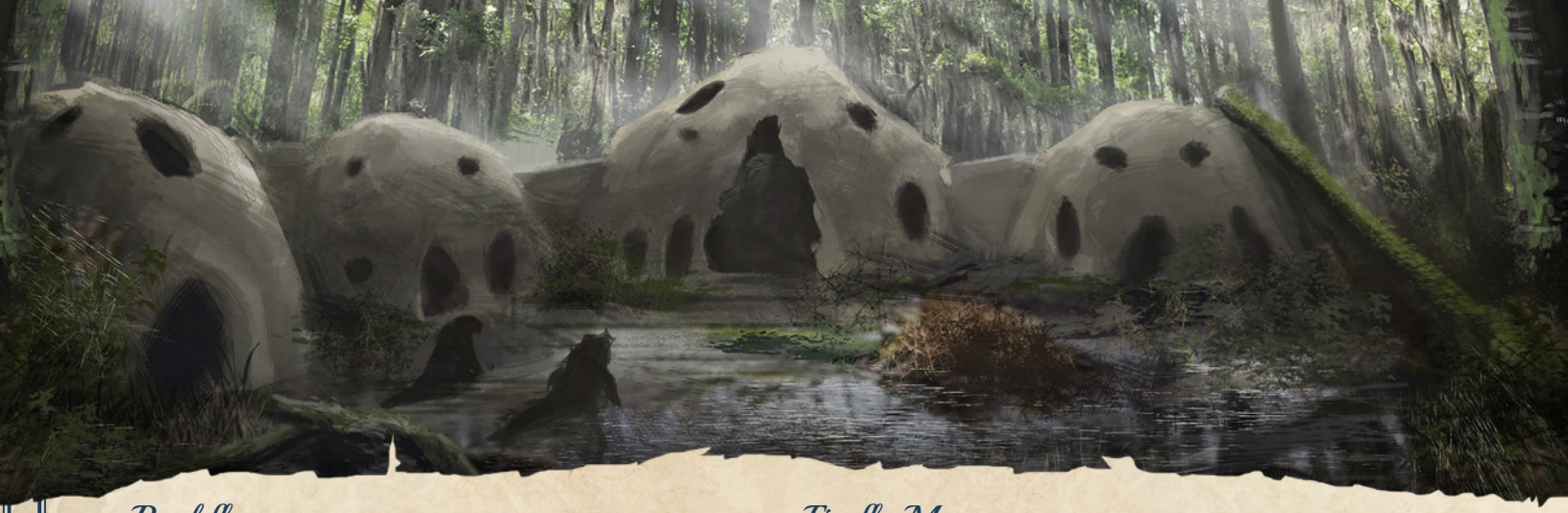
Rot

1st-level necromancy

Classes: Druid
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 60 feet
Components: V, S, E (swamp)
Duration: Instantaneous

You extend your hand toward a creature you can see within range and infect the target with a horrible disease, causing their flesh to form pustules and smell of decay. The creature must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or take 2d12 necrotic damage and become poisoned until the end of its next turn. This spell has no effect on undead or constructs.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 2nd level or higher, the damage increases by 1d12 for each slot level above 1st.



Backflow
2nd-level transmutation

Classes: Druid, Ranger
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self
Components: V, S, E (swamp)
Duration: Concentration, up to 10 minutes

You create a 5-foot-radius sphere of water repellent energy centered on yourself. Any water in this area when the spell is cast is forced outward, knocking any creatures swimming in the area back 5 feet, and any flowing water that attempts to enter this area for the duration is diverted backward. If you are swimming when you cast this spell, or begin swimming while concentrating on it, you descend 60 feet per round until the spell ends. If you land before the spell ends, you take no falling damage and land on your feet.

If an attack with a projectile made of ice or water is made against a target within the area from outside of it, it is reflected away. There is a 50% chance that the projectile will reflect directly backward, making the attacker the target instead. Otherwise, the attack is redirected harmlessly away and fails.

As an action on your turn while concentrating on this spell, you can expand the area of this spell to a 10-foot-radius sphere, pushing the water in the new area backward and knocking any creatures swimming in the new radius back 5 feet. You can also use your action to shrink the area back to a 5-foot radius. When you lose concentration on this spell, its effect lingers until the end of your next turn, after which the area of energy fades and the displaced water comes rushing in. Creatures no more than 5 feet outside the area of the spell are pulled 5 feet toward its center. Any creatures within the area of the spell must succeed on a Strength saving throw, or take 2d10 bludgeoning damage as the water cascades upon them. Creatures with a swim speed make this saving throw with advantage.

Firefly Messengers
3rd-level illusion (ritual)

Classes: Druid, Ranger
Casting Time: 1 hour
Range: Self
Components: V, S, M (a jar full of fireflies), E (swamp)
Duration: Instantaneous

You imbue a jar of collected fireflies with a collective understanding of your will. At any point over the next year and a day, you can use your action to open the jar. When you do, you can paint a mental image as you speak aloud the name of a creature who is known to you. The fireflies understand exactly where this creature is, and take the most direct route toward them. Upon arrival, they magically shift hues and draw your mental image in the air within 5 feet of the named creature. This image lasts for 1 hour, or until the named creature dismisses it using a bonus action.

No other creature can open the jar. After delivering the message, or after a year and a day, the fireflies return to the swamp they were captured from.

Healing Leeches
3rd-level conjuration (ritual)

Classes: Druid, Ranger
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self
Components: V, S, E (swamp)
Duration: 10 minutes

You summon two magical leeches that exist for the duration. They can be given to willing creatures and placed somewhere on their skin. If a creature is affected by a nonmagical poison or disease, the leaches remove these toxins from its body. Additionally, the creature is immune to disease, cannot be poisoned, and is resistant to poison damage for the duration.

Decompose

4th-level necromancy (ritual)

Classes: Druid, Ranger
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 10 feet
Components: V, S, M (a handful of earthworms), E (swamp)
Duration: Concentration, up to 10 minutes

You call upon the spirits of nature to decompose a corpse. Choose one dead creature within range or undead creature that lacks the Incorporeal Movement trait within range. If the target is not at 0 hit points, its maximum hit points are reduced by 5 at the start of each of your turns. If the target is out of range at the end of your turn, the spell ends.

If you concentrate for the full duration and the target has 0 hit points, it begins decomposing quickly, immediately becoming a volume of fresh healthy soil. If the target has more than 0 hit points, the spell ends and the target's maximum hit points will return after a long rest.

Swamp Den

5th-level conjuration (ritual)

Classes: Druid, Ranger
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self
Components: V, S, E (swamp)
Duration: 12 Hours

A 20-foot radius sphere opens up in the swamp, causing plants to move aside, water to divert around it, and dirt and rocks to form a cavern with an opening around you and your allies. Once you and any creatures of your choice enter this space, the vegetation and other natural features of the swamp fill the space around this sphere serving as both a defense against threats from outside this space as well as natural camouflage.

Inside the sphere is dry. Enough food immediately grows to feed each creature within. Flowing clean water is available, and it drains into the soil, leaving behind only a small damp spot. Glowing fungus allows you to create bright or dim light within the sphere. Creatures inside cannot be targeted by attacks, spells, or other effects originating from outside the sphere.

As an action, you can open a door, allowing creatures in or out of the den. While this door is open, creatures can be targeted as normal.

Conjure Shambling Mound

7th-level conjuration

Classes: Druid
Casting Time: 1 minute
Range: 60 feet
Components: V, S, E (swamp)
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 hour

You call forth a shambling mound, created from the vegetation around you. Choose an unoccupied area near a source of vegetation that you can see within range. A shambling mound will rise from the ground in this location. The mound disappears when it drops to 0 hit points. The mound is friendly to you and your companions for the duration. Roll initiative for the mound, which has its own turns. It obeys any verbal commands that you issue to it (no action required by you). If you don't issue any commands to the mound, it takes the Dodge action. If your concentration is broken before the spell's duration is reached, you lose control of the mound and it becomes hostile toward you and your companions. A hostile shambling mound can't be dismissed by you. It disappears when its hit points reach 0 or 1 hour after you summoned it, whichever happens first. The DM has the creature's game statistics.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a 9th-level spell slot, you summon two shambling mounds in unoccupied areas within range that you can see.

Death Lights

8th-level enchantment

Classes: Druid
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 300 feet
Components: V, S, E (swamp)
Duration: 1 minute

You tie together dozens of strings of latent magic laying in the soil and plant life of the swamp. Bundling them together, you choose one, two, or four points within range that are also within the swamp. The energies coalesce at those locations, casting light from those points. One point casts bright light in a 20-foot radius, with dim light 20 feet beyond that. Two points cast bright light in a 10-foot radius, with dim light 10 feet beyond that. Four points cast bright light in a 5-foot radius, with dim light 5 feet beyond that.

Creatures who can see the light that aren't immune to the charmed condition must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw at the start of each of their turns. On a failure, they must use their movement to move as close to a light as they can. They have disadvantage on this saving throw if they are in the dim light cast by the spell.

Creatures who start their turn in the bright light take necrotic damage based on the number of lights. The damage is 8d10 if you created one light, 4d10 if you created two lights, or 2d10 if you created four lights.

Poison Geyser

9th-level evocation

Classes: Druid
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self
Components: V, S, E (swamp)
Duration: Instantaneous

You reach out with your mind and cause the swamp to rearrange pockets of gas and fluids to explode where you choose. Closing your eyes, choose up to four different points within the swamp. Each point erupts, bathing all creatures within a 40-foot sphere centered on that point with acid and detritus. Each affected creature must make a Dexterity saving throw, taking 20d6 acid damage and 20d6 poison damage on a failed saving throw or half as much on a successful one. A creature in the area of more than one burst is only affected once.

Additionally clouds of noxious gas hover. This gas hangs in the air in a 40-foot radius around the selected points. Any creature starting or ending their turn in this area becomes poisoned. This effect fades after an hour.

Locations

The Evermoors

The idea of a swamp tends to conjure up thoughts of hot, muggy, humid places filled with mosquitoes and bubbling pools. The Evermoors, however, are a foggy, windy, and chilly place composed of rolling hills, rock outcroppings, and frequent boggy troughs. Once upon a time, it was infested with trolls, but learning that information gave me pause. After all, what could have run off the trolls?

The Evermoors, over a hundred miles wide and nearly a hundred-and-fifty miles from north to south, are vast and generally open. However, the heavy fog keeps visibility at a minimum, never more than a couple of miles on the clearest day. This made the Evermoors prime hunting ground for the trolls, and with their rubbery hides and famous regenerative properties, they were not bothered by the acidic waters that they lurked in while waiting to ambush passersby. This made them a danger to anyone traveling to and from the settlement known at the time as Nimoar's Hold.

Nimoar the Reaver, a barbarian leader that had already fought to take Bloodhand Hold and rename it as his own, would not suffer the trolls. Nimoar led his barbarians on a bloody campaign to drive back the trolls, slaughtering them nearly to the last in an event that would leave scorch marks across the moors for centuries to come. Indeed, this singular event lead to the year 932 DR being known as the Year of Fireslaughter. Nimoar's Hold is more famously known today as the thriving city of Waterdeep, and his slaughter of the trolls is likely what allowed travel and commerce to the region to flourish.

However, trolls are resilient in more ways than their regenerative flesh. They would not stay away forever, and fleeing from the incursion of giants, the trolls returned to the bogs once more. They terrorized the small towns and farmers across the Evermoors but for a few scant years until the giants drove them from the moors as well.

Today, fog, cloud, hill, and frost giants march across the Evermoors with relative impunity. While trolls could be counted on to be stupid and predictable, giants are an entirely different manner of adversary for the merchants who travel Evermoor Way between the trade settlement of Triboar and the shining Gem of the North, Silverymoon.

Arclath and I had gotten it in our heads to visit the ruins of Nesmé, a small frontier city once located at the northwestern edge of the Evermoors. We knew the journey would take nearly a tenday by horseback, traveling from Silverymoon, but we wanted to see whatever remained of the once heavily protected steel trading town after falling to the blades of orcs and the breath of a frost dragon.

Around halfway through our journey, we sat at the foot of the Startop mountain. The air was crisp and clear, remarkably so for the generally foggy Evermoors, and under the light of the full moon, the peak of the mountain truly did shimmer like a shining star. It was a moment of beauty and serenity that I never would have expected within the chilly

Fauna. Alligator, Bloodbloater, Bog Bloke, Hiveslime, Salamander (Giant)

Flora. Garath's Gulper, Ghost Willow, Gutmoss, Kortyn, Silverbark, Toady Raftvine, Yuruldra

- Some say a fog giant died and sank into a bog, but no one knows which one. Their fifteen-foot long silver sword would be worth a fortune.
- A wealthy mage benefactor is seeking a party to help them locate the tomb of an ancient Netherese noble, which supposedly contains magical treasures from an age long past.
- Trolls aren't often missed in the Evermoors, but after three weeks one has been sighted. This one was extremely sick, and locals fear the disease could spread.
- Bog bloke are gathering near the mouth of the River Surbrin, and where bog bloke gather, warmongering trolls often are not far behind.

bog, and I wish it would've lasted longer, as an even heavier fog than usual rolled in with the rising sun. Our horses were nervous.

"I can hear a wild herd in the distance," Arclath said as he pets his steed, "I wonder if they're feeling the call of the wild."

I could hear it too: the hooves of the diminutive bog ponies, splashing through shallow waters and softly thudding across the saturated soil. We'd only just finished packing our camping supplies onto the saddles and mounted up when the herd of wild ponies passed by us, and Arclath and I decided to follow their trail. From only a few yards behind, we kept pace with the ponies through blinding fog, using their guidance to avoid sliding into deep waters.

It came out of nowhere. A sword easily twice my height cut through the fog, slicing through the front of the herd, tossing the little horses into the air like a temperamental child flinging their toys across the room. My horse let out a terrified bray and nearly threw me from his back, but I was barely able to hold on, trying to keep him from bolting in any random direction.

Arclath raced back to my side once he got his own horse under control, and we both gazed into the fog to try to make some sense of the pandemonium. As the wild herd of ponies scattered, towering figures stepped closer, their forms becoming clearer. Though most were too far from us to see anything but a silhouette, one walked directly in front of us. We stood at the feet of a fog giant, easily four or five times our size, as she reached down to pluck one of her hooved prey from the ground. Her skin was milky white, and her long, silver hair was pulled back in a single thick braid that fell down the middle of her back. She was clad in what looked like the hide of a white dragon, and armed with a sword made of what I can only assume was bone inlaid with runes of silver. She turned her depthless black eyes to look toward us, only a pinprick of light at the center to suggest the direction she was looking, but I could feel her calculating gaze fall on us. Our horses were bigger than her catch, but I imagine she must've been weighing the annoyance that humans might bring. She stared for several moments longer than I'd wish upon my worst enemy before turning to walk into the fog to gather more of her quarry.

I'll readily admit to panicking. The moment that she turned away from us, Arclath and I both bolted, fleeing in whatever direction seemed most opposed to the fog giant hunting party. It was an awful sound echoing behind us, the thudding of enormous feet and screeches of terrified horses, but we fled until all we could hear was the pounding of our own hearts pulsating in our ears. We would spend the next tenday wandering lost, constantly looking over our shoulders, listening for distant footsteps of giants, and keeping one eye open at night. We did not continue to Nesmé, but instead, we finally found our bearings when we reached the Laughingflow River that cut through the Evermoors, some sixty miles south of our destination.

The Laughingflow was akin to an oasis in the desert. Crystal-clear waters flowed quickly over gravel in stark contrast to the stagnant pools we'd grown so accustomed to. Unlike the endless fields of rocks and grasses, the edges of the Laughingflow were flourishing with flora, from felsul, laspar, and silverbark trees, down to patches of wildflowers. We would spend a full day resting at the comfort of the river before beginning to follow it eastward. Even after the river petered out, we were able to use its direction to help us find our path back to Evermoor Way, the merchant road running south of the boglands. It was almost a full cycle of the moon since we'd last had contact with other folk, but we soon came upon a wagon of warm and welcoming halfling merchants. They only had to take one look at us trudging forlorn along the path, before they offered shares of their food and wine and asked, "You got lost in the fog, didn't you?"

Fauna. Algalmental, Alligator, Bloodbloater, Bog Bloke, Hiveslime, Salamander (Giant and Ancient)

Flora. Garath's Gulper, Kortyn, Redflower, Selune's Tear, Sugarblossom, Thelmallow, Toady Raftvine, Yuruldra

- Several people have vanished, and the only commonality between them is that they were heard discussing the same subject recently. No one in town will tell you what they overheard.
- Ever since an adventuring company set out to map the swamp, the town of Ylraphon has reported monstrous humanoids rising from the water and pulling people under. They need help and have compensation prepared.
- Owlbear egg hunts are lucrative, but recent hunters have gone missing. Suspiciously, no corpses are left behind. Now, the egg-trading business has come to a halt, stagnating the local economy.
- The proximity to Ylraphon has finally become a critical issue as outer farmland floods at an increasing rate. The locals are amassing stone and sediment from the hills to the east to create barriers but seek a more permanent solution.

Flooded Forest

Technically speaking, the Flooded Forest is one of the youngest wetlands we've visited, having only begun to sink into a swamp about a hundred and fifty years ago. While that may feel like a long time for most humans, it's humbling to realize how many elves and dwarves still remember the flourishing maple and oak forest that once stood at the northeast coast of The Dragon Reach.

Arclath and I learned of the Flooded Forest when we arrived at the port of Ylraphon, having travelled on a merchant vessel around the coast. They say that Srinshee, one of the longest-living elves ever recorded, once called Ylraphon her home. This story in particular caught my ear, as Srinshee gave her life at the battle of Myth Drannor, where Arclath and I had fought on the side of the elves. However, seeing the human port it's become today, you'd never guess that Ylraphon was a flourishing elven settlement thousands of years ago.

