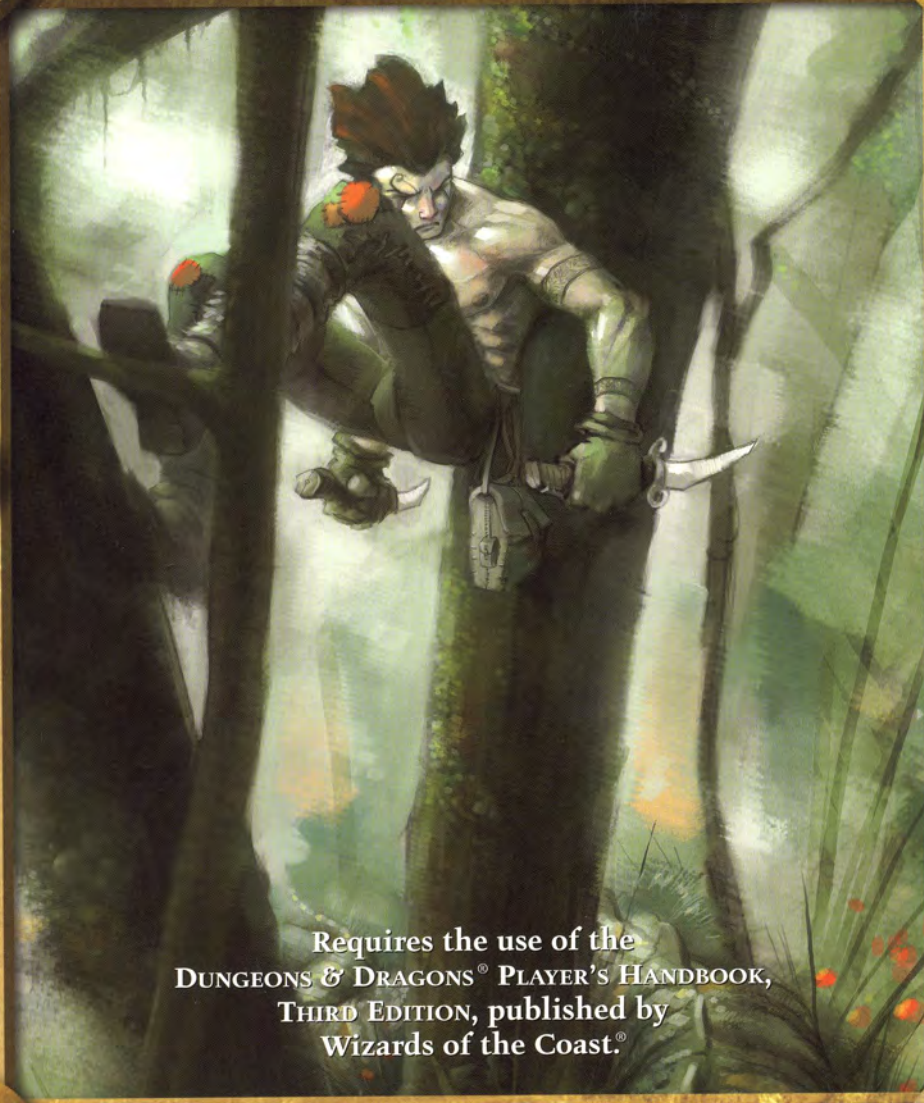


5E  
system

# WILDS™



Requires the use of the  
DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® PLAYER'S HANDBOOK,  
THIRD EDITION, published by  
Wizards of the Coast®.

AEG

# WILDS



**All rangers believe in God.  
They spell it "nature."**

# INTRODUCTION

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## SPECIAL THANKS

First, Mike Mearls did a great job putting together *Magic, Good, Relics*, and now *Wilds*. As we speak he's furiously typing away at *Empire*. It would be nice if we paid him for his efforts, but we've decided that printing his name four times on this page is enough.

Andrew Hudson wants to thank Scott Warren, for putting up with various ramblings and complaints about the forest.

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I love the cover of this book.

Dave Agoston. Welcome back.

Another special thanks to Tanisha for not calling the cops.

Justin Lawler probably deserves recognition for his dedication to the project and his dreamy smile.

## DEDICATION

Anyone who challenges the worth of Margaret Mead, Rachel Carson, Dian Fossey, and Jane Goodall doesn't have a soul. Thank you for your tireless efforts.



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## INTRODUCTION

*“What is man without the beasts? If all the beasts were gone, man would die from a great loneliness of the spirit.”*

— Chief Seattle

The wilderness has long been the traditional second step in a fantasy gamer's developmental process. Once you master the intricacies of the dungeon, it's time to move on into the unlimited potential of the wild. Compared to a dungeon, the wilderness offers a vast range of environments. Endless deserts, haunted forests, towering mountains, and foul swamps hold a host of fearsome monsters that equal the dangers present in dusty tombs and deep caverns. Yet, while the wild creatures and lurking monsters may pose a threat, the environment itself is perhaps the greatest danger that adventurers can ever face. A storm of freezing rain might not seem as daunting as an orc berserker, but it can just as easily defeat a party of adventurers.

Consider the role of the environment in the history of mankind in the conventional world. For thousands of years, men and women struggled to survive in the face of cold winters, sweltering summers, droughts, floods, and other trials. Even without dragons, demons, and marauding orcs, the world is a dangerous place. In North America of the 1800's, travel from one coast to the other was a dangerous undertaking before the construction of cross-country railroads. In the wilderness, the monsters and creatures are perhaps the least of an adventurer's worries. At minimum in a dungeon you have a roof over your head and the consistent, year-round warmth provided by the subterranean environment. Fighting orcs, ogres, and trolls is one thing. Fighting them while a blizzard dumps three feet of snow on your head is another. The wilds present an unpredictable, dangerous, and ultimately unforgiving environment for adventures.

The wilds' allure as an adventure setting goes beyond the threat posed by the natural world. While storms and environmental factors can serve as deadly obstacles, the wilds take hold of the imagination in a way that dungeons cannot rival. All of us grew up with the wilderness either as part of our immediate physical surroundings or we discovered it the movies and television we watched or in the books and comics we read. Even the most cloistered urbanite knows what a tree looks like or has endured at least one powerful thunderstorm. The recognizable aspects of the wilds serve to make a game more vivid and accessible. Few of us have ventured into natural caverns

or spent time exploring ancient tunnels and stone passages within the earth. On the other hand, the vast majority of GMs and players have walked through a forest or endured bitterly cold or searing hot weather. The wilds present an environment that we can all relate to.

The wilds also hold a primal grip on our imaginations. From the dark forest filled with terrible monsters and wondrous magic to the bleak, titanic mountains where the gods themselves are said to walk, the wilderness always plays a vital role in the worlds of fantasy literature and games. The heroes may need to enter dangerous territory to complete some great quest, or the dark, mysterious enemies of good might march forth from the mysterious lands beyond the horizon. The wilderness is often linked with the strange, unknowable, and frightening. From the earliest days of civilization, both the wonders and terrors of the wilderness have captivated mankind. Fear of the unknown is perhaps the greatest fear of all, and there is no greater unknown than the lands hidden beyond the horizon.

Of course, this is a fantasy game, and what would a fantasy game be without wondrous magic and fearsome beasts? The wilderness is home to countless terrible beasts. Dragons lair in the highest mountain peaks, while goblin hordes march across the plains to besiege the cities of men, dwarves, elves, and gnomes. In the wilds beyond the tenuous grasp of civilization, terrible monsters grow strong and cast their greedy eyes to the borderlands. In a world where strange, deadly creatures are common and marauding hordes of evil humanoids, the wilderness can serve as an incubator for a wide manner of threats. Adventurers must venture out into the forbidding climes and terrain to defeat such menaces before they can expand to defeat the forces of good and cast down the bastions of civilization.

This book contains general advice for designing wilderness adventures and running them for your gaming group. In addition, several chapters focus on specific environments. The secrets and dangers of the desert, forest, mountain, swamp, and jungle are all laid bare for you to use in your campaign. Prestige classes and feats allow you to customize the inhabitants of such realms, while new rules for the environment and special terrain within those regions lets you create adventurers where the wilderness is every bit as deadly as the deepest, darkest dungeon levels you still love to peruse.

## Chapter 1:

# Outdoor Survival

## INTRODUCTION

The wilderness offers a vista that dwarfs dungeons not only in physical size, but in the variety of adventures to be found there. Dungeon adventures can take on many forms, but when all is said and done, you're still wandering through a subterranean tunnel, encountering monsters, traps, and other obstacles on your way to a goal. The wilderness offers much more variety, from the searing heat of a desert to the deadly cold of a vast tundra. The wilderness environment poses a greater threat and a wider range of options than any dungeon ever could. For DMs, this book covers the basics of creating wilderness adventures. Chapter 1 discusses how to include the wilderness in your campaigns and how to make it more interesting than simply the terrain that separates dungeons. Chapters 2 through 7 cover specific types of wilderness, including desert, jungle, mountains, swamps, forests, and tundra. Each wilderness type is given some specific game rules to help you draw out its unique characteristics and reflect the challenges it poses to explorers.

For players, this book includes new prestige classes, feats, spells, and other rules information. Furthermore, chapter 1 covers some basic advice on wilderness adventuring. The game rules are equally useful for DMs, as they allow you to craft NPCs, monsters, and other threats that are tailored to a specific environment.

## PLAYERS AND

## WILDERNESS ADVENTURES

In fantasy literature, the journey is often just as important as the destination is, and the wilderness is much more than simply the space between dungeons. Surviving the wild places of the world are an important rite of passage in many seminal fantasy works, and are used to establish the competence of the heroes and demonstrate their sheer determination to overcome adversity in the pursuit of a noble goal. But in a fantasy game where characters gain access to powerful teleportation spells, and other, similar magics, the romance of the long, lonesome and difficult trek across the countryside, camping beneath the stars, riding swift horses across endless plains, and climbing snow covered peaks to see all the vistas of the world laid out before you, is too easily lost. Worse, if a campaign leaves wilderness travel and adventuring behind, it risks making certain character classes — notably the ranger and druid — significantly weaker than they should be.

The new optional rules and suggestions presented here are intended to put the fun back in the wilderness, to give added prominence to wilderness-oriented characters, and to explore facets of fantasy gaming which have, for too long, been given short shrift.

## THE ROLE OF MAN

Certain classes are tailor-made for wilderness adventures, with skills and abilities which only reach their full potential in the wilds. Other classes are not so fortunate, as their skills and abilities are either poorly suited for the wilderness, or they require access to supplies not readily found outside of civilized lands. What follows is a brief discussion of the role each core class occupies in wilderness adventures, and their unique strengths and weaknesses.

### THE LEADERS

**Barbarian and Ranger:** The barbarian, already a strong class, is a true terror in the wilderness, and the ranger only truly comes into his own when he is deep in the wild lands. A barbarian who selects the Track feat can hunt prey and opponents nearly so well as a ranger, and his increased speed helps him to overtake his quarry with ease. The ranger, even more than the barbarian, is a deadly wilderness combatant; the best tracker, the best skirmisher and a capable front line warrior knowledgeable in all manner of terrain, he is a master of all aspects of outdoor adventuring.

**Druid:** The wilderness cradles the druid the way a mother cradles a babe. A druid in the forest can't be tracked, isn't slowed by the thickest brambles and knows the rhythms of the forest as well as his own heartbeat. The druid's ability to wildshape, when combined with his nature-oriented spell list, means there are few natural obstacles which can threaten, or even slow him for long. More so than any other class, the druid's abilities must be carefully studied and accounted for when creating adventures, lest he simply walk over them. Likewise, the druid's player would do well to learn his spell list front to back, and carefully consider the strengths and weaknesses of the animal shapes he can assume, since many of their physical and extraordinary abilities will negate the need for him to use his spells at all.

### THE OTHER CLASSES

**Bard and Rogue:** At first glance, rogues and, especially, bards seem poorly suited to life in the wilds. In some ways they are, as one of the greatest strengths of each class is their access to skills which are of primary benefit in urban environments. After all, skills like Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Innuendo will see limited use in a deep wilderness adventure. On the other hand, both classes also have vital skills like Hide, Listen, and Move Silently on their class skill lists, which will come into play constantly. Likewise, the rogue's sneak attack ability, when combined with his skill at hiding, will make him a deadly hunter and skirmisher, nearly on par with the

ranger. The bard, too, with his access to spells like hold person and invisibility, can hold his own in a wilderness environment. If you are planning on an extended sojourn into the wilderness, or if the entire campaign is set far from civilization, you would do well to forego specialized social skills in favor of other, more survival oriented skills; the rogue, with his many skill points, might even consider picking up cross-class skills like Wilderness Lore.

**Cleric:** The cleric is arguably the strongest spellcaster in the game, with access to both healing and attack spells. A cleric who selects any of the elemental domains, or the animal, plant or travel domain, will have even greater access to spells and powers which are of incredible value in the wilderness. If there is a downside to playing a cleric in the wilderness, it is this: the heavy armors which he is capable of wearing will be of limited value and accessibility, and may even prove a liability.

**Fighter and Paladins:** The stereotypical fighter and paladin face a difficult time in the wilderness. Their class skills are ill suited to wilderness survival, and the heavy weapons and armor upon which they depend will be difficult to maintain in the deep wilds. The paladin, at least, has his marvelous saves and divine abilities to fall back to, but a player who wishes to play a single class fighter faces a hard road.

**Monks:** Among the most self sufficient of the core classes, the monk, when used correctly, is a powerful force in the wilderness. With a skill list providing access to such vitally important skills as Hide, Listen, and Move Silently, and with special abilities which allow him to race through the forest with the speed of a stag, leap with the grace of a wildcat and heal himself with but a moment's concentration, the monk needs none of the trappings of civilization to survive and thrive.

**Sorcerers and Wizards:** Of all the classes, perhaps only the fighter is more ill-suited for wilderness adventuring than the wizard. With only access to Knowledge (nature) as a survival skill, and with his magic dependant upon access to large and relatively fragile spellbooks and scrolls, the wizard in the wilds is out of his element. At higher levels, when the wizard gains access to travel magic and items which allow him to store and carry his spells with ease, many of these problems abate, but the wizard will never be the master of the wild lands. The sorcerer, with his inborn magic, will have an easier time of it, though his skill list is even less suited to wilderness adventuring.

## NEW USES FOR OLD SKILLS

Certain skills are tailor-made for wilderness environments, and others, with a little thought, become easy fits as well. The following new uses for existing skills give you and your wilderness-oriented characters a chance to truly shine.

### ANIMAL EMPATHY (CHA; TRAINED ONLY)

**Normal:** Use this skill to calm a raging bull, or convince a wolf to stay its fangs.

**New Use:** *Rouse Anger.* Just as you can attempt to pacify a potentially hostile wild animal, so too can you attempt to arouse its anger and direct it against another target as a standard action. In order to do so, you must succeed at an Animal Empathy skill check, with the DC of the check dependant on the animal's current attitude towards the intended target. Consult the chart below for the appropriate DC.

TABLE 1-1: ROUSE ANGER

Initial Attitude	New Attitude			
	Friendly	Indifferent	Unfriendly	Hostile
Friendly	—	10	15	20
Indifferent	20	—	15	25
Unfriendly	25	20	—	15
Hostile	40	30	20	—

The DC of the check is increased by 10 (plus the Animal Empathy skill of your opponent) if the animal you are attempting to influence is a pet or companion of the intended target.

With a successful check, you have succeeded in altering the animal's attitude towards the desired target. On a failed check, you not only fail to turn the animal against your target, you alter its attitude towards you one step towards hostile, with an animal already hostile to you attacking immediately.

In order to use the Animal Empathy skill in this fashion, you must meet one of two conditions: either you must possess an item with the target's scent on it, or the target must be within eyesight of the animal you intend to turn against it.

**Special:** A character with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (nature) gains a +2 synergy bonus to their Animal Empathy skill check when attempting to rouse an animal's anger.

### CRAFT (TRAPMAKING) (INT)

**Normal:** Use this skill to build a tripline, or a complicated system of pitfalls and tiger traps.

**New Use:** *Create Blind.* With a successful Craft (trapmaking) skill check, you can weave branches and vines into a blind, a false wall of vegetation which helps hide you from prying eyes. The DC of the check is 20, and, once proper materials are acquired, it requires a full hour to construct.

With a successful skill check, you successfully construct the blind, granting you two benefits. First, you gain a circumstance bonus to all Hide skill checks equal to 1 + 1 per point your skill check exceeds 20 by, to a maximum bonus of +10, so long as you remain behind your blind. Secondly, while behind the blind, you gain the benefits of a tower shield, allowing you to have total cover should you choose. On a failed Craft skill check, you still succeed in creating a blind, but it contains a hidden flaw which negates both the bonus to Hide skill checks and cover bonuses. In fact, the blind is so unconvincing you receive a circumstance penalty to your Hide check equal to -1, increasing by 1 for each point by which you failed the check, to a maximum penalty of -10.

**Special:** A character with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (nature) or Profession (woodcutter) gains a +2 synergy bonus to their skill check when attempting to construct a blind. A character with 5 or more ranks in both gains a +3 synergy bonus to the check.

### DISGUISE (CHA)

**Normal:** Use this skill to change your appearance, allowing you to pose as someone who you're not or impersonate a particular individual.

**New Use:** *Camouflage.* With a successful skill check, and the careful application of mud and bits of foliage taken from the local area, you can blend in with the landscape, rendering you nearly invisible. It takes 10 minutes to apply camouflage on yourself or another person. After application is complete, you may attempt a Disguise skill checks against a DC of 20; if successful, you gain a circumstance bonus to all Hide skill checks performed in the environment the camouflage matches equal to 1 + 1 per every 5 points by which you exceed the DC, to a maximum bonus equal to your ranks in Disguise. On a failed check, you gain no bonus to your Hide check.

You can apply this bonus to another character if you so wish, though you yourself must still make the Disguise check. The DC of the skill check is raised by 5 if the recipient is wearing any sort of metal armor. Camouflage stays effective for a maximum of one full day, though it is rendered ineffective after one hour of exposure to heavy rain or instantly upon immersion in water.



**Special:** A character with 5 or more ranks in the Knowledge (nature) or Wilderness Lore has a mastery of foliage patterns, granting him a +2 synergy bonus to all Disguise skill checks when applying camouflage.

**New Use:** *Disguise Scent.* With a successful skill check, you can suppress and disguise your natural scent to such a degree that it can no longer be sniffed out by even the most sensitive noses. In order to use the Disguise skill in this fashion, you must first smear your body with strong smelling juices or natural substances; a successful Wilderness Lore skill check against a DC of 15 and about ten minutes time provides you with all the material you need. It takes another minute to apply the gathered materials, after which time you can attempt a check against a DC of 20. With a successful check, you are no longer detected automatically by creatures who possess the scent ability when you are within 30 ft. and the DC for creatures attempting to track you by smell is increased by 10.

**Special:** A character with 5 or more ranks in either Knowledge (nature) or Wilderness Lore gains a +2 synergy bonus to their skill check when disguising their scent.

## HANDLE ANIMAL (CHA; TRAINED ONLY)

**Normal:** Use this skill to train a guard dog, or to force a team of horses to cross a rickety bridge.

**New Use:** *Pointer.* You can teach an animal with the scent ability to flush out game, greatly aiding you in the hunt. Training an animal to point requires 3 months of continuous training, and a skill check, made after the second month, against a DC of 20. Success indicates that you have successfully trained the animal, while failure means the animal is not, and cannot be trained to point.

You gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Wilderness Lore skill checks when using a pointer-trained animal to hunt wild game or when tracking quarry. You also gain a +2 circumstance bonus to all Spot checks to notice living beings when hunting or tracking with the assistance of a pointer-trained animal.

**Special:** A Beast or Magical Beast can also be trained to point, but it requires 4 months and a successful skill check against a DC of 25. A character with 5 or more ranks in Animal Empathy gains a +2 synergy bonus to his skill check.

## KNOWLEDGE (NATURE) (INT)

**Normal:** Ranks in this skill represent familiarity with a specific sort of learning. A character with this skill is familiar with the nature and habits of animals, with weather patterns, and with the properties of plants.

**New Use:** *Animal Mimicry.* With a successful skill check, you can imitate the sounds of any animal or monster, from a wild dog's growl to an eagle's cry to the roar of

a wounded manticore. The DC of the check depends on your familiarity with the creature you are attempting to imitate; if you are very familiar with the animal (as when a druid with a wolf companion attempts to imitate its growl), the check is DC 10; if the animal is known to you (as when you attempt to replicate the death cry of an owl-bear you killed months before), the check is against a DC of 15–20; and if you attempt to imitate an animal which you have never heard, but which has been described to you, the check is DC 30 or more. While a successful check means you have convincingly mimicked the creature, you are still limited by your own physiology, meaning that while you may be able to exactly reproduce the sound of a raging lion's roar, you cannot match its volume without magical assistance. Using this skill only allows you to replicate animal sounds, it does not give you the ability to communicate with them beyond conveying broad emotions like fear or anger.

**Special:** A character with 5 or more ranks in the Perform or Wilderness Lore skill gains a +2 synergy bonus to all Knowledge (nature) skill checks when attempting to mimic an animal. A character with 5 or more ranks in both skills gains a +3 synergy bonus to the check.

## PROFESSION (WOODCUTTER) (WIS; TRAINED ONLY)

**Normal Use:** The profession skill indicates familiarity and training in a job which requires a broad range of knowledge, like sailing, mining or tanning.

**New Use:** *Guide Fall.* With a successful skill check, you can, when felling a tree, cut it in such a way that it falls in any direction you wish. The DC of the check varies from 10–20, dependant on the thickness, condition and height of the tree; the DC to guide the fall of a young pine tree would be 10, and the DC to guide the fall of an ancient, thoroughly rotten redwood is 20. The tree lands within 1d4 feet to the left or right of your intended impact point; if the check DC is exceeded by 5 or more, the tree falls exactly where you want it, with no deviation.

**New Use:** *Perfect Chop.* Normally, creatures of the Plant type are immune to critical hits. With a successful Profession (woodcutter) skill check against a DC of 10 + 2 per creature hit die, you analyze a plant creature's vulnerable areas and can, for the duration of the encounter, inflict critical hits upon it as normal. A separate skill check must be made for each Plant creature encountered and analyzing a plant in this manner is considered a standard action.

**Special:** A character with 5 or more ranks in the Knowledge (nature) skill gains a +2 synergy bonus to the skill check.

## WILDERNESS LORE (WIS)

**Normal:** A character well versed in Wilderness Lore knows how to identify animal spoor, how to hunt, and how to avoid natural hazards like sinkholes.

**New Use: Controlled Burn.** Thanks to your knowledge of the wilderness, you know how to correctly start a wild fire that follows a predetermined path. With a successful skill check against a base DC of 15, you can create a wildfire that burns in the direction of your choice. The DC of the check is modified by weather and surface conditions, as outlined below.

Condition	DC Modifier
High winds	+1 for every 10 miles per hour
Wind against intended direction	+2 for every 10 miles per hour direction
Damp conditions	-2
Dry conditions	+2
Extremely dry conditions	+4

In order to use this skill, you must first prepare the area, removing unwanted flammable objects, digging shallow channels in the earth, and stacking tinder. It requires a full hour to properly prepare an area no more than 20 ft. square for a controlled burn. Under your guidance, other characters can prepare additional 20 ft. square areas, but that increases preparation time to two full hours. You can reduce preparation time, but for every 10 minutes (or fraction thereof) you shave, the DC is increased by 2.

Once a fire is started, it continues to spread and burn in the direction you intended until halted by magic or it naturally burns out. Once the fire has begun, it is no longer under your control, and can only be controlled by the of magic.

**Special:** This skill can also be used to create a fire break, a section of cleared ground which channels a wildfire around the area you wish to protect. An hour's effort will create a cleared area 40 ft. long and 10 ft. deep. The DC of the check 15 + condition modifiers, as described above. A character with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (nature) gains a +2 synergy bonus to his Wilderness Lore skill check when attempting to start a controlled burn.

**New Use: Disrupt Scent.** You can create a simple concoction of strong smelling natural materials, like dung, pungent berries and toxic leaves, that is capable of stunning creatures who rely heavily on their sense of smell. It requires 10 minutes time and a skill check against a DC of 15 to gather and prepare the materials, which are usually wrapped into a crude bundle about the size of an acorn. The mixture can be delivered in one of two ways; by being thrown into the creature's face (requiring a successful ranged touch attack), or simply by being dropped on the ground along your path. In the first case, the creature struck must attempt a Fort save against a DC of 15 or lose its sense of smell for 1d4 hours. Creatures with the scent ability suffer a -4 penalty to their save, and if they fail,

must attempt a second Fort save at the same DC (but at no penalty) or be *nauseated* for 1d4 rounds. If the mixture is simply dropped along your trail, a character encountering it must save as above, but they receive a +4 bonus to their save.

**Special:** A character with 5 or more ranks in the Alchemy or Knowledge (nature) skill gains a +2 synergy bonus when using Wilderness Lore to disrupt a scent. A character with 5 or more ranks in both skills gains a +3 synergy bonus to his skill check.

**New Use: Foil Pursuit.** Familiar with the ways of the wilderness and skilled in the art of tracking, you can use your knowledge to confound those attempting to track you. With a successful Wilderness Lore skill check, you may successfully erase almost all evidence of your passing, making it much more difficult to follow your trail. In order to use this skill you must move at no more than half speed (see below). The DC of the skill check depends on the surface, on prevailing conditions, and other circumstantial factors, as described below. You must have the Track feat in order to use Wilderness Lore in this manner.

Surface	Base DC
Hard	5
Firm	10
Soft	15
Very Soft	20

Condition	DC Modifier
Each additional person whose tracks you are attempting to obscure	+1
Size of creatures whose tracks are being obscured:	
Fine	-8
Diminutive	-4
Tiny	-2
Small	-1
Medium	0
Large	+1
Huge	+2
Gargantuan	+4
Colossal	+8
Attempting to move full speed while covering your trail	+5

\* If the skill check is successful, add +1 to the skill check DC of those attempting to track you, +1 per point by which your skill check exceeded the DC, to a maximum of +10.

**Special:** These rules are intended to supercede those rules for hiding trails presented in the PHB under the Track feat.

A character with 5 or more ranks in the Hide skill gains a +2 synergy bonus to Wilderness Lore skill checks when using the skill in this fashion.

**New Use: Weather Shelter.** With a successful Wilderness Lore skill check, you can create a temporary weather shelter which shields you and your allies from the harshest effects of the weather. The type of shelter you create

depends on your environment, and on prevailing weather conditions; in the tundra, for example, you might dig a shelter in a snow drift, while in the mountains you might construct a lean to block howling winds and rain. Constructing a weather shelter large enough for one requires 15 minutes (with an additional 15 minutes required for each additional creature to be sheltered) and a skill check against a DC of 15. Success means that you have created a weather shelter, granting a +1 bonus to all Fort saves to resist severe weather effects, +1 for each point by which the check exceeded the DC, to a maximum bonus of +6. Everyone within the weather shelter automatically receives the bonus to their Fort saves. The bonus lasts only so long as the characters remain within the shelter.

**Special:** This rule is intended to supplement and expand upon those presented in the PHB, under the Wilderness Lore skill description.

A character with 5 or more ranks in the Knowledge (nature) skill gains a +2 synergy bonus on Wilderness Lore skill checks when building a weather shelter. A character with 5 or more ranks in the Profession (woodcutter) skill can, at the DM's discretion, also gain a +2 bonus to the check, but only when building a wooden shelter.

## MAKING USE OF OLD FEATS

Feats offer the easiest way to customize your character, allowing you to sculpt your abilities to fit exactly the concept you have in mind. This section is broken down into two parts. The first section lists the d20 feats that are most useful in outdoor adventures and provides some ideas for applying your character's abilities during wilderness adventures. The second section presents several new feats that allow you to create characters who are experts in wilderness traveling and exploration.

**Alertness:** A +2 bonus to Listen and Spot may not seem like much, but it can mean the difference between getting caught in your bedroll and standing ready with sword and shield when an intruder slips into your camp. One of the more dangerous aspects of wilderness adventures is that enemies can approach from almost any direction. In a dungeon, the doorways and passages channel your foes down predictable paths. When camping for the night, you can take cover in a room accessible through a single doorway and guard that portal throughout the night. In the wilderness, it is usually impossible to so easily find choke points to your campsite. Thus, Alertness can prove to be a tremendous boon in helping identify and respond to threats before they catch you by surprise.

**Blind-Fight:** While most players assume this feat works only in darkness, it works equally well against all types of concealment. In areas with dense terrain, such as forests and jungles, this feat can allow you to fight without any undue restrictions. Weather conditions such as rain and fog can also grant your enemies concealment, making this feat useful in a wide range of situations.

**Combat Casting:** Some players feel that if a wizard or sorcerer needs to use this feat, he is in too much trouble for a single spell to help him. However, Combat Casting can spell the difference between using *invisibility* to escape an ogre and a swift death at the business end of its club. As mentioned above under Alertness, wilderness adventures offer large, open spaces for encounters. Monsters can much more easily sneak up on you from behind or attack from multiple directions at once. Combat Casting can save a spellcaster's skin when a gang of orcs surround the party and charge into melee. Even in a dense forest, you cannot afford to rely on the party's fighters and barbarians to form an impenetrable defensive line. The wilderness is too open to allow a spellcaster to quickly find a safe, defensible position that cuts off his enemies' advance while granting him a clear line of fire for his spells.

**Endurance:** This feat may seem useful in adventures that require a lot of travel over difficult terrain. As an added benefit, Endurance allows you to move at a faster rate than normal when marching overland for extended periods. Increase the multiplier you use when determining your overland movement through a specific terrain type by 0.25.

**Extend Spell:** The most useful metamagic feat for outdoor adventures, Extend Spell allows you to cast *bull's strength*, *mage armor*, and similar spells that last from morning until night. Usually in a dungeon, you can control your exposure to encounters by withdrawing to an area you have previously cleared out or returning to the safety of town. During a long, overland journey, you cannot count on such opportunities to take solace in a secure area. When you are hundreds of miles from town, you can never truly count on avoiding a surprise attack or a chance encounter with a hungry predator. Extend Spell helps ensure that your spells are in effect whenever you need them.

**Far Shot:** Since wilderness encounters take place at much longer ranges than battles in dungeons, Far Shot shines in open environments such as plains, deserts, and tundra. With this feat, you can rain arrows with deadly accuracy on your opponents long before they move within range with their own weapons and spells. In tight, confined dungeon areas this feat does not see much use, but in outdoor areas it comes into play in almost every battle.

**Mounted Combat:** Along with the feats that build off of it, such as Mounted Archery, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, and Trample, Mounted Combat is invaluable in an outdoor setting. Since you can expect to have a lot more room to maneuver, riding a mount into combat is (obviously) much more viable in the outdoors. Best of all, since combat tends to begin at longer ranges you can race forward on your mount to attack. This tactic minimizes your exposure to missile fire and allows you to pounce on enemies before they can threaten the bards, sorcerers, wizards, and other vulnerable characters.

**Run:** Useful in open areas and in encounters that take place at extreme range, Run is best suited to barbarians and monks as their enhanced speed allows them to make the most of it. A barbarian or monk could run to the right or left of a group of opponents, allowing him to outflank his foes and attack them from a second direction. Combined with feats such as Spring Attack or Far Shot, Run can allow you to surround opponents or loop around and attack spellcasters or archers that support them with ranged fire.

**Shield Proficiency:** A tower shield can prove useful against archers, spellcasters, and other opponents who can engage you at long range in the wilderness. Spellcasters with this feat can make the most of such mobile protection. Best of all, you can use equipment such as wands and wondrous items without risking the arcane spell failure chance. Since spellcasters tend to be more exposed in wilderness adventures than in dungeon ones, a tower shield can prove to be a lifesaver against a squad of orc archers or a group of boulder-throwing giants.

**Spell Mastery:** While this feat may seem superfluous for most wizards, when trapped hundreds of miles from civilization in the midst of a great desert or stinking swamp, losing spellbooks can cripple a spellcaster. Spell Mastery is best used to cover a few critical spells that can help you compensate for a spellbook's loss. This feat is best chosen at high levels. There's no point in using it to choose *mage armor*, *sleep*, or even *magic missile* with this feat since at higher levels those spells offer less utility. Instead, go for *teleport* and similar spells that allow you to escape from danger and recover your books.

**Track:** Probably the most important feat for outdoor adventuring, Track is a key talent for barbarians, druids, and clerics with the Travel domain. Unless you have a ranger in the party, this feat should be a strong candidate as a 1st-level selection for those character classes, especially human PCs who receive a free, additional feat. Track is the wilderness equivalent of the rogue's ability with traps. It allows you to pursue your enemies, uncover evidence of monsters and creatures that operate in the area, and discover important clues while traveling.

## NEW FEATS

The following feats are all designed to aid you in creating characters and NPCs that are skilled explorers and wilderness experts. Most of them grant you bonuses when dealing with the outdoors or allow you to expand your skill choices to better handle outdoor challenges.

### EXPLORER [GENERAL]

You have spent months exploring difficult terrain. You have scaled mountain peaks, ventured deep into isolated realms, and developed your physical abilities to handle such environments. While others who practice your trade may be sedentary, you are lean and athletic.

**Prerequisite:** Str 13+.

**Benefit:** Climb, Jump, and Swim are considered class skills. Upon selecting this feat, you immediately gain 4 ranks to spend on those skills.

**Special:** This feat may only be taken at 1st level, though your DM may rule that the extended time you spend outdoors in difficult terrain allows you to qualify for it.

### FRONTIERSMAN [GENERAL]

You grew up in an area on the border between wilderness and civilized realms, or perhaps you were raised amongst barbarians in the wild. In either case, you have an ingrained sense of the wilderness and are as adept as a ranger or druid in navigating wild areas.

**Prerequisites:** Con 13+, Wis 13+.

**Benefit:** Intuit Direction, Spot, and Wilderness Lore are considered class skills. Upon selecting this feat, you immediately gain 4 ranks to spend on these skills.

**Special:** You may only take this feat at 1st level, and your DM can veto its selection if your background does not logically allow for it. For example, a wizard who grew up in a vast metropolis cannot take this feat.

### NATURALIST [GENERAL]

You have studied herbs and plants, granting you a much deeper knowledge of nature than is normal for those of your trade. You grew up in a wilderness area or were apprenticed for a time to an herbalist or healer.

**Prerequisite:** Wis 13+.

**Benefit:** Concentration, Heal, and Knowledge (nature) are considered class skills. Upon selecting this feat, you immediately gain 4 ranks to spend on these skills.

**Special:** You may only take this feat at 1st level, and your DM can veto its selection if your background does not logically allow for it.



### OUTRIDER [GENERAL]

You were born into the saddle. Amongst your people, horses are valued above all else. Your people produce legendary cavalry units, and even though your trade has little to do with horsemanship you are an accomplished rider.

**Prerequisite:** Dex 13+.

**Benefit:** Handle Animal, Ride, and Spot are considered class skills. Upon selecting this feat, you immediately gain 4 ranks to spend on these skills.

**Special:** This feat can only be chosen at 1st level. Your DM can veto its selection if your background does not logically allow for it.

### TRAVELER [GENERAL]

You have traveled far and wide, visiting a wide range of cultures and learning how to blend in with the locals and avoid any embarrassing social gaffes.

**Prerequisite:** Cha 13+.

**Benefit:** Diplomacy, Sense Motive, and Speak Language are considered class skills. Upon selecting this feat, you gain 4 ranks to spend on these skills.

**Special:** This feat can only be chosen at 1st level. However, your DM may rule that visits to a wide range of cultures and realms allows you to select it at higher levels.

## GEARING UP

When the party must travel deep into unknown territories, far from the nearest friendly settlement, the equipment you decide to take with you plays a critical role in determining your chance of success. Even the mightiest warrior stands little chance if he forgets to bring along enough food and water. This section lists a variety of mundane items that can prove useful in outdoor adventures and grants a few additional uses for such items that you might normally overlook.

**Backpack:** While the uses of a backpack in the outdoors may seem obvious, this item's most important feature is that you can use it to carry equipment while fighting with a weapon and shield or casting spells. Keep your most critical items and a day or two worth of food in your backpack. If you are ambushed and forced to drop some of

your supplies, you can rest easy knowing that you have short-term food and important gear tucked away in your backpack.

**Blanket:** Useful not only for keeping warm in the face of unexpectedly cold weather, a blanket can also be folded to serve as an impromptu sack, used to smother a fire, and tied over a captive's head to muffle the noise he makes and disorient him as you escort him back to your camp.

**Caltrops:** While these items are heavy when carried in great numbers, caltrops are an effective deterrent against creatures that may try to sneak into your camp. Spread caltrops around the perimeter of a campsite to prevent spies and other creatures from slipping in past your guard or to stop attackers in their tracks if they attempt to charge your position.

**Candle:** While too small to light an entire campsite, candles are good secondary light sources. If each character carries a few in his belt pouch along with flint and steel, you never need worry about losing all your light sources.

**Donkey:** A simple beast of burden can carry enough food and gear for the entire group, allowing you to fight without being weighed down by equipment and persist for weeks on rations. Best of all, donkeys can survive on grass and other undergrowth you find in the course of your travels. In a desert or arctic region, you need to carry food for the donkey, making it less useful. If you run out of food, you can always kill and eat a pack animal to stretch your supplies out for a few additional days. After all, if you are out of food you don't need the donkey to carry it anymore.

**Flint and Steel:** Fire is critically important for warmth and illumination, making flint and steel an important priority to any adventuring band. Each member of an expedition should carry flint and steel to ensure that you are never left without it.

**Horn:** Sometimes, you need to let your friends know that danger is at hand and don't care for subtlety. A horn allows you to sound the alarm over a great distance, though you also alert your enemies of your presence. This item is best used as a last resort method for summoning help. Use it when you're surrounded by orcs and your friends aren't in sight.

**Horse and Riding Dogs:** Even characters without the Ride skill can benefit from mounts, as the enhanced overland speed they provide, the additional equipment they can carry, and the improved tactical speed they grant all combine to make them very useful in outdoor adventures. If you lack the Ride skill, you can still use a mount outside of combat. When an enemy approaches, you can dismount and prepare for battle.

**Mirror:** A small hand mirror can prove useful for signaling your allies during bright, sunny days. By flashing sunlight off of it, you can use a silent method of passing simple messages via a system similar to Morse code. For example, three quick flashes might signal your scouts to return to camp, while two long ones could mean all's well. While a mirror requires specific circumstances to prove useful, it draws much less attention than a horn.

**Piton:** Useful for scaling walls, pitons are best suited for use in mountainous and rocky areas. Even in a forest or jungle, you can use pitons to help scale trees to escape an enraged creature or scan the terrain ahead.

**Rope:** Whenever possible, buy the lightest rope you can find. You can never have too much rope, especially if you anticipate scaling cliffs or steep slopes. Sometimes, a sudden attack or the nature of the terrain you face may force you to leave a length of rope behind. Thus, try to carry as much rope as possible by going with more expensive but lighter types.

**Sack:** Sacks are great for carrying treasure hoards, trail rations, and other heavy, bulky materials you need or find in your travels. Tie a sack shut so that you can drop it at the first sign of trouble, allowing you to free your hands for weapons or spellcasting while simultaneously reducing the load you carry. When you enter a dangerous area, find a safe, secure spot where you can stash your excess goods and proceed forward without any unnecessary gear.

**Spyglass:** This oft-overlooked piece of equipment can save a lot of trouble and heartache during travels. The spyglass lets you pick out dangers before you stumble into them. While in dense terrain, such as forest and jungle, the spyglass is of limited use, in plains, mountains, and tundra you can use it to spot and identify creatures before they come close enough to threaten you with spells or arrows.

**Wagon:** While a wagon is more of a liability than an asset when traveling through isolated realms, it can prove useful when moving along roads, paths, and other established routes. A wagon allows you to carry a tremendous variety of goods and can serve as shelter against rain, snow, and extreme temperatures. Remember, though, that a wagon is useless when venturing into broken ground, thick forests, or rocky, mountainous areas.

### WEAPONS AND ARMOR

While in most cases the outdoors function in the same manner as a dungeon in regards to weapons and armor, there are a few specific cases where a weapon or armor type is more useful outdoors.

**Leather Armor:** A suit of leather armor weighs 15 lbs., but a strong fighter, barbarian, or paladin can easily handle the extra load. When making camp, you can remove your heavy armor but sleep in leather. If a monster or wild animal pounces on you while you rest, you have at least some measure of protection to rely on.

**Slings:** Since a long, overland journey puts a major emphasis on your ability to maintain supplies, the sling is the ideal weapon to help conserve arrows, bolts, and other ammo. Simple rocks work fine as sling ammunition, allowing you to use it against goblins, orcs, and other weak creatures and save your ammunition for the toughest monsters you encounter.

## SPELLS AND MAGIC IN THE WILDS

While druids come to the forefront during wilderness adventures, every spellcaster has something to offer while trekking through the wilds. This section lists a variety of d20 spells and gives you ideas and hints for using them during outdoor adventures.

In addition to the creative use of spells, casters should take a few other precautions to ensure an expedition's success. Utility spells such as the ones listed below are best kept to scrolls, allowing you to stock up on offensive spells to fight off enemies during the day. The spells listed here are all good candidates for scrolls, since they might prove useful on the road. Even if you plan on resting for a while in a seemingly secure positions, be sure to prepare a few *fireballs* or *searing lights*, as you can never be completely sure that you are safe from attack.

With their spellbooks, wizards face a few specific problems. If you can afford it, carry a spare book with a few critical spells in your backpack or amongst your horse's gear. In that case, if you lose the bag or satchel that carries your main books you can rely on your back-up to see you through the rest of the adventure. Keep an archival copy of your spells back at home, especially if you have a tower. This allows you to easily recover spells that you would otherwise lose. As an optional rule, copying a spell you already know into a spare spellbook costs only 1/20th the listed gold piece price.

**Alarm:** While this spell is frequently overlooked by adventuring spellcasters, its 2 hour/level duration makes it useful for any spellcaster of 4th level or higher. *Alarm* provides a nearly foolproof barrier against creatures that seek to slip into your camp and surprise you while you sleep, an important tool to help PCs with poor Listen and Spot skills keep watch by night.

**Calm Animals:** This spell is best used when traveling across wild areas, since in such realms you are likely to encounter wolves, bears, and other mundane animals. A single use of this spell can prevent a battle, as creatures that lack combat training are not allowed a saving throw against it.

**Create Food and Water:** While devoting a 3rd-level slot to this spell is not always a wise investment, it does allow you to avoid carrying food and water for your journey. The space you save could allow you to travel much faster or carry far more loot than normal.

**Endure Elements:** The ultimate counter to cold or hot weather, *endure elements* can easily absorb the subdual damage caused by heat or cold. Since it lasts 24 hours even for low-level casters and is only 1st level, this spell is handy to keep around on scrolls or in potions. It makes the ideal emergency safeguard against the loss of cold weather gear or to allow a fighter to wear his plate mail in the midst of a sandy desert.

**Magic Mouth:** Sometimes, you may need to relay a message to a friend but are beyond speaking range or need to keep quiet. By placing a *magic mouth* on an arrow then firing the projectile towards your friends, you can deliver a short, spoken message to them. Alternatively, you can place the *mouth* on an arrow and fire it away from your position to throw off pursuit. If you set the *mouth* to shout in pain or yell insults, it can draw enemies away from you. Simply set the *magic mouth* to activate when the arrow hits the ground, and you have an instant diversion. This spell is also useful to draw sentinels away from their posts and to confuse the enemy by making it sound as if you and your allies approach from several directions at once.

**Make Whole:** Frequently overlooked even by experienced players, this spell allows you to conserve arrows and instantly repair sundered weapons and armor. When traveling through the wilderness, this spell can prove invaluable when you run low on arrows or face an ogre or troll that uses its great strength to snap weapons and crumple shields. Since you aren't likely to stumble upon a forge in the woods, this spell can make a huge difference.

**Mending:** Similar to *make whole* above, this spell is useful for repairing gear in the field. The party's archers should collect and store their broken missiles after each fight, as you can use this spell to restore them. If you anticipate a day of rest during your travels, you can prepare this spell many times to restore their supplies. This spell's major drawback is that it affects only one object at a time, making it most useful if you use it consistently over the course of your travels to prevent the party's ammunition stores from dwindling too low.

**Mount:** In addition to this spell's obvious uses, you can use it to conjure an animal to carry treasure, spare food, or other supplies you require. Rather than leave a great hoard of copper or silver pieces behind, this spell allows you to instantly call forth a beast of burden to help carry the loot home. In other situations, you can use the horse to drag rocks or other barriers away from a path, tear a door off its hinges, or carry a badly wounded comrade to safety.

**Reduce:** While this spell's short duration prevents it from aiding you in carrying treasure or supplies, it does offer a convenient method for clearing away logs, boulders, and other obstacles that block your path. A single, well placed *reduce* can cause a rock wall to tumble to the ground or create a convenient entry in a log stockade.

*Rope Trick:* While at low levels this spell is of limited utility due to its duration, once you reach 8th level it is perhaps the most efficient spell for setting up camp or creating a safe haven for the night. Its biggest drawback is that horses and other animals cannot normally climb the rope to enter the dimensional space. This spell is also good for frustrating pursuers, as you can duck into the *rope trick* and hide there until your foes leave the area.

### TAKING THE REINS

From a gaming standpoint, the vastness of a fantasy wilderness is both its greatest strength, and its greatest weakness. The sheer open possibilities of a wilderness quest can be invigorating and daunting by turns, both for the players and the DM. After all, when a hundred paths are open to you, which one do you travel?

The answer, of course, is all of them.

*Bring Your Own Details:* It is not solely the DM's responsibility to provide color detail for your journeys through, and adventures in, the wilderness. When you use your Wilderness Lore skill to track prey, for example, don't simply ask for the DC and roll your skill check. Instead, describe how your barbarian kneels down, running his hands over the soft earth feeling for depressions, or searches low hanging branches looking for tufts of fur or bent leaves. When you use the Hide skill, briefly describe how your ranger burrows beneath a pile of leaves, or folds himself into a hollow log. When you use the Listen skill to track an orc war band, describe how you place your ear to the ground, listening for the hollow thump of many boots.

*Revel in the Seasons:* The character of a wilderness area changes drastically with the seasons. A forest in the summer is not the same forest in the winter. Revel in descriptions of the seasons, and remember that new fallen snow isn't just good for circumstance bonuses to your tracking checks; instead, when you play a druid, use it for flavor. Walk barefoot over the drifts, or pack wounds with it when you make Heal skill checks. DMs should use circumstance bonuses and penalties to skill checks to highlight the difference between foraging in the spring and in the winter, or attempting to Move Silently across new-fallen, crisp leaves in the fall.

*The Forest Is Alive:* The stereotypical dungeon is still and quiet as a tomb, with only the creak of settling stones, the slow drip of water and the groan of water rusted door joints to break the silence. The wilderness, however, is alive, with an endless variety of sounds and sights to distract the senses. Unseen animals slither through the undergrowth, distant roars and rumbles of thunder echo among the canyons, and winds whisper the scent of loam, leaf and berry. Use the senses to your advantage, both as a

player and as a DM, so that when the wilderness does fall silent and still, you know something important (and likely dangerous), is about to happen.

*Camping, the Overlooked Stage:* Most players and DMs take periods of rest for granted, seeing them as brief lulls in the action, a chance for spellcasters to restore their spell energies, and for other characters to sleep, take their watch and perhaps heal a few hit points. For most groups, it's just a necessary evil, a quick fade to black before the real action begins. But it can be much more than that.

Use the downtime between the hardships and mortal dangers that camping provides to plan out strategies in relative safety and comfort, to have in character discussions of the events of the day and to have your characters practice their skills. Fantasy literature and film is rife with examples of heroes cementing their friendships around the campfire, and you may be limiting the true roleplaying potential of your campaign if you do not take advantage of the same opportunities.