Though Ylraphon was once a bustling trade post, the encroachment of the Flooded Forest has taken its toll. The still waters of the swamp are foul, and when the breeze blows just right, it carries the stink of rot across the town. Worse still are the denizens of the swamp, a colorful mixture of plants and animals, and all of them bloodthirsty. We were first exposed to some of these creatures when we spotted a haggard looking band of hunters returning to Ylraphon at sunset, carrying a wagon loaded with various oddities; a freshly skinned giant owlbear pelt, a sack of stirge wings, and a glass jar containing several purple fungus tentacles, floating in their own poison.

Arclath and I followed some of the hunters to the tavern to ask them about their interesting quarry, and that was where we met Velder. Unlike so many of the other hunters, Velder was young and energetic, not yet scarred and worn out by his work. His fresh face was sparsely touched with a few carefully-manicured hairs, and he displayed some effort in carrying the same bass in his voice as his elder peers, consciously squaring up his shoulders to try to take up more space at the table.

"You think our hunt is strange?" Velder asked, peering over his mug of beer, "Well, I'll say. Half of the creatures we're hunting aren't even from around here."

"They're not from around here?" Arclath asked, stroking his own jaw, "Then how did they get here?"

"I'm betting it's the Mage Who Never Dies!" Velder replied, not even waiting for us to ask who that was, "There's this mage that no one's ever seen living in a tower out in the swamp, who lords over it."

"If no one has ever seen them, how do you know there's a mage there?" Arclath asked, "Much less that they're a mage at all? Or that they're an immortal, and not just a long line of successors? Or that they rule the swamp at all?"

Velder paused, and furrowed his brow, before saying, "Well... Well that's what they say! And

there's definitely a big tower in the swamp. I've seen it! Seventy, eighty feet tall, and no doors on it. It's definitely a mage's tower."

I began to notice that the more Velder talked about the mage and their tower, the more his fellow hunting party silently excused themselves, standing up from the table and moving to another seat, or leaving the tavern entirely. Some glared daggers at Velder, and others walked away with a shake of their head as though washing their hands entirely of the situation.

"I believe you," I told him.

"You do?" Arclath asked, "Why?"

I didn't want to explain it in front of Velder. His wide-eyed curiosity and enthusiasm would likely keep us here all night, and I was looking forward to sleeping in a bed that didn't rock on waves for the first time in a while. But, in the back of my mind, I knew what Elminster knew. I knew there was a Mage Who Never Dies who'd claimed the southern portion of the swamp as their own, and I knew that tower to be filled with deadly traps designed to deter explorers from peering within. Furthermore, I had a feeling that bad things came to those who talked about it too much.

The next morning, we found Velder outside the tavern, readying his horse by himself, chatting nervously with the stableboy about how his hunting party was hazing him. They had left at dawn, earlier than usual, and not bothered waking Velder to go with them. As soon as he saw us, Velder asked if we had any interest in seeing the Flooded Forest for 'material for that book' of mine, and volunteered to escort us on the way to meeting up with his hunting party. It wasn't difficult to tell that he was looking for someone, anyone, to travel with him. I felt partly responsible for the situation he was in, so I agreed, to Arclath's dismay.

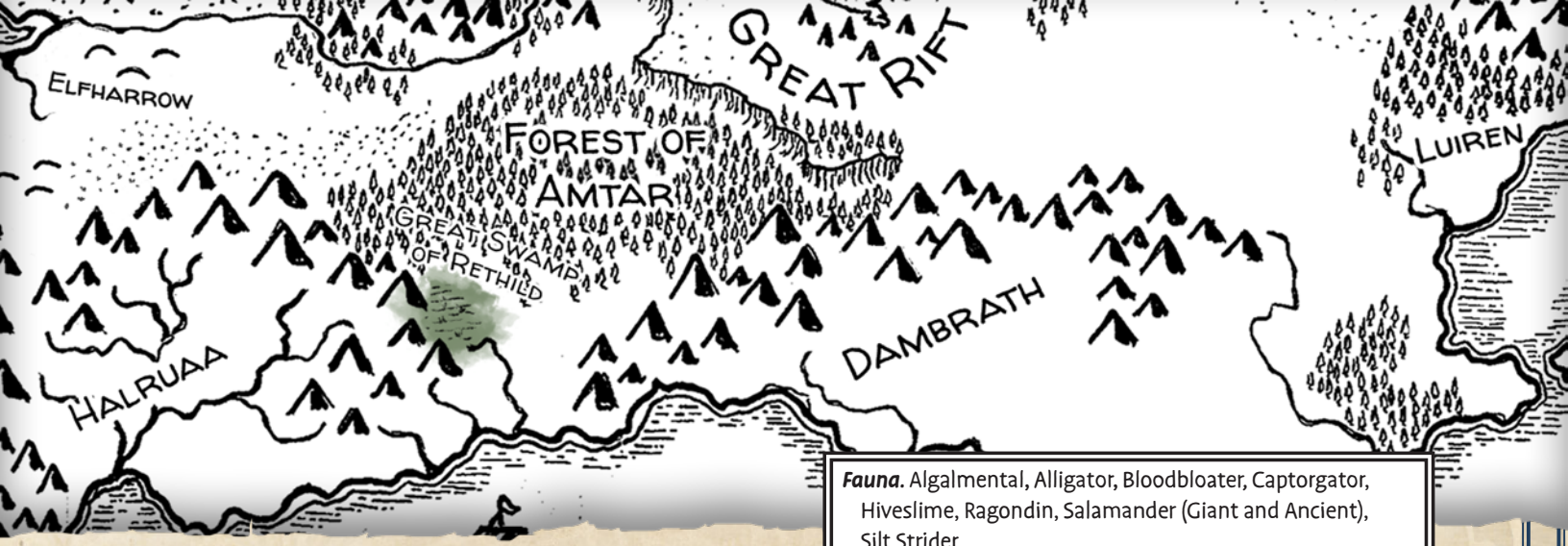
This was our first time leaving Ylraphon, and our exit out of the northern side of town gave us a heartbreaking glimpse into the town's elven roots. Beyond the wooden palisades that protected the settlement were the abandoned ruins of Old Ylraphon, with crypts and temples covered in moss and half-buried in the sinking mud. It wasn't difficult to tell that other travelers had made camp here, or gone adventuring into the half-lost tombs, and that there was likely a hideout or two for smugglers or thieves in the area. In the midst of the elven ruins were the signs of a former orcish occupation, driven out long ago. Though I found it all fascinating, Velder didn't slow down, having grown well accustomed to these surroundings, and being overly eager to rejoin his hunting party.

I'm sure that once upon a time, this place was a beautiful forest of great oaks and maples. Today, many of the trees still stand as fragile reminders of a time long past. In the time that we traveled through the swamp, however, I saw at least two other trees fall or drop limbs into the fetid waters. I imagine in another decade, there won't be a single tree remaining of what was once a dense and flourishing forest.

When we finally caught up with Velder's hunting party, or half of them at least, they were in the midst of a battle with an ancient salamander. They'd snared the large amphibian with chains and ropes, but it thrashed violently in the putrid water, swinging its poison-coated head and tail at anyone who tried to get too near to it. The moment he saw what was occurring, Velder urged his horse into a sprint while he drew an arrow from the quiver on his hip and brought his shortbow to bear. Strafing around the battlefield, he fired three shots in between his fellow hunters, sinking into the ancient salamander's flesh and finally bringing it to a rest.

As one of the hunters hurried to collect what they could from the specimen with their toolkit, a single hunter from the group approached Velder. She was an older woman, her dark skin marred with scars and her silver hair pulled back in tight plaits. She gave me and Arclath a look of consideration before she said to Velder, "Well, you're not dead yet, so we'll consider that a good sign. But you and me are gonna have a long talk about 'polite conversation' after this."

Truth be told, I'm not sure Velder would've been welcomed back if there hadn't been an audience at that moment. Given their desperate need for protection in Ylraphon, I shudder to think that a dedicated young hunter could be so quickly abandoned for speaking of things like a mage's tower. Truth be told, I wouldn't even be writing about it today if I ever had any plans to return to the Flooded Forest.



Fauna. Algalmental, Alligator, Bloodbloater, Captorgator, Hiveslime, Ragondin, Salamander (Giant and Ancient), Silt Strider

Flora. Athakka, Bloodpurge, Drunn, Garath's Gulper, Ijult's Polyp, Keng, Kortyn, Quamaetha, Spidercap, Toady Raftvine, Vaundyr Vine, Vrukhweed, Xelduth, Yuruldra

- Some believe the descendant of the last Queen of Dambrath is hiding in Rethild, amassing magic power with hopes of taking her throne back by force.
- Sages have found an immovable yellow-scaled monolith in the swamp. While one of the researchers was observing it, they saw a small lizard touch it, turn to light, and fly away at impossible speed.
- Harvesting poisons, venoms, and diseases is dangerous business, but it has the potential to make lots of gold. Locals are willing to pay a lot of money for a detailed journal on how to handle toxic material.
- The godking of the bullywug, known only as the Ascendant, has moved his forces to the Great Swamp. Lizardfolk refugees in the Shaar have put out a call for aid to liberate their home.

Great Swamp of Rethild

At the border between the nation of Dambrath and the magical kingdom of Halruaa, is the Great Swamp of Rethild. This swamp, muggy and blazing hot in the summers, filled with stinging and biting insects, has seen a great deal of upheaval in its neighbors.

Dambrath, the nation that Rethild was once considered territory of, was sternly ruled by a line of half-drow queens until around a century ago when the human population of Dambrath rose up and overthrew the monarchy. To the west of Rethild is the eastern Wall of Halruaa, a mountain range that protects the kingdom from the outside. Though Halruaa was thought to have been destroyed by the Spellplague, in fact it was torn from the realm for safekeeping and restored during the Second Sundering.

Amidst all of this, the Great Swamp of Rethild was surprisingly stable. Much of this was owed to the small lizardfolk nation of Kethid. During so much upheaval in the world, the ruler of Kethid, King Ghassis, formed a legendary mercenary company known as the Servants of the Royal Egg. This mercenary company travelled all over Faerûn, fighting in other people's wars for coin to support their own people and to feed their king's ambitions. Some have even said that the Servants of the Royal Egg were carried upon flying ships that their king had received from a Halruaan merchant house, in order to fight off pirates that harassed them.

However, all things must come to an end. The Halruaan skyships were said to be taken by the Yaulazna pirate enclave, and with the death of King Ghassis, Kethid too would vanish into the fog of the Great Swamp of Rethild. Though some lizardfolk mercenaries still call themselves the Servants of the Royal Egg today, this is most likely banking on the fame of the name and not any true connection to the great army of yesteryear. I had assumed that without strong leadership, Kethid had simply fallen apart. As it turns out, I was half-right.

Arclath and I had heard from a lizardfolk trader that there was indeed a kingdom within the Great Swamp of Rethild, but it wasn't Kethid. Instead, many of the lizardfolk descended from Kethid have formed their own community called Ilimar, built on the long-destroyed sarrukh ruins of a city that went by that name. To the lizardfolk, the ruins were a holy site, and they viewed the naga who once dwelled there as gods. After our pleasant experience with the lizardfolk in the Vast Swamp, I was eager to see what a lizardfolk city might look like, even if built on the remnants of a sarrukh city.

From the lizardfolk merchant, we purchased scarves, gloves, and masks made of Rethild-weave silk, which she assured us we would need to protect ourselves from the gasses and fogs within the swamp. Though I wasn't entirely sure that she wasn't just trying to sell us on her wares, I wasn't willing to take the chance with the magic and poisons I'd heard were floating all around the Great Swamp.

The Great Swamp of Rethild is a vibrant, colorful place. Trees of cypress and zalantar grow everywhere, often covered in thick mosses, some of which bloom with tiny flowers. Heavy rope-like vines hang from the canopy, dripping with moss like lace hanging from a noble's canopy valance. Then of course, there is the color of the air, and that in itself is a terrifying thing.

Much of the fog within the Great Swamp of Rethild maintains a faint bluish hue, I'm sure because of something in the water. However, clouds of gasses flow through the swamp in shades of brown, green, or yellow. You can be assured that these clouds are not a pleasant change from the ordinary; many of them carry poison or diseases like cackle fever, mindfire, or flesh rot. Even with our Rethild-silk garments, Arclath and I went to great measures to try to avoid these slow-roaming clouds. What we did not take into account was that it's harder to avoid something that actively pursues you.

It was early on the morning of our fourth day in the swamp. Arclath was packing inside the tent, and I had gone outside to check on our kettle over the campfire. We'd collected rainwater, and poured it through a filter of coarse and fine gravel, then sand, and now we were boiling it to make sure it was clean. After hearing about the horrors of throat leeches in Chult (see Amarune's Almanac Volume 1: Forests of the Realms ~ AD), Arclath and I took no chances with swampy waters. The water had only just reached a boil when I noticed a strange, shimmering orange fog moving just beyond a stand of cypress trees. I called out to Arclath to hurry up his packing, and I returned my attention to the kettle. When I glanced up again only moments later, the fog had crossed the water and was nipping at the edges of the small muddy island we had pitched our camp on.

I barely had time to shout "RUN!" as I turned and fled. Arclath, knowing better than to ask why, burst out the back of the tent and fell into step alongside me in naught but his breeches, hose, and still pulling his silk mask and scarf around his face. As horrid as the muddy ground was, he trusted that I wouldn't shout such a thing if there weren't a far worse threat bearing down on us.

I glanced back only briefly, but I could see the shimmering orange fog crawling and weaving across the ground like a pile of writhing snakes. I thought my lungs burned from the heavy air that I drew through my moisture-soaked mask, but I had no concept of the 'burn' before the fog lunged forward and wrapped its tendrils around me. I fell into the shallows on my hands and knees, sinking into the water to my elbows, as the shimmering orange haze coiled around me and slid under the gaps of my mask. Arclath, bless him, skidded in the mud and turned to come back for me, but I had no breath to tell him to keep running. I could only watch as the fog overcame him too.

The fog did not stay with us. Once it did its work, it moved on, no doubt seeking more living creatures to inflict with its contagion. Arclath and I crawled through the shallow water to lay against the roots of a cypress tree. Right away, we could feel the heat rising in our bodies, burning inside our skulls. I've never been so feverish in my life, never experienced such strange delusions and hallucinations. There were moments I swore Elminster was standing next to me, cursing me for my failures. At other times, I saw my long-dead father, his war wizard robes dragging in the water as he walked away from me through the fog. I swear that bullywugs arrived at one point and poked at us with sticks before fleeting into the swamp, and I think that may have really happened; if I were them, I wouldn't have spent too much time around the muttering, feverish humans either.

The last strange, splendid sight I saw was the keel of a ship. My vision was hazy, and there was an intense pressure on my chest, giving me the impression I was laying at the bottom of the sea and gazing up at a galley above me. On each side, three massive white oars, looking almost like sails, swept back and forth elegantly. I don't know if I was rising up toward it, or the boat was lowering toward me, but I could see it drawing nearer and nearer.

When Arclath and I woke in a small trade town in Dambrath, we were told by the healer that he'd been treating us for mindfire, and we were lucky to have survived. He told us that some lizardfolk from Ilimar had delivered us here and quickly left again. I cannot be certain if we were saved by Ilimarans riding on a Halruaan skyship, or if that was simply a figment of my fever-addled mind. As badly as I'd like to thank them, and ask them for clarity, we won't be making another journey into the Great Swamp of Rethild any time soon.

Fauna. Alligator, Bloodbloaters, Bog Bloke, Captorgator, Ragondin, Zairtail

Flora. Athakka, Drunn, Garath's Gulper, Ghost Willow, Gutmoss, Keng, Kortyn, Quamaetha, Selune's Tear, Silverbark, Toady Raftvine, Vrukhweed, Yuruldra

- A halfling wizard has been spotted in the Mere attempting to pioneer a *speak with dead* spell by screaming more and more loudly. Luckily, her attempts to raise an undead army seem to be failing... So far.
- A necromancer was found roadside, pleading with people to take them as far from the mere as possible. When questioned, they only said, "the true mere lies beneath the water, and more than men rest there."
- Parts of the marsh are lit by some unseen source, as though the mere itself is falling somewhere else. Someone needs to find out if settlements are in danger.
- A crown was found by a fisherman collecting bait in the mere. A noble in Neverwinter is paying handsomely to have it escorted to their estate.

Mere of Dead Men

The elves call this place Merdelain, meaning Slow Marching Court, I'm sure in reference to the difficulty of slogging through the terrain with any expediency. However, nothing paints a picture of this place quite like its Common title, the Mere of Dead Men.

Long ago, this land filled with the troops of Uthtower and Phalorm, the Realm of Three Crowns. The armies of Uthtower and Phalorm, made of dwarves, elves, gnomes, halflings, and humans, had come to this place to do battle against the orcish hordes that besieged the kingdom of Uthtower. What they did not know at the time is that a long-unheard-from mage, who held his own tower just east of the nearby High Road, had not died or abandoned his tower, but instead had become a powerful lich named Iniarv, holed up in the tower's deepest recesses.

When Iniarv became active again, the king of Uthtower sent him a plea for help, citing an ancient alliance between the lich and the kingdom. Iniarv agreed to rid Uthtower of the attacking horde, and used his magic to cause the ocean to rise. From the Sword Coast, all the way to the western edge of the High Road, chilly salt water flooded through the battlefield, killing humanoids and goblinoids alike, and ruining the kingdom of Uthtower. Iniarv eventually allowed the flood waters to recede, leaving a swamp in their wake. Later that year, the remainder of Phalorm would be destroyed by a goblinoid horde, and Phalorm would become known as the Fallen Kingdom.