Camping scenes are also a good place to set important scenes, to stage ambushes or to provide clues to future events. A distant light, miles from the party's location, could portend adventures to come, or dreams in the darkness could serve as omens. Unexpected visitors can provide excitement as well; imagine the memorable chaos that would ensue if an ogre suddenly crashed through the brush and staggered into your campfire. Now imagine the same scene if the ogre was locked in a wrestling match with a grizzly bear...

### WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES

While by no means all-inclusive, the following list of possible wilderness activities should serve to spark some ideas for wilderness adventures, or even entire campaigns set primarily in the wild.

*Recovering History:* The typical fantasy world is an ancient place, with a history that stretches back millennia. In such a place, the echoes and detritus of long lost civilizations can be seen everywhere, if one cares to look. On all but the most highly magical or heavily settled worlds, the majority of these ancient sites still await discovery. Nestled deep in forest depths, high atop windswept mountain peaks, or buried beneath the shifting sands of a thousand years, these ruins are both tombs and treasuries, lonely artifacts eager to give up their secrets to the clever and the brave. Only those willing and able to dedicate the time and energy necessary to fully explore the world's wildest, most remote areas have a hope of finding these reliquaries. Who better than you?

*Taming the Wilds:* Many kingdoms claim dominion over vast, untamed stretches of wilderness which have never been explored, let alone settled. To ensure that the firm



hand of their rulership extends to all corners of their lands, and that no potential resource goes unexploited, the nobility sends teams of explorers into these regions to map the terrain, find and record items and locations of interest, and to slay or drive off any monsters they come across. If you are hired, or commanded, to take on such an assignment, the potential rewards and dangers will be great indeed. If you are clever and bold enough to bring the light of civilization to the kingdom's untamed lands, and politically skilled and charismatic enough to ensure you can take the credit for your work, you might just find yourself with a Baron's title and papers granting you stewardship over the lands you tamed.

If you are willing, and if you are strong and courageous enough, you can ascend to even loftier heights. In all but the most magical and politically advanced fantasy worlds, there are vast stretches of wilderness which are, as yet, completely unclaimed by civilization. By the power of your sword, your knowledge and your magic, they can be made yours. The fun and excitement of carving out your own domain cannot be overstated; an entire campaign could be focused around the taming of such a place, and the subsequent efforts to attract settlers to your newly-born kingdom. Establishing your own kingdom is not so simple as *teleporting* willy-nilly about the landscape, cutting down a few hapless beasts and planting a flag. Instead, it requires dogged persistence and an unwavering vision; as the saying goes, Rome wasn't built in a day.

A campaign which involves your characters establishing their own kingdom can take you all the way from 1st to 20th level and beyond, as the game evolves from simple combat and exploration to matters of state and diplomacy. Of all the classes, the barbarian is perhaps best suited for this sort of campaign.

*Going to Ground:* Adventurers make enemies. Sometimes, lots of them. During your adventuring career, there are bound to be times where it behooves you and your allies to disappear for awhile, occasionally a very long while. At such times, the depths of the wilderness can offer you the protection and privacy you need. The advantages of using the wilderness as a hiding place are many. First and foremost, you are far from prying eyes; spies, snitches and enemy agents congregate in major cities, and only spellcasters of some power can observe the party through *scrying* and other similar spells. Second, it is easy to pick up stakes and move to a new location each night, offering additional protection against sudden attack. Third, the more distance you put between yourself and civilized lands, the harder it is for your enemies to muster their full strength against you; shepherding a large force through the wilderness is a logistical nightmare, and your knowledge of local geography will allow you to strike, then fade away, waging a guerilla campaign of attri-

tion against your foes. Should your foes choose instead to send a small, elite force, your familiarity with the terrain still gives you the advantage, particularly if you count rangers, druids or barbarians among your number.

Going to ground is best done at low to mid levels, since at high levels both you and your enemies will have access to abilities and items which negate many of this tactic's advantages. Even so, a high level druid, with his mastery of natural magic and shape-changing abilities, can go to ground very effectively.

*Hunting:* Hunting is an important part of the medieval, or fantasy pseudo-medieval world. The common folk hunt rabbits and, when given permission by the local lord, deer in the forest, and the huntsman of the nobility stalk the private forests, killing and dressing wild stag for their lord's feast tables. Nobles, too, love the hunt, turning the pursuit into a grand spectacle of pomp and pageantry in pursuit of foxes or mighty stags.

Thrilling as such grand pursuits are, they pale in comparison to the truly legendary hunts undertaken by the mightiest heroes. The legend of the Calydonian Boar, Sir Pellinore and his lifelong chase of the Questing Beast, and even Captain Ahab's obsessive pursuit of Moby Dick, all of these are hunts of the most magnificent sort, and make fine examples of what your own heroes might emulate. In a fantasy campaign, the possibilities are endless.

Even characters who do not condone the killing of animals for sport can partake in these sorts of escapades, as not all hunts need end in death. Perhaps the young elven shield maidens of a distant kingdom must, with the help of a few carefully chosen allies, pursue and capture a pegasus or unicorn to serve as their mount, or perhaps the sultan of a desert empire has promised his daughter's hand in marriage to the first hero who can capture a djinn and ride upon its shoulders through the palace gates.

Adventures themed around a hunt are appropriate for characters of all levels, so long as careful measures are taken to ensure that *scrying*, *teleport* and similar magics cannot be used to end things prematurely. For high level characters, this means using opponents which are capable of their own fast escapes, so that if such magics are used the pursuit can still range across the world and even into other planes.

*Wilderness Guide:* Religious pilgrims fleeing persecution or journeying to a holy site; soldiers bringing war to a distant land they've never seen; loremasters and bards seeking a fabled glade they've read or sung about, but never seen. All these and more need the services of skilled wilderness guides: men and women with the skills necessary to lead them in to the wilds and, more importantly, lead them back out. If you have the ability, you can name your own price.

Adventures of this sort are fantastic when you are playing low-level characters; a 1st to 3rd level ranger or druid will still appear staggeringly competent to your typical pilgrim. Even at mid- to advanced levels, however, there is still fun to be had with this kind of wilderness adventuring, particularly if you can serve as guide on a voyage across the seas or even across planar boundaries.

*Stewardship:* There are bandits in the forests and goblins infesting the mountains. There are savage horsemen raiding desert caravans, worgs savaging the caribou herds settlers depend on in the tundra, and degenerate snake-men stalking traders in the steaming jungle. Who will patrol the wilderness? Who will enforce the law in those places which are farthest from the noble courts?

You will.

A campaign which features heavy amounts of wilderness combat will truly highlight the abilities of barbarians and rangers, while still providing plenty of opportunities for those playing other classes. On the downside, a steady diet of patrolling the woods looking for bandits to kill can become monotonous, which is why this option might be best used as a frame for a series of adventures in your character's early middle levels, perhaps from 4–8, when you have a bit of experience under your belt, but are not yet ready to take on world spanning adventures against demons and power-mad would-be overlords.

## DM'S ADVICE

While players must worry about their individual characters and their comrades, you, as DM, are responsible for constructing an entire world for the adventurers to explore. This section covers some advice and ideas on designing the wilderness and creating adventures and campaigns set there. The first section covers ecology and geography; these basic building blocks will help you map the wilderness and place creatures, from simple animals like bears and lions, to bizarre, magical monsters such as medusas and manticores. The second section focuses on adventures, presenting advice on structuring quests and journeys across the wilderness, and tips for creating combat and roleplaying encounters in the isolated wilds.

## GEOGRAPHY

Most of the time, mapping the wilderness is a rather simple task. Most of the features you need to keep in mind are guided by common sense. Rivers flow down from the mountains to the ocean, the highest areas of the mountains are cold and snowy, forests and jungles need rain to survive, and so on. This section presents a few basic terrain types and gives you some simple guidelines for placing them in relation to the world around them. Mountains do not simply rise from the middle of a flat plain. Usually, they're surrounded by foothills. Areas of desert don't often grow near oceans, while a jungle is not liable to flourish near a polar region. Each of the basic terrain types presented in this book is described below in terms of how you can locate it within your campaign.

In addition, a few other ideas are given for other common terrain features.



## DESERT

Deserts exist in any area that has a combination of hot temperatures and little rainfall. This combination is generally possible only in areas near the equator and far from a large body of water. Furthermore, a large mountain range can prevent rain clouds from reaching a desert region. If the mountains reach high enough, they can literally squeeze the rain out of them. As the clouds are forced higher into the air, they cool. As clouds cool, moisture within them condenses and rain forms. Thus, a bank of clouds loses its moisture if it encounters a tall enough range of mountains. If you consult a map of Earth, you'll find that most deserts are either tucked deeply within a continent or ringed by high mountain ranges. You can spring a desert on the characters by placing one within a ring of tall mountains. The characters could hear rumors of a lost kingdom found beyond the peaks or they might uncover an ancient map that points to an ancient civilization. After nearly freezing in the mountains, they find the area on the other side is a hot, dry desert. Otherwise, plains can slowly transition over to desert. As the characters venture deeper into the continent, they find rain becomes less frequent and the soil slowly changes over from lush grass, to scraggly plants, and finally to sand.

## FARMLAND

Any region with adequate rainfall and warm temperatures can sustain agriculture. While farming may conjure images of corn and wheat fields, it also includes cattle ranching and simple gardening. Isolated settlements may grow food purely to support themselves. In such a case, any effort to clear trees and till the soil should be successful; otherwise, there wouldn't be any settlements there at all! Farming goes hand in hand with cities and towns. Cultures that rely on growing food usually build permanent settlements that could be defended with walls and an organized fighting force. In other regions, "civilization" might consist of a few isolated manor houses ringed with fields worked by serfs and peasants. In still other areas, farmers work to sell their products at market. Thus, the farmland closest to a port or market features fruits and vegetables, while those further away specialize in raising animals such as cattle, goats, or chickens. More distant farmers could produce wine and oil. Since a farmer has to bring his harvest to market in order to sell it, farmers close to market can afford to grow and harvest goods that could go bad if they linger too long. On the other hand, a rancher can bring his cattle to town and then slaughter them there for their meat or sell his animals and leave their preparation to their new owner. Farmers who dwell far from a city probably still grow food, but they do so to meet their own needs rather than the needs of others.

Unlike other terrain types, farmland arises wherever intelligent creatures want to raise food and establish a home. Thus, be sure to account for the political and military situation in your campaign world when placing villages and farms. Generally, the closer to the central areas of civilization, such as cities or the well-defended interior of a kingdom, the greater the chance that the area is used for agriculture.

## FOREST

The old, spooky forest is a classic archetype of fantasy gaming for good reason. Forests dominate any area that has the proper climate and enough rainfall to support them. The key difference between a forest and a jungle is that the jungle is located within a warmer, wetter area that supports a much broader range of life. Temperate forests arise in areas with frequent rainfall. Trees require a lot of moisture to survive. For example, if you look at a map of North America you find thick forests confined mostly to the regions near the coasts. The Great Plains of the American Midwest, while fertile enough to support wheat and corn, are unable to sustain thick, boundless forests. The plant life in forest areas develops in predictable cycles. In open, sunny areas ferns and other undergrowth flourish. Over time, saplings take root and grow. Eventually, these young trees cast so much shade over the smaller plants that they die off. Thus, forests feature relatively clear areas beneath the trees but quickly become overgrown and difficult to navigate in open areas free from shade.

## JUNGLE

Many of the comments that apply to forests work equally well when looking at jungles. In essence, jungles are the tropical versions of forests. They require warm weather and copious rainfall to flourish. The key difference is that since jungles are located in tropical regions, they receive more sunlight and rainfall per year than temperate forests. Thus, they can support a wider range of plant and animal life because they have greater available resources. Jungles should be located on the edges of continents and in other areas that place them in rainy areas.

## LAKES

Lakes form in areas where the ground level drops low enough for water to collect in a stable body. Usually, lakes are fed by streams and rivers that drain down from mountains and hills and collect together. From the lake, rivers and streams further flow out towards the sea. Melting snow and rainfall feed lakes, and during times of extended drought a lake can shrink dramatically in size. The regions around a lake are typically rainy and wet, as the ground water levels are kept high. Furthermore, truly

gigantic lakes may be large enough to help grant moisture to storm systems, creating rainy or snowy weather depending on the local climate.

## PLAINS

Plains areas are a midpoint between deserts and forests. While they receive enough rain to sustain grass, underbrush, and isolated patches of trees, they are too dry to sustain plant life on the same level as a forest. Despite this relatively dry weather, plains can support agriculture and are the ideal place for herding. An area of plains should stand between forests or jungle and an area of desert, marking the middle ground in the gradual transition from the wet forest areas to the parched sands.

## SEA

The ocean is the birthplace of the storms that bring rain to the world, ensuring that the cycle of life can continue. Coastal areas also have more moderate weather than the regions around them. During winter, coastal areas are slightly warmer than inland ones, while summer months see cooler than normal weather. The ocean's temperature changes slowly. During the summer, the water is relatively cold compared to the land, creating a sea breeze and cooling the coast. During the winter months, the water retains the warmth it built up during the summer. Generally, coastal areas receive plenty of rain. Droughts may occur over a period of a year or two, but they rarely persist for long periods of time.

## SWAMP

In essence, a swamp is a stretch of land saturated with water. Usually found in coastal areas, swamps can also form in areas where the flow of water from mountains and other high elevation areas collects in lowland regions. Swamps are always found on or near rivers and lakes. The water that floods them flows along to other areas. Otherwise, the swamp would have long ago become a lake. Obviously, swamps occur only in regions with copious rain and moisture. This factor explains why swamps are invariably pictured as wooded, overgrown areas. The abundant water is an ideal environment for many plant species.

## TUNDRA

In many ways, tundra is the polar equivalent of a desert region. The further north you travel, the less precipitation you encounter. Cold air cannot hold much moisture, making it unlikely for storms to develop in such regions. The reason why arctic regions are snow-covered is not because storms regularly hit those areas. Rather, the rare storms produce snow because it is so cold, and that snow in turn remains for long periods of time as the temperature never rises high enough to cause any melting. Regions of tundra

are thus dry, bitterly cold, and comparatively bereft of plant and animal life. Tundra exists in any interior, arctic (or Antarctic) region. Unlike deserts however, tundra can exist in coastal regions if the weather is consistently cold enough. However, the ocean's moderating effects usually produce short summers that allow a small amount of melting and enough warm days to support more plants and animals than interior tundra wastelands.

## MAPPING

With the guidelines and ideas given above, you still face the daunting task of creating a map of a wilderness area. This section focuses on small-scale maps. If you want to design maps on the continental or planetary scale, your best place to start is with an atlas or globe of Earth. Find locations within your campaign world and compare them to places that have a similar geographic location on Earth. If you look at the climate and terrain in the real world location, you can use that as a springboard to building that region. There are three key factors that determine a region's climate and terrain.

### LATITUDE

A region's distance from the equator determines how warm it is on average. Areas close to the equator receive more sunlight over the course of the year and are therefore warmer. The further north or south you go from the equator, the colder it gets. Since warm air can hold more moisture, areas closer to the equator also receive more rainfall.

### OCEAN

Areas closer to large open bodies of water receive more rainfall and have more moderate temperatures. Storms form over the oceans, making coastal regions much more likely to receive consistent rain and snow storms over the course of the year.

### ELEVATION

Mountains are physical barriers to rain. The tall peaks, force storm clouds to dump the moisture within them as rain. Once the clouds have lightened their load of moisture, they can rise up and pass over the mountains. Furthermore, higher elevations are cooler than the region around them. For example, in Central America almost every type of climate, from deserts to rain forests, exists within a relatively small area because of the great variation in altitude from one region to the next.

When designing the terrain and climate of a region in your campaign world, look at these three factors and find an area of Earth that closely matches it. With these three factors in mind, you can find a starting baseline for the

weather, plants, and other factors. Remember that there is a close link between weather, which determines how much rain an area receives, and the density and variety of vegetation. Many terrain types, such as desert, forest, and plains, are defined by the amount and type of plant life that thrives within them.

## ECOLOGY

The ecology of a fantasy world is not, and should not be, the ecology of the real world. The presence of magic and of the myriad bizarre, supernatural creatures which populate the typical fantasy campaign setting means that the normal assumptions of food chains and ecological niches must be carefully reevaluated. The suggestions presented below will help guide you through the creation of a fantasy ecology for your own campaign.

### POPULATION PYRAMIDS AND FOOD CHAINS

As a general rule of thumb, there must be five times the number of herbivores to support a single predator; so, for example, if a pack of 15 worgs lives in the forest, there must be at least 75 deer to support them. Larger predators, such as hydra, ravenous trolls and dragons, require an even higher ratio of prey to predator, or else a corresponding increase in the size of the prey.

Likewise, there must be plants enough to support the herbivores, which is why, for example, brontosaurus do not live in the desert. The largest herbivores, such as dire animals and the aforementioned dinosaurs, should either be restricted to large grasslands, jungles and forests, or other areas where greenery is plentiful, or they must be provided with some other means of sustenance. So if you plan on putting a dinosaur in the desert, you would be well advised to think up a magical justification for why it hasn't long since starved to death.

It is not necessary for you to keep a running total of, for example, the number of caribou in the tundra or goats on the mountain peak; so long as you imply, through spoor signs, brief descriptions of or encounters with large herds, or simply the infrequent appearance of lone animals, that sufficient numbers of them exist to feed the area's predators, nothing more need be done.

### TERRITORY

A bear who lairs in a cave does not confine himself to it, and herds of deer do not spend their entire lives in one small field. Wild animals need space to roam, so they can move to new areas as the nearby food supplies dwindle. The amount of territory a particular animal needs depends largely on two factors; its size and its preferred food. Small herbivores, such as mice or rabbits, do not need large territories; so long as their population is kept

under control by predators, the local plant life will replenish itself as fast as they devour it. Large herbivores wander further afield, particularly herd animals like deer or bison.

The range of territory they claim depends on the fertility of the local environment. Large herbivores who dwell on scrub plains, such as those found in the tundra, must journey hundreds of miles each year, as they quickly strip the local plant life, but a deer herd in a heavily forested area may never travel more than a few miles. Like small herbivores, predators like ferrets, foxes and wolverines need only limited territories, as they can easily subsist on the local rodents. Larger predators, such as wolves and lions, must by necessity follow the herds, meaning their territories cover dozens or even hundreds of miles. The mightiest predator of all, the dragon, must range hundreds of miles to find food enough to sate his appetite, or secure other means of feeding itself.

Animal territories can and do overlap, particularly between animals of different species. In the case of herbivores, so long as they are not in direct competition for food sources, there is little conflict between them. Predators, however, are a different story. Most are very territorial by nature, jealously protecting their lairs and directly competing against one another for prey. The conflict is less severe between predators of different sizes, and non-existent between those who hunt wildly different prey (so eagles and wildcats can prowl the same territory without issues), but conflict inevitably results when predators of similar diet claim the same territory. The problem is exacerbated when fantastical beasts and monsters compete for the same prey and lairs, so DMs should carefully consider the logical implications of placing two or more large, similar predators near each other when sketching out a local ecology.

### CREATURES OUTSIDE THE FOOD CHAIN

Monsters like elementals, golems and undead are not a part of the food chain, but their presence can and does affect it. The often-dire influence such creatures have on the environment and the natural beasts which live within it are more fully detailed below, under *Magical Creatures and the Environment*.

## METHODS OF CREATION

There are any number of methods available to create a fantasy ecology, the most common of which are described below. Using the methods outlined below will not only help you create believable and (more importantly) fun wilderness ecologies, they will spark ideas for wilderness adventures. Sample ecologies, built using the methods outlined here, are included as well.

## THE ECOLOGY OF THE 'COOL'

The easiest way to plan out the ecology of a wilderness area is to simply ignore it altogether and just place what monsters you want, where you want, with no concern for providing them with adequate food supplies or territory. There is nothing wrong with this approach, particularly in games which highlight the acquisition of treasure and near constant combat, and there are few players or DMs who do not have fond memories of adventurers where flights of a dozen griffins happily laired just one hill over from a clutch of young blue dragons. In such a game, concerns of ecology need go no further than ensuring that kraken aren't encountered at the top of a sand dune (at least not without a very good reason). So long as the adventures are memorable and exciting, most players are willing to forgive the inconsistencies and logic flaws which invariably pop up in campaigns of this sort.

A DM running a campaign as described above should still glance over the suggestions presented below, if only to gather ideas for interesting future encounters.

## MONSTER SPECIFIC

In a typical fantasy campaign, the most dangerous monsters are almost always savage killing machines who hunger for, above all else, the sweet taste of man flesh (usually in the form of luckless adventurers). Since these enormous, very predatory beasts are also the monsters that both players and their characters most want to pit themselves against, it makes sense for the DM to take a monster-specific approach when sketching out an area's food chain. The monster-specific approach works best when designing smaller areas, particularly those which the player characters will not be returning to, or when you wish to theme an adventure around a specific creature, like a red dragon. It is also a convenient method to use when you have limited preparation time available, as it concentrates on the placement of only a few important monsters and their food sources.

When using the monster specific approach, you should first identify which powerful or exotic monsters you wish to have in the area, then decide on the location of their lairs. Make note of each monster's supernatural, spell-like and extraordinary abilities, as these will have an effect on the local environment and on the creatures which live near the beast (see *Monsters, Magical Creatures and Their Effect on the Environment*, below). After you have selected and placed the unique and powerful monsters, you should then place their food sources (for example, in the case of a typical predatory monster like a griffin, these will be large herbivores, perhaps horses, mountain goats or deer). From here, you should determine the herbivore's major food source; berries and grass for deer and horses, for example. If the powerful or rare monsters you selected earlier include one or more herbivores, you should also

now establish what they eat and where it is located. After all these steps are completed, you can begin to fill in the ecological niches, beginning with more mundane predators and omnivores, like bears and wolves, then (if you so choose) working your way down to smaller herbivores and food animals, like fish and field mice. In general, however, it is not necessary to completely fill in every niche, as animals like moles, non-poisonous snakes and small insects are notable only by their absence; describing a rabbit darting through the brushes adds color to an adventure, but few players are interested in hearing a complete rundown of every animal species which lives in the Forbidden Forest.

### The Steps

- Select and place powerful, exotic and featured monsters
- Select and place their animal food sources
- Select and place the herbivore's food sources
- Select mundane predators
- Select mundane predator animal food sources
- (Optional) Select small herbivores

### Sample Ecology: The Griffin

While brainstorming for tomorrow's gaming session, you decide to create an adventure for low- to mid-level characters which features the retrieval of a griffin's egg as the primary challenge. Reading up on the griffin, you take note of the fact that the griffin prefers to roost in temperate hills or mountains, and decide that the adventure will be set on the peak of a mountain a few day's journey from the player characters' current location. Since you have little time, and since you have no plans to use the mountain top after the current adventure is through, you decide to use the monster-specific approach.

Obviously, the griffin will be the most important creature in the area, so you place it first, deciding that its nest will be on the very tip of the mountain. Next you decide that its primary food source will be mountain goats, as you like the image of the griffin swooping down and snatching bleating rams off sheer cliff faces. You also decide that the goats will eat shrubs, stunted trees and small flowers which sprout from cracks all over the peak, and grasses which grow thick and lush lower down the mountain, and they will drink from small streams which feed shallow pools at the mountain's base.

At this point, you have done all you need to do to create an ecology centered around the griffin, but you decide that the mountain needs more animals, as it both feels too empty and lacks sufficient challenges for the heroes to overcome. So to spice up the journey, you place two ogres at the base of the mountain, in a cave just off the path the party will most likely travel. You also decide that black bears can be found on the mountain as well. To feed the ogres and the bears, you populate the mountain with deer,

who feed on the same thick grass the goats do, as well as berry plants which are scattered about the mountain, and fill the streams and pools with trout. The fact that the bears and the ogre compete for the same food sources sparks an idea, so you sketch out an encounter where the party comes across one of the ogres and a bear grappling on the edge of one of the shallow pools.

As a final step, you decide jot down a list of a few animals you will use for color description; rabbits for hunting, field mice, crickets to sing at night, owls to feed on them, butterflies and honeybees to flutter about the mountain meadows and a few plump bluebirds and sparrows to feed on them.

## FROM THE BOTTOM UP

The from the bottom up approach is a more traditional method of ecology building, concentrating on the placement of plants and herbivorous animals first, then moving on to mundane predators. As a final step, you should select those monsters and fantastical creatures which are at least somewhat common, and those unique, powerful monsters, such as ancient dragons, which you know in advance will lair in the area. Building your wilderness ecologies with this method will result in more realistic environments, and this is the preferred method for populating large swathes of your campaign world, or for those wilderness areas where your player characters will adventure frequently. Another advantage of this approach is that it is easy to add fantastical creatures and monsters to the area as needed, and, since the ecology is not specifically themed around them, it is not seriously disrupted by their deaths at the hands of the player characters.

Again, it is not necessary, or even desirable, to obsessively catalogue each and every mundane species in the area. Highlight instead the most common and the most noteworthy animals. Doing this leaves you free to more fully detail the area's monsters and magical beasts, which are (along with the player characters and fantastical locations) the stars of the fantasy wilderness.

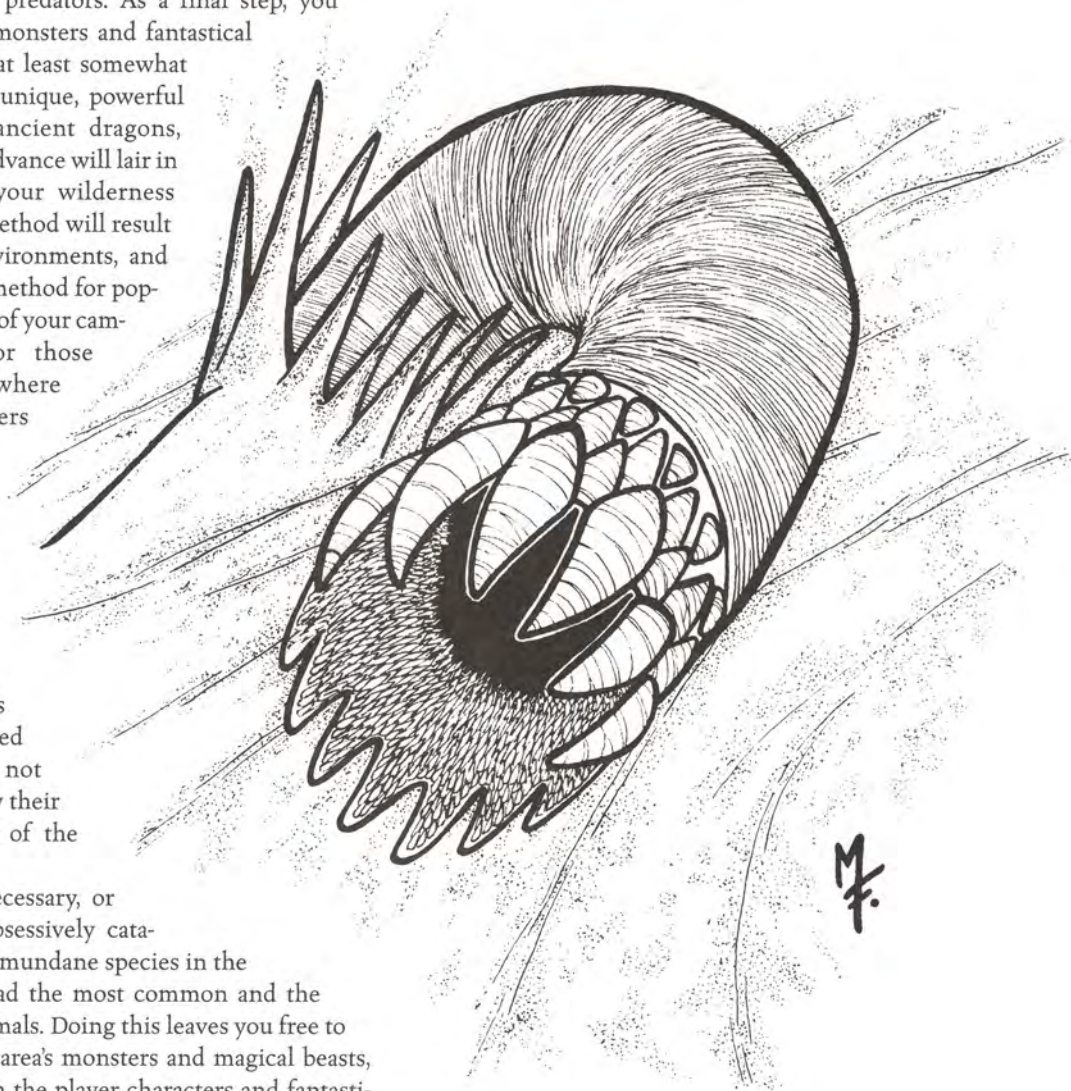
## The Steps

- Select primary mundane herbivores and their food sources
- Select primary mundane predators
- Select "common" monsters and fantastical creatures

## Sample Ecology: Heathman Forest

You have an idea for a series of adventures set in and around Heathman forest, formerly a private hunting preserve for elven royalty, now an overgrown, shadowy wilderness. Since the player characters will be adventuring in the forest for months of both game and real time, you decide to use the from the bottom up method to populate the forest.

First, you select the herbivores and plants you wish to highlight. Since it is a forest, trees will of course be everywhere; since the forest is a former elven preserve, you



decide the majority of the trees will be cherry, apple, oak and weeping willows, as those species (with their delicate blossoms, elegant shapes and leaves which change color with the turning of the seasons) would be aesthetically pleasing to elf eyes. Since elves are well known for their love of natural beauty, you also decide that pockets of colorful wild flowers will blossom everywhere, the last vestiges of the many grove gardens which dotted the forest long ago. Finally, you decide the forest contains many small, hidden meadows where grass grows tall and thick; on a whim, you jot down that many of these meadows are choked by blackberry bushes, which, bolstered by latent elven magic, are always heavy with fruit.

Having chosen the significant plants and trees which make up your forest, you next look to herbivores and mundane predators. Though the elves which maintained the forest are long gone, vestiges of their benevolent protective magic still linger in the forest; to highlight this, you choose herbivores which would be considered pleasant to elven eyes, and decide to limit the number of predators to only a very few species. For herbivores, you select deer, elk and silky furred rabbits, most of whom live in and around the hidden meadows, and decide that wild boars should roam at least a few of the forest's paths. With a specific adventure in mind, you decide that the northwest corner of the forest is littered with hives of aggressive bees, descended from honey bees which the elves kept. For predators, you decide only wolves and snow white owls live within the forest proper, though bears occasionally prowl just within the old borders and eagles and hawks sometimes swoop down from above to snatch up hapless rabbits. Of course, there are likely to be hundreds of other animal species in the forest, herbivore, omnivore and predator alike, but these can be added as needed and will likely play little part in the party's adventures.

Finally, you decide to place a few fantastical creatures and monsters within the forest: beasts which you know will either play an important part in adventures, or which will simply serve as color. To play up the feel of ancient elven magic, you decide that the majority of the magical beings will be benevolent (or at least not initially malevolent) and further, they should be primarily Fey creatures. After looking through your books, you mark locations for bands of sprites, a grace of unicorns, and a small tribe of centaurs which may or may not be hostile to the intruders. You also place a nymph in one of the hidden, bramble encircled meadows, and a treant and a grove of awakened trees in the heart of the forest. To round out the ecology, you place a tendriculos, a shambling mound, and (as the forest's major antagonists) a particularly savage covey of green hags and their hobgoblin servitors.

Note that in the sample ecology, there are relatively few unusual creatures placed within it. Unless you have months of preparation time before the campaign begins, this is the best way to build your ecologies. Limiting the initial population of monsters means you can spend more time fully detailing each one, allowing you to better develop the facets of their personalities and motivations.

### TIPS TO REMEMBER

**One Area At a Time:** Many beginning DMs make the mistake of attempting to fully detail every area of their often vast campaign worlds before the first adventure begins. While it is certainly possible for a dedicated world builder, it is a daunting task and not really a necessary one. Unless the heroes of your campaign will begin the game at higher levels, or unless they have access to some exotic means of transport, such as a flying ship or teleport gate, they won't be traveling very far or very fast. Concentrate your initial efforts on a small area, no larger than perhaps a kingdom, and ideally no larger than a secluded valley or small forest. Only when the party is ready to move beyond that area should you begin detailing the next.

At the same time, it is good advice to write down at least sketchy notes concerning other areas of your campaign world, especially when the party gains access to *teleport* and other magic, since you never know when the characters will feel an urge to go where the wind takes them.

**Leave Nothing Set in Stone:** Part of the fun of playing a fantasy role-playing game is encountering (and then hacking to bits) new and unusual creatures. So it is important that you leave room for improvisation in your world's ecology; when you have a great idea for introducing a brand new monster, or when your players express their desire to encounter some specific terror, you can incorporate it with minimal effort.

**Nature Abhors a Vacuum:** A wilderness' ecology is always in delicate balance, and the sudden reduction or extinction of a link in the food chain, no matter how seemingly inconsequential, can have wide-reaching effects on the area. Should a sudden magical blight destroy the grasslands on the rolling veldt, for example, the majority of the indigenous gazelle population will probably starve, leading in turn to a reduction in the number of lions in the area. The same rules of cause and effect apply to the actions of adventurers as well; should the player characters in your campaign destroy all the griffins which live on a particular mountain, the herds of goats which the beasts fed upon will undergo explosive population growth, and if their numbers are not brought under control, they will strip the mountain of edible plants within a few years, leading to the mass starvation of the mountain's indigenous herbivores.



**Nature Abhors Redundancy:** Two or more creatures which occupy the exact same ecological niche should not occupy the same territory, as competition will drive the weaker one to extinction. This means that griffins and hippogriffs, for example, should not be found in the same area, as they fill a similar ecological niche and thus compete for the same prey and nesting areas. Neither should wolves and worgs dwell in the same section of forest, unless both are part of a single large pack. Here, relatively rare monsters can be the exception that proves the rule; a chimera and a digester are both large predators which can be found in temperate environments, but they are different enough that, if food is plentiful, both can coexist in the same territory.

**Intelligence Takes Precedence:** Many fantasy creatures are blessed with above animal intelligence. When populating an area, remember that such creatures will have a natural advantage over less intelligent creatures of otherwise similar ability.

**Magic Changes Everything:** Magic can be used to justify the presence of almost any creature, regardless of its normal habitat and other considerations. The mad wizard who stocks the lands around his tower with a menagerie of bizarre creatures gathered from across the world has long been a fantasy gaming staple, one which never seems to wear out its welcome. When using magic in this fashion, consider the consequences this will have on the local ecology. The transplanted monsters must have access to a food source, which means in some cases that their preferred prey will have to be imported as well, which could drive the indigenous herbivore population to extinction. Imported monsters must also have access to lairs and proper consideration must be given to the effects that the local climate will have on them; transporting a tyrannosaurus from the jungle to the arctic tundra isn't going to provide an archmage with a ferocious guardian, but it will leave him with plenty of frozen lizard meat for the polar bears. A Dungeon Master should also consider the long term effects of using magic in such a fashion; should the archmage be killed (a common occupational hazard) the magic which keeps his imported guardians in place and away from each other's throats will eventually fade, and they will turn on one another, die of old age or wander off to other pastures. After a few generations, if these imported beasts have mates, or are able to mate with indigenous creatures, they will breed and become acclimated to their new environment; when used as background history, this is a good justification for the introduction of monster subspecies, such as furry stirges in the far northern tundra, or desert-dwelling gnolls.

**Nature Doesn't Recognize Challenge Ratings:** When populating a wilderness area, remember that nature pays no attention to the player character's relative strength, so statistically powerful creatures should not be

restricted only to areas where mighty adventurers ply their trade. In fact, the powerful monsters of a typical fantasy world are more likely to be found in the remotest wildernesses and in places without experienced heroes, whose job is, after all, to ensure such beast's destruction.

**The Fantastical Should Supplement the Mundane, Not Replace It:** A fantastical creature seen too often quickly loses its luster. If a wilderness ecology is a soup, then mundane animals like sheep and hawks and lions are its base, and the dragons and trolls and demons of the world are the spices; too much spice and you ruin the taste, too little and the meal isn't memorable. It is a mistake to place too many monsters and magical creatures in any stretch of wilderness, and you should almost never wholly replace a mundane animal with a fantastical creature. As a rule of thumb, any creature of the Animal or Beast type can serve as a replacement for a more mundane creature, so owlbears could wholly replace mundane bears in a fantasy world without issue, but only in the highest magic worlds could unicorns completely replace common horses.

## MAGICAL CREATURES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The presence of a monster or magical being, particularly one with powerful supernatural abilities, is going to have a direct effect on the nearby environment — beyond just its place in the food chain. For good or ill, such a creature will, perhaps irrevocably and catastrophically, alter the natural landscape and the habits of any creatures who live nearby.

What follows are suggestions for altering the wilderness to include some of the logical effects of a supernatural creature setting up a lair in the wilderness, as well as suggestions for making encounters with specific creatures, or related groups of creatures, more memorable and exciting.

### CREATURE TYPES

In d20 games, creatures which share common abilities or characteristics are grouped into loose categories, known as creature types. Others are further grouped by type modifiers, such as Fire, which more tightly define their essential characteristics. By virtue of their innate nature, creatures of many of these types will, even if they share only superficial similarities, have similar effects on their environment. Some of these effects are discussed below.

**Construct:** Constructs, artificial beings created by wizards and other powerful magical beings, are not a part of the natural order. As such, just their presence is enough to cause a serious disruption in the delicate balance of

nature. Constructs are generally enchanted to fulfill one of two roles; tireless guardian or unstoppable killer. In the first case, when a construct, such as a golem, is assigned to guard a particular location or object, its detrimental effect on the local habitat will be restricted to the immediate area around its post. Within that radius, adventurers will find little evidence of animal life: the local fauna will have long since learned to avoid the construct's tireless fists and ever watchful eyes. As a general rule, no creature of the Animal, Beast, or Vermin type with an intelligence score of 2 or less will approach within a 500 ft radius of an area guarded by a Construct.

In the second, when a Construct is simply set loose to wreak havoc, or when it breaks free of its owner's control, the impact is more far reaching. A rogue Construct will mercilessly attack any creature it comes across, fighting to the death in every case. As most powerful Constructs, particularly golems, are immune to non-magical attacks, they face little danger from the teeth and claws of all but the strongest animals. Unless another supernatural creature lairs in the vicinity, the Construct will be nearly unstoppable. Animals, Beasts and Vermin will flee the area with all possible speed, as noted above, meaning that the land for miles around the rampaging monster will be devoid of all animal life. Plant life, too, will suffer at the hands of the maddened Construct, with bushes uprooted and tree trunks splintered in a narrow line that oftentimes stretches for miles. Even after a Construct is destroyed, or simply leaves, Animals and Beasts will shun the area, returning in strength only after at least a year's time. Large plant life, particularly trees, returns even more slowly, though the rotting remains of fallen timber and animal corpses causes a rapid explosion of fungal growth, as well as an tremendous increase in the Vermin population. Scavenger creatures, such as otyughs and creatures of the Ooze type are also drawn to the devastation, and, on rare occasions, dead animals spontaneously rise as undead.

**Dragon:** Dragons are the undisputed terrors of the world, more powerful, cunning and ruthless than any other mortal creature. So, naturally, a wilderness area which serves as a dragon's lair will be unlike any other place in the world.

Dragons are predatory by nature, and at their size they require prodigious amounts of food to sate their hunger. They are also fundamentally lazy, so a dragon only willingly lairs in an area where it has relatively easy and steady access to a food source. Even then, their huge appetites soon deplete the local stock. Since dragons are reluctant to abandon a lair once it is established, most choose to restock their food herds when they dwindle. The ways they go about doing this are varied, and depend upon the dragon's temperament and alignment. Some dragons, particularly the wiser breeds, maintain breeding stock, which are kept in the dragon's lair itself, within a

closely guarded out of the way location, or are guarded over by intelligent servitors, should the dragon have them. Other dragons purchase (or extort) livestock from farms. In any case, the number of large herbivores will be an order of magnitude larger than normal within a radius of roughly 100 miles of a dragon's lair, meaning that the dragon will also have to take steps to ensure that his herd's own food source is not depleted. In most cases, this means the use of magic.

As the population of herbivorous herd animals is proportionately larger, so too is the number of predators within range of the dragon's lair proportionally smaller, as the dragon jealously guards both its territory and its herd. While all dragons take steps to ensure that no predator capable of dragging down one of their herd animals remains within 100 miles of its home, most are wise enough to allow smaller predators, such as owls and small wildcats, to remain, so that the numbers of mice, rabbits and other "nuisance" (to the dragon's eyes) herbivores are kept in check.

Depending on their type and habits, dragons have other effects on the wilderness areas they call home. The land for miles around a red dragon's home is likely to be charred, with large trees blackened or simply burned to ash; as a result of this, the local soil is likely to be especially fertile, as the ash fills the top soil with essential nutrients. Likewise, the swamps a black dragon calls home are filled with the half dissolved husks of cypress trees, and great puddles of melted, pitted rock. The local flora and waterways are likely to be at least mildly toxic as well, requiring those who are not used to the contamination (most adventurers, in other words) to attempt a Fort save (DC 13–15) or suffer 1d3 points of temporary Constitution damage. The plants around a green dragon's lair are likewise dangerous, requiring a Fort save (DC 14–16) to avoid 1d3 points of temporary Constitution damage, if the dragon is of at least Adult age. The dangerous chlorine gas that exudes from the skin of green dragons of age category Ancient or older permeates the air for at least 100 yards around the lair proper, requiring all those who enter to succeed at a Fort save once per hour against a DC of 14 + 1 per age category above Ancient or suffer 1d4 points of temporary Constitution damage. By contrast, the good aligned metallic dragons take great pains to ensure that the wilderness is not adversely affected by their presence, so their territory is rarely, if ever, corrupted or scarred permanently.

**Elemental:** Elementals are purely of the natural world, but are from a time so ancient, so primal, so far above the modern in purity and power that their "naturalness" is bane to the living world. Normally, they make their homes on the elemental planes, endless realities which embody one of the four elements, but they are sometimes summoned to the prime material by powerful spellcast-

ers, or find their way there by passing through portals connected to volcanoes, whirlpools, fault lines or mountain tops. Such naturally-occurring portals are frequently home to many creatures of the Elemental type, who pass in and out of the portal as the whim strikes them. In addition to permanent portals, temporary connections to the elemental planes sometimes form in the heart of wildfires, hurricanes or other natural phenomena, bringing with it an infestation of Elemental creatures.

In any case, the areas around a portal quickly change to match the elemental plane connected to it; the landscape becomes a scorched wasteland, searing the flesh of all non-elemental beings who traverse it, or it becomes a wind-blasted plain, covered with the shredded remains of mighty trees and swirling with dust devils. Normal animals and plants cannot hope to survive in such conditions, and they either die or flee to safer territory. As a result, adventurers will not be able to hunt or forage for food, and must bring all supplies with them — with the obvious exception of water near a portal to the water plane. Near a portal to the plane of elemental fire, the localized temperature can reach into the high triple digits, and the air can become superheated, instantly killing any being not of the Fire subtype or protected by strong magic.

**Fey:** The archetypal fey is an ageless, supernatural being which lives in harmony with, and claims stewardship over, the wilds. Fey can be by turn cruel, capricious and alien, or benevolent and wise, but nearly all embrace the natural world as their own domain. Fey embody the trees and live within them, or stride through the most primeval forests as spectral phantoms. A wilderness area which is home to fey responds to their magic, their will and their essence, so it will either be extremely beautiful, with soaring, flawless trees, sun dappled glades overflowing with eternally blossoming wild flowers and lush, rolling meadows, or hideously ugly and terrifying, full of thorns, black, crawling shadows and grasping tree branch hands that cling greedily to flesh and cloth.

In either case, fey will not abide the presence of creatures which do not please their aesthetic sensibilities, or which do not match their personalities, and will drive off or kill them whenever they appear. Fortunately (for them), the magic fey radiate is a siren call to those creatures which suit them; wilderness areas inhabited primarily by good or neutrally aligned fey are filled with beautiful stags, rabbits, and foxes, while those home to evil fey are spider-haunted, infested by bats and rats and patrolled by ferocious wolves.

**Giant:** Wilderness areas populated by giants (or Giant types) quickly change to accommodate their occupant's oversized girth. Low-hanging (in giant's terms) branches are snapped off by heads, shoulders, or enormous axes, undergrowth is trampled and crushed underfoot,

and small bumps and hazards on trails and roads are quickly stamped flat by enormous boots. When traveling through wilderness areas populated by Giant type creatures, movement rates are increased by one category, from Trackless to Road, and from Road to Highway; this increase only applies to movement through Forest or Jungle terrain. In addition to this, there is rarely if ever more than light foliage available for concealment in Giant-populated Forest or Jungle terrain, as low branches are stripped.

**Plant:** Creatures of the Plant type include the majestic, ancient treant and the horrific shambling mound, as well as an endless assortment of unintelligent plants both beneficial and deadly. As with an area inhabited by Fey, a section of wilderness home to Plant type creatures are lush and wild, and those areas tended by one or more treants doubly so. As a natural consequence, the population of herbivores, natural animal predators and insects in the area is likewise increased. As a general rule, an area dominated by Plant type creatures, or which serves as a home to a plant creature at least as powerful as a treant, will have an animal population 50% larger than is normal for the area. The yield of fruit-bearing plants is likewise increased, and flowering plants keep their blooms half again as long as normal.

Movement through Forest or Jungle terrain areas dominated by Plant type creatures is considerably more difficult than normal; reduce movement rates by one step, from Highway to Road, and from Road to Trackless. Likewise, all foliage within such an area is considered to be at least dense, offering three quarters concealment, with some areas so thick with vines, roots and branches that nine tenths concealment is provided.

**Outsider:** The Outsider type includes the horrific demons, the blasphemous devils and the benevolent upper planar guardians known as celestials, as well as a host of other extra-planar entities. Like Constructs and Undead, Outsiders stand outside the natural order, meaning they have no place in the ecology of a normal campaign setting. Because of this, their presence causes immediate, sweeping changes in the wilderness landscape, which makes for unique, memorable outdoor encounters.

A wilderness area which is home to a good-aligned outsider, or group of outsiders, such as a couatl, is likely to be a earthly paradise, a verdant garden of lush plants growing tall, beautiful and strong, and populated by animals which are unusually docile and amenable to contact with humanoids. In such a place, light is supernaturally strong and long-lasting, with sunrise coming a full hour before normal and leaving just as late. Torches, lanterns and fires are similarly strengthened, with a radius and duration 50% higher than is normal. Vegetables and game taken from the area are more nourishing as well, and tastier

besides, with a single ripe apple proving the equal of a multi-course meal; of course, certain outsiders take a dim view of humanoids killing animals for food, and may take steps to rectify the "slight" done to them.

Or the animals may simply take it upon themselves to strike back; the upper planar energy which permeates the land sometimes causes animals to spontaneously *awaken*, as the spell, or infuses their body with holy energy, creating *celestial* and half-celestial beasts.

Those wild places home to demons and devils are literal hells on the mortal plane, twisted and cursed landscapes of congealed darkness, prowled by only the foulest creatures. As above, the extra-planar energies which suffuse the area bring changes to the plant and animal life, but in this case the changes are dark and toxic, crippling the area for all eternity. Plants and fruit-bearing trees are filled to bursting with noxious sap and juices, forcing any non fiendish creature (creatures without the *fiendish* or *half-fiend* template, or those who are not of the lower planes) to succeed at a Fort save against a DC of 13—15 or suffer 1d3 points of temporary Constitution damage. After one year of lower planar infection, even the air within 100 yards of the lower planar beast's lair becomes toxic, requiring a Fort save (DC 12) once each hour to avoid 1 point of temporary Constitution damage. Few untainted animals remain within the affected wilderness; within one year's time, any animal, beast or vermin which lives within the area will have been *awakened*, as by the spell *awaken*, or will have gained the *fiendish* or *half-fiend* template.