Today, the Mere of Dead Men remains a cold saltwater swamp fed by the Sea of Swords. The heavy ocean fog obscures all manner of dangers, such as quicksand, fallen trees, and tangling vines. The shallow waters and saturated sand are littered with the bones of dead creatures, some recent, and some ancient, perhaps dating back to 615 DR when the mere was originally flooded.

The Mere of Dead Men can be navigated with a flat-bottom boat, albeit with only barely enough clearance. Naturally, that's exactly what Arclath and I chose. We met two old gnomish men who lived in a cabin on the edge of High Road just north of the mere, retired soldiers who'd transitioned to fishing in their sunset years, and they were willing to rent us a boat. One of the old gnomes, Gimble, agreed to be our guide. Though Gimble would prove informative, he was also a chatterbox who seemed insistent on giving the longest answer possible to any question.

I had made the mistake of asking what manner of creatures lived in the Mere of Dead men, just as we were climbing into our boat.

"Oh all sorts," Gimble said, "There's bullywugs and lizardfolk, they're the kinder sort, but the ones you've got to watch out for are the behirs, the hydras, the gibbering mouthers, the shambling mounds... Used to have trolls but the place got too bad even for them, ha hah! Sometimes the water's alive too, you got to watch out for that. Oh and if you see any humans living in any of the old ruined settlements,

they ain't human. Those're doppelgangers. But the real danger ain't what lives here as what unlives here. Ghouls, zombies, skeletons, you know what I'm sayin'."

As he listed all the various threats, he leaned lazily on his oar, before realizing that we were staring at the oar more than him. He finally realized it was time to push off, and he nudged us out of the shallow mud and into the water.

"Ain't the doing of the old lich that flooded everything," said Gimble, "Least not directly, but he got his boney hand in it. Y'see there was this necromancer who went and got turned into a god, but I guess he wasn't that good at it because he got killed, or at least an avatar of him got killed, and all the bone dust rained down on the mere. Well all that undead god bone dust got into the corpses and got 'em standing up and walking around. They don't do much, since they don't have nobody to command 'em, but they like to cause a ruckus."

Gimble lazily navigated us through the mere as he rambled, but the waters are dark and heavy with fog, making it easy to get stuck on unseen obstacles. About an hour into our tour, Arclath stuck a pole into the mud to try to dislodge us, and when he pulled it back out, there was an orc skull on the end of the pole, pierced right through the eyesocket!

"The mere floats right up to the edge of High Road," Gimble explained, gesturing vaguely to the east as we cruised in that direction, "They keep tryin' to move the road, on account of all the undead and such, but every time they move it over, the swamp just floods in next to it like a curse. I met my husband diggin' that new road when I was patrolling. Next time around, I was the one diggin' and he was the one on patrol! Figured we were just meant t' be here."

By this point, Arclath was firmly seated in the middle of the boat with an unhappy expression plastered on his face. He'd had enough of Gimble's rambling, enough of the damp and chilly air, and more than enough of the swamp. But, to my surprise, he perked up when his eye caught something in the distance. He directed us to move closer, and soon, we came upon a boney arm and half-intact hand sticking up from the tall grasses. We might have passed it by entirely if the hazy mid-day light hadn't glinted off of the ring on its finger.

Arclath carefully leaned over the boat, and plucked the ring from the finger, accidentally bringing the finger with it. He shook the loose bone from within

the gold and black band, and held it up to view the symbol of a flaming white skull on one side. I recognized it, immediately, as the symbol of Myrkul.

"Well that's a right shiny trinket," Gimble vocally observed, taking the ring out of Arclath's hand to look it over. When Arclath reached to take it back, Gimble slid the ring right onto Arclath's finger and said, "Fits ya too!"

It took me physically restraining Arclath for him not to hurl our gnomish guide right out of the boat, as a string of complaints and obscenities flowed from his mouth like a wellspring. As he laid out the many dangers of toying with potentially cursed, potentially evil jewelry, Gimble leaned on his oar and dug at his ear wax with a pinky tip, an annoyed look on his face, pretending to not hear Arclath.

Once I was able to calm Arclath enough, we determined the ring wasn't cursed. But, as he wore it, he could feel the ring tugging him toward the west. Once we placated Gimble, and I quietly apologized for Arclath's outburst, we began to travel westward.

Seemingly in the middle of the Mere of Dead Men, Arclath began to hold the ring clutched tightly to his chest.

"The Uthtower is here," he murmured softly, "Not the kingdom, but the actual tower, the seat of the king. I can feel it, sunk under the mud. The ring is pulling at it, like it wants to draw it upward."

"Can you?" I asked.

"It would need more," said Arclath, "More rings. And... I don't want to."

We left the Mere of Dead Men before sunset, hearing the clattering and rattling of the undead rising from the muddy waters behind us. Arclath had removed the ring from his finger, but he still clutched it tightly to his chest. I don't know exactly what he felt from the tower, or from the ring, and I hesitate to ask given the look in his eye as he gazed at the waters where he believed the Uthtower resided. He held onto the ring for several tendays in our travels, before he buried it under soil and stone, far, far away from the Mere of Dead Men.

Ring of Myrkul

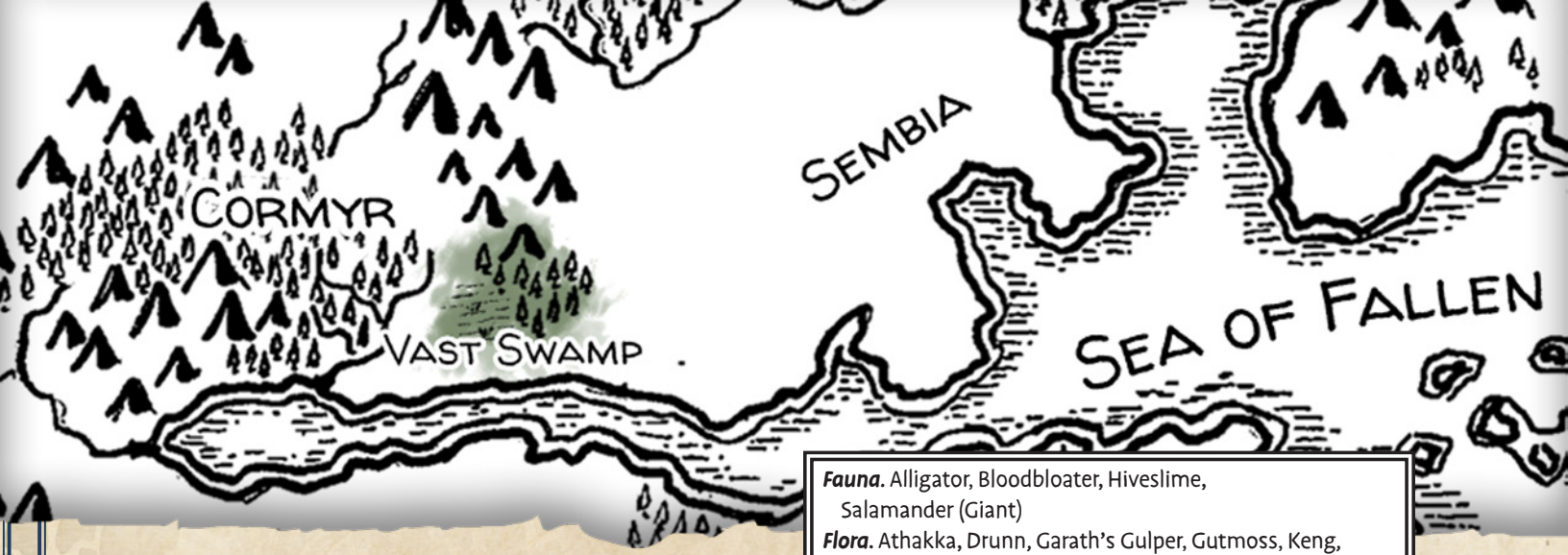
Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement)

This thick gold band is painted black and bears the image of a flaming white skull. Usually worn by Myrkul's priests, a creature attuned to the ring isn't attacked by common undead of CR ½ or lower unless they attack first. Or they are under another creature's direct control and are ordered to do so. In addition, the ring has 4 charges, which can be expended as follows:

As an action, an attuned creature wearing the ring can cast *chill touch* (1 charge) or *speak with dead* (2 charges). The ring regains 1d4 charges each morning before dawn.

The *ring of myrkul* text was originally published in *Faithes of the Forgotten Realms* by Alex Clippinger, Micah Watt, and Scott Bean; used here with permission.

B-Design



Fauna. Alligator, Bloodbloater, Hiveslime, Salamander (Giant)

Flora. Athakka, Drunn, Garath's Gulper, Gutmoss, Keng, Kortyn, Quamaetha, Sugarblossom, Thelmallow, Toady Raftvine, Vrukhweed, Yuruldra

- Increasing reports of rogue geysers have been springing up lately. Merchants, getting their wares blown up and boiled, don't find it funny.
- A kindly orc ghost roams the swamp, telling of a keep older than elven memory in the Earthspur Mountains. Monstrous hybrid creatures roam its outsides and many people disappear near it.
- Lizardfolk bathe in the hot springs found in the Vast Swamp. Rumor says, their wounds heal fast. That water should be worth a gold or two, or more to the right buyer.
- An idol of some sort has emerged from beneath a wallow within the Vast Swamp. Archeologists have begun operations to investigate, as it appears to be from an ancient sauroid civilization, possibly even the original sauroid empire.

Vast Swamp

I've always been fascinated by how places are named. For example, Neverwinter is famed for its comfortable temperatures and the fact the docks don't ice over even in most winters. However, some say that the name has nothing to do with the climate and is instead named after Halueth Never, a sun elf who believed he would make his last stand on the ground where the city would one day be built, naming it Never's Winter. He survived that battle and lived to build Castle Never, around which the city flourished.

There are so many clever and interesting names across Faerûn that pique your curiosity, like Highcliff, Ravilar's Cloak, and Dagger Falls. Then, there's the Vast Swamp.

What else is there to say about the Vast Swamp? It's really all right there in the name, after all. It is, by every definition, a swamp. This dense wetland stretches from the foot of the Thunder Peaks, around forty-five miles south almost to the Dragonmere, a lake emptying out into the Sea of Fallen Stars. From east to west, it reaches from the curve of the Thunder Peaks to the Eastern Plains of Cormyr. Though I've been in far larger forests, and its 'vastness' does not hold a candle to anything encountered in Chult, the heavy fog within the Vast Swamp will not let you see anything past a mile on even the clearest days. It's very easy to feel as though the swamp itself is endless, sucking you deeper into the muck no matter how hard you try to crawl free of it. The slowness of travel only compounds these issues.

Perhaps the 'vast' moniker was also given for the sense that those who enter the swamp do not always leave. The Vast Swamp is plagued with clouds of noxious gasses, boiling hot geysers, blinding fogs, patches of quicksand, inescapable bogs, and as an occasional break from the oppressively muggy atmosphere, bouts of freezing rain. Oh, it's also plagued with insects carrying all manner of diseases, so you can add actual plague to the list.

I can't claim ignorance and say that Arclath and I didn't know what we were getting into when we chose to visit the Vast Swamp. When Arclath and I were traveling along the poorly named Way of the Manticore (see *Amarune's Almanac: Grasslands of the Realms*), we stopped in the hamlet of Battlerise along the Darkflow river. Battlerise is not exactly a noteworthy stop along the road; it's a decent place to refresh your horses, and buy turnips, but that's not exactly a claim to fame in itself. While we were resting at a small roadside eatery, and Arclath was sulking over his unseasoned turnip handpie like a spoilt toddler, I overheard some farmers talking about lizardfolk raiders from the swamps in the north.

I couldn't help but inquire. As it turns out, there is a long-standing collective of lizardfolk living within the Vast Swamp known as the Sharptooth Tribe, who formed an alliance with the Kingdom of Cormyr. Though not the only Lizardfolk in the Vast Swamp, they were the most organized, and they

The Humble Turnip

I despise turnips. While I do not doubt they have many uses, primarily as livestock feed, or as a desperate last resort when you're inches away from starvation, I cannot fathom why any self-respecting cook includes them in their repertoire. Is it a challenge? Are you trying to prove that you could somehow make a rock palatable? Do you just hate people and this is your best method of passive-aggression? I cannot understand how turnips became the cornerstone of Battlerise. I imagine the only reason they continue to grow the vegetable is because turnips are more useful for clubbing lizardfolk than a carrot.

Lizardfolk raids are not uncommon news, especially near this kind of terrain, but what struck me as odd was the remark, "I thought the Sharptooths were supposed to keep them in line?"

were even willing to trade peacefully with outsiders. I could hardly pass up the opportunity to pay them a visit, and Arclath was excited to visit any locale that didn't treat turnips as the centerpiece of every meal.

Arclath's enthusiasm rapidly dwindled when we arrived at the edge of the Vast Swamp, but I was unwilling to turn back. There was a nagging thought growing in the back of my mind, scratching incessantly at my consciousness. Every time I would put my quill to page, I could feel a sense of nostalgia. I'm loath to admit I threw away several pages of writing because I realized the words were not my own.

Long, long ago, my great-grandfather organized a collection of books that would be published under the title of Elminster's Ecologies. Though he was not the only author of the project, despite lending his name to the whole of it, I could remember him sitting up at night reading over the submissions of one Brother Twick, a cleric of Chauntea who had studied this very swamp. Twick's observations painted the lizardfolk of the Vast Swamp as irredeemable savages, attacking any outsiders in what seemed like near psychosis. Brother Twick described a faithless people who had abandoned their gods in favor of evil nature spirits, and lizard kings who demanded human and elven sacrifices.

Though I recall Elminster looking over the words with some doubt, it did not prevent him from publishing the words. I don't know if what I feel is any reflection of his own memories, but I feel ashamed on his behalf, knowing what I know now.

By the time we first encountered lizardfolk in the thick swamp, I was beginning to doubt my choice to venture so deep. Arclath and I were beginning to run low on supplies, and we'd become hopelessly lost; it was difficult even to tell direction by the reckoning of the sun, through such dense fog and heavy canopy of trees. I was shocked by the sight of a seven-foot tall barrel-chested lizard-man dropping from the branches of an oak to land as lightly as one could imagine in the mud ahead of me. More shocked when he lifted his head, whipping back his leathery 'mohawk' of spines, and hissed, "Are you lossst?"

My baser instincts told me to run, they treated his question as a threat. The lack of eyebrows or other factors I'm so used to seeing in a humanoid face were alarming to me, but I soon realized his voice carried a note of concern behind the breathy reptilian accent. At first I could only summon up a small nod, before I began to awkwardly explain that I was there to write a book.

Though our newfound guide seemed confused, he was more than willing to take us to his people. We were not introduced to a mad pack of nomads clawing for scraps of elf, but instead, a small but thriving community of tents and huts built on gravel and stone in a comparably 'dry' strip of land. The whole area smelt of sulfur, and the reason was obvious; on the other side of the field of hotsprings, a geyser of boiling water erupted from the ground with shocking frequency. As often as four or five times a minute, a scalding gout shot a hundred feet in the air, sending droplets right to the edge of the lizardfolk's village. Despite the glaringly inhospitable surroundings, the people were anything but. They welcomed us among their numbers, surprised to have human visitors in between their normal trade schedule.

The lizardfolk were, for lack of a better word, primitive, and I want you to try to think of that word in its purest context without any other associations. They were far from the savage, barbarous beasts described in Brother Twick's words. I can only imagine that our narrow view of the lizardfolk from the outside is perhaps in part due to their lack of written language; the chieftain spent some time telling me the oral traditions of his people, but they seemed puzzled by the way I wrote things down.

"And you enjoy thisss?" the chief asked cautiously, peering over my page. I'm sure entirely unaware that the shadow he cast was preventing me from writing more, but this foreign practice seemed to make him uneasy.

"I enjoy it very much," I replied, "I want to tell a lot of people about you, not just in little towns of forty or fifty people, but in cities with tens or hundreds of thousands of people. My voice can't carry that far, so I write the words down so people can learn the story even if I'm not there to tell it."

This concept fascinated him, and soon, countless warriors, clutch-tenders, and even youths were gathering around to tell me stories. I wish I could include them all, but this is Amarune's Almanac and not Amarune's Anthropologies. Though, that isn't a bad idea for a sequel, is it?

At the end of the evening, we were treated to a local delicacy. With excitement in their eyes, the lizardfolk led us to the hot springs, and to a sizable crater in the ground filled with sulfurous bubbling water, and large unidentifiable chunks. The chieftain grabbed one of the enormous snail shells from a pile by the 'water' and dipped it in, scooping up what appeared to be a broth, and offered it to us. I don't think Arclath will ever complain about turnips again, following his encounter with snail-and-eel soup.

Between Adventures

Faerûn's wetlands are rife with life, particularly flora, that can be found nowhere else in Faerûn. The following section details a downtime activity which you can participate in to gather the flora of specific regions. Of course, these roots and herbs are not only found in the wild; they can be used to populate marketplaces, act as quest hooks, or simply add another element of depth to an environment. Some even function as spellcasting components to improve spells or can be used in the crafting of weapons and equipment.

Downtime Activity: Gathering Plants Expedition

The world is a wealth of natural resources, and it only takes a keen mind and a bit of regional knowledge to collect its bounty.

Resources. An expedition to gather resources and materials takes a workweek from planning to completion. Part of this time is spent gathering information about what types of plants can be found in the region, and how difficult they are to find. Each of the plants on the Regional Flora table designates the regions of Faerûn in which they are most commonly found.