**Undead:** Undead, as corpses reanimated by necromantic energy, quite obviously have no place in a normal ecology. In fact, wilderness areas haunted by undead quickly begin to wither and fade, poisoned by the ever-present chill of negative energy. The air and plants within a radius of 100 yards around an area where undead linger is adversely affected in the following ways: plants no longer bloom or bear fruit, the number of Vermin, rats and other scavenger creatures doubles, and the visibility granted from natural light sources is reduced by 50%. Sounds also echo strangely in wilderness areas where undead dwell,



with spontaneous sounds, as the spell *ghost sound* cast by a 12th level caster, manifesting up to once per hour. On the, relatively, positive side, spells which summon or control Vermin, such as *insect plague* and other, similar magics are cast at +1 caster level.

The amount of time necessary for this transformation to occur is equal to 10 years — the undead creature's hit dice, to a minimum of 1 year, with the Hit Die of multiple undead added together to determine the rate of change.

## SPECIFIC CREATURES

In addition to the effects noted above, certain creatures, by virtue of their strange, wondrous, beneficial or deadly abilities, have direct effects on the wilderness environ-

ments they call home. Some of these effects are listed below. Remember that these are just suggestions, and that this is by no means a complete list: simply a sampling of what can be done to make your wilderness encounters that much more exotic and memorable.

**The Allip, the Gibbering Moulder, and Other Madness Causing Monsters:** The allip, the babbling remnant of a maddened soul, and the gibbering moulder, a oozing monstrosity of corrupt flesh with uncounted gnashing, drooling mouths, both have the supernatural ability to drive their opponents to madness with their nonsensical chatter. While their powers are only of short term concern to adventurers forced to bring steel and spell against them, it has long-term detrimental effects on other animals which live within their vicinity; Animals, Beasts and Magical Beasts of Intelligence 3 or less who remain within a 1,000 yard radius of a madness-causing creature's lair for more than a month have a permanent -1 penalty to Will saves, as their mind's defenses are permanently battered by the insanity which permeates the air. Further, spells such as *Speak with Animal* are of limited use when attempting to converse with such damaged creatures; their answers, when they give them, will be confused, contradictory or purely nonsensical. Signs of madness are everywhere within the affected wilderness area, with random claw marks, desperate, barely recognizable bird calls and meandering, staggering tracks everywhere.

**The Ankheg, the Bulette, and Other Burrowing Creatures:** Burrowing creatures of size Large or greater size churn up the soil to such a degree that it affects travel and influences localized growth patterns. When a burrowing creature of sufficient size has laired in a particular area for at least a year, the ground within its territory is softened, reducing the movement of characters with medium or heavy encumbrance by 5 ft a round in combat. Their constant burrowing also destabilizes plant roots; within their territory, grass and small shrubs grow only in small patches, the rest having been churned up or starved long before. A Knowledge (nature) or Wilderness Lore skill check against a DC of 15 will successfully identify the presence of a burrowing creature in the area, but will not reveal specifics of its species.

**Aranea, Giant Spiders and Other Web Spinners:** The lairs of aranea and other, less intelligent web spinners are among the most dangerous wilderness areas a group of adventurers will ever find themselves in; the non-intelligent arachnids especially see no difference between the body fluids of intelligent humanoids and lesser animals. Wilderness areas infested by arachnids will be choked with webs, which, in forested areas, are spun so thick in the tree canopy they block sunlight, reducing visibility in daylight by 25%. Such areas are only lightly populated by non-arachnids, since the spider's webs or traps quickly ensnare unwary animals. Birds, especially, are scarce,

as they are among a giant spider's most preferred foods. Because the animal population is so depleted, plants grow wild and unchecked, choking paths with vines and scrub, and making it extremely difficult to push through the veritable wall of tree branches — reduce all movement rates by one step, to a minimum of Trackless, and give all opponents nine-tenths concealment against ranged attacks when they are within heavy foliage.

Wild places dominated by spiders are also likely places to find both spider eaters and giant wasps, both of whom are a giant spider's natural predators. Hives of more mundane wasps are often found clustered around the nests of their giant counterparts, preying on the hordes of small spiders which scuttle in the footsteps of their bloated cousins.

**The Basilisk, the Medusa, and Other Petrifying Creatures:** Basilisks, medusa and other creatures with the ability to petrify their opponents, such as the gorgon, have catastrophic effects on the local flora and fauna. The boundaries of their territories will be well marked with grisly evidence of their power, in the form of animals and humanoids forever transformed to crumbling, moss covered statues. In most cases, plant life too falls victim to their gaze, with stone-dipped leaves and petrified tree trunks dotting the landscape. The medusa, more intelligent than the rest, sometimes disposes of its kills by hiding their bodies in hollow tree trunks, or beneath soft earth or at the bottom of streams and rivers, so potential victims have no advance warning of an attack. Other medusas, particularly those who only wish to be left alone, sometimes place their victims along roads and trails which pass through their territory, the better to warn off interlopers.

**The Behir and Other Creatures With Elemental Qualities:** Behirs, with their lightning breath, and other creatures capable of unleashing powerful energy-based attacks often leaves clues behind for those who know what to look for. A successful Wilderness Lore skill check against a DC of 15 will uncover small scorch marks, bits of flash-freeze damage, or other, similar signs on foliage, rock and earth. A successful Knowledge (nature) skill check will identify the non-natural origin of these markings, allowing a druid, ranger or similar character to recognize the difference between a tree shattered by lightning in a storm, and one splintered and charred by a behir's breath attack.

**The Ghoul, the Ghast, the Zombie and Other Flesh-Covered Undead:** Wilderness areas overrun by ghouls, zombies or other undead still covered in flesh are infested with Vermin and other carrion eaters. Such places are swarming with flies, beetles, and grubs of all sort, and are also fertile breeding grounds for violet fungi and shriekers, both of which are normally only encountered in underground locales. Oozes too are attracted by

the scent of rotting flesh, with one or more gelatinous cubes living near packs of ghouls or zombies, eagerly gobbling up the bits of flesh which fall from their lips or drip from their rotting limbs. Creatures with the scent ability will not willingly live in an area near a lair of flesh-covered undead.

**Giant Eagles, Giant Owls and Other Enormous Birds:** The presence of giant eagles, owls or other birds of extraordinary size means that the local population of Tiny and Small-sized Animals is reduced to almost non-existent levels, as instinct either causes them to flee or they are devoured by aerial predators. Because of this, the numbers of smaller sized predators, such as wild cats and wolves, are similarly reduced, leaving the large birds as the region's dominant predators. More mundane birds of the giant avian's species are drawn to its territory like moths to flame; they build their nests in close proximity to their larger relative's, and often follow them as a flock.

**Hags:** Hags guard their wilderness lairs jealously, meaning the only large predators and monsters permitted to dwell in the area are those which serve her will. Most hags claim dominion over an area two to five miles square, with a coven holding sway over an area between five and fifteen miles square. Monsters within that area which are too large or powerful to be destroyed or brought under the hag's sway will be carefully watched over by the hags or their servants, and paths will be created that lead to their locations; obvious signs of the presence of monsters will be placed along these paths, to serve as "clues" to lead meddlesome adventurers away from the hags and towards the mighty beasts, the better to remove two obstacles at once. The most fiendishly clever annis and green hags sometimes go a step even beyond that, directing allied evil druids to subtly alter the natural environment itself (growing thin veils of grass or vines over sinkholes and bog pits, or altering the shape of poisonous plants so that they closely resemble harmless species). Hags take great delight in watching hapless travelers fall prey to their subtle traps.

**Nymphs and Satyrs:** Nymphs and satyrs, the embodiment of nature's beauty and the lust of beasts respectively, are fanatic in both their defense of the most pristine and beautiful wildlands and in their pursuit of the opposite sex. The areas around their homes are beautiful even by fey standards, because both nymphs and satyrs take pride in cultivating only the most perfectly-shaped trees and wild flowers. There will be no sign of weeds within a nymph or satyr's chosen territory, and the trees, plants and grass grow strong and free of disease and discoloration. Occasionally, satyr use their pipes to charm a female druid, and persuade her to use magic to alter the shape of the local trees, sculpting them into aesthetically pleasing or useful forms, so that willows will be bent into arching bridges, oaks transformed into winding staircases,

or alders crowned with branches molded into shapely dancing women. Nymphs (who prefer their homes as natural as possible) never do this, and indeed frown on the practice. Satyrs often congregate around nymph grottoes, forcing travelers to run a gauntlet of lustful fey sorcery.

**Troglodytes:** Troglodytes are infamous for the atrocious, barely tolerable stench which constantly oozes from their pores. Animals with the scent ability will not willingly approach within a mile of a troglodyte village, meaning the area will be free of wild dogs, cats, wolves and many other predators. On the other hand, flies and other garbage, and carrion-eating insects gather in great swarms in and around troglodyte territory, leading to an increased numbers of bats and birds.

The stench which hangs over troglodyte territory is so potent and thick that it clings to plants as a greasy film, giving berries and vegetables a noticeable, barely tolerable tang. A successful Wilderness Lore skill check (DC 15) will identify the taste for what it is. During humid summer months, the stink wafts up from the ground and the foliage, so heavy that all who breathe the air must succeed at a Fort skill check against a DC of 10 once an hour, or suffer 1d4 points of temporary Strength damage (as though they had come within close proximity of a troglodyte).

**Trolls:** The troll is among a typical fantasy world's most feared predators, a relentless, nearly unstoppable killing machine which devours any living being unlucky enough to encounter it. Trolls rarely settle into one territory for long, as their relentless appetite and dim intellect causes them to quickly deplete the local animal population with little regard for long term consequences. A wilderness area which has been the hunting ground for one or more trolls for a significant length of time will be nearly depleted of animal life. In the short term, this means opportunities for hunting will be negligible. In the longer term, this means the area will become overgrown as plant life grows thick and wild unchecked by the presence of herbivores. Eventually, the abundance of plant life will result in one of two outcomes; either large numbers of herbivores migrate to the area, bringing with an attendant increase in predators, or Plant type creatures will be drawn to the wild growth, with results as detailed above. In either case, the natural ecology will be disrupted for many years, long after the trolls have been destroyed or moved on.

**Unicorns:** Unicorns consider themselves the guardians of the world's most primal and untouched forests, and defend their homes with lethal force if necessary. A sylvan area protected by a pair or grace of unicorns will be a study in perfect ecological balance, as the unicorns take great pains to ensure that the population of herbivores and predators is maintained at ideal levels. The subtle magic of the unicorn permeates the forest and

invigorates those who live within it. Plants within a unicorn's domain yield 25% more crop than normal, and all Animals, Beasts and Magical Beasts who dwell within its territory possess maximum hit points. The glade where a unicorn sleeps each night is even more strongly affected by its magic; all cure spells are automatically maximized when cast in the glade, and characters who sleep there awaken fully refreshed after only four hours. The benefits of this effect are lost instantaneously when the unicorn is killed.

**Vampires:** Vampires, undead kings of the night, rarely choose to live in the depths of the wilderness, preferring instead to dwell near cities, where their preferred food gathers. Occasionally, however, a vampire will choose to live in the wild lands, hiding itself in the forest depths or other secluded location. Most who choose to do so subsist on the blood of animals, keeping herds of placid herbivores for their convenience, though more enterprising vampires will instead keep herds of cowed humanoids, who, after a few generations, are so cut off from civilization they revert to a primitive state. In any case, the wilderness around a vampire's lair reacts to the dark energy which suffuses it, with results as detailed earlier. But a vampire, more powerful by far than most other undead, has other effects on the natural world. Within a year of a vampire's arrival, wolves, rats, bats, mosquitoes and spiders will begin to gather in great numbers; maddened by the vampire's dark influence, they are always considered hostile, and the DC of any attempt to influence their attitude, whether by the Animal Empathy skill or other means, is increased by 2. Should a vampire remain in one location for a century, the necromantic energy which sustains him will begin to influence the weather. The ambient temperature in a vampire's territory is always 10 degrees lower than normal, thick fog rises each morning regardless of rainfall or temperature, rain storms are always twice as fierce as they are anywhere else, and the sun rises a full half hour later than normal and sets half an hour earlier. A vampire's dark influence extends a radius of one mile for each full century of its unlife, to a maximum 10 mile radius.

## THE HUNT

Here are some basic guidelines to follow when running a scenario where the PCs need, or want, to hunt. In many games, the DM asks for a simple Wilderness Lore check which, at it's most basic, is a simple yet unexciting way to handle this activity. According to the skill, a character can provide food and water for one additional person for every 2 points by which the character's check result exceeds 10. This is good for when a village hunter is gath-

ering a meal for his family by going to the nearby woods or waiting near crops for animals to come and graze. It's also handy to represent an afternoon of good fishing. It's not very exciting or accurate when hunting in the wild while on an adventure, where you won't always have convenient hunting grounds nearby.

Instead of the aforementioned abstraction, the DM can run a short, fully detailed hunting experience without wasting his (or the players') precious adventuring time, yet still making special skills and actions worthwhile. These rules are to simulate non-intelligent Animals and Beasts for the purposes of survival (food, pelts, etc.). Other hunted creatures (such as a hippogriff or manticores) should probably be dealt with individually in an adventure situation.

### GOAL

First, determine what the PC's are hunting. The two important things that may be of concern in a hunting expedition are time and distance. If they want to hunt whatever's available then the DM has the simple chore of rolling on the following table to discover which type of game is in the area, modifying for terrain and climate:

1d20	Prey
1-6	Tiny: game birds, mouse, rabbit, squirrel
7-12	Small: antelope, bobcat, goose, wild dog
13-17	Medium-size: boar, deer, sheep, wild goat
18-20	Large: bear, moose

Once the available prey has been determined, the hunt can be simulated with three steps: finding the hunting ground of the prey, stalking the prey, and engaging the prey.

**Finding the Hunting Grounds:** This is how far away game can be found from camp, or the PC's current location. This area can be found without the need to move at half speed, but it still must be done with some caution. A hunter scouts out a game trail or area, noting signs of territory markings, watering holes, droppings, signs of grazing or foraging, or simple well-traveled animal trails or paths. A successful Wilderness Lore check allows a character to locate the creature's natural surroundings. If he fails, roll on the table below and try again. The time listed after the DC is the minimum amount of time that must be spent scouting an area, whether or not a Wilderness Lore check is successful.

As a general note, herbivores normally gather in larger groups and as are often more plentiful and thus easier to track than predators. Predators have other ways of marking their territory and big cats, for instance, strike from secure or otherwise hidden locations. A hunter tracking a mountain lion is either brave or stupid.

# OUTDOOR SURVIVAL

Size	Herbivore (natural prey)	Carnivore (natural predator)
Tiny	DC 0/1d20 minutes	DC 5/1d2 hours
Small	DC 5/2d10 minutes	DC 10/1d4 hours
Medium	DC 10/3d20 minutes	DC 15/1d6 hours
Large	DC 15/4d20 minutes	DC 20/2d4 hours

**Example:** Mira is hunting for a deer (a medium herbivore). She rolls a Wilderness Lore check and gets an 8, a failure. She rolls 3d20 and gets 25. She rolls her skill check again and gets a 14. She rolls for time again, this time 40. She spend a total of 1 hour and 5 minutes tracking down an area where deer roam.

**Stalking the Prey:** Once the hunter has the found game area, opposed skill checks come into play. The hunter must either 'dig in' and wait for the animal to approach or move about actively hunting the animal. Alternately, the hunter can simply set a trap and return later to see what (if anything) is caught.

**Digging In:** This is getting into position and then luring the animal into the hunter's range, either through simple hiding, using lures or bait or special animal calls. The hunter must make an opposed Stealth check against the animal. To do this, add the hunter's Hide and Move Silently scores together, and add the Animal's Spot and Listen scores together, divide each by half and make opposed rolls. If the check fails, no animal comes within range, wasting 1d3 hours of the hunter's time searching for an adequate place to 'dig in.'

Success allows the hunter to find a suitable brush, ditch, or tree from which to lay in wait which provides visual cover until the animal comes along. If the opposed check succeeds by 10 or more, it also means the hunter is situated downwind from the animal's suspected position (halving the range of an animal's scent ability). It takes a minimum of 1 hour to dig in and wait for prey. After that, check on the table below to see the range to the prey and the additional time spent in wait.

1d20	Range	Time*
1-6	201 - 250 ft.	1d20 minutes
7-10	151 - 200 ft.	2d20 minutes
11-14	101 - 150 ft.	3d20 minutes
15-18	51 - 100 ft.	4d20 minutes
19-20	0 - 50 ft.	5d20 minutes

\* Halve this time for birds, but increase by range by 20-50 ft. to indicate height.

**Active Hunting:** Actively stalking one's prey involves moving closer and closer within visual range in order to fire upon it. To get within good striking range, the hunter makes a successful Wilderness Lore check (DC 15) in order to situate himself downwind from the suspected animal's position (halving the range of an animal's scent ability). Then the hunter must make an opposed Stealth check against the animal. To do this, add the hunter's Hide

and Move Silently scores together, and add the Animal's Spot and Listen scores together, divide each by half and make opposed rolls. If the check fails, the animal is spooked and begins to move at full speed from the hunter. Because of the acute senses of animals and the wary nature of most prey, the animal moves twice its normal distance before the hunter can react.

If successful, determined the range to the prey by comparing the difference of the opposed rolls and referring to the table below.

Success by	Range
0-4	301-350 ft.
5-9	251-300 ft.
10-14	201-250 ft.
15-19	151-200 ft.
20-24	101-150 ft.
25-34	51-100 ft.
35-49	21-50 ft.
50-64	11-20 ft.
65-79	6-10 ft.
80+	5 ft.

The time it takes to actively hunt down an animal is 1d100 minutes minus the success of the Stealth check.

**Setting a Trap:** It takes a Wilderness Lore check to set a successful trap. The DC is based on the size of the trap and thus the size of the creature being trapped. Whether or not the creature is trapped is up to the whim of the DM, but the time is listed below on the same table.

Size	Herbivore (natural prey)	Carnivore (natural predator)
Tiny	DC 15/2d20 minutes	DC 25/1d4 hours
Small	DC 20/4d10 minutes	DC 30/1d6 hours
Medium	DC 25/6d20 minutes	DC 35/1d8 hours
Large	DC 30/2d6 hours	DC 40/3d6 hours

Some examples of animal or beast traps are a deadfall trap, neck snare, netting, steel leg trap, or pit trap. Conversely, the hunter could set a trap and then follow the rules above for Digging In and wait for the trap to be sprung.

**Engaging the Prey:** Once the prey is within range, there are a number of ways to finish the kill.

**Ranged Weapon:** If the prey has not spotted the hunter yet, he may make a ranged attack roll against the animal's AC to hit it. No additional roll is required, but a creature struck in the vitals takes 3d10 minutes to expire and may leave a blood trail as it attempts to leave the area.

**Melee Weapon:** If the prey is not spotted, the hunter gets a surprise round on the animal, effectively refocusing for his Initiative check. If he can reach it by moving or charging, and still attack, he may attack it with a melee weapon, dealing automatic critical damage and applying sneak attack damage if appropriate. In nearly ever case, this will fell a game animal.



If he cannot reach the animal in time, or he does not kill it in one stroke, the prey is allowed a Reflex save (DC equal to hunter's Initiative check), to flee the area. Most prey is fast and surefooted. Even the best hunter would have a hard time running down a fleeing gazelle or moose. And in some cases, a moose will not run from a fight, especially if it believes its young might be harmed. How the animal reacts is ultimately up to the DM, but this chapter details the reaction of the "fight or flight" mentality of animals that should be taken into account.

**Magic:** Spells can be cast against the animal, but if it has somatic or verbal components the hunter must make yet another Move Silently (for verbal) or Hide (somatic) check against the animal's Listen or Spot check (or, if the spell has both, a single Stealth roll as described above). Failure indicates the animal has fled the scene and is lost.

Alternately, if the hunter has no weapon, he can try to force or scare the animal over a cliff or into a preset pit trap. The hunter makes an Intimidate skill check, setting the DC for the animal's Will save. If the animal fails, it flees in the direction the hunter intended, perhaps running straight into a tripline. However, if the prey succeeds, it runs in a random direction. Obviously a group effort here could prove very useful. A minimum of 5 hunters can automatically guide an animal over a cliff or ledge and 10 hunters can automatically guide an animal into a pit or ditch.

## WILDERNESS ADVENTURES

Many DMs prefer to push long journeys in the wilds to the background. The characters set off from town and arrive at the dungeon entrance without any delays or hassles. This method works fine for some. If you want the action to focus on dungeons, city adventures, and other areas, there's no reason to roleplay the long hours spent on the road or include monsters that rampage across the countryside unchecked. On the other hand, such encounters and adventures show the PCs that the world is a wide place filled with a variety of dangers. Even a simple trip over the hills north of town can be a dangerous proposition of giants, ogres, and dragons dwelling there. Many players find it unrealistic that dungeons would be filled with dangerous monsters, but the countryside is perfectly safe for travelers. After all, monsters can exit dungeons just as easily as the characters can enter them.

Adding the wilderness to your campaign increases your available options in designing encounters and gives you a chance to develop your campaign world beyond a small town and the dungeons near it. Furthermore, some people grow bored of dungeons. The possibilities and options offered by adventures in the wilderness are a nice change of pace from stone corridors, wooden doors, pit traps, and other dungeon features.

## THE FLOW OF EVENTS

Wilderness adventures offer a variety of challenges and obstacles that dungeons avoid by their very nature. In a dungeon, the characters can only go in a limited number of directions. If a corridor ends in a stone wall, only a secret door or a powerful spell can allow the characters to continue forward. In the wilderness, these barriers are much harder to put in place. During an adventure that takes place in a forest, the characters could theoretically wander off in any direction. A dungeon presents a clear progression of encounters. The characters defeat the monsters in an outer guardroom, avoid a few traps and ambushes in the corridors beyond that chamber, then battle the creatures that dwell within the inner vaults. The dungeon map serves as a flowchart of possible encounters. In the wilderness, the characters can wander off in any direction, making it much harder to predict the order in which the characters meet the challenges you design.

Establishing a predictable flow can be an important part of an adventure. If you want a nasty troll to serve as the climax of an adventure, it isn't much fun if the characters stumble upon that monster while crashing through the woods. Worst of all, you may have a druid NPC who can provide the characters with a flaming sword to defeat the monster. Some DMs like to chart their adventures out like timelines, building a series of encounters that form a coherent plot for the characters to experience. Others prefer to construct environments for the players to explore. In either case, how you place encounters is a critical part of designing an adventure no matter how you normally run your games.

One method to overcome the openness of wilderness adventures is to establish an event timeline. In this style of adventure design, encounters are tied to a specific time in the characters' journey. Perhaps a group of bandits has followed the PCs from town in order to ambush and rob them once they are far from civilization. But, on the third night of travel, the robbers attack. This event occurs no matter where the PCs travel since the bandits follow them wherever they go. Other events can be tied to environmental conditions or a villain's actions. An enemy spellcaster could use *scrying* to locate the PCs then dispatch a squad of his flying minions to attack them. Since this event is driven by an NPC's actions, the villain's timing (rather than the PCs' actions) determines when the encounter comes to pass.

Other timed events could be related to changes in the environment. You can decide ahead of time the weather conditions the characters can meet during their journey. If you note that on the third day of travel a terrible storm caused by a rogue air elemental hammers the PCs with lightning bolts, that event occurs unless the PCs find shelter for that day.

Timed events illustrate that forces beyond the characters' control (especially active ones such as allied or enemy NPCs) still play a role in the campaign world. Events should occur for good reasons that are driven by logical forces. In this manner, you can advance the adventure not only by providing the characters with a challenge but also giving them hints about the active force that is behind the attack or obstacle. A landslide that blocks a mountain trail can be an annoyance, but if it was caused by a gang of hill giants who received a hefty bribe from a shadowy figure for their work, the event suddenly takes on a much more sinister aura. The characters must not only clear the path, but if they encounter the giants and question them, they must now consider who could be working against them. Furthermore, such a development can increase the tension as the characters must now worry if their unknown malefactor has more threats to deploy against them. A routine journey from one town to another could turn into a dangerous gauntlet of obstacles if a villain sees that journey as a chance to destroy the PCs once and for all.

Another option is placing unavoidable events before the PCs. Since the players do not have knowledge of your notes, they never know if the ogre camp they encountered happened to be on their path or not. In this case, design a few encounters and run them at opportune moments, modifying your map to match the path the characters take. Instead of charting out an area and placing encounters within it before the game starts, you mold and sculpt the details to fit the characters' actions. This method has its strengths and weaknesses. Some DMs and players prefer a more robust, realistic environment where exploration and chance play a larger role. For such groups, this wholesale editing of the game environment can betray the joy of discovery and the feel of a real, breathing world to explore. In other cases, the players may resent the fact that their choices have no real bearing on events in the game. Whether the characters follow the major road through the forest in a bid to save time or move through the trees in order to remain concealed, they encounter the same creatures in the same order. However, over time the players may grow frustrated that despite excellent planning they always stumble into monsters or important NPCs.

The other extreme is to place encounter areas on a wilderness map and allow the characters to travel where they wish. The PCs could spend an entire game session trampling through the woods, never running into anything of note or encountering monsters. On the other hand, unlucky groups could stumble into encounter after encounter, turning a routine trip across the countryside into a harrowing gauntlet. This method has the advantage that the players' choices and plans have a major impact in shaping how the adventure progresses. Their decisions

determine which encounters they uncover and help breed a sense of mystery and wonder as the players can never be sure what lies beyond the next hill. On the other hand, it can lead to frustration if the characters pick a path that avoids any of the design encounters or landmarks. The players might become bored, while all the work put into designing the bypassed encounters goes to waste.

A nice compromise between the two methods is to mix them together. When designing a wilderness area, break it down into a set of zones or paths the characters can follow. You can then divide those paths into smaller zones, each of which is linked to an event that occurs when the PCs enter the area or a specific location within the zone that the PCs can discover. In essence, this method is similar to noting the exact location of several encounters on the map. However, instead of confining an encounter to the specific space it covers, it allows an encounter to encompass a much wider area. The PCs can wander across the map and make decisions that have a real impact on the adventure's development, while having a much higher chance of walking into the encounters you design.

### WEATHER

The DMG has all the basic rules for weather. Consult it for rules on wind, snow, ice, and rain. It also includes a table you can use to randomly determine the weather (or use the *Toolbox*). With those rules as a starting point, you can plot out weather effects and make plans to use the weather as an important factor in an adventure.

To start with, avoid overusing strange or extreme weather. It gets old fast if the characters are hit with a blizzard or hurricane every time they journey out into an adventure. Weather should add an additional danger to the game or occasionally enhance adventure design. For example, the adventure begins with the description of a lingering, heavy rainstorm that saturates an area with water. Later, the PCs must pursue a villain along a country road only to find that a key bridge has been washed out, forcing the PCs to take another route. In this way, weather adds an unexpected complication to an adventure.

Perhaps, during the winter months, the characters could trek to a dungeon and spend several days within it adventuring. When they finally leave the dungeon, they return to the surface to find that a blizzard has dumped three feet of snow on the area. Typical fantasy game world, are void of snow plows to clear the roads. Nor are spellcasters capable of predicting the weather common enough to make their services available to everyone. Play on that sense of the unknown by describing gathering clouds and other obvious signs of a change in the weather. Any wilderness expedition must pay attention to weather conditions, and a storm that continues for a few days can grind a group of travelers to a halt and force them to dig into their rations.

## UTILIZING THE ENVIRONMENT

One of the major factors in outdoor adventures is the threat posed by the environment. Extreme weather, rock-slides, and dense undergrowth can pose just as much danger as the traps and monsters the PCs encounter in a dungeon. The easiest way to introduce complications and variables into a wilderness adventure is to bring the environment and the conditions it inflicts on the characters to the forefront of a game.

When planning an adventure, consult the appropriate chapter of this book (and the section below) and read the rules given for the terrain in question. A trip through the swamp is much more dangerous if the characters must worry about disease and deep, thick mud. The modifiers and rules are meant to add depth to an encounter. They allow you to use the rules to enforce the advantages or hindrances that terrain presents to heroes and monsters.

The first and most important rule you should remember is that almost any environmental factor can be expressed as a circumstance bonus. The greater the advantage a factor grants, the higher the circumstance bonus it confers. For disadvantageous conditions, the circumstance penalty increases with the severity of the condition. The following descriptions summarize the different levels of circumstance bonuses you can award. You can use these guidelines when assessing penalties or bonuses to attacks, checks, and saves.

**Minor Bonus (+1):** The environment is conducive to the action, but it does not consistently apply. A +1 bonus represents the average advantage a character gains over the course of an action. For example, a ranger using Wilderness Lore to track a creature may receive a +1 circumstance bonus for infrequent, isolated patches of mud where his quarry left fresh tracks. The advantage the mud grants isn't consistent, since the ranger has to follow the tracks from one puddle to the next, but the clear signs are enough to help him in his efforts.

**Standard Bonus (+2):** The environmental effect consistently applies to a character over the course of an action. A ranger using Wilderness Lore to track a creature would receive a +2 circumstance bonus to his check if his opponent wears thick, heavy boots that leave distinctive tracks. The boot prints are a consistent sign he can rely on while tracking.

**Major Bonus (+4):** With the aid of this environmental factor, a novice with 4 ranks in a skill is assured of success against a DC 10 at least 75% of the time. This environmental factor is not only consistent, but it helps cancel some of the traits that could work against success. A ranger tracking a foe bleeding from several wounds might receive a +4 circumstance bonus to his Wilderness Lore check. His target leaves clear marks even on rocky terrain where he would not normally leave footprints.

**Minor Penalty (-1):** The environment hinders the character's effort, but the factors playing against him are not a continual nuisance. A ranger tracking an opponent might suffer a -1 penalty if his opponent occasionally moves across a rocky area or another short section of hard ground. The terrain is not hard enough to justify an increase to the DC, but it does sometimes hinder the ranger's efforts.

**Standard Penalty (-2):** The environmental factor consistently applies to and hinders the character's efforts. A ranger who wants to track a single, specific person walking with a large group of travelers would suffer a -2 circumstance penalty to his Wilderness Lore check, as the additional tracks muddle and confuse the signs he seeks.

**Major Penalty (-4):** The drawback is serious enough that a even a routine skill check (DC 10) becomes almost as challenging to handle as a difficult one. While the challenge the character must overcome remains the same, his abilities are consistently and severely hindered. A ranger trying to track an opponent who can fly for short periods of time each day would face this penalty. For substantial portions of the trail, the ranger has no signs to rely on.

**Concealment, Cover, and Hiding:** Cover and concealment improves a character's AC or allows him a flat chance to avoid an attack respectively. Logically, it follows that such circumstances would also grant a bonus to Hide checks. Since, for purposes of hiding, cover and concealment have the same net effect (a character is harder to see whether he hides behind a rock wall or within a thick fog bank) both factors use the same set of modifiers.

Concealment/Cover	Hide Circumstance Bonus
One-quarter	+1
One-half	+2
Three-quarters	+4
Nine-tenths	+8

Characters with total cover or concealment cannot be noticed using Spot. In such cases, it is simply impossible for an observer to see a character.

**Elevation:** The standard modifier for elevation is a +1 bonus for an attacker who stands on higher ground. In most cases this rule is enough to make elevation a factor in combat, but in some circumstances additional detail can help make an encounter unique and challenging.

Remember that reach can allow a creature to strike opponents that would otherwise be out of range of a melee attack. An ogre with a reach of 10 ft. can reach upward to strike a target sitting in a tree, while his foe could not necessarily fight back unless he, too, had reach. A creature with reach can, as a rule of thumb, attack creatures that are a distance up to its reach above its position (i.e., an ogre can attack a gnome standing on a ledge 10 ft. above the ground). In most cases, a creature standing on a ledge, tree branch, or similar edge gains quarter-cover

against opponents who attack it from below. Obviously, a creature can always step back away from the edge to break line of sight to enemies below it.

Attacks from above can strike with surprise more often than those launched from ground level. A group of adventures traveling through a forest might watch for opponents who approach between the tree trunks while neglecting to look out for snipers in the branches above them. A creature that launches an attack from above gains a +4 bonus to its initiative if its opponents are not surprised. Otherwise, resolve the surprise round and subsequent Initiative checks as normal. This bonus represents the middle ground between complete surprise and a sudden attack from an unexpected quarter.

A character could jump from a height to land on an opponent as an attack. Using his weight and momentum, the attacker launches himself through the air like a living missile. These attacks are risky but potentially devastating. The attacker suffers falling damage as normal. The defender sustains damage based on the attacker's size and the distance he fell. If the defender is the same size as the attacker, he takes 1d6 damage per 10 feet the attacker fell. This damage die increases to 1d8 if the attacker is one or two size categories larger and 1d10 if he is three or more categories bigger. On the other hand, relatively small creatures have less chance of scoring a decisive attack. If the attacker is one or two categories smaller, he inflicts 1d4 damage per 10 feet fallen. Attackers three or more categories smaller than the defender inflict no damage.

As an optional rule, determine damage using the attacker's weight. A creature that weighs 30 to 100 lbs. inflicts 1d4 damage per 10 feet it falls. From 101 to 200 lbs. a creature inflicts 1d6 damage, 201 to 500 lbs. attackers inflict 1d8, and those heavier than 500 lbs. inflict 1d10 per 10 feet fallen. Note that these damage totals are less than those assigned for falling stone blocks and similar traps. For simplicity's sake, assume a living creature is not as optimal a crushing device as a boulder or a stone block.

**Falling Projectiles:** In a variety of situations, the characters could transform the terrain into a weapon. A brawny fighter might push a boulder down a slope towards a mob of goblins. A cunning ranger could fell a tree to land atop a passing hill giant. In either case, a character uses the weight and speed of a heavy object to hammer an opponent. As a rule of thumb, a falling object deals damage as described in the rules for a leaping attack under elevation. For particularly solid or dense items, such as stone blocks or boulders, increase the base damage die by one type. To determine the distance an object has "fallen" for purposes of using those rules, divide the distance the object moved before striking its target by half. The result is the distance it "fell" when applying those rules.

## WANDERING MONSTERS

Since the wilderness is an open environment with a wide variety of animals and plants present within it, the characters may blunder into a group of monsters, humanoids, or dangerous animals purely by chance. Wandering monsters have been staples of fantasy games since their genesis. While in a closed dungeon that idea that creatures wander about unaccounted for by the encounter key may not always be realistic, random encounters work well in an outdoor setting. A tribe of goblins on a hunting expedition could pick up the party's trail, while a group of bandits could happen to make their camp right on the PCs' path through the woods. This section gives you ideas and guidelines for constructing random encounter tables.

The first factor you need to consider is how frequently the characters might encounter random monsters. As a rule of thumb, you should check for encounters once per hour. Increase or decrease the number of encounters to reflect a more dangerous or less populated area. However, decreasing the rate makes random encounters almost an afterthought, while making checks more often could cause the PCs to be overwhelmed by an endless parade of monsters. The best way to reflect the population level in an area is to alter the chance that an encounter occurs.

Each 5% chance is an encounter per day. Generally speaking, it is best to restrict the chance for a random encounter to 10%. As you can imagine, increasing it can lead to more encounters than a party can handle during the course of a day. However, if the wilderness area does not include any keyed encounter areas or you do not have any battles planned for the session, a higher rate of random encounters can work out well. Sometimes, you might use nothing but random encounters to provide the opposition for an adventure if the crux of the scenario does not revolve around combat. This allows you to spend more time and creative energy on roleplaying and problem-solving encounters than combat.

Once you have chosen the rate at which encounters occur, design the random encounter table to determine exactly what the characters meet. Designing a random encounter table is a lot more work than simply slapping a list of monsters together. There are two basic steps you need to work through. Decide what types of monsters appear in the area the random encounter table covers and figure out the relative proportion of the different monster types. The two processes go hand in hand: you may want to make one creature type very common but introduce several different variations in how the PCs can encounter it. For instance, if orcs infest the North Glen, your table of ten random encounters may include six different orc entries including a war party, hunting group, patrol, scavengers, ambushers, and foragers.

Choosing monsters requires several important decisions regarding wilderness design. The first issue concerns the CRs of the creatures you want to use. Some DMs prefer to let realism and coherence dictate the monsters that dwell within the wilderness. If the forest west of town is infested with trolls, the characters find trolls there whether they are 1st-level neophytes who made a wrong turn off a logging trail or a band of battle-hardened veterans seeking arcane lore. This design philosophy makes your game world feel more realistic and lends some sense of accomplishment to the players when their characters become powerful enough to venture into dangerous areas that were previously too deadly for them. On the other hand, it can make the game less enjoyable if the characters make a simple mistake and blunder into a deadly encounter because of luck's vagaries. Furthermore, once the PCs attain higher levels random encounters become an annoying distraction as they pause to hack apart a few, puny goblins looking for easy prey.

Your other option is to tailor a random encounter table's CRs to the party's level. This ensures that random encounters pose an appropriate threat to the characters. The PCs are still threatened by an encounter, but they shouldn't be overwhelmed by it. This solves both ends of the problem, with low level parties never pushed into situations that are far over their heads and high level ones facing monsters that keep the game exciting. On the other hand, it may cause some problems with believability and stability in your campaign. You may have to redesign tables as the characters gain levels, while the players may get the sense that they can venture anywhere without any real fear of meeting a powerful monster. This metagame thinking can wreck a campaign, as the players make decisions based on what they think you want to do as DM, not on the situation presented to them in the game. For example, if you describe a forest as haunted by undead monsters, the players may think you are intentionally trying to steer them away from there. That could lead them to march right into what should be a daunting environment, confident that you, as DM, would never hit them with an encounter far beyond their abilities. Tailoring threats to the characters' level in all situations helps breed metagame thinking if the players catch on to your design decisions.

As is true in most cases, a middle ground between these two options is usually best. Relying on a realistic or logical assessment of the monsters without regard to character level is best used for areas that you do not expect the characters to visit. If the PCs blunder off into the wilds without a plan, they may pay a steep price. Furthermore, this method allows you to keep the characters on a predictable path. Regions infested with dangerous monsters can help dissuade the players from wandering into areas that you have not yet designed while still giving your campaign a realistic, coherent feel. In contrast, if you plan

on running adventures in a specific wilderness area, create a random encounter table that fits with the party's level. This method gives the best of both worlds: a coherent, realistic campaign setting and encounters that are consistently balanced against the characters' power.

A further option is to include a wide range of CRs in a single table. When the party has a random encounter, they could meet anything from an easily overwhelmed creature to a powerful, terrifying beast that sends them running for cover. This option can potentially bring your campaign to a screeching halt with a single die roll, but it could also allow for some dramatic, memorable game sessions. Sometimes, forcing the characters to cope with the occasional powerful beast pushes them to find more interesting, inventive methods to handle an encounter. You can also work this disparity into your campaign. If a green dragon lives in the hills outside of town, the players will worry every time they have to move through them to reach a dungeon or travel to a nearby village. Don't use the presence of powerful creatures on your encounter tables as an excuse to butcher the characters. Instead, such an encounter could consist of a single, fly-by attack, the sound of the creature's roar in the distance, or the discovery of its previous victims. If the characters meet a powerful creature and manage to escape without losses, award them XP for defeating a creature whose CR equals their average level.

Once you have determined the general CR of the creatures on your random encounter table, you must now determine exactly which monsters to add to it. The key to this step lies in picking monsters that are suitable to the climate and the campaign. For example, a forest known to be infested with kobolds should feature those humanoids as a major part of any encounter table. There are a few different spins you can put on random encounters:

**The Dominant Monster:** Pick one specific creature type that is at the top of the area's food chain. This could be a humanoid race that rules the area or an animal that uses the region as its personal hunting grounds. These creatures represent up to half the possible random encounters and usually come in different forms when encountered. A humanoid tribe may have war parties, raiders, scouts, hunters, and traders active in the area. A monster type could appear in variable numbers or in different sizes. You can add HD to a creature to present powerful or noteworthy predators.

**Ecology:** Design a simple ecology and use that as the basis for your random encounter tables. Predators should dominate the list of creatures the party might encounter. Pick out the animals or monsters that would be most likely to attack humans and use them to create your table.

**Wild Kingdom:** In this option, mundane animals (defined as those found in the real world) dominate the area. A few magical or strange creatures might wander

about, but the numbers of bears, tigers, wolves, and so forth dwarfs them. This choice makes sense for areas where monsters are rare or in campaigns where strange, magical beasts are meant to be noteworthy opponents. Any creature with the animal type, and to a lesser extent those classified as beasts, should form the bulk of the encounter table if you want to use this option.

Once you have picked out the monsters that are to appear on your random encounter table, you need to put the actual table together. All things being equal, every monster should have the same chance of coming up on a random die roll. The easiest die to use with an encounter table is a 1d100. This choice makes it easy to think about the percentage chance that the party can encounter a specific creature. If on your table the PCs meet a pack of ghouls on a roll of 1 to 5 on 1d100, you know that there is a 5% chance that the ghouls appear as a random encounter. With this in mind, you can manipulate the percentages to reflect the relative frequency of the different encounters.

For example, the Yellow Hills are home to several bands of hobgoblins. In addition, the green dragon Gyrthyr uses that region as a hunting ground. Since the hobgoblins are active and aggressive, they should form about half the random encounters. Gyrthyr is very powerful and should be a very rare encounter. In addition to those monsters, krenshars, stirges, giant bees, dire weasels, ankhegs, dire badgers, and hippogriffs all appear at roughly the same frequency in the hills.

1d100	Creature	Number	EL
1 – 7	Ankheg	1	3
8 – 14	Dire badger	1	2
15 – 21	Dire weasel	2	4
22 – 28	Giant bee	4	2
29 – 43	Hobgoblin patrol	6	3
44 – 58	Hobgoblin hunters	4	2
59 – 68	Hobgoblin scouts	5	3
69 – 73	Hobgoblin raiders	8	4
74 – 78	Hobgoblin foragers	4	2
79 – 85	Hippogriff	1	2
86 – 92	Krenshar	2	2
93 – 99	Stirge	4	2
100	Gyrthyr (green dragon)	1	12

Using this table, the characters have an equal chance of meeting hobgoblins or other creatures. The green dragon appears rarely, but its CR ensures that when it does the PCs will notice. The different hobgoblin bands could be outfitted with different equipment and tactics. The patrol may be standard hobgoblins, while the hunters could wear lighter armor but carry better missile weapons and possess such feats as Point Blank Shot. The scouts may simply shadow the PCs for a time, hoping to attack them when they least expect it. The raiders carry heavier weapons and might have a few escorts or some recently claimed booty. Finally, the foragers might be unarmed.

When they see the PCs they simply flee. If the characters capture one or more of them, they could learn the location of the hobgoblins' stronghold. By injecting a few unique elements into different encounters with the same creature, you can add depth and utility to an encounter table without spending too much time working on it.

## WILDERNESS ENCOUNTERS

When running combat encounters in the wilderness, you can create more interesting battles by making terrain an important factor in combat. During a fight in a forest, there should be plenty of trees around to block line of sight and provide cover. In the mountains, the characters may have to cope with enemy archers who lurk atop a cliff or a gang of ogres who roll rocks towards them down a steep slope. This section addresses the design and implementation of specific wilderness encounters. The advice given here is meant to help make that transition if you're a novice DM or help with new ideas in creating encounters if you're an experienced one.

### Using Terrain

Focus on how to improve the monsters' abilities rather than looking for ways to negate the characters' feats, spells, and skills. One of the most enjoyable parts of the game for some players is designing and customizing their characters. If you consistently take steps to eliminate the abilities the players have chosen, you make their characters less effective and therefore less fun to play. Instead, look at terrain and factors that can improve the monsters' abilities. That way, the players can still make full use of their abilities while facing a challenging encounter. This doesn't mean that you can never use environmental factors or terrain that hinders the PCs. Sometimes a feat or skill fails to provide any real advantage. However, avoid foiling or defeating the PCs' abilities the focus and goal of your work.

This section lists a few common strengths and weaknesses and how to support or overcome them in wilderness encounters.

**Area of Effect Abilities:** The key to an area of effect ability is that the more targets it can affect in one use, the more total damage it can inflict against the party. This factor leads to something of a contradiction in how these abilities are best put to use. Open areas allow an area of effect ability to extend to its full size and grant its user a clear field of fire. However, the party can easily scatter to avoid placing themselves in its radius. On the other hand, confined areas force the party to bunch up but tend to present more cover and restrict line of sight. The best way to counter these factors is to use elevation to the monsters' advantage. Hills, cliffs, and slopes restrict movement without necessarily granting cover. A spellcaster perched on the edge of the cliff above the path can peer over the side and unleash his spells. Meanwhile, the characters are

trapped on the path unless they have spells or abilities that allow them to leap to safety. They could run up or down the path, but in either case they are forced to remain close together unless they want to head in opposite directions.

You can gain similar effects with bridges, roads leading through thick, dense forests, the low ground between hills, and so on. The key is that the terrain restricts movement without blocking line of sight.

**Fliers:** Flying creatures are at their best in the outdoors. With the open space they are free to maneuver and attack without restriction. Obviously, it is important to use them in areas that do not provide a lot of cover unless the fliers are small. Trees can protect the party from griffons and similar creatures, as they cannot swoop down through the forest canopy to attack. In essence, they are forced to behave like ground creatures. At their best, flying monsters can use hit-and-run tactics to strike the PCs. Furthermore, they can always simply fly away to rest and recover if the battle goes poorly. Areas with dense cover against flying creatures can foil both of these advantages.

**Mobs:** Creatures that rely on numbers to overwhelm their enemies rely on open space. The more avenues of attack open to them, the easier it is for them to bring their numbers to bear. Typically, if you can use a lot of monsters in a balanced fight, the characters outclass them in terms of base attack bonus and AC. Thus, it is important for them to surround and flank the PCs in order to give themselves the best chance of making a successful attack. Since an open area makes missile fire and area effect spells useful against large groups, you need to ensure that the creatures can advance to the characters without taking too many casualties. Give them some cover to hide in, either to launch an ambush or to spring upon the characters before they can make full use of their ranged attacks. The shorter the distance between the monsters and the PCs at the start of the encounter, the better chance they have of bringing their numbers to bear.

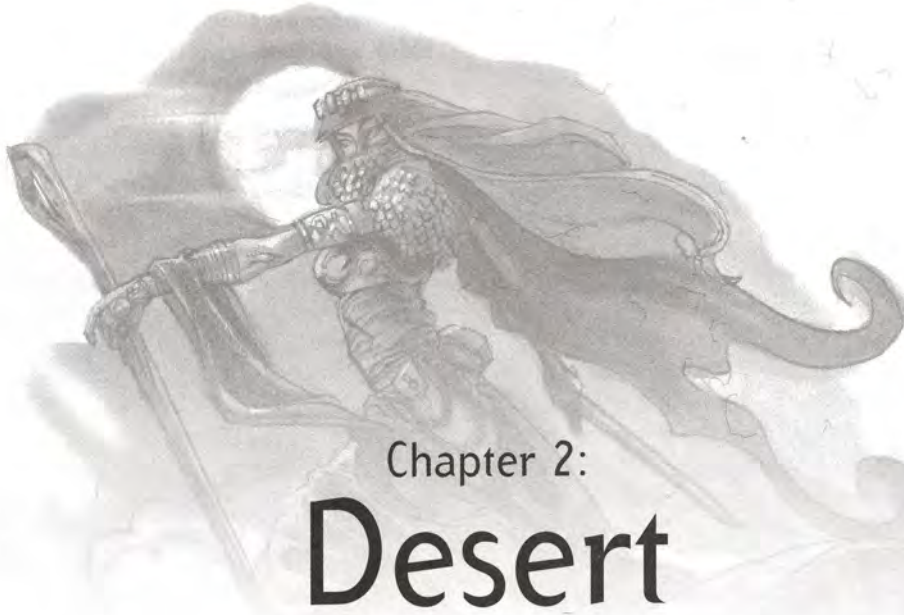
**Ranged Attackers:** Monsters that rely on keeping their enemies at a distance benefit from terrain that blocks all movement while leaving line of sight clear. A stone wall, for example, allows a group of goblin archers to take cover from melee and missile attacks while firing upon the characters. In the wilderness, trees, rocks, debris, and even snow all provide convenient cover for bowmen and monsters that rely on ranged strikes. Features that can block movement, such as chasms, pits, deep rivers, and cliffs, protect archers from melee attacks and force the party to take cover and respond with spells or missile fire. Such extreme measures should only come into play in special circumstances, as most creatures can benefit from cover that provides a few extra rounds of fire. Denying the party the ability to make close quarters attacks is an extreme measure that eliminates their abilities and penalizes characters that are not optimized for ranged combat.