Resolution. The character must make a series of checks, with the DC for all checks determined by the plant the character is searching for: the character's choice of Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Survival), Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception), and a Wisdom check using an herbalism kit, or an Intelligence check using alchemist's supplies. If the plant is poisonous, they can use an Intelligence or Wisdom check using a poisoner's kit instead.

If none of the checks are successful, the character becomes lost and is on the expedition for an additional tenday.

If only one check is successful, the character never finds their bounty but returns as expected.

If two checks are successful, the expedition is a partial success, netting the character 1d4 units of the plant they sought after.

If all three checks are successful, the expedition returns 1d4 + 3 units of the plant they sought after.

Whether the expedition is a success or a failure, all is not lost. Roll an additional d6 and consult the Mundane Flora table, to determine if anything else was found.

Mundane Flora

d6	Reward
1	Nothing of value was found, and roll on the Expedition Complication Table.
2	Nothing of value was found.
3	5 gp worth of herbs and materials were found.
4	10 gp worth of herbs and materials were found.
5	25 gp worth of herbs and materials were found.
6	25 gp worth of herbs and materials were found, and one unit of one of a unique flora that can be found in the region (determined by the DM).

Expedition Complication Table

d6	Complication
1	The trail you were following is not where you thought it was, adding two days to your expedition.
2	A persuasive and intrusive bard meets you on your journey and insists that, because you overheard his music, you owe him compensation.
3	In the dead hours of the night, your packs are ransacked by local fauna, leaving you with half as many provisions as are required to complete the expedition.
4	It is too early or late in the season for the plant to have its clear indicators, making it nearly impossible to find.
5	You encounter an aggressive band of beasts local to the region.
6	A denizen of the swamp is found, sinking in a muck hole, and entreats your aid.

Materials: Units

When gathering flora, the useful part of the plant varies. In the case of a flower, it might be each individual seed; or in the case of a tree, it could be cords of burl or specific cuts of lumber. The units and values shown here represent what is usefully gathered by a small adventuring band, which is likely far less than the amount of units a major lumbering organization can procure within a tenday.

Regional Flora Table

	Athakka	Bloodpurge	Drunn	Garath's Gulper	Ghost Willow	Gutmoss	Ijult's Polyp	Keng	Kortyn	Quamaetha	Redflower	Selune's Tear	Silverbark	Spidercap	Sugarblossom	Thelmallow	Toady Raftvine	Vaundyr Vine	Vrukhweed	Xelduth	Yuruldra
Aglarond					✓					✓			✓			✓	✓	✓			✓
Amn					✓		✓	✓		✓								✓		✓	✓
Beastlands					✓					✓							✓	✓			✓
Calimshan							✓	✓												✓	
Chessentea				✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Chondath	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Cormanthor	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	
Cormyr	✓			✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓		✓	
Damara					✓					✓							✓	✓			✓
Dambrath					✓			✓		✓					✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Elfharrow				✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Forest of Amtar	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Halruaa	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Hordelands					✓					✓							✓	✓			✓
Impiltur					✓					✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓
Jungles of Chult				✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Lantan				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							✓		✓	✓
Lapaliiya			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Luiren	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Mhair Jungles	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Moonshea Isles				✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓							✓		✓	✓
Mulhorand					✓			✓		✓							✓	✓			✓
Murghôm				✓	✓				✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Narfell				✓	✓				✓	✓	✓						✓	✓		✓	✓
Neverwinter				✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓		✓	✓
Samarach				✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Sembia	✓			✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Silver Marches					✓	✓	✓			✓				✓				✓			✓
Tethyr					✓		✓			✓								✓			✓
Thay				✓	✓				✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
The Dragon Coast	✓			✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
The Great Dale				✓	✓				✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
The High Forest	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓		✓	✓
The High Moor	✓			✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓						✓		✓	✓
The Shaar																					
The Shining Plains										✓		✓					✓				
The Wealdath					✓		✓			✓								✓			✓
The Western Heartlands				✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓						✓		✓	✓
Thesk					✓					✓						✓	✓	✓			✓
Thindol					✓					✓					✓			✓	✓		✓
Turmish					✓			✓		✓		✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Tymanther				✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Unther				✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Turmish		✓			✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Tymanther		✓			✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Unther		✓			✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓

Flora

Presented in this section are details of some of the flora you can find in dire mires of Faerûn. The regional flora table in the previous section will detail where they can be found in the wild, and the following section and table provides the details about the flora and their measures and values.

Flora: Swamps

Below is a table which lists each plant included in this book, sorted alphabetically. Each plant has a quantity of material and a gold cost associated with that quantity. The costs listed are for high quality and adventurer-grade examples of each material.

Flora	Unit	Value
Athakka	10-square-feet of athakka	50 sp
Bloodpurge	1 handful of leaves	30 gp
Drunn	half a dozen suth's bladderwort	30 gp
Garath's Gulper	1 intact gulper	25 gp
Ghost Willow	1 fruit 1 bottle of Seer's Touch wine (contains 5 glasses)	50 gp 500 gp
Gutmoss	1 gutmoss mushroom	850 gp
Ijult's Polyp	a half dozen immature polyps, or a single mature polyp	20 sp
Keng	a half dozen leaves or roots	1 gp
Kortyn	10 lbs of kortyn	50 cp
Quamaetha	a bushel of floatcandle buds	1 gp
Redflower	one dozen red flowers	150 gp
Selune's Tear	1 flower	75 gp
Silverbark	50 lbs of wood	2 gp
Spidercap	a vial of spidercap spores	220 gp
Sugarblossom	1 mature sugarblossom flower, dried and treated	450 gp
Thelmallow	1 flower	50 gp
Toady Raftvine	1 vial of spores	350 gp
Vrukhweed	a dozen leaves	5 gp per leaf
Xelduth	10 lbs of xelduth	50 sp
Yuruldra	25 lbs of yuruldra	50 sp

Athakka

Athakka is a swamp vine consisting of tiny brownish floatation bladders joined by thin, flexible green stalks. Every bladder sprouts several stalks so the plant branches at every bladder (which grow about two feet from the next bladder), eventually growing into a tangled web work or mass that forms floating mats many other swamp plants grow on or through. As a result, athakka plants are often large, widespread, and largely hidden under other plants. This makes them very hard to kill, as they jet internal fluids and vitality out of damaged areas and into the rest of their weblike bodies, abandoning imperiled areas and moving their vitality elsewhere. (An athakka is typically attacked only by another creature trying to clear a channel through a swamp.)

Athakka is edible, but more bitter and woody than appetizing; it can sustain life but isn't naturally preyed upon by much of anything beyond a few rare sorts of tiny tunneling beetles.

Sentient creatures patient or desperate enough can cut an athakka free of all of the other plants entwined on it, and use it as a fishing or climbing net, or cut it free of anchoring plants but leave the rest to use an athakka as a roof for a hut (if the ends can reach the water, it can even be a living roof, though in most cases the "high and dry" areas will be abandoned by the athakka and will dry out and desiccate over a summer season).

Athakka have a strange side-effect: when the area of effect of any unleashed spell touches or comes within about a foot of any part of an athakka, the entire plant glows softly for 10 minutes, typically with a blue-green or green radiance.

Bloodpurge

This small, green herb grows outward from stalk which splinters out like a network of veins. The leaves, a dark green, droop and are streaked with red where its vascular system peeks through the leaf's surface. This plant is found on waterbeds across the polluted swamplands of Faerûn, doing exceptionally well where poisons and blights would kill other herbs.

The bloodpurge herb was given its name for its ability to sequester and pump out minor poisons from the blood. To use it, crush a handful of bloodpurge leaves and rub it into an incision made somewhere on the chest or neck, or closest to the wound where the poison was applied. If the DC for the poison was 14 or less, the target is cured of the poison's effects as the neutralized poison seeps from the incision or wound.

Drunn

Drunn, or "Suth's bladderwort," (the latter name coming from an unfortunate adventurer-wizard who was killed long ago by a giant specimen) is a usually-tiny swamp plant found all over the Realms. There are many sorts of bladderworts, quite a few having canary-yellow flowers on stalks rising up from underwater stems and bladders, but drunn have tiny amethyst-purple (mature) or beige (immature) flowers that grow in clusters on translucent bladders that float on the surface of swamps, usually among algae and scum. Drunn, like other sorts of bladderworts, have bladders covered with tiny hair-like feelers that detect when insects, birds, frogs, or other small swamp creatures land on them—whereupon the bladders instantly suck in water and the intruder, then close again, trapping the intruder inside to be drowned by the water, then absorbed by the plant.

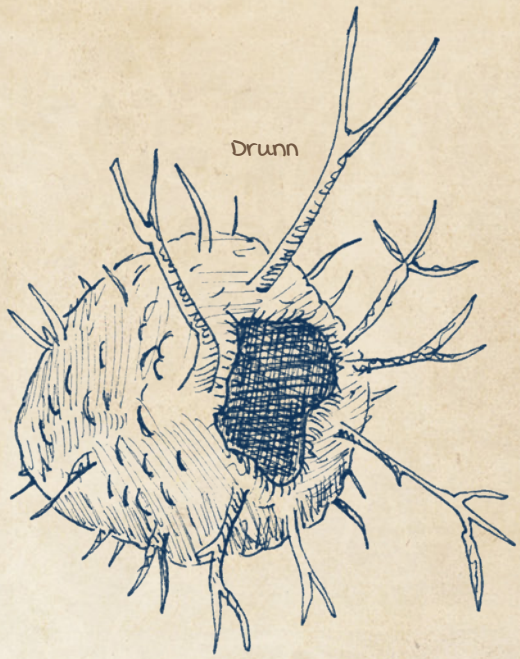
Drunn large enough to be menacing to humans are very rare, but do kill a handful of folk every year. Far more drunn are harvested and eaten for their beneficial effects. Drunn loses these helpful properties when entirely desiccated, but can shrink and shrivel greatly when removed from the swamp water they float in, yet remain useful if kept moist. Any mammal that consumes a drunn bladder becomes immune to paralysis from any source, and from feeling any pain at all (and so won't suffer shock, though shock could still be caused by sufficient blood loss), and have existing paralysis or pain banished in moments ("the time it takes to draw breath" is the Faerûnian folk saying). After consuming drunn bladder, the next time you become paralyzed or gain a level of exhaustion, you don't and this effect ends. This lasts 1 minute for each bladder you consume. Once you've benefited from this effect, you can't do so again until 24 hours have passed. Alchemists, healers, and priests will pay handsomely for sacks of moist drunn bladders—if they still bear their flowers, for that's the only way to distinguish drunn bladders from other sorts of bladderworts that confer no benefit at all. All bladderworts are edible but unappetizing.

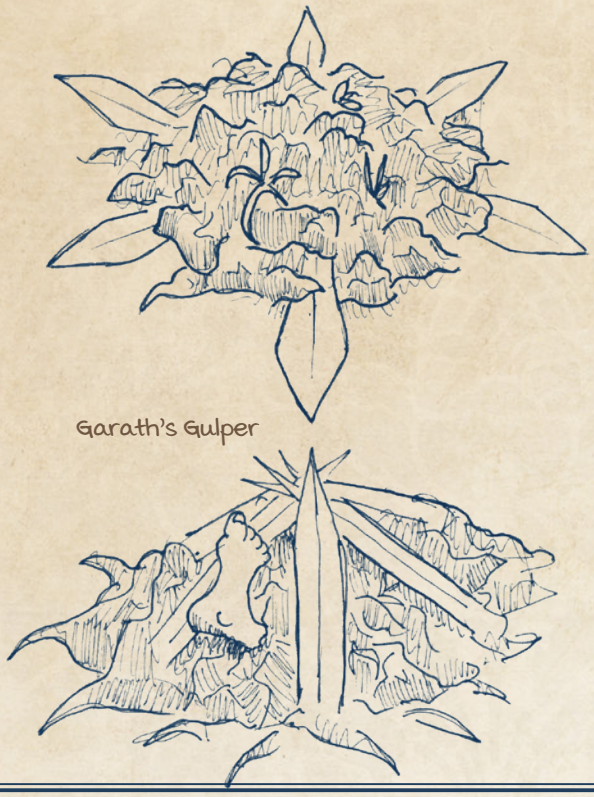
Garath's Gulper

Garath's Gulper, more widely known as the "Catapult Cauldron," is an abundant swamp plant found everywhere in Faerûn, but it only rarely grows large enough to be a peril to anything larger than a gnome, halfling, or smaller creature.

Gulpers are broad oval flowers that float on the watery surface of bogs, but have a stout stalk descending down to roots that usually entwine firmly around other plants. These can be released by the gulper if the water they're in grows too shallow or stagnant, and the plant instinctively wants to move to busier areas in hopes of attracting more prey.

What makes gulpers so dangerous is that other plants can grow within the cauldron or cup of their open flower, and debris—including dead plants—accumulate there, creating a relatively safe-looking patch of ground to walk upon. Experienced swamp travelers learn to notice the sticky outer tentacles of the plant, a ring of dark green, waxy, tall and narrow





leaves that resemble a real-world "hispaniensis" gladius blade in shape. If sufficient weight (the body weight of a Large creature) descends on the exact center of the cup or cauldron of the open flower, these tentacles snap together, enclosing the intruding creature.

In their snapping, they slam into an intruder, striking for 1d4 + 2 bludgeoning damage each, and usually knocking the intruder down. If a fallen tree or other obstacle prevents tentacle leaves on one side of the cauldron from moving, or tentacle leaves are damaged or missing, an intruder is sometimes "catapulted" through the gap, out of the flower's closing embrace (usually into a harmless swamp-muck landing, but sometimes into other perils), hence the gulper's nickname.

All gulpers, if uninjured, have at least six tentacle leaves; large specimens may have twice or even thrice that number. Gulpers attack enfolded victims with splashes of acid (collectively equal to the effects of an *acid splash* spell cast every round, at the lowest possible spell and character level) from their tentacle leaves, which then press against an immobilized enfolded body to absorb flesh, blood, organs, bodily fluids, and last of all, bones. Metallic objects will be acid-damaged but not dissolved or absorbed by a gulper; they typically remain in its cauldron. Such items can be found in harvested gulpers, including the occasional magic item. Intact gulpers are sought after by some citizens of the realms to populate their gardens as a form of pest-control.

Ghost Willow

On the run from a two-headed troll, a traveler is forced deeper into the swamp. An unnatural fog surrounds them, as they come to see a gnarled, dead tree standing aerated roots, its leafless branches swaying in a missing wind. Such is the usual tone that accompanies the sighting of a ghost willow, an ominous tree of the Luruar region which is often misattributed malevolence.

While definitely magical (its leaves exist in the Ethereal Plane and it produces a thick fog), the ghost willow does not present any real harm. Indeed, it often saves travelers, as its fog has a calmative effect which dissuades pursuers from continuing. The fog extends out to a radius of 10 feet for every foot the tree is tall, which usually means about 400 feet. While in the fog, creatures have disadvantage on ability checks made to find creatures or objects, and divination spells return nonsensical information.

Ghost willow fruit, which can only be collected from the Ethereal Plane, can be brewed into a wine known as the Seer's Touch. The wine, and hence the fruit, is extremely unique and valuable: it retains a perfect coolness, it radiates a light mist, and is a marvelous mix of tart and sweet. A creature that drinks a glass of Seer's Touch can see into the Ethereal Plane for an hour.

Gutmoss

The wary traveler of western Faerûn will note that some of the beast carcasses found among the wetlands share some similar characteristics: a split stomach, the cavity of which is covered in red fuzz dotted in skyward-reaching stalks of glistening silver. Though it may seem that these animals were the victims of a mauling being reclaimed by nature, the reality is that they were the victim of gutmoss, also known as hellbait.

The spores of gutmoss grow into beige fruiting bodies reminiscent of the common edible mushroom. The only way to tell the two apart is by the patch of red moss at its base, requiring a DC13 Wisdom (Survival) to identify, or a DC13 passive Perception check to notice the red moss.

If ingested, the target must succeed on a DC14 Constitution saving throw, or become poisoned. While poisoned this way, the target must repeat this saving throw every 24 hours. If it successfully saves against this poison three times, the poison ends. If it fails its saves three times, the creature dies as the moss begins to rip their stomach open. The successes and failures don't need to be consecutive; keep track of both until the target collects three of a kind.

Ijult's Polyp

Ijult's Polyp (or "Blastball") is a rare warm-climate swamp plant that resembles a rough-surfaced, spherical mottled purplish-brown floating potato—until it rises up. Many polyps are disguised by other swamp plants growing on them, or sitting on them and trailing roots down into the swamp water they float in. Polyps are omnivores, feeding on small fish, larvae, and other water-dwelling creatures who stray in among their dangling root-tendrils, and on algae and other plants their tendrils can reach. The pale tendrils look like potato shoots, but are strong, tough entwining and tugging, sucking tentacles, and grow in profusion (dozens in number) underwater, down from the underside of a polyp.

Blastballs live quietly for years, growing slowly in size due to available food, and either using their tendrils to cling to other swamp plants nearby and stay anchored, or—if food grows scarce in their current spot—letting winds and currents move them

around a swamp as they float and drift on the water. When a polyp reaches the right size (typically larger across than a very large warrior's shield), they expel internal gases to silently rise straight up into the air, usually about a dozen feet, but in rare cases as high as twenty or thirty feet. They then burst explosively, ripping themselves apart so that half a dozen or more chunks of polyp splash down over the immediate area to float (or use their tendrils to drag themselves to the nearest open water) and grow as so many new, smaller polyps. Their first season of growth rounds them from torn chunks back into a spherical shape.

Polyps can sense the nearest water, and vibrations in water and on swamp soil nearby, but they cannot see or think as sentient creatures define the word; their actions are instinctive. A polyp's rising is a relatively feeble jetting of gases, and a rising polyp can readily be shoved or deflected to move it; their blast has the force of a *thunderwave* spell (no save possible, but as a 1st-level spell). Baerendren Ijult was a famously energetic explorer and merchant trader who became a casualty of a polyp in 1216 DR, before a large audience of fellow merchants.

Keng

Keng is a plentiful, widespread swamp plant that resembles a lilypad: it has swamp-bottom roots and a long underwater stalk rising to a floating-on-the-surface of swamp water "lilypad"-like leaf; unlike lily pads, which are usually various shades of green, keng leaves are always russet red. Keng can safely be eaten by all mammals, reptiles, and amphibians, though very few would describe it as appetizing. Its chewy, "rubbery" floating leaves can grow quite large, and remain supple and tough for days after harvesting (drying out very slowly), and so can serve well to wrap small items or foodstuffs in.

Keng has a special benefit for lizardfolk, kenku, and possibly other creatures, but this boon does not extend to humans, elves, dwarves, halflings, gnomes, giants, orcs, goblins, or hobgoblins: eating keng roots or leaves (but not stalks) confers limited magic immunity upon the eater: rendering them entirely unaffected by all spells of the enchantment school (regardless of their personal wishes; even if they want to be affected, they can't be). The onset time of this effect is 1d6 + 5 minutes after first ingesting a mouthful of keng, and the immunity lasts 1d4 hours (eating more keng can't prolong this effect; it's a chemical brain alteration that spreads, peaks, and then must naturally subside and end before it can begin again). So eating more keng will have no effect until six entire hours have elapsed since a particular individual last had any trace of keng immunity. This benefit can only be realized by eating keng root or leaf that is fresh, or within a month of harvesting.

Alchemists, healers, druids, and various priests have experimented many times, seeking to isolate what in keng aids against enchantment magic, and to extend it to other races beyond lizardfolk and kenku—and thus far, have met with utter lack of success.

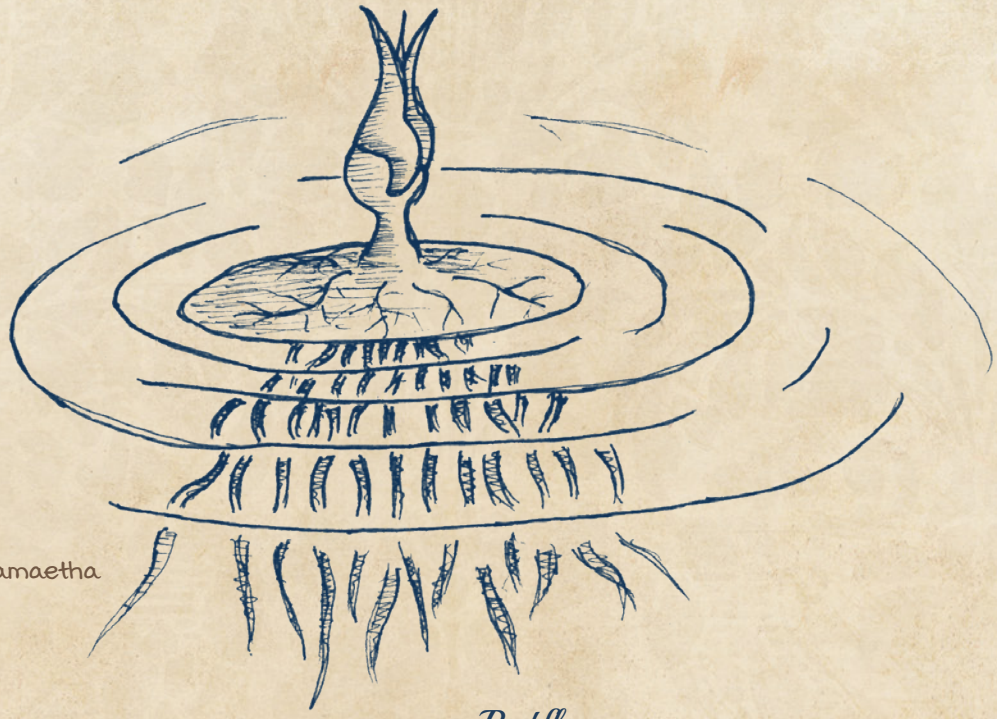
Kortyn

Kortyn (or "Bloatflower") is a copper to brown swamp plant that resembles giant clumps of broad-bladed grass; it has tall leaves that grow in clusters from a root ball that either floats in swamp water or reaches down to swamp water while anchored in boggy ground. Kortyn is disgusting in odor and taste, and causes immediate numbness and nausea if ingested, so poisonings are almost unheard of because no sort of creature ever eats enough to be further harmed.

Just brushing against kortyn leaves does no harm, but breaking off a leaf so that leaking sap (odorless, watery rather than sticky, and translucent coppery orange in hue) comes into contact with skin results in short-lived (2d4 hours) but spectacular bloating: large and disfiguring pustules or blisters erupt. This typically causes superficial damage if the blisters are breached and the bodily fluids within leak away and are lost, or no damage at all if they are not. The blisters will erupt only where the skin comes into contact with kortyn sap, and so can be confined to specific areas by chance or deliberately.

Swamp-dwellers and some druids and others wise in swamplore have deliberately used kortyn sap on their faces to change their appearance (giving themselves temporary huge noses, cheeks, or chins, for example) to avoid being identified by others searching for them. Kortyn-caused bloating almost never endangers sight, hearing, smell, or breathing, as the blisters don't block nostrils, the mouth or throat, and so on.

Lizards, other reptiles, and dragons of all sorts can eat kortyn without ill effects or bloating, which is why bloatflowers haven't long ago overrun swamps and choked out all other vegetation.



Quamaetha

Quamaetha, or "floatcandles," are olive-green swamp plants consisting of an oval lilypad-like floating leaf with a teardrop-ovoid-shaped (pointing upward) "bud" or largely-closed flower thrusting up into the air from its center. A small forest of worm-like appendages dangle down from the underside of the leaf, providing slow locomotion through calm water, absorbing algae and other material from swamp water (cleansing it in the process), and providing shelter for small fish and water snakes.

Floatcandles grow from human-palm-sized up to several feet across; the largest have central flowers a foot-and-a-half high. They get their name from their natural oil, which smells rather like limes and attracts insects into the nigh-closed flower bud (concentric rings of overlapping petals, with a golden heart) where they stick fast and are absorbed by the flower. The oil of a floatcandle is flammable, and so are the gasses it constantly gives off. Like certain volcanic vents, if ignited by a spark, flame, or lightning strike, a floatcandle flower will burn like a lamp. This can be eerily beautiful, by night in a swamp, but it helps predators see prey and so can be dangerous to be near.

Floatcandle buds can be harvested for use as improvised lamps or torches (they don't survive severe handling), and in a few places in the Realms, such as the southeastern fringes of the Vast Swamp, they are farmed and crushed in a press to jar for local use, and sale, as lamp oil.

Redflower

Redflower is commonly found in central Faerûn, in the regions surrounding the western edges of the Sea of Fallen Stars. It is found in stillwater bogs fed by high tides and torrential rains, where the water stagnates for long periods of time. It is a widely held opinion that the plant's vibrant red flower is a result of absorbing iron nutrients from the water from warm blooded creatures and insects that decompose in the water. As such, the plant is considered carnivorous although it is not ambulatory like some of the more dangerous plants found across the realms.

Alchemists and apothecaries from the surrounding regions seek out and prize the redflower to produce a tincture that can improve the deftness and coordination of those who imbibe it. This potion (known as *rogue's draught*) sells for 300 gold pieces per dose, reflecting the values of the materials and skill that go into creating it (dried redflower, a high-potency grain alcohol, and expertise in the form of a DC 21 Intelligence check using alchemist's supplies). The imbiber of this dose gains advantage on Dexterity ability checks for the next hour. Should the dose be doubled, or a second dose taken before the effects of the first have worn off, the imbiber must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw, becoming poisoned for an hour on a failed save instead of the tincture's normal effects.

Shiah "Cinder" Irgangladen

Selune's Tear

Found in the Silverwisp swamp along the Sword Coast, this flower is heavily sought after by necromancers for its ability to aid in the calling of spirits. The flowers grow from a circular base made of layered leaves that reach anywhere from 6 to 10 inches in diameter. Three to seven blue, overlapping cup-like flowers grow from the center of the leaf circle. The flower itself emanates a soft silver glow under the full moon, making that the best time to hunt for the tears.

If the flowers are cast into a lit brazier fueled by duskwood during a full moon. Any ghosts within 500 feet of the fire are forced to enter the Material Plane and can't return to the Ethereal Plane until the flame is put out. If a ghost's CR is higher than twice the amount of flowers cast into the flame, it is unaffected by the magic.

If a spellcaster were to do this as they finished casting *animate dead* while uttering the name of a ghost in the area, they can assert control over the ghost as if it were a zombie or skeleton they animated. The ghost is treated as a number of undead equal to their CR for the purposes of reasserting control using animate dead.

Silverbark

Silverbark is a meek looking tree of red wood and flakey, silver bark that can be found in the northern wetlands of the Luruar region, which includes The High Moor and The Evermoors. The tree itself only grows to about 12 feet, and has sparse but large, broad leaves of a deep red hue. The waxy leaves take on a similar shape to that of a cherry tree, and are about 8 inches long on average, though some can grow as large as a dinner plate.

Elves of the region are known to use the leaves to wrap food, but the wood itself was light and brittle and hence not usable for much. The wood is only ever used to make stakes by the humans who live in the area.

Though the people there may have forgotten this fact, making stakes from silverbark was a tradition passed down by some of the settlers of the area. Being chased away from their homes by lycans, they had noted their hunters avoided the trees with the same vehemence they avoided silver. They had begun making weapons that incorporated the tree's wood and bark into their make, and realized that they could hurt their assailants with them. Any weapon or item made from silverbark is treated as a silvered magical weapon when used to attack monstrosities or undead.

Spidercap

This parasitic, fuzzy mushroom can be found growing out of tree trunks in the subtropical and tropical wetlands. The mushroom mimics the appearance of a small tarantula at rest, requiring a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) or Intelligence (Nature) check to discern its true nature. It uses its appearance to lure out creatures that would prey on spiders, such as birds.

The second the mushroom is disturbed, it splits open to reveal a cloud of white, animate spores which launches itself towards the attacker. The swarm acts as a **swarm of spiders** that attacks the nearest creature mindlessly. Upon reducing a creature to 0 hit points, each animate spore-spider takes a small chunk from the body and climbs up the nearest tree to begin the process anew.

It is believed that these mushrooms were intentionally created and spread by the drow to punish those that would dare attack their sacred animal, and some drow have been known to carry vials of spidercap spores to throw into the midst of their enemies. A creature can harvest the spores of a single mushroom into a vial by succeeding on a DC18 Wisdom (Survival) check.

Sugarblossom

The sugarblossom is a vine plant from the Feywild that grows in the swamplands around the Sea of Fallen Stars, but is most known for growing in the Vast Swamp that forms a border between Cormyr and Sembia. When not in bloom, the plant grows as a lace of thin vines that enwraps one or two trees, using them as bracing to reach the canopy. When the vines finally reach the sunlight, they begin growing small yellow and pink flowers all along the tree's branches, which emit a saccharine smell that puts nearby creatures into a blissful lull. The flowers release small rosy seeds onto their captives to spread about the swamp, but oftentimes their captives end up in the jaws of opportunistic predators.

Each creature who starts their turn within 30 feet of such a tree and can smell the flowers must succeed on a DC14 Wisdom saving throw or become charmed for an hour, until they take damage, or until a creature uses their action to shake them out of the stupor. While charmed this way, the creature is incapacitated and has a speed of 0. Regardless of if the creature succeeds or fails, they are then immune to this effect until they finish a long rest.

A creature can cast a *charm person* or *charm monster* spell into a dried sugarblossom to store the magic for the next hour. If a creature willingly accepts

the sugarblossom as a gift in that duration, they are targeted by the caster's spell. At the end of the spell's duration, the sugarblossom withers away to dust, but the creature doesn't know it was charmed (though it can still surmise the fact if they are aware of the plant).

Thelmallow

The thelmallow plant is a white water blossom found across the swamps and bogs of interior Faerûn. The plant produces flowers with large petals shaped like ripped tissues, and usually housed swamp flies, their primary pollinators. The flowers are easily identifiable by their sickly sweet smell, like that of overripe fruit. The scent tends to draw large herbivores to the area where the plants grow, leaving carnivores and scavengers not too far behind.

Thelmallow's only known use is as part of a clear, syrupy concoction named spellstop, which was discovered by a Sembian alchemist named Janesse Wyndsur. Any arcane spellcaster who imbibes spellstop (most commonly done when mixed with wine, a mixture called spellslayer wine), is unable to cast spells for 2d4 hours, after a 1 minute delay. The other ingredients required are oak sap, a vial of harpy and wyvern blood, and the herbs alarvaun (found in wetlands, from the plant known as vaundyr vine) and drace (found in arid grassland regions, from the plant known as bittergar bush). Spellstop can be made by someone proficient in alchemists' supplies, requiring 8 hours and a successful DC17 Intelligence (alchemists' supplies) check. A success generates a single dose of the substance.

Toady Raftvine

In the midst of Faerûn's wetlands, one can find a clump of floating vines upon their larger bodies of water. The clump, usually about 5 feet in radius, can most often be heard before it is seen: as it the clump swells with air and recedes, letting out a long groaning croak resembling that of a giant toad. The croak attracts amphibious monsters, particularly giant toads, during their springtime mating periods. The vine clump relies on the angry toads getting tangled in the clump to find other vines to pollinate. While tangled this way, a giant toad has a +2 bonus to its AC and a resistance to fire damage.

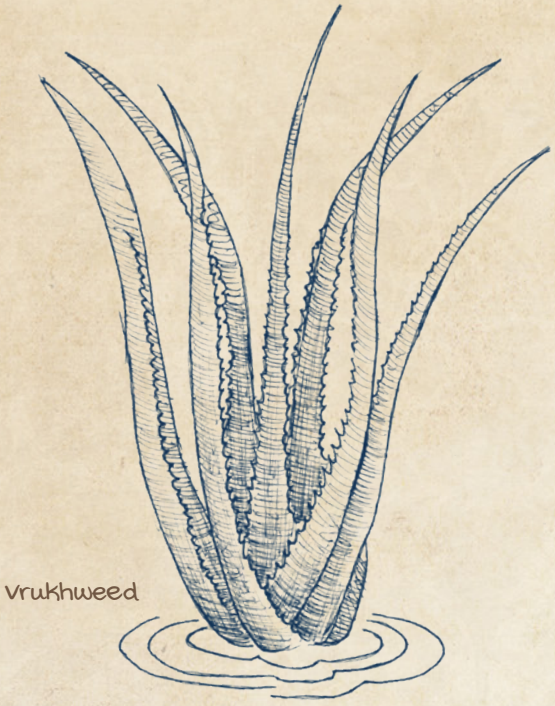
Although they resemble vines, the toady raftvine is actually a kind of fungus, and the "vines" are actually incredibly swollen mycelia. When the raftvine senses the presence of another of its kind, it partially unfurls, revealing a flesh-like center, and begins to emit a cloud of spores. A creature who were to ingest a vial of toady raftvine spores would find that they could only breathe underwater for the next 1d4 hours, though actually bottling enough of the spores is said to be an annoying task.

Vaundyr Vine

Vaundyr vine is a decidedly unremarkable vine that grows in all wet, shady areas in southern Faerûn and along the northern borders of Zakhara. The vine thrives in moist areas with dry sea air, and is especially prolific in the mangroves of the recently re-emerged Mhair Jungles. The tangled vine sports a host of waxy, heart-shaped leaves every 1-2 inches along a mature vine, which can be dried and pressed to create the common herb alarvaun. Almost all civilizations, past and present, that existed near where vaundyr vine grows are known to have used alarvaun in teas and broths (adding a sweet earthy flavor). Alchemists in recent history have examined the herb in every which way, trying to unlock any secrets towards medicinal or curative properties to almost no avail, short of spellstop discovered by Janesse Wyndsur.

Vrukhweed

Vrukhweed (or just "Vrukh") is a tall mottled dark blue-green swamp plant that resembles clumps of grass, or aloe vera (if the latter grew tall and thin like oversized blades of grass): its leaves are fleshy and hollow, and drip clear, sticky sap if broken off. Vrukhweed isn't plentiful, but grows almost everywhere there's stagnant standing water, so in stream backwaters and ponds as well as swamps.



It's edible, provides a home and food and a place to lay eggs for many frogs and newts, and if ingested in sufficient quantities (a volume equal to an eater's balled fist, or more) by any mammal or amphibian, staunches blood loss, melds together torn flesh and skin that's stitched or splinted or otherwise treated to hold torn or cut edges or ends together (healing 1d4 + 1 hit points), and can aid in regeneration of lost, maimed, or damaged limbs or organs. Vrukhweed can be substituted for the usual material component in any healing or regeneration spell. When used as a spellcasting component for a spell that restores hit points, you can use the maximum result of one die rolled with the lowest result. Due to its healing properties, vrukh leaves and sap command high prices among alchemists, healers, priests, and druids who know of it.

Xelduth

Xelduth (pronounced "Zelduth") is a serpentine-shaped, beige to mottled brown, ambulatory swamp plant that most closely resembles a tree root. Xelduth are long, cylindrical, and covered with hair-like branchlets that propel them and absorb algae and other nutrients from swamp water.