**Small Groups of Creatures:** Typically, if you can only use a few creatures in a balanced encounter the individual monsters are powerful enough to stand against the characters in direct combat. The key in these situations is to allow the monsters to fight without succumbing to sneak attacks and other maneuvers that exploit their small numbers. Tight, constrained quarters allow such creatures to approach the party under cover and use the terrain to shield their flanks and rear. Otherwise, the party can quickly surround and defeat a creature such as a giant or dragon. With the party and the monster so evenly matched, any advantage the characters gain can quickly shift the encounter in their favor. Dense forest terrain works very well in these situations, as a creature could use the trees to gain concealment against ranged attacks. Once they close to melee, trees break up the party's attacks and restrict the number of PCs that can surround and fight them.

Tight, constrained paths of movement also work well for these creatures. A winding mountain path, a narrow patch of firm ground in a swamp, or a bridge spanning a chasm all make it possible for a creature to take on the characters one at a time. With only a narrow space available, a creature can choose a choke point where the PCs are unable to swarm it.

**Spellcasters:** Creatures and NPCs that rely on spells or spell-like abilities are in most ways much like those who use ranged attacks. They need cover to shield themselves from the party's missile fire and find tremendous benefit from terrain that blocks all movement. Like creatures that use area attacks, they also function best when their opponents do not have terrain they can use to shield themselves from attacks or scatter too wide to make area attacks useful. Spellcasters are also more flexible than simple archers, granting them abilities that can radically change the tone of an encounter. Spells that improve a creature's mobility, such as *fly* or *dimension door* work very well in areas that restrict mundane movement. The PCs could charge an enemy wizard only to watch as he uses a spell to escape. Meanwhile, a mob of powerful monsters corners them.

**Stealthy Creatures:** Creatures with good total bonuses in Hide and Move Silently or NPC rogues need terrain to help them creep close to the party before making their attack. While trees and bushes may seem like obvious choices for terrain, these features do nothing to mask noise. Most terrain allows a creature to keep out of sight but does nothing to help it remain quiet. Howling winds, the loud splashes of a waterfall or swift running river, and similar diversions can cause penalties to the characters' Listen checks, allowing quiet monsters to move close before striking. The terrain should also be tight and closed. Since at some point the creatures must leap out to attack, they need the terrain to cover them as close to the characters as possible. A creature can move as stealthily as possible, but its efforts are wasted if it must leap from cover and run a hundred feet to make its first attack.



## Chapter 2: Desert

### THE DESERT ENVIRONMENT

Arid deserts can be divided into three types — stony deserts, wastelands dominated by rocky mesas and broken stone; sand seas, the famous vistas of rolling dunes; and salt flats, harsh plains that were once the beds of now-vanished seas. All deserts share certain features, notably terrible heat, a blistering lack of water, and a general hostility to almost all life. Unless otherwise noted, all of the features below can be found in any type of desert.

#### BARCHAN DUNES (SAND SEAS)

These are crescent-shaped dunes shaped by the desert wind. The windward side of the dune is hardened by the constant winds, while the lee side is much softer and indistinct. Barchan dunes can vary greatly in size.

Characters fighting on a barchan dune's leeward side do not get any bonuses for a height advantage over opponents — the sand is too soft and unstable, and slides downslope at the slightest pressure. Characters may make a DC 10 Balance check to ignore this effect. The loose sand and plentiful cover provides a +2 Circumstance bonus to Hide checks.

#### SALT FLATS (SALT FLATS)

Salt flats are the beds of long-vanished seas. Where once there were deep oceans, now there is nothing but vast dry expanses of salt-encrusted ground. Salt flats are extremely dry and lifeless, and even less hospitable than other desert regions. Characters travelling in a salt flat suffer from even more intense thirst than in other desert

regions, and may also be blinded by sunlight. Furthermore, things lost to the ocean many ages ago may have survived and returned to the light of day. Ancient underwater cities, the shades of the drowned, or cyclopean tombs may rest beneath the encrusted salt ground.

#### WADIS (STONY DESERTS)

Sometimes, rare rainstorms sweep the desert. For a few brief hours, greenery blooms amid the rocks. The water runs down and collects in the wadis, which are narrow channels in the desert floor. In a rainstorm, the dry channel quickly becomes a rushing river. Creatures caught in a wadi may be washed away by the water.

#### MESAS (STONY DESERT)

Towering pillars of stone, the shadows of mesas reach across the wastes like grasping fingers. They are extremely steep, and the DC to climb a mesa is 15.

Mesas make excellent watchtowers and refuges. Colonies of azer on the prime plane hollow out mesas and use them as fortresses. The azer's mining efforts often attract sand worms, which follow the vibrations made by picks and shovels. To destroy troublesome worms, the azer dig underneath mined-out mesas, then summon the worms to the surface by tethering goats to a post and letting the sound of their hooves echo through the ground. When the worm rises, azer engineers collapse the trapped mesa on top of the worm (and the poor goats), crushing it beneath thousands of tons of stone. That usually kills it. Some cruel azer have been known to substitute more succulent creatures for the goats.



**OASES (STONY DESERTS OR SAND SEAS)**

Wherever there is water in the desert, there is life. Oases are places where water is comparatively plentiful, and therefore life crowds them. An oasis might be a shallow, dust-choked pool of water at the bottom of a depression used as a watering hole by camels, or a small lake surrounded by a riot of plant life.

Every oasis, except those in lost in the deepest desert, will be watched or inhabited by something.

Most major oases are either home to a community, or else watched by a powerful entity – some are protectors, others are predators, feeding on creatures who come to drink. Communities at an oasis are made up of traders and former nomads who are too old or sick to travel. Such trading posts are vital links between the roaming tribes of nomads, and rare wonders from the depths of the desert can be purchased there. Trading posts are also an excellent place to hire guides or mercenaries. Anyone attacking or attempting to despoil an oasis will earn the enmity of thousands of nomads.

Other oases are under the care of a powerful druid. Some druidic sects believe that one oasis contains a magical seed that shall bring the deserts bursting into life and growth. Until the seed is found, every oasis must be guarded. These druids care little for who visits their oases, but react with fury if anyone puts their charges in danger. Dryad-like spirits haunt other oases. These spirits are rarely dangerous, unless one takes a fancy to a particular visitor. If a spirit falls in love, she will invisibly sabotage the equipment of the travelers, or use trickery to split them apart. She desires to keep the object of her fancy in the oasis forever, so she ruins his ability to cross the desert. The oasis spirits are fundamentally good-hearted, though, and will relent if the object of their desire grows angry with them.

The janni are a more dangerous sort of spirit, and they also haunt oases. Janni tribes will often claim an oasis as their private watering hole, and leave a guard to watch over it and drive off invaders. The janni guards keep lionesses or serpents as watch-beasts, training them using *Speak to Animals* and preparing them for battle using *Enlarge*.

Predatory beasts that dwell in an oasis include dire felines, dragonnoses, and hieracosphinxes. Such creatures are intelligent enough to wait until prospective victims have encamped at the oasis and have relaxed. They also attack when the victim is away from the water's edge, to avoid decaying bodies fouling the water.

**DESERT RUINS**

Travelers sometimes come across signs of once-mighty civilizations in the depths of the sands. The endless winds might expose the worn face of a massive fallen statue, or a network of foundations and streets that mark the former site of a vast lost city. No matter how great the accomplishments of a civilization, the sands will one day engulf it.

Some mighty kings of old sought to escape this fate. Ages ago, slaves built vast pyramidal tombs for them, who were then mummified and buried with all their wealth and treasures. The pyramidal shape of the tombs combines with powerful hieroglyphic magic to gather the solar energy that bathes the desert surface. Over thousands of years, the pyramids draw in and store power. One day, the stars will align with celestial maps carved deep inside the tomb, triggering the second phase of the spell. The stored power will be channeled through the grave goods and treasures of the tomb, and the ancient kingdoms will erupt back into reality. Thousands of serfs and soldiers will be *resurrected*, cities and palaces will be conjured from the sand, and the power of the sun will restore the mummified king to full life and health.

**TABLE 2-1: OASIS ENCOUNTER TABLE**

1d20	Encounter
1	A single traveler in the wilderness.
2	A company of 2d6 nomads.
3	A trading caravan, comprised of 2d10 pack animals and 2d8 traders and guards.
4	A single wild animal – roll on the desert encounter table.
5	A small pack or herd of wild animals – roll on the desert encounter table.
6	An elderly animal, come to the oasis to die.
7	A single predator.
8	A small pack of predators.
9	A single large predator who watches the oasis.
10	The oasis is unoccupied. Ignore this result if instructed to roll again.
11	The oasis is unoccupied, but another traveler will arrive within 1d4 hours.
12	The oasis is unoccupied, but watched.
13	The oasis is dry.
14	The oasis is nearly dry – 3d4 gallons of water can be gathered, but no more.
15	The oasis is poisoned or otherwise befouled.
16	The oasis is home to a single hermit.
17	The oasis is home to a small community of 2d10 creatures.
18	The oasis is guarded by a spirit or outsider.
19	Roll again twice.
20	Roll again, but there is only enough water for one group of travelers.



The items buried with the king serve as templates for aspects of the renewed kingdom. Every cart in the land will be based on the ornate golden cart in the tomb's treasury, every soldier will be a reflection of the bodyguards who were buried alive with the king. If any of these items is missing from the tomb when the stars come right, the spell will go horribly wrong, creating a perverted twilight kingdom of the half-dead. To avoid this, anyone stealing from the tomb awakens the mummified king, who hunts down the thieves and retrieves the stolen goods. The tomb kings can draw on the stored energy of their pyramid tombs, and channel it into powerful arcane spells as sorcerers do.

Other desert ruins are merely remnants of lost cities or citadels. There is vast wealth to be found beneath the shifting sands, but such ruins lie in the deepest and most treacherous regions of the desert. Divination spells are of little use, because the sandy terrain changes quickly in the wind. Scholars and treasure hunters hire nomads to search for the ruins, who mark the spot for later exploration. Small icons are used to mark the location of the ruins; the scholar retains an identical matching icon, and uses it to visualize the location of the original for *teleportation*. On the fringes of the desert, a fierce shadow war is fought between nomads, thieves and treasure-hunters for these icons. An icon looted from the corpse of a nomad might be the key to *teleporting* to a rich treasure vault — or a dragon's lair, for many desert monsters have learned to steal these icons and wait for dinner to arrive.

### GREEN PLACES

Anywhere there is water, there is life. A large oasis or river valley can sustain a community or even a civilization. Without safe paths through the deserts, these islands of life can go undiscovered by the outside world for centuries. All sorts of bizarre cultures can exist in nigh-perfect isolation in the deep desert. Trapped and protected by the burning sands, these cultures can pursue strange new forms of magic, terrible gods, or abstruse philosophies. The desert nomads may know of these green places, and bring back unusual trade goods to the edge of the desert. Lands that sages believe are either long-ruined or long-lost might also exist in the heart of the desert.

### DESERT CAMPAIGNS

For characters new to the desert, the sands are either a barrier that must be carefully crossed, or a death-trap that will challenge their survival skills. The dangers of thirst and exposure should be constantly present, and the Dungeon Master should make the desert as imposing as possible. Adventures in the desert should use the sands as a gauntlet that the characters must run, a hot killing field that tests their ability to survive. Removing the characters' ability to create water or travel quickly will reinforce the danger still further — characters in most fantasy games

can have a large arsenal of magical devices and spells that make survival a bit too easy. While not every trip into the desert should be a grueling or lethal adventure, the characters should at least once have to deal with thirst and heat exhaustion.

### THE DESERT AS SETTING

If characters are living in or around the desert, and can deal with the dangers, it can become an intriguing setting for a game. In more temperate climates, there is no distinct line between civilization and wilderness — cities blend into towns which blend into villages, then farmland, then borderland, then the wild. All the land is inhabitable, so other people can be found anywhere.

In contrast, the desert has a small number of nexuses of life — the oases and rivers — surrounded by uninhabitable wilderness. There are only a few places where the characters can be sure of meeting other people. This can be a useful abstraction for the Dungeon Master: instead of having to detail every mile of the setting, he can just concentrate on the oases and leave the intervening terrain as “trackless desert.” In effect, the desert focuses the setting, by having a set number of important places — the oases — in the midst of emptiness, as opposed to an endless number of potential encounters everywhere like other regions.

### SONS OF THE DESERT

Characters who come from desert regions may be shocked by the softness and wealth of other lands. The scarceness of water makes the desert a crucible where only the strong survive, but in other lands, even the weak can get more water than they will ever drink. Desert characters may find other folk decadent or unappreciative of the vast water wealth they have.

Of course, the flipside of this is that desert characters will seem especially tough and dangerous to outsiders. To outsiders, the desert is synonymous with suffering and deprivation, and if a man was born and bred in that hellish realm... surely there is nothing he cannot accomplish. That said, desert survival requires a great deal of specialization, and the skills for finding oases and making water last are of little use outside the sands. Desert characters will find many of their skills and abilities are useless in more hospitable lands.

### THIRST AND STARVATION

Deserts are defined by their lack of water. The blazing heat of the day, the chill of the night, and the endless anonymity of the sea of sand are all secondary to the danger of dehydration. Characters need a certain amount of water each day to avoid dehydration, according to table 2–2.

Inactive/day means the character is exposed to the desert sun during the day, having only rudimentary or no shelter, and does not exert himself by fighting, travelling or doing other work. Active/day means that the character is exerting himself during the day. Inactive/night and active/night implies that the character is sheltered from the desert heat during the day. The above numbers assume that the character is sleeping for most of either the day or night — if a character is active during both periods (travelling all day and night, for example) he requires the full amount of water needed for both periods.

A character can go without enough water for 1 day plus a number of hours equal to his Constitution score. After this time, the character must make a Constitution check each hour (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) or sustain 1d6 points of subdual damage. This subdual damage cannot be restored by magical healing — only finding a source of water will allow a character to heal subdual damage caused by dehydration.

Obviously, finding water is exceedingly difficult in the desert. There are water sources, ranging from oases and small rivulets to trapped dew or moisture from plants, but it takes great skill to locate them. A wilderness lore check is required, where the DC depends on the type of desert.

Desert Type	DC
Stony Desert	15
Sand Dunes	20
Salt Flats	25

If the character passes the check by less than 5, he finds only tainted, brackish water, or else a rather unpleasant source of drinkable liquid, such as bitter cactus pulp. A character trying to drink such liquid must make a DC15 Fortitude save, with a +1 bonus for every previous save made to avoid dehydration subdual damage. If the character fails this save, he is unable to stomach the water, and wastes his share. If the character passes the check by 5 or more, he finds water that can be safely drunk without a Fortitude save.

TABLE 2–2: THIRST AND STARVATION TABLE

Creature Size	Inactive/day	Active/day	Inactive/night	Active/Night
Small	1 gallon	1 gallon	1 gallon	1 gallon
Medium	2 gallons	3 gallons	1 gallon	1 gallon
Large	4 gallons	6 gallons	2 gallons	3 gallons

In the desert, a successful Wilderness Lore check garners the character 2 gallons of water, plus another gallon for every 5 points by which his check result exceeds the DC. The DM may choose to limit the amount of water found in the manner — not even the greatest ranger can find a lake where there is none. Hunting for water counts as being active for the purposes of determining amount of water required by the character.

Food is also scarce in the desert, although death by starvation is not quite as pressing a danger as death by thirst or death by hungry blue dragon. A Wilderness Lore check is required to find food — the DC for this check is the same as that for finding water, but prospective food is more likely to fight back (DM's discretion). A character can go without food for three days before suffering subdual damage.

Any creature reduced to one quarter of their subdual hit points will attract the attention of 1d3+1 vultures, who will circle overhead waiting for the character to succumb to thirst.

Characters with access to even minimal divine magic can *create water*, which is obviously a great boon in the desert. Shamans and clerics who can cast such spells are very influential among the tribes and caravan traders who travel such regions. One common use of *bestow curse* is to prevent a rival cleric from using *create water* — this is an especially nasty revenge, as the cursed spellcaster might not realize he is cursed until he tries to create water in the middle of the sandy waste. Some harsh gods also forbid the spell to their followers — using magic to conjure water denies the desert its rightful sacrifices.

## HOT AND COLD

Heat is the other major danger of the desert. During the day, the temperature can rise to 120° F or higher. Characters must make a Fortitude save every hour (every ten minutes if the temperature is above 110° F) or take 1d4 points of subdual damage. The DC for this Fortitude check is 15, +1 per previous check. The character's saving throw is modified as follows:

DC Modifier	Condition
+1	If he has some sort of shade, such as the shadows of rock pillars
+2	If he is in constant shade
+1	if he has suitable headgear, such as a turban
-1	If he is wearing a metal helmet
+1	If he is not suffering from dehydration
+1	If he has extra water above the minimum needed to avoid dehydration
-0	If he is wearing light, loose clothing suitable for the desert such as an explorer's outfit
-2	If he is wearing ordinary clothing
-4	If he is wearing heavy clothing or any sort of light or medium armor
-6	If he is wearing heavy armor

Most desert warriors rely on speed and agility instead of armor to protect them in battle, although a few wear enchanted (i.e. essentially weightless) armor that does not penalize Fortitude checks.

The temperature plummets at night, often to below freezing, and unfortunate wanderers who survived the blistering heat are often surprised to find that they have frozen to death in the darkness. Characters without shelter at night must make a DC 15 Fortitude check, +1 per previous check, to avoid taking 1d4 points of subdual damage.

Characters should constantly be reminded of the dangers of the temperature. The crippling heat can kill just as surely as a monster. The DM should drag out the descriptions of the endless sands, making sure that the players feel the intense desert heat sinking into their very bones. Cunning PCs may choose to remain sheltered during the day and only travel at night, but there is a greater chance of going astray in the darkness.

## GETTING LOST

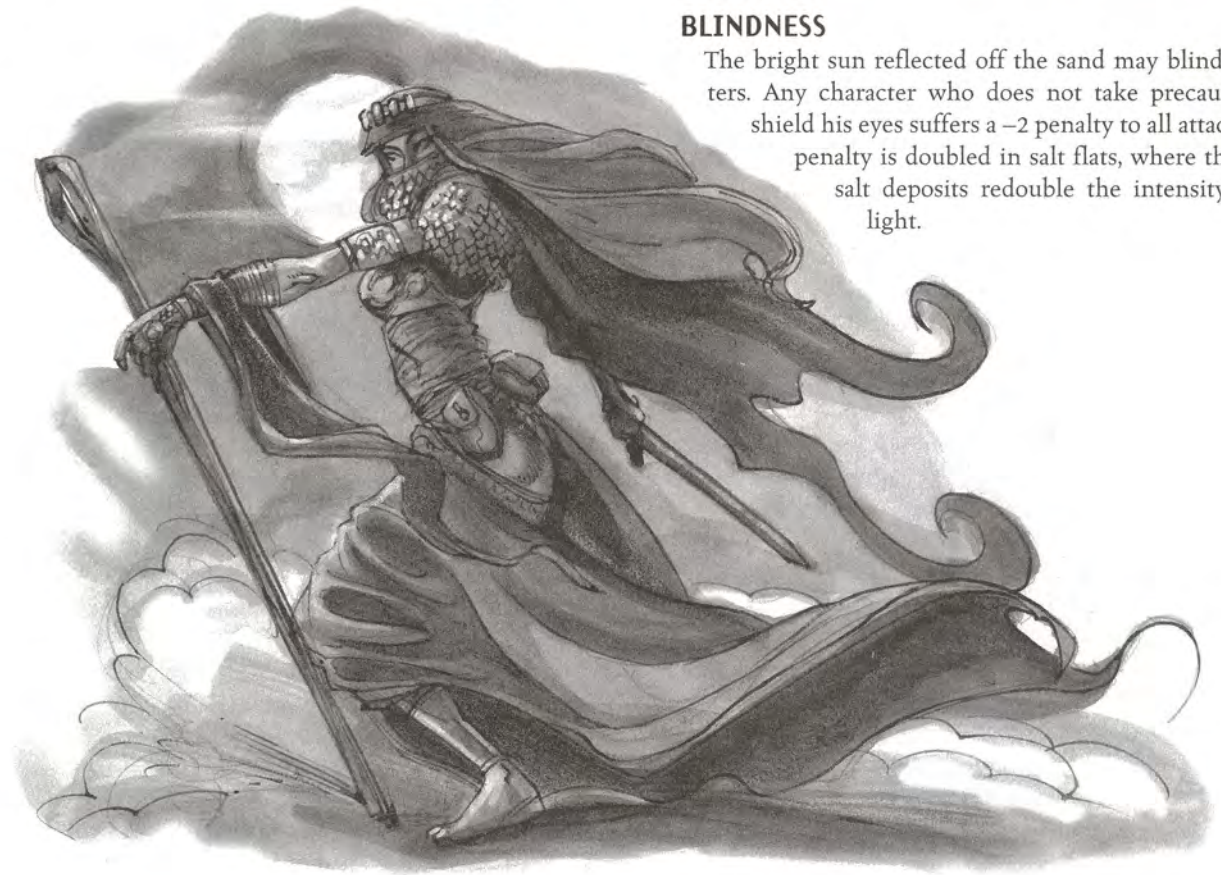
Deserts are extremely difficult to navigate. To the untrained eye, there are fewer landmarks than in other terrains; no unusual trees, no rivers or streams, no roads or tracks. If a character is unfamiliar with the desert, the DC for all Wilderness Lore checks to avoid getting lost is increased by 5. Spending three months in the desert removes this penalty. The DC to avoid getting lost amid sand dunes is increased by 10 for all characters — even the desert tribesmen do not go far into the dunes without a skilled guide.

If a character gets lost in the desert, he must make a DC 10 (DC 15 if unfamiliar with the desert) Intuit Direction check to avoid walking aimlessly or in a circle for four hours. He may then make another Wilderness Lore check to try to find his path once again. If the character fails either check by 10, the DC for the next check is increased by 5 — those who wander too far from their course are almost certain to perish.

Characters travelling at night increase by 5 the DC for all Wilderness Lore checks to avoid getting lost.

## MIRAGES

Those suffering from extreme thirst or heatstroke may hallucinate. The rippling heat haze rising off the sands may seem to resolve into images of an oasis, a castle, a dancing maiden or some other vision. If the DC for a character's Fortitude save to avoid dehydration or heat subdual damage goes over 20, he must make a DC 15 Will save or suffer from a momentary delusion. The severity of the delusion varies depending on how badly he failed the Will check.

**BLINDNESS**

The bright sun reflected off the sand may blind characters. Any character who does not take precautions to shield his eyes suffers a  $-2$  penalty to all attacks. This penalty is doubled in salt flats, where the white salt deposits redouble the intensity of the light.

**Margin****of failure****Mirage**

- 1 – 5** Distracting images at the corners of the character's vision, inflicting a  $-2$  Circumstance penalty on all attack rolls.
- 6 – 10** The character hallucinates a phantasmal image. He can still perceive his surroundings, and the image will not put the character in immediate danger. He may see a canteen of water floating away over the sand, but will still notice the pit between him over the canteen.
- 11+** The character's hallucination is severe, and may pose a danger to himself or others. He may believe he is somewhere other than the desert, or think that a pool of bubbling green slime is actually cool blue water, or perceive that another character is a doppelganger.

A mirage lasts  $2d4$  hours minus the character's Wisdom modifier, or until the character discovers that he's hallucinating, say by drinking that cool blue water he thinks he has uncovered.