However, xelduth are most often mistaken not for a root, but for a watersnake, as they are seen wriggling along underwater. Xelduth move slowly and constantly through swamp waters, not far beneath the surface (as so much of their food is at or near the surface). However, they will wriggle faster to get away from a disturbance in the water close behind them, and to get closer to a disturbance in front of them (likely to take advantage of food displaced in the turbulence; why they seem to flee disturbances behind them is unknown).

Xelduth are mindless, resemble sunchokes in taste and texture (but lack the flatulence-producing ingredient in sunchokes) and can be eaten raw or cooked. Xelduth have scared many a wayfarer traversing swamps into thinking they are under attack by watersnakes. To make things worse, some watersnakes swim with xelduth, using them as camouflage so they can approach unsuspecting prey. Xelduth themselves are harmless, and beneficial both as food and because their feeding (they are omnivores, dining on insects, larvae, small frogs, and small water worms as well as plants and rotting debris) cleans swamp water, in some cases turning it from dangerously tainted to safely drinkable by mammals.

Yuruldra

Yuruldra (or "Needlecushion") is an abundant swamp plant that grows everywhere in Toril where bogs or open-water marshland can be found. It's juicy and sweet, rather like a mango in taste but with no central stone or fibrous consistency, instead having a grapefruit-like spherical floating main body, with dozens of long, thin red (and brittle) red tendrils trailing down into the water below). The flesh of a yuruldra is segmented and studded with seeds like that of a grapefruit or orange, and is both edible and very tasty inside its thick rind. However, the plant's widely-used common name comes from the many sharp, spiky thorns it grows in all directions, jutting out from its spherical rind. These are incredibly hard and durable (not easily snapped off), and can be six inches or more in length, though most are about four inches long. For centuries, lizardfolk and other creatures living near swamps have harvested yuruldra for eating, and yuruldra needles for use as sewing needles, piercing tools, and means to pin down or pin together hides and large leaves to dry them out, form tents or other shelters, and so on. Even today, a small sack of yuruldra needles is worth a few coppers.

Damaged needlecushions regrow into intact form with astonishing speed (often within a tenday), and even heavily-harvested swamps rapidly repopulate with yuruldra, as the plants constantly expel seeds to sink down into the swamp muck, but not germinate to float up and grow into new yuruldra unless sufficient sunlight reaches them (meaning no yuruldra are floating just above, blotting the sunlight out).

Shiah "Cinder" Irgangladen

Appendix
Beasts and Monsters

Swamps are often associated with death and decay yet this could not be further from the truth. The wetlands of Faerûn are swollen with flora and fauna. The biome is a diverse mix of still water (both salt and fresh), soft ground, and humid air. The mixture provides all the nutrients required for vibrant and healthy life both flora and fauna. However, the fauna found here can be alien, voracious, and even the smallest creature can cause the most harm. The Faerûn's fens are not for the faint of heart.

Regional Beasts Table

	Algalmental	Alligator	Bloodbloater	Bog Bloke	Bunyip	Captorgator	Hiveslime	Ragondin	Salamander, Ancient	Salamander, Giant	Silt Strider	Zairtail
Aglarond	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		
Amn			✓		✓			✓				✓
Beastlands	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓		✓
Calimshan				✓	✓		✓	✓				
Chessentea		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Chondath		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	
Cormanthor	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓		
Cormyr		✓	✓				✓			✓		
Damara				✓			✓					
Dambrath			✓		✓		✓				✓	✓
Elfharrow	✓			✓	✓						✓	✓
Forest of Amtar	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Halruaa	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Hordelands			✓				✓					
Impiltur			✓									
Jungles of Chult		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓
Lantan		✓	✓		✓		✓			✓		✓
Lapaliiya	✓			✓	✓							✓
Luiren		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mhair Jungles	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Moonshea Isles		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Mulhorand		✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Murghôm		✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓	✓
Narfell				✓			✓					
Neverwinter		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓
Samarach		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓
Sembia		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓		
Silver Marches		✓	✓	✓			✓			✓		
Tethyr			✓		✓			✓				
Thay			✓				✓					
The Dragon Coast	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	
The Great Dale	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓		
The High Forest		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		
The High Moor	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
The Shaar							✓				✓	✓
The Shining Plains							✓					
The Wealdath		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓
The Western Heartlands	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		✓
Thesk							✓					
Thindol							✓					
Turmish			✓									
Tymanther		✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓	
Unther		✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓	✓

Algalmental

A regional variant of water elementals, algalmentals incorporate the prolific plantlife and algae found in swampy water into their own liquid bodies. Smaller and less powerful than a standard water elemental, they are nonetheless keenly adapted to swampy terrain. Their ability to suddenly emerge from murky water, send foes reeling to the ground with a torrent of water, and then disappear back into the muck makes them excellent ambushers.

Algalmental

Algalmental

Medium elemental, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 37 (5d8+15)
Speed 30 ft., swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Resistances acid; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Aquan
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Freeze. If the elemental takes cold damage, it partially freezes; its speed is reduced by 20 feet until the end of its next turn.

Pond Stride. As a bonus action while on the surface of water, the elemental can collapse into a pool and teleport to another location on the surface of water within 30 feet of it. This doesn't provoke opportunity attacks.

Photosynthesis. If the elemental starts its turn in sunlight, it regains 5 (2d4) hit points.

Water Form. The elemental can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Water Whirl (Recharge 4-6). The elemental spins a twisting wave of water outward from within. Each creature within 15 feet of the elemental must make a DC 13 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage and is knocked prone. On a success, a creature takes half as much damage.

Alligator

Lurking in the waters of swamps throughout Faerûn are alligators, who are often mistaken for their cousins the crocodiles. They are ambush predators, surging out of the water to grab prey with their immensely powerful jaws.

Alligators are hunted for their scaly skin, which is prized for use in high fashion as well as more practical leatherworking applications. A shield backed with alligator scale or a dagger wrapped with their hide are common sights among swamp hunters.

Alligator

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 37 (5d10 + 10)
Speed 15 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Skills Stealth +4
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages —
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Ambusher. The alligator has advantage on attack rolls against surprised creatures.

Hold Breath. The alligator can hold its breath for 15 minutes.

Actions

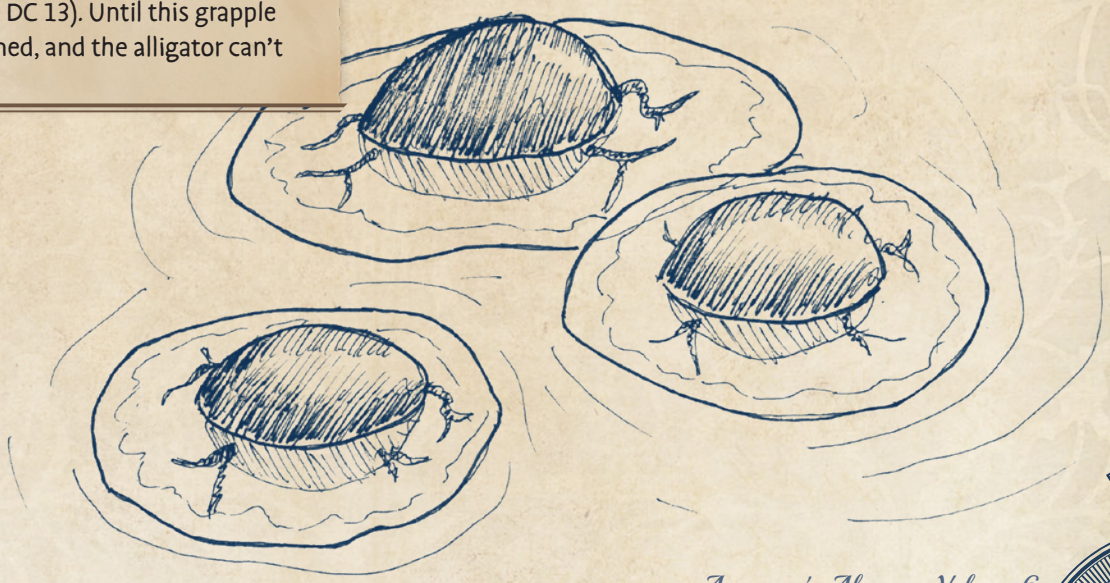
Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 14 (2d10 + 3) piercing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the alligator can't bite another target.

Bloodbloater

Bloodbloaters are a parasitic nuisance that floats along the surface of still and murky water. Each bloater is only slightly larger than a human hand, but it isn't a single bloater that poses a threat. Swarms of hundreds could be found preying on unfortunate creatures in swamps all across Faerûn. The parasitic pests are even known to inhabit the sewer waters of cities that have them, such as Waterdeep.

Their bloodlust is insatiable, and can be their downfall where food is abundant. But, for every overzealous bloodbloater, there are two more to take its place. Chirurgeons have used bloodbloaters to draw toxins, venom, and infections from the blood of their patients, but often to disastrous results. It takes a certain level of proficiency to utilize a bloater in this manner properly. When a swarm is defeated, as many as 1d4 + 1 bloaters will remain and can be bottled or contained for later use. A successful DC 17 Wisdom (Medicine) check when applying a bloater to remove poison from a creature will successfully remove all but the most virulent nonmagical strains. However, a check that fails by 5 or more results in not removing the bloater before it feeds fully and explodes, dealing 2d4 acid damage to the target and 1d4 to each creature within 5 feet.

Bloodbloater



Shiah "Cinder" Irgangladen

Swarm of Bloodbloaters

Medium swarm of tiny oozes, unaligned

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 27 (5d8 + 5)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +2
Damage Resistances acid; bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone
Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 12
Languages —
Challenge 1/2 (200 XP)

Harry. Any creature concentrating on a spell that starts its turn in the same space as the swarm must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw to maintain concentration on that spell. In addition, creatures in the same space as the swarm have disadvantage on Constitution saving throws made to maintain concentration.

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny ooze. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points, except with its drain life attack.

Actions

Drain Life. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 0 ft., one creature in the swarm's space. *Hit:* The target loses 7 (2d4 + 2) hit points due to blood loss, or 4 (1d4 + 2) hit points if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer. The swarm gains hit points equal to the hit points lost by the target. If this would cause the swarm to regain hit points beyond its maximum, the swarm explodes, reducing its hit points to 14. Each creature within 15 feet of the swarm must succeed on a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw, taking 4d4 acid damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

Bog Bloke

One would not want to happen upon a bog bloke unexpectedly. These dead tree-looking creatures are aggressive and can be deadly, and can easily hide in plain sight. The conventional wisdom is that wherever trolls are found, bog blokes are not far behind. The relationship between the two creatures is unknown but something symbiotic is the prevailing assumption.

Bog blokes are diminutive, and appear as a dead tree-like shrub with many gnarled limbs. They are unassumingly swift and can easily catch intruders—entangling them in their branches. The bodies of bog blokes have been lit and gathered around by many travelers of the Evermoors and other regions, but no other practical use for their timber is known.

Bog Bloke

Small plant, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 65 (10d6 + 30)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	5 (-3)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)

Damage Vulnerabilities fire
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages —
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

False Appearance. While the bog bloke remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal tree.

Regeneration. The bog bloke regains 5 hit points at the start of its turn. If the bog bloke takes fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the bog bloke's next turn. The bog bloke dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Actions

Multiattack. The bog bloke makes two limb attacks.

Limb. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* The target takes 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or become grappled (escape DC 14). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained. The bog bloke has three limbs capable of grappling, each of which can grapple only one target.

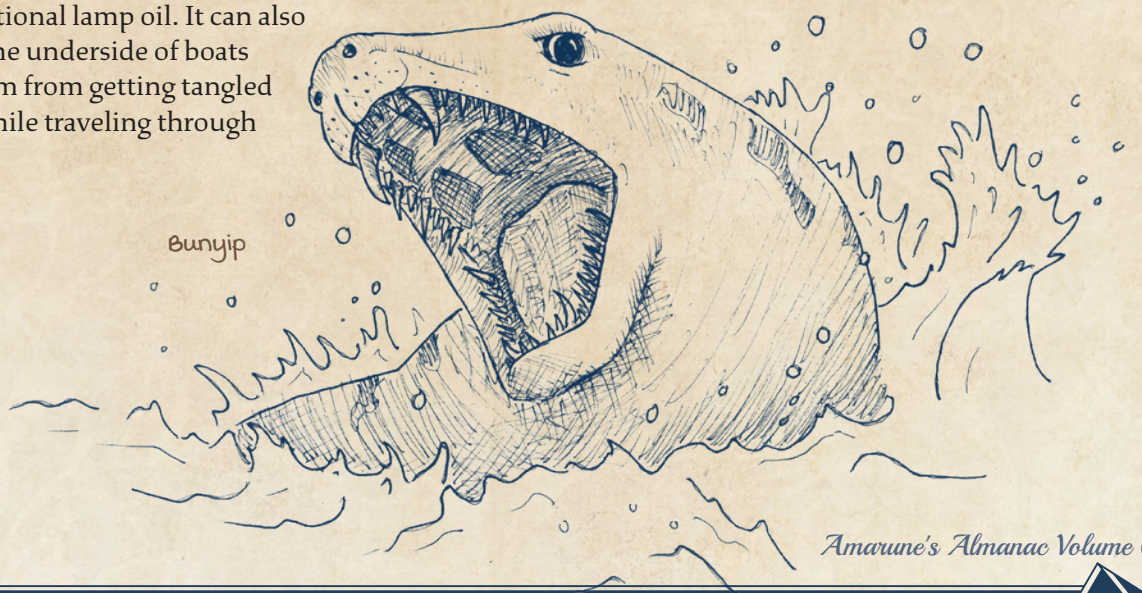
Reactions

Grappling Limb. When a creature leaves the bog bloke's reach, it can use its reaction to make a limb attack. If this attack hits, the target automatically fails its saving throw to resist being grappled. If the target was mounted, or a mount currently being ridden, the rider becomes dismounted.

Bunyip

Bunyip are a terror to the waters in which they inhabit: all of the ferocity of a shark, with the power of psionic ability to make them truly terrifying. Their slick brown-black bodies are covered in an oily fur, able to wick moisture away and aid their speed through water. Their heads are seal-like, with whiskers and a mouth full of sharp teeth designed to rend flesh. Found most commonly in the marshland that borders salt-water seas, the bunyip prey on fish who come inland to lay eggs, as well as any mammal that might be unlucky enough to swim near them.

If one is skilled enough to slay a bunyip, their form provides numerous bounties. The oil from their fur and skin can be squeezed free and contained to serve as a functional lamp oil. It can also be spread on the underside of boats to prevent them from getting tangled or damaged while traveling through shallows with ensnaring water plants and dead-head stumps. The fur and leather from their skin is poorly suited for crafting armor, but can be used to create an efficient rain-cover for dry stores that must be left outdoors. Most notable are the teeth. Lizardfolk and other tribal humanoids who choose to live from the land, instead of mining and refining metals, can use the teeth of a bunyip—pressed tightly between two pieces of softened wood, which are then dried and tempered by flame—to craft a sort of sword that causes egregious lacerations. Swords crafted in this way use a variety of materials for the cutting edge, ranging from sharp stones to animal teeth, and even so far as obsidian glass collected in the wake of a red dragon attack.



Shiah "Cinder" Irgangladen

Bunyip

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 88 (16d8 + 16)
Speed 0 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Dexterity +7, Wisdom +4
Skills Acrobatics +7, Athletics +8, Perception +4, Stealth +7
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages —
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Amphibious. The bunyip can breathe air and water.

Telepathic Sense. The bunyip can sense the presence of any creature within 60 feet of it. This can't detect undead or constructs.

Reckless Frenzy. The bunyip has advantage on melee attack rolls, and melee attack rolls against it are made with advantage. When the bunyip scores a critical hit with a melee attack, it rolls one additional damage die.

Swimming Leap. With a 10-foot swimming start, the bunyip can long jump out of or across the water up to 25 feet.

Actions

Multiattack. The bunyip makes two bite attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d10 + 5) piercing damage.

Captorgator

The fey-reptilian creatures known as captorgators earned their name from their uncanny ability to swallow prey whole and transport them away to parts unknown. Hags and other intelligent fey who lair in swamps use them as pets, sending them to scoop up a hapless victim and delivering them back to their lair. They mimic the forms and behaviors of terrestrial alligators, including their tactic of ambushing prey from just beneath the surface of the water.

Captorgator

Huge fey, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 68 (8d10 + 24)
Speed 20 ft., swim 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	6 (-2)	15 (+2)	6 (-2)

Skills Stealth +4, Perception +4
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages Sylvan
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Ambusher. The alligator has advantage on attack rolls against surprised creatures.

Amphibious. The alligator can breathe air and water.

Shapechanger. The alligator can change its size between Huge, Large, Medium, or Small as a bonus action. All its other statistics remain the same. If the alligator has a creature swallowed, it can't become a size smaller than that creature.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 18 (2d12 + 5) piercing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 15). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the alligator can't bite another target.

Swallow. The alligator makes one bite attack against a target smaller than it, that the alligator is grappling. If the attack hits, the target is swallowed, and the grapple ends. The swallowed target is blinded, restrained, and incapacitated, and has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the alligator. The alligator can have only one target swallowed at a time.

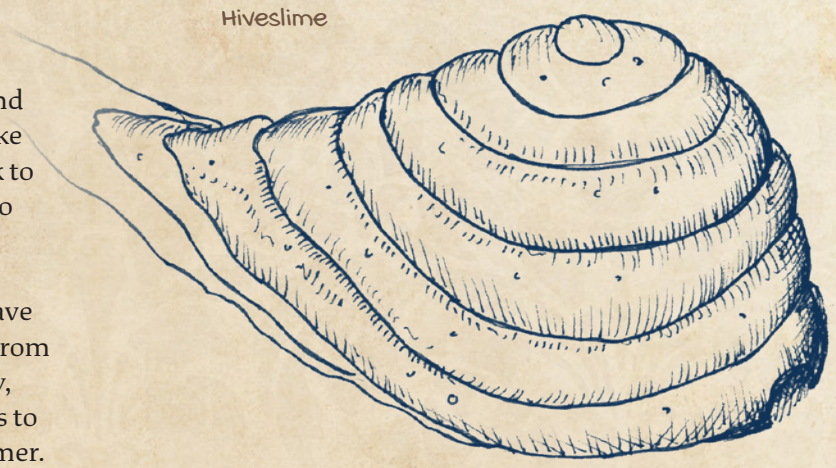
If the alligator takes damage while it has less than half hit points, it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or spit out a swallowed creature, which lands prone in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of it. If the alligator dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 5 feet of movement, exiting prone.

Captorgator

Hiveslime

Hiveslimes are living beehives congealed from great masses of honey. The queen of the hive embeds herself in the ooze and controls it, allowing it to move from location to location and offer a degree of protection to the hive itself. Like any beehive, a hiveslime's inhabitants are quick to come to the defense of their home, forming into clouds that relentlessly sting any intruder.

The honey that composes a hiveslime is especially sweet and aromatic, as long as you have the patience to pick out all the bees and larvae from it first. Hiveslime Mead is an expensive delicacy, though it is often exported from swamp regions to urban centers to cater to a higher class of customer.



Hiveslime

Large ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 9
Hit Points 74 (8d10 + 30)
Speed 15 ft., climb 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	8 (-1)	17 (+3)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	1 (-5)

Damage Resistances slashing
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone
Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8
Languages —
Challenge 3 (1,100 XP)

Amorphous. The jelly can move through a space as narrow as 1 foot wide without squeezing.

Spider Climb. The jelly can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Hive Defenders. The first time the slime takes damage, and when it is reduced to half hit points, 1d4 swarms of bees (using the Swarm of Wasps statistics) emerge from within the slime to defend it. The swarms return to the hive when it is restored to full hit points.

Actions

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 4 (1d8) poison damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be grappled by the ooze (escape DC 13). The ooze can have up to 5 targets grappled at once with its pseudopods.

Bee Spray (Recharge 5-6). A phalanx of fast-attack bees bursts from the slime and sting each creature in a 15-foot cone emanating from the ooze. Each creature in the cone must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, taking 14 (6d4) piercing damage on a failure, or half as much damage on a success.

Ragondin

Ragondin

The ragondin is believed to be an import from Anchorôme, possibly brought back with Balduran on his first voyage to the distant land. Ragondin resemble large rats, with slick and coarse brown fur and a long tail adapted to their aquatic life. Their short, greyed muzzle bears large teeth which are adept at breaking down soft and hard woods.

These small rodents are considered an invasive pest in most regions of Faerûn. Their nature is destructive, and they reproduce rapidly and prolifically. A population of ragondin left unchecked can decimate an entire wetland in just a few short seasons. They are, however, abundant prey for the many predatory creatures that hunt in wetlands so nature has a way of naturally balancing their impact.

Ragondin pelts make for questionable fur products, and its meat serves the purpose of providing sustenance, but there is no pleasure gained from consuming the tough and unflavorful meat. In the regions surrounding large swamplands, like the High Moor, it's common to find bounties posted for ragondin pelts to keep the population under control. These bounties range from 15 silver to 1 gold per pelt, depending on the region and need.

Shiah "Cinder" Irgangladen

Ragondin

Small beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 36 (8d6 + 8)
Speed 30 ft., burrow 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)

Skills Acrobatics +5, Athletics +3, Stealth +5
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages —
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Den Builder. When the ragondin burrows, it can choose to move at half its burrow speed and leave a 5-foot-diameter tunnel in its wake.

Wood Woes. The ragondin's bite attack deals double damage to plants, as well as objects and structures made of organic plant materials.

Actions

Multiattack. The ragondin makes two bite attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Salamanders

Giant salamanders are bulbous amphibians that secrete poisonous mucus from their skin as a defense mechanism. While they can be found up and down streams and waterways in their native ranges, they are most common in swampy areas that give them plenty of camouflage and small insects to feed on. These creatures are largely untouched by the passage of time, and can live for centuries if left to their own devices, becoming enormous ancient salamanders in due time.

The toxic mucus of giant salamanders is a useful ingredient in poisoncraft. A character proficient with poisoner's kits can spend one hour with the tool to harvest a single dose of basic poison from a salamander. Ancient Salamanders can provide two doses.

Giant Salamander

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)
Hit Points 19 (3d8+6)
Speed 15 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10
Languages —
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Amphibious. The salamander can breathe air and water.

Poisonous Skin. Any creature that grapples the salamander or otherwise comes into direct contact with its skin must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. A poisoned creature no longer in direct contact with the salamander can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage and 2 (1d4) poison damage.

Ancient Salamander

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 57 (6d10+24)
Speed 15 ft., swim 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10
Languages —
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Amphibious. The salamander can breathe air and water.

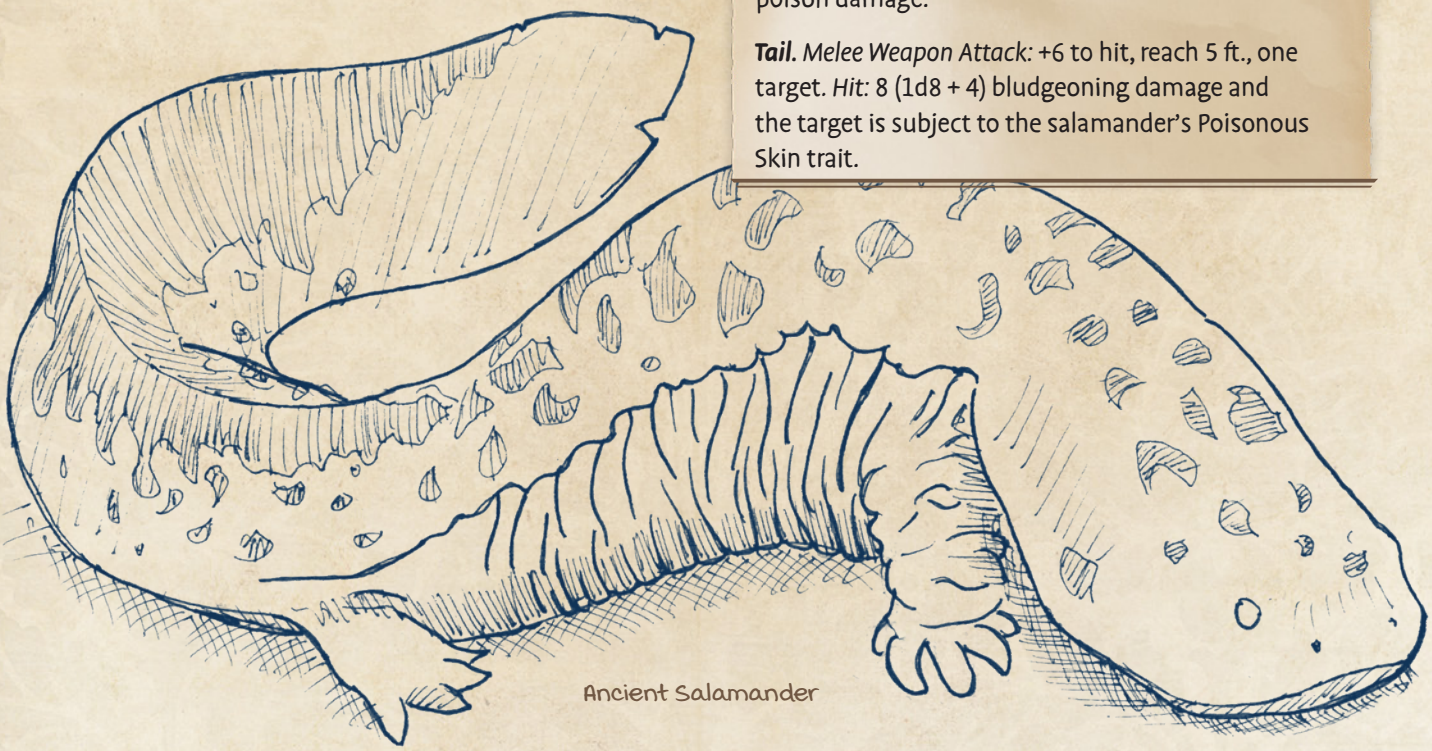
Poisonous Skin. Any creature that grapples the salamander or otherwise comes into direct contact with its skin must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. A poisoned creature takes 5 (2d4) poison damage at the start of each of its turns, and if it is no longer in direct contact with the salamander can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Actions

Multiattack. The salamander makes one bite attack and one tail attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage and 5 (2d4) poison damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage and the target is subject to the salamander's Poisonous Skin trait.



Ancient Salamander

Silt Strider

Huge monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 100 (8d12 + 48)
Speed 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	6 (-2)	22 (+6)	1 (-5)	5 (-3)	1 (-5)

Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 7
Languages —
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Carapace Caravan. The silt stride's shell is carved out to make room for cargo and passengers. Up to four Medium creatures can ride in the shell without squeezing. Creatures in the shell have three-quarters cover against attacks and effects from outside it, and can't make melee attacks targeting creatures outside of it. If the silt strider dies, creatures in the shell fall into unoccupied spaces within 5 feet of the silt strider, taking 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall.

Direct Control. A creature proficient with Medicine that is inside the silt strider's shell can assume direct control of the silt strider as a bonus action, driving it as a vehicle. The controller decides where the silt strider moves and what actions it takes. The controller can relinquish control as a bonus action, or loses control if they exit the shell.

Sure-Footed. The silt strider has advantage on Strength and Dexterity saving throws made against effects that would knock it prone.

Actions

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (1d12 + 4) piercing damage.

Siltstrider

Silt striders are long-legged insectoids that often migrate through swampy regions. Atop their spindly legs sits a thick carapace, that combined with their long claws allows them to ward away most attackers. Denizens of the swamps have learned how to harness these creatures into living vehicles. The carapace is cut away to form a small hollow inside, and the exposed organs within can be prodded and manipulated by the driver in order to take control of the creature. A single strider can carry as much cargo or passengers as a carriage or wagon. While they're relatively slow, they can traverse swampy terrain that prevents the passage of traditional wheeled vehicles. Silt hoppers are a juvenile form that acts as a faster personal transport, though carrying fewer passengers.

Shiah "Cinder" Irgangladen

Silt Hopper

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 47 (5d10 + 20)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	1 (-5)	5 (-3)	1 (-5)

Senses passive Perception 7, blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius)
Languages —
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Carapace Vehicle. The silt hopper's shell is carved out to make room for cargo and passengers. Up to two Medium creatures can ride in the shell without squeezing. To make a melee attack against a target within 5 feet of the silt hopper, they must use spears or weapons with reach. Creatures in the shell have three-quarters cover against attacks and effects from outside it. If the silt hopper dies, creatures in the shell fall into unoccupied spaces within 5 feet of the silt hopper.

Direct Control. A creature proficient with Medicine that is inside the silt hopper's shell can assume direct control of the silt hopper as a bonus action, driving it as a vehicle. The controller decides where the silt strider moves and what actions it takes. The controller can relinquish control as a bonus action, or loses control if they exit the shell.

Sure-Footed. The silt hopper has advantage on Strength and Dexterity saving throws made against effects that would knock it prone.

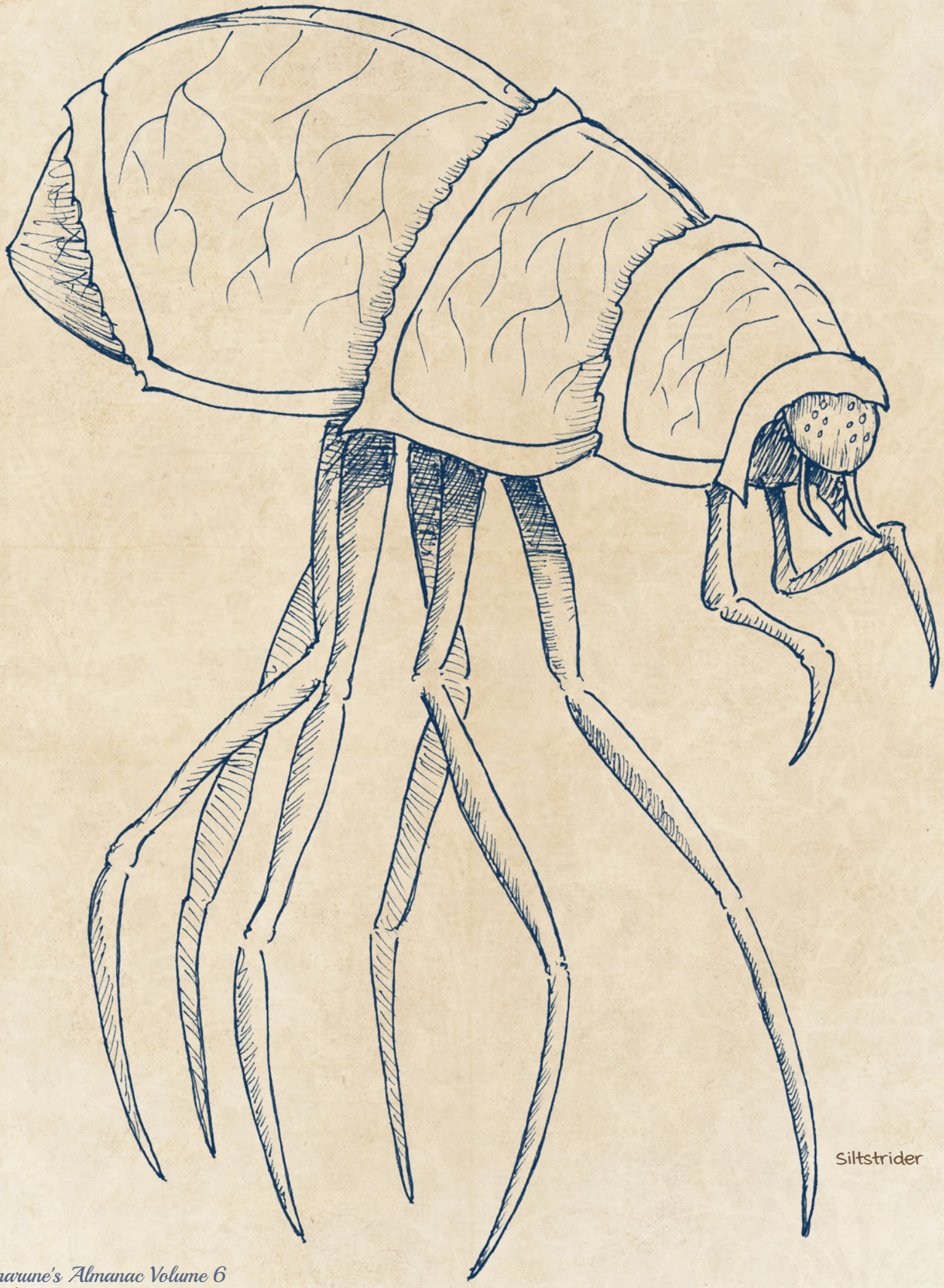
Standing Leap. The toad's long jump is up to 20 feet and its high jump is up to 10 feet, with or without a running start.

Actions

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage.

Variant: Wild Striders

Wild populations of Silt Striders exist in the swamps, congregating in areas where they can easily feed on aquatic plant matter. A wild silt strider or silt hopper doesn't have the Carapace or Direct Control traits.



Shiah "Cinder" Irangladen

Zairtail

Zairtails are an import from Abeir, transported to Toril during the Spellplague. These diminutive reptiles are a dangerous and invasive species. Originally brought to Toril with the continent of Laerakond, collectors and prideful nobles insisted they could keep their threat contained and had them shipped to Faerûn through the ports of Waterdeep, Amn, Calimport, and Port Nyanzaru. It only took a handful breaking free or being misplaced before they were commonly found in the wilds of the Sword Coast and Chultan Peninsula, and only a year or so after that the infestation had reached the shores of Golden Water and as far north of Murghôm.

Zairtail are brightly colored, dragon-kin reptiles. They come in four varieties, and can be found swarming more often than not. They are effective at bringing down large prey in numbers. When solitary, they rely on scavenging instead.

The bright color of zairtails have led to their use in creating similarly colored inks through a boiling and reduction process. The flesh is lithe and skin oily, and can provide sustenance to reluctant imbibers.

Firetongues. Bright red and hot to the touch, firetongue zairtails can spit flames and can be found in hot climate jungles where water and humidity are abundant. The largest concentration of wild firetongues in Faerûn can be found in the Mhair Jungles, but also as far north as Elfharrow and the Border Kingdoms.

Gazers. Not to be confused with the variety of beholderkin, gazer zairtails are named for their large, hypnotic eyes. They play a pivotal role in the swarm's ability to bring down dangerous prey.

Cutters. Swift and energetic, cutter zairtails quite easily occupy only the peripherals of their prey's senses until it is too late. Unlike other zairtails, cutters have long slashing claws they utilize effectively with their speed.

Bonebreakers. These zairtails are aptly named, using their massive jaws to break tough materials and clamp down on anything they can't break through. They aren't massive, but much larger than other zairtails and capable of using their grip to drag their prey around.

Variant: Subspecies

There are several subspecies of zairtail, each with their own unique role and abilities among their collective. Choose one of these subspecies and add these traits and/or actions to the zairtail's base statistics.

Firetongue: Traits

Scalding Body. When a zairtail firetongue is hit by a melee attack, or grappled or restrained by a creature, the attacker takes 5 fire damage.

Firetongue: Actions

Burning Bile. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) fire damage.

Gazer: Actions

Disorienting Gaze. The zairtail affixes its gaze on a creature it can see within 5 feet. If the target can also see the zairtail, it must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or become blinded until the start of its next turn.

Alert (Recharge 4-6). The zairtail emits a screech, alerting all zairtails within 30 feet to danger. A zairtail that can hear this screech can use its reaction to move up to its movement.

Bonebreaker: Traits

Drag. The zairtail can move at its normal speed while dragging or carrying a creature it has grappled.

Vise Jaws. When the zairtail hits a creature with its bite, the target must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw, or become grappled. While a zairtail has a creature grappled in this way, the grappled creature has disadvantage on attack rolls against it, and any time the grappled creature takes an action, it provokes an opportunity attack from the zairtail.

Cutter: Traits

Lithe Body. Opportunity attacks made against the zairtail are made with disadvantage.

Cutter: Actions

Slash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage.

Slicing Charge (Recharge 4-6). The zairtail moves up to half its speed. It can make a single slash attack against each creature it moves to within 5 feet of during this movement.

Swarm of Zairtail

Medium swarm of small beasts, unaligned

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 27 (5d8 + 5)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	19 (+4)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)

Damage Resistances acid, bludgeoning, piercing, slashing
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages —
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Keen Smell. The swarm has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Swarm Tactics. The swarm has advantage on attack rolls against their target unless the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Small zairtail. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Actions

Bites. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 0 ft., one creature in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 10 (4d4) piercing damage, or 5 (2d4) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

Zairtail

Small beast, unaligned

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 31 (9d6)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	19 (+4)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)

Damage Resistances acid
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages —
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Keen Smell. The zairtail has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Leaping Legs. The zairtail can make a long jump up to half its movement standing, and up to their full movement if it moves at least 5 feet before the jump.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d4 + 4) piercing damage.

Magic Items

In addition to the flora, fauna, and fetid fens of the realms, throughout my travels I have learned about or interacted with multiple wondrous artifacts. Relics, created to offset the hazardous environment of the swamp, or simply found amongst the muck.

Bog Goggles

Wondrous item, uncommon

These bug-eyed brown tinted goggles are able to see through even the murkiest and muddiest of waters. While wearing them you always treat visibility underwater as if it is clear water and bright light, even in obscuring underwater effects such as the kraken's Ink Cloud.

Boots of Swampwalking

Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement)

These boots are made from a rubbery animal hide and come up to your knees. The soles are especially thick and have a glowing green rune on the heel.

While wearing these boots you are able to walk across the top of water, mud, or bog, if it is not deeper than 5 feet. If it is deeper than 5 feet you sink until your feet are 5 feet from the bottom.

Additionally, you ignore nonmagical difficult terrain while in swamp biomes.

Fens and Ferns: A Swamp Guide

Wondrous item, uncommon

This book seems to be perpetually damp to the touch, yet the pages suffer no deleterious effect of the moisture. A small vine grows from the back, serving as a rope latch for the leather binding of the tome. This vine grows back within an hour if removed or cut.

If you spend 8 hours studying this book, the swamp biome becomes favored terrain (as described in the ranger's Natural Explorer feature) for you for the next week.

By looking through the book, you can identify any natural poison or disease afflicting a willing or unconscious creature within 5 feet of you with a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) check. If you succeed by 5 or more, you can ask the DM one question about the poison or disease you identified. In addition, you learn a natural remedy for the poison or disease, which you can apply to the afflicted creature over 10 minutes (this counts as light activity during a rest). At the end of this time, you must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check to be successful. Using a healer's kit will grant advantage on this check.

Hermuk's Hoover

Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)

This reinforced leather pack has a set of six glass spheres along its sides. These spherical vials are nearly indestructible from the inside, hold one gallon, and can seal once full. They seem to be connected through the pack to a hose via a set of magically enhanced tubes and nozzles but can be detached if desired.

As an action you can activate the apparatus and attempt to capture a Tiny or smaller creature, a liquid, or something such as leaves or a cloud of flies, that you can touch. If the target is a creature they must succeed a DC 16 Dexterity or Strength saving throw (target's choice) or be captured within one of the six vials.

To use the apparatus in this way you must have at least one empty vial. If you wish to empty a vial you can do so as a bonus action on your turn, expelling the contents up to 15 feet away.

Mortick Machete

Weapon (short sword), rare

This small blade, embellished with Luiric script, was supposedly forged by halflings to venture through the swamps and bogs with ease. This blade deals double damage to plants and plant type creatures. Additionally, you and any creatures moving directly behind you, are able to ignore difficult terrain caused by plants or brush by chopping at the vegetation.

mortick machete

Shiah "Cinder" Irgangladen

Moss Paste

Wondrous item, common

This large metal tin opens to reveal a sticky dull green paste. When applied to any surface besides metal or glass it easily sticks, and over the next minute a thick layer of moss and other small plants grows. If you cover yourself with this paste, after 1 minute, you have a layer of natural camouflage that lasts up to 1 day before it falls off. It takes about ¼ of the tin to cover a fully grown human. While covered in moss paste and not wearing metal armor, if you hold completely still while in a swamp biome or other mossy area, you can not be seen unless the searching creature makes a successful DC 21 Wisdom (Perception) check, or is within 15 feet of you and has a passive Perception of 15 or higher.

Spear of the Marsh

Weapon (spear), rare (requires attunement)

This spear has a shaft of aged ash, and its constantly dripping head is rusted from being perpetually damp.

Highlands. As an action, you can drive the spear into dry ground and create a cylinder of brackish murky water 5 feet deep and 15 feet in diameter centered on the spear. The water will not flow outside this cylindrical space it is confined to.

When you remove the spear as a bonus action the water is violently sucked back into the tip of the spear and any creature except you inside the brackish water must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be pulled 10 feet toward you.

Lowlands. As an action, you can plunge the spear into brackish or swamp water 5 feet deep or less to create a 15-foot radius of dry land. Water that enters this area is repelled out to the sides.

When you remove the spear as a bonus action the displaced water erupts out of the tip of the spear in a 20-foot cone. Any creature in this area must make a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be pushed back 15 feet.

Staff of The Leaf Lord

Staff, Legendary (requires attunement by a druid or cleric)

This ancient staff carved from stout oak is without any ornamentation beyond its heavy burling and twisting, and a small inscription. If you are able to read Elven you can gather that it was created for a crusade to heal the swamps and restore balance lost in the spellplague.

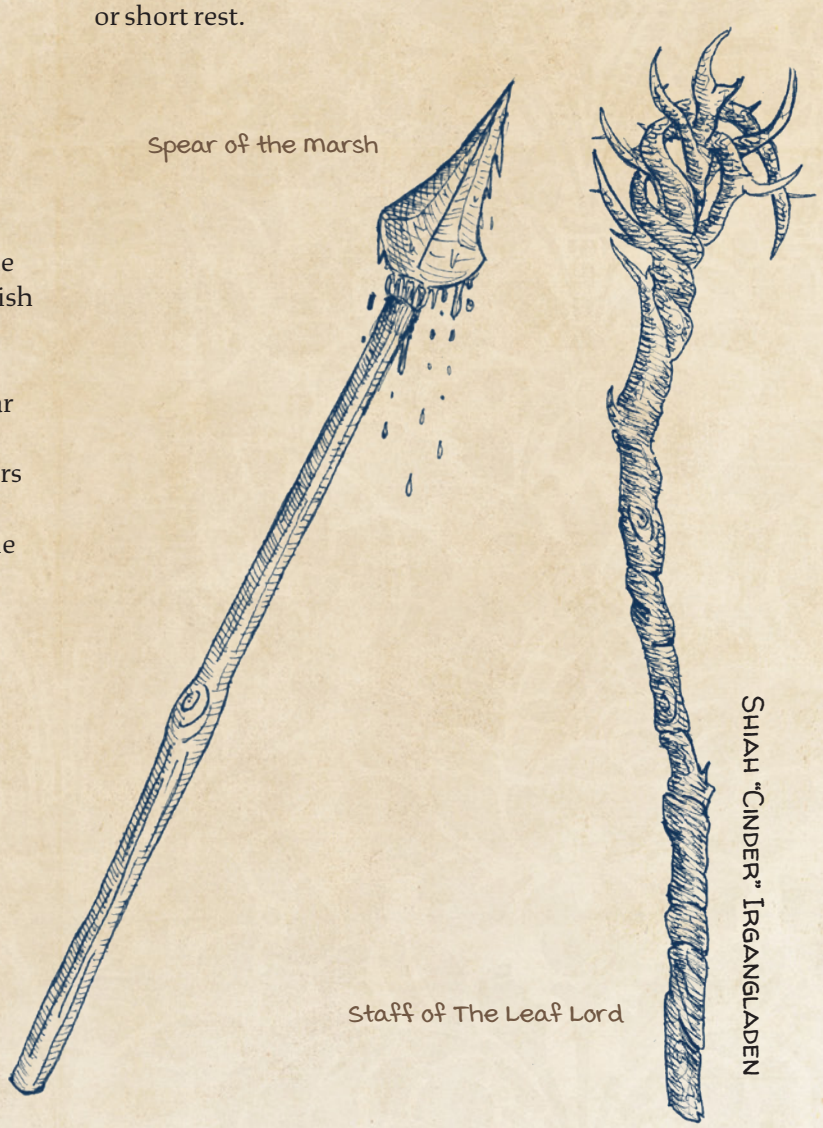
This staff has 10 charges and regains 1d10 expended charges each day at dawn.

Reach of Infinite Branches. When you cast *thorn whip* or *grasping vine* you can cast them from a Large or larger plant you can see, that is not hostile, as if you were there.

Tangled Canopy. You know the cantrip *thorn whip* if you did not previously, and additionally can expend a charge to cast *grasping vine*, ignoring concentration.

Roots of The Great Oak. If you expend a charge and spend 1 minute concentrating, as if concentrating on a spell, you can cast *transport via plants* so long as the destination plant is an oak tree.

Leaf Lord's Blessing. As an action you can expend a charge while touching a Large or larger tree or plant in a swamp or dead forest to stimulate it to grow so long as it is still standing. Within one hour you can notice it's bark being restored, and buds beginning to form. You regain one expended charge for each plant healed in this way after a long or short rest.



Vest of Vines

Armor, rare (requires attunement)

If this large seed wasn't covered in intricate carvings you might think it was just another fruit pit someone threw out.

When you attune to this item, it sprouts, sending tendrils around your hands and arms.

As a bonus action while you are touching the seed, you can command it to activate. When you do, the seed springs to life, covering you in armoring vines over the next turn. You can don the armor in this way once per short rest.

While wearing this armor you have an AC equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier and if you are in a swamp biome you gain advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks. You can choose to doff the armor as a bonus action, causing the vines to shrivel and fall off by the end of your next turn, the seed returning to its dormant state.

Zarlandris

Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)

This flashy amulet has an impressively large green emerald as its centerpiece and is ornamented with onyx and blackened steel.

When you slip it over your head you can hear it speak to you and know that it holds a fragment of a dragon's consciousness within it.

Ancient Presence. When you are attuned to this amulet it begins to change even your physical body. The presence within it is so powerful. Over the course of a month, jet black scales grow down your spine and your eyes become emerald green. You gain immunity to acid damage, resistance to poison damage, and darkvision out to 120 feet if you did not have it before.

If you unattune from this amulet you lose these benefits, but your scales and eyes remain and can only be removed by a *greater restoration* or *wish* spell.

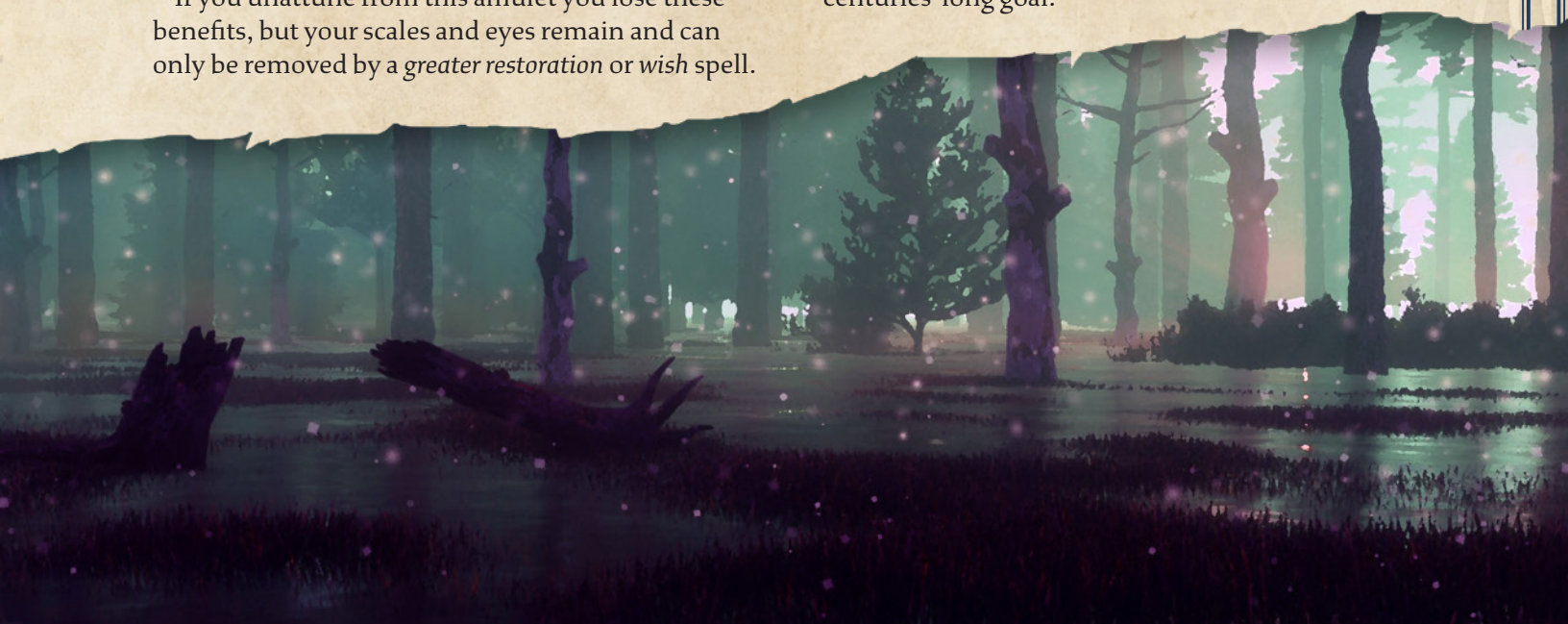
Caustic Soul. As an action if you are within the area of poisonous or harmful gases, you can breathe in the toxins surrounding you and exhale a roiling stream of acid and poison 60 feet long and 10 feet wide. Each creature in the line must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, taking 4d8 acid damage and 4d8 poison damage on a failed throw or half as much on a successful one. If breathing the gas in this way would cause you to make a saving throw, you make that save with advantage.

Master of Fear. You can not be frightened by any creature with a CR less than or equal to 13. Additionally, any adult or younger dragon that tries to use their Frightful Presence action on you must instead make a saving throw against their own effect.

Sentience. Zarlandris is a sentient chaotic evil amulet with an Intelligence of 20, Wisdom of 18, and a Charisma of 24. It has proficiency in Insight, Deception, and Charisma saving throws, with a proficiency bonus of +6, and it has hearing and blindsight out to a range of 120 feet.

The amulet can speak, and understand Common and Draconic, but can communicate only telepathically with its wearer. Its voice is low and rumbling but soothing in a way.

Personality. Zarlandris speaks quietly but with authority that only comes with age and immense confidence. Zarlandris' only goal is resurrection and to be freed from the amulet. He is not friendly, and never will be, but will play the part of a wise grandfather giving sage advice and encouragement, and will do almost anything including lying or getting the wearer killed if he thinks it will sway the wearer closer to his selfish goal. Doing what he must to gain trust is just a part of this scheme, even if he does not enjoy it. Zarlandris is clever and has endless patience, and will never lash out or grow impatient unless he believes he is within reach of his centuries-long goal.



Faerûn

Sossal ↑

Sea of Moving Ice
Icewind Dale
Luskan
Luskwood
Silver Marches
The High Forest
Evermoors
Neverwinter
The Mere of Dead Men
Waterdeep
The Whale Bones
Ruathym
The Sword Coast
Greypeak Mountains
Anauroch
Vaasa
Great Glacier
Narfell
Damara
The Great Dale
Rashemen
Hordelands
Sunrise Mountains
Thesk
Cormanthor
Flooded Forest
The Vast
Impiltur
Easting Coast
Sembia
The High Moor
Cormyr
Vast Swamp
Sea of Fallen Stars
Aglarond
Thay
Murghôm
Baldur's Gate
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Elturgard
The Dragon Coast
Turmish
The Shining Plains
Chondath
Chessenta
Unther
Tymanther
Mulhorand
Plains of Purple Dust
The Yehimal Mountains
Beastlands
The Moonshae Isles
Sea of Swords
Amn
The Wealdath
Cloven Mountains
Lake of Steam
Themasulter
Border Kingdoms
Tethyr
Calimshan
Lantan
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The Shaar
The Great Rift
The Eastern Shaar
Luiren
Trackless Sea
The Shining Sea
Elfharrow
Lapaliya
Tashalar
Jungles of Chult
Forest of Amtar
Great Swamps of Rethild
Dambrath
Mhair Jungles
Halruaa
Thindol
Samarach
The Wild Coast

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