**SANDSTORMS**

Dust storms are described under Weather in the DMG. After a sandstorm, characters must make an Intuit Direction or Wilderness Lore check (DC10) to avoid becoming lost. The DC for following a trail using the Track feat after a sandstorm is increased by 10.

**ELEMENTAL CONFLUENCES AND DISASTERS**

Natural deserts are dry due to weather patterns and climate. Some deserts, however, would be fertile lands if it were not for magic. The elemental plane of fire can come into conjunction with portions of the prime material plane, and the heat of the eternal flames burns the land. Such deserts are biased towards fire magic, and against water magic. The hottest parts of the desert intersect with the plane of fire, and natural portals open up in the burning sands. Elementals and outsiders often travel via such portals to the desert, where they have access to the varied resources of the prime material without being forced to deal with unhelpful summoners or unpleasantly wet weather.

Characters in an elemental desert lack easy access to one of the most important tools for survival — magical sources of water.

Strength	Portals to the Plane of Fire
1	1 in the center of the desert at the summer solstice.
2	1 in the center of the desert when the temperature exceeds $130^{\circ}\text{F}$ .
3	1 in the center of the desert at noon each day.
4	1 in the center of the desert at noon, $1d4$ others in random places when the temperature exceeds $130^{\circ}\text{F}$ .
5	$1d6$ randomly located portals at all times.

The strength of the confluence increases the level of water-based spells. For example, a strength 1 confluence increases the level of *create water* from 0 to 1. A strength 5 confluence makes *create water* a 4th level spell. The number of outsiders encountered in a desert is proportional to the number of portals to the plane of fire.

Other unnatural deserts are created as a result of mighty spells going awry. The great danger in unnatural deserts is thirst and starvation, not heat. Such wastelands are much cooler than other deserts, but contain many more aberrations and bizarre magical after-effects of the disaster. The ghosts of creatures slain in the disaster are also a common danger in such places.

## DESERT RANGER

Few walk unafraid in the harsh and empty places of the desert. Only the strongest and most cunning creatures can survive where the water is scarce and life is scarcer. In the crucible of the sands, life is tested to its utmost limit. A desert ranger has passed this test of the sands. He knows the oases; he walks the dunes without fear or hesitation.

**Adventures:** Desert rangers are often guides and rescuers. They might lead caravans across the trackless wastes, or come out of the sandstorms to bring lost travelers to safety. Many belong to the nomadic tribes who live on the fringes, and defend their people against monsters from the heart of the desert. The sands have buried many secrets. Lost cities and temples wait beneath the shifting dunes, and sometimes the winds expose the ruins to the desert air. The rangers watch for such places, for vast treasures and terrible dangers can be found within.

**Characteristics:** The desert ranger knows and respects his dangerous realm. The desert is harsh and unforgiving, so the ranger is careful not to make any mistakes when it comes to survival. He knows how to ration his water and avoid wasting energy. He is a master of endurance, and prefers to wear his enemies down over time. When pressed, though, he is as quick and dangerous as a sandstorm.

**Alignment:** Almost all desert rangers are neutral — neither those who cannot quickly adapt nor those who lack discipline survive for long in the sands. Most desert rangers are loyal to their tribe above all, and have little time for cosmic battles of good and evil. Some rangers delve deep into the deserts, looking for ancient buried temples and forgotten civilizations — but while some hope to destroy evil while it sleeps, other rangers try to reawaken it.

**Religion:** Faith can sustain a man in the desert, and fate governs the endlessly changing sands. Still, the gods reward those who help themselves. Desert rangers tend to be fervent followers of a god, but depend on themselves first and foremost. Furthermore, the various desert spirits, like the jinni, must be respected, and rangers know many rituals and rites for dealing with such entities.

**Background:** While most desert rangers come from the nomadic tribes, others learned their craft from old hermits, or from observing the desert animals. The sands care little for a man's history, and neither do the rangers. It is what is done now that is important.

**Races:** Humans commonly become desert rangers — the fast-expanding race is forced to live in marginal territories, and so must adapt to harsh climates. Elves make excellent rangers, and are devoted defenders of the oases. Dwarfish desert rangers are almost unheard of, but they are quick to master the endurance techniques of the class. Lahryk and makall may also become desert rangers.

**Classes:** Desert rangers appreciate self-sufficiency. They get on well with fighters and clerics, and tolerate barbarians who can control themselves. They dislike the dependency of wizards on books and materials, and much prefer to work with sorcerers where arcane matters are concerned. There are few rogues in the desert, but the rangers respect their skills. Bards are also rare in the sands, and most singing is a waste of moisture.

## GAME RULE INFORMATION

Desert rangers have the following game statistics.

**Abilities:** Constitution and Wisdom are important for desert rangers. Strength and Dexterity are also valued, but endurance and insight are prized in the sands. Desert rangers do not always use spells, so there is no Wisdom score requirement.

**Alignment:** Desert rangers can be of any alignment, but tend towards neutrality.

**Hit Dice:** d10.

## Class Skills

The desert ranger's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha, exclusive skill), Balance (Dex), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Intuit Direction (Wis), Knowledge (Nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Tumble (Dex), Use Rope (Dex) and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

**Skill Points at 1st level:** (4 + Int Modifier) × 4.

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:** 4 + Int modifier.

## Class Features

All of the following are class features of the desert ranger.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** A desert ranger is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, all light and medium armor, and shields.

**Track:** A desert ranger gains Track as a bonus feat.

**Favored Enemy:** At 1st level, a desert ranger may select a type of creature or organization as a favored enemy. Due to his extensive study of his foes and training in the proper techniques for combating them, the ranger gains a +1 to all checks made against that creature or organization. The +1 counts for both attack and damage rolls, even against constructs, undead and other enemies. The damage bonus counts for ranged weapons as well, but only against targets within 30 ft. At 4th level and every 5 levels thereafter, the ranger gains an additional +1 to his bonus, or selects another favored enemy. If another enemy is selected, the bonus applies only to that enemy. For example, a 15th level desert ranger could have a +3 vs. dragons, or a +1 vs. goblinoids, giants and beasts, or a +2 vs. fey and a +1 vs. vermin.

A desert ranger's favored enemy types follow the same rules as the PHB, except that he need not be evil to choose his own type or race as a favored enemy. A human desert ranger who learns to hunt humans might be defending his tribe against bandits or searching for lost travelers in the desert.

## DESERT RANGER FAVORED ENEMIES

Type	Examples
Aberrations	Mimic
Animals	Snakes
Beasts	Roc
Constructs	Golems
Dragons	Blue dragons
Elementals	Fire elementals
Fey	Dryads
Giants	Fire giants
Humanoid type	*
Magical Beasts	Basilisks
Oozes	Black pudding
Organizations	*
Outsider type	*
Plants	Assasin vines
Shapechangers	Werelions
Undead	Zombies
Vermin	Scorpions

\* Desert rangers may not select "humanoid," "organization" or "outsider" as a favored enemy, but they may select a more narrowly defined type of humanoid (such as goblinoid or reptilian humanoids), organization (tribe of Kull, mages of the sunspire) or outsider (genie-kind, devils, etc). A desert ranger may select his own race as a favored enemy, no matter his alignment.

**Desert Lore:** At 1st level, the ranger gains a +2 circumstance bonus to Balance, Hide, Intuit Direction, Move Silently, Search, Spot and Wilderness Lore checks made within the desert. At 3rd level and every 5 levels thereafter, the desert ranger gains more knowledge about the desert and becomes more adept at surviving within it. At 3rd level, the ranger learns to hide even the smallest traces of his passage. Anyone attempting to track the ranger or his companions through the desert adds 5 to the DC.

TABLE 2-1: DESERT RANGER

Base Class Level	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	Desert lore, favored enemy, track
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	Ranger option
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	Desert lore 2
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	Favored enemy 2
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	Ranger option
6	+6/+1	+5	+2	+2	
7	+7/+2	+5	+2	+2	Bonus feat
8	+8/+3	+6	+2	+2	Desert lore 3, ranger option
9	+9/+4	+6	+3	+3	Favored enemy 3
10	+10/+5	+7	+3	+3	
11	+11/+6/+1	+7	+3	+3	Ranger option
12	+12/+7/+2	+8	+4	+4	Bonus feat
13	+13/+8/+3	+8	+4	+4	Desert lore 4
14	+14/+9/+4	+9	+4	+4	Ranger option, favored enemy 4
15	+15/+10/+5	+9	+5	+5	
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+5	+5	
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	+5	Bonus feat, ranger option
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+6	+6	Desert lore 5
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+6	+6	Favored enemy 5
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+6	+6	One with the desert

At 8th level, the desert ranger gains increased overland movement within the desert. Trackless desert now counts as highway to him while he is alone. If leading a party, movement within trackless desert is at their normal overland speed  $\times 1$ .

At 13th level, the desert ranger gains the druid's Trackless Step ability within the desert; the sand swallows his footsteps and he cannot be tracked.

At 18th level, the desert ranger gains a +2 circumstance bonus to all Initiative checks while in his favored terrain.

**Ranger Option:** A desert ranger can select one Ranger Option at 2nd level, another at 5th level, and every 3 levels thereafter (11th, 14th etc.) The options are stated below, and unless otherwise stated, the same option may be taken more than once.

**Option 1:** The desert ranger chooses one feat from the list of feats below. He may take this option more than once, but a different feat must be selected each time. Feats gained by means of this ability can only be used as long as the ranger is in light or no armor.

The list of feats for the desert ranger includes the following: Alertness, Ambidexterity (applies to double weapons), Combat Casting (only after choosing option 9, below), Combat Reflexes, Desert Blooded (Endurance), Dodge (Mobility, Spring Attack), Expertise, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, No Meat For Buzzards, Point Blank Shot (Far Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run), Quick Draw, Run, Two-Weapon Fighting (applies to double weapons) (Improved Two-Weapon Fighting (applies to double weapons)), Weapon Finesse\*, Weapon Focus\*.

Some of the bonus feats cannot be acquired until the ranger has gained one or more prerequisite feats; these are listed parenthetically after the prerequisite feat. Feats marked with a \* can be chosen more than once, but only for a different weapon each time.

**Option 2:** The desert ranger gains 10 ft. extra base movement as long as he is walking on sand and wearing light or no armor. This stacks with other extra movement abilities.

**Option 3:** The desert ranger may increase his favored enemy score by 1.

**Option 4:** The desert ranger may increase his natural armor class by 1.

**Option 5:** The desert ranger permanently gains Fire or Cold Resistance 2. He may take this option multiple times, increasing his Fire or Cold Resistance by 2 each time.

**Option 6:** The desert ranger gains the ability to sneak attack as a rogue. He gains sneak attack +1d6, which can only be increased by taking this option again.

**Option 7:** The desert ranger masters a technique of wearing his foes down in a fight. He gains a +1 competence bonus to attack rolls for every 5 rounds spent fighting the same opponent. If the ranger attacks any other target, the count of rounds is reset to zero. If this ability is taken again, the bonus is gained every 3 rounds instead. This option may be selected a maximum of two times.

**Option 8:** The desert ranger gains spellcasting. He may cast 1st level spells, following the progression listed below, where X is the level at which this option is chosen. If he chooses this option again, he may cast 2nd level spells and so on up to 4th-level spells, using the same progression. The desert ranger must have a Wisdom score of at least 10 + the spell's level. Desert ranger bonus spells are based on Wisdom and saving throws against these spells have a Difficult Class of 10 + spell level + Wisdom modifier.

A desert ranger casts and prepares spells as a cleric does, though he cannot use spontaneous casting, unless he chooses the spontaneous casting option. A ranger's casting level is one-half his class level. The desert ranger uses the ranger class's spell lists.

#### Desert Ranger Spell Progression

Level	Spells per Day
X	0
X+1	1
X+2	1
X+3	1
X+4	1
X+5	1
X+6	2
X+7	2
X+8	2
X+9	2
X+10	3

**Option 9:** The desert ranger gains spontaneous casting, as long as he has already chosen option 8. The ranger follows the same rules as a cleric for spontaneous casting.

**One With The Desert:** At 20th level, the ranger's soul becomes an aspect of the sand, and vice versa. He no longer needs to eat, drink or sleep, and can *wind walk* at will within the desert. He may command the sands within ten miles of his location — this manifests as a Supernatural ability to cast *pass without trace*, *control sand* (as *control water*) and *create water* at will at any point within ten miles.



## PRESTIGE CLASSES

The punishing heat and endless sands of the desert breed toughness, inventiveness, and power in those who can survive them for long. The following prestige classes represent the abilities possible amongst those who survive and perhaps even thrive in the desert.

### ELEMENTAL SUPPLICANT

The deepest wisdom comes through suffering in isolation. Away from the distractions of others, and driven from the flesh by pain, the greatest sages and prophets gained their highest insights in the wilderness. The elemental supplicant seeks the wisdom of the desert, no matter the cost to his sanity and health.

To become a supplicant, a character must travel into the harshest wilderness with the barest minimum of resources. As he suffers, his insight grows. In the end, he will gain insight — or madness.

**Hit Dice:** d6.

#### REQUIREMENTS

To become an elemental supplicant, a character must fulfill the following requirements:

**Concentration:** 6 ranks.

**Knowledge (nature):** 4 ranks.

**Knowledge (religion):** 6 ranks.

**Spellcraft:** 4 ranks.

**Wilderness Lore:** 6 ranks.

**Feats:** Iron Will, Toughness.

**Special:** The elemental supplicant must spend at least forty days and forty nights in the desert. He may not bring any equipment or supplies with him except a single weapon, simple clothing, and a few days worth of rations. The supplicant must survive this ordeal without help from others.

#### CLASS SKILLS

The elemental supplicant class skills (and the key ability for each) are Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Listen (Wis), Knowledge

(Religion)(Int), Move Silently (Dex), Pick Pocket (Dex), Read Lips (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis), and Wilderness Lore (Wis)

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 4 + Int modifier.

#### CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the elemental supplicant prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** The elemental supplicant gains no proficiency in any weapon or armor.

**Spells:** If the elemental supplicant can cast clerical or druidic spells, he gains extra spellcasting levels in his previous class. Beginning at 1st level and continuing every other level thereafter, the knight gains another level for the purposes of casting spells.

**Locusts and Wild Honey:** At 1st level, the supplicant learns to survive in the desert. He gains a +3 competence bonus to all Wilderness Lore checks made while in the desert.

**Elemental Guidance:** At 2nd level, the supplicant contacts the elemental powers who rule the desert. He can now cast *commune* a number of times per day equal to his Wisdom bonus (if any).

**The Insight Thirst Brings:** At 3rd level, the supplicant can attain an astonishing level of insight by fasting, meditating and mortifying his flesh. Through self-flagellation or through ritual pain, the he can see and know things others cannot. He gains an insight bonus equal to half his subdual damage total (maximum +10) to all Knowledge, Sense Motive and Spellcraft checks.

**Favored Child of the Wilderness:** At 4th level, the supplicant is sent a protector by the elemental powers. This protector is usually an outsider or *awakened* creature with a number of hit dice equal to the supplicant's level. Common protectors are elementals or genies. Supplicants receive an animal companion (determined by the DM) that progresses in hit dice as the character gains levels and is considered a familiar in all respects. Use the rules for familiars in the PHB.

**Purified Soul:** At 5th level, the supplicant's insight is complete. His Wisdom permanently increases by 1. He gains another point of Wisdom after every five years spent alone in the desert.

TABLE 2-2: ELEMENTAL SUPPLICANT

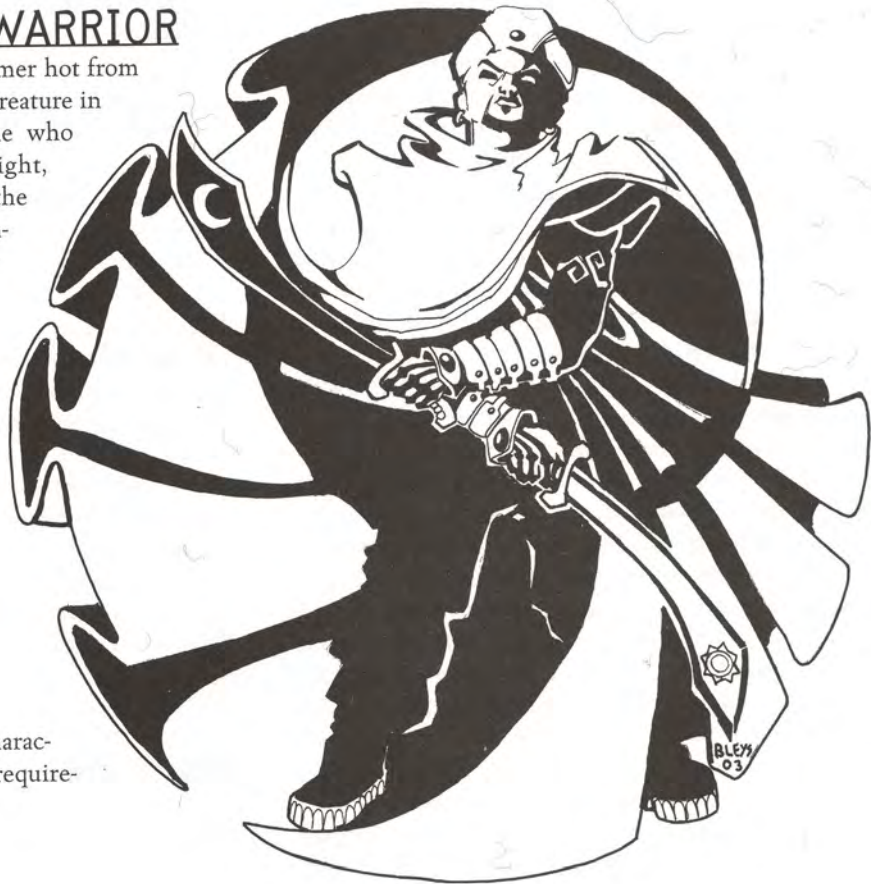
Base Class	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per day
1	+0	+2	+0	+0	Locusts and wild honey	+1 level of previous class
2	+1	+3	+0	+0	Elemental guidance	
3	+2	+3	+1	+1	The insight thirst brings	+1 level of previous class
4	+3	+4	+1	+1	Favored child of the wilderness	
5	+3	+4	+1	+1	Purified soul	+1 level of previous class

## HORIZON WARRIOR

By day, the sun strikes like a hammer hot from the forge. The sands ripple like a creature in pain, and thirst torments anyone who walks the fiery desert. By night, though, cold winds whip over the dunes and the temperature plummets to below zero. This contrast of light and darkness can be tapped by a disciplined mind.

Horizon warriors are driven by extremes. Like a pendulum, they move from intense heat to freezing cold, gathering power as they go. They stand between light and darkness, heat and cold, law and chaos, drawing power from all points and channeling it into their movements.

**Hit Dice:** d10.



### REQUIREMENTS

To become a horizon warrior, a character must fulfill the following requirements:

**Alignment:** Any neutral.

**Base Attack Bonus:** +6.

**Balance:** 4 ranks.

**Concentration:** 4 ranks.

**Feats:** Endurance, Expertise, Iron Will.

### CLASS SKILLS

The horizon warrior's class skills (and the key ability for each) are Alchemy (Int), Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Heal (Wis), Intuit Direction (Wis), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), and Swim (Str).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 4 + Int modifier.

### CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the horizon warrior prestige class. Some of these abilities are usable only at night or in dark areas such as underground or areas of magical *darkness*. Others are usable only during the day or in areas lit by magical *sunlight*. The horizon warrior cannot use these class features at dusk or dawn or in half-lit areas such as in shade or indoors.

TABLE 2-3: HORIZON WARRIOR

Base Class Level	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	Dawn strike
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	Dusk cloak
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	Horizon balance
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	Dream of the morning
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	Fear of the night
6	+6	+5	+2	+2	Horizon call
7	+7	+5	+2	+2	Heat of the sun
8	+8	+6	+2	+2	Cold of the moon
9	+9	+6	+3	+3	Horizon shift
10	+10	+7	+3	+3	Horizon walk

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** horizon warriors are proficient in all simple and martial weapons.

**Dawn Strike:** At 1st level, the horizon warrior's weapon strikes with the speed of dawn. He gains a +2 enhancement bonus to initiative. Furthermore, his initiative increases by 1 every round during combat up to a maximum of 25 plus his Dexterity bonus. This ability is usable only in daylight.

**Dusk Cloak:** At 2nd level, the horizon warrior wraps shadow around himself, fading into the darkness. He may take a full-round action to raise his degree of concealment by one step. If he takes any other sort of action, his degree of concealment returns to normal. This ability is usable only at night.

**Horizon Balance:** At 3rd level, the warrior begins to balance light and darkness in his soul. He may no longer be scryed upon directly, and his alignment and thoughts cannot be read by magic. This ability is constantly active.

**Dream of the Morning:** At 4th level, the light inspires the warrior's allies to greater effort. A number of times per day equal to his Charisma bonus (if any), the warrior can give all allies within 60 ft. a +2 morale bonus to all rolls. This effect lasts a number of rounds equal to the warrior's Concentration skill. Invoking this ability is a free action, and it may only be used during the day.

**Fear of the Night:** At 5th level, the warrior can draw on the fears and night terrors of his opponents. He may create an effect equivalent to a *fear* spell cast by a sorcerer of his level. This ability is usable a number of times per night equal to the warrior's Charisma modifier, and it is usable only at night.

**Horizon Call:** At 6th level, the warrior can move between day and night. He may emanate nonmagical daylight or darkness. This emanation has a range of 30 ft. and is centered on the warrior. Invoking this ability requires concentration, but the emanation lingers for 1d4 rounds after the warrior stops concentrating. Both daylight and darkness have effects identical to the spells of the same names as cast by a sorcerer of level equal to the warrior, but these effects are nonmagical and cannot be dispelled. This ability inflicts one point of temporary Constitution damage on the warrior, and can be used at any time.

**Heat of the Sun:** At 7th level, the horizon warrior channels the heat of the sun into his weapon. He gains a +1 enhancement bonus to damage for every 10 degrees of current air temperature above 70 degrees F. This ability is usable only during the day.

**Cold of the Moon:** At 8th level, the horizon warrior can drain the vitality of his foes. All foes within 30 ft. of the warrior suffer a -1 morale penalty to attack and damage rolls for every 10 degrees below 0 degrees F of the current air temperature. This ability is usable only at night.

**Horizon Shift:** At 9th level, the horizon warrior learns to adapt to his surroundings. He may become a creature with the Heat or Cold type or count as Chaotic or Lawful at will. Use of this ability is considered a free action.

**Horizon Walk:** At 10th level, the warrior may *teleport without error* to any point on the horizon, three times per day. This ability may only be used during twilight.

## KING OF THIEVES

There are few shadows in the desert. A thief in more hospitable lands might slip away into the darkness, or hide in the throng of common folk, but there are no such refuges amid the sand. Also, the desert folk deal harshly with criminals, and are merciless towards those who dare steal. Just as the harsh desert environment acts as a crucible, burning away the weak and leaving only the strongest creatures alive, only the best thieves survive in such difficult conditions. Those that do have honed their skills until their abilities are legendary, and they are respected and feared as kings among their brethren.

**Hit Dice:** d6.

### REQUIREMENTS

To become a king of thieves, a character must fulfill all the following requirements:

**Appraise:** 6 ranks.

**Escape Artist:** 6 ranks.

**Gather Information:** 6 ranks.

**Hide:** 6 ranks.

**Feat:** Leadership.

**Special:** To prove himself, a prospective king of thieves must complete a legendary heist by stealing something of great value from a place generally believed to be impenetrable – but first, he must publicly boast that he will steal the prize. The prize can be anything from a huge diamond to a kiss from the Emir's daughter; anything that poses a huge challenge, and wins the respect of the other thieves.

### CLASS SKILLS

The king of thieves' class skills (and the key ability for each) are Appraise (Int), Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Glass-blowing), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Innuendo (Wis), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Open Lock (Dex), Perform (Cha), Pick Pocket (Dex), Read Lips (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Tumble (Dex), Use Magic Device (Cha), and Use Rope (Dex).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 6 + Int modifier.

## CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the king of thieves prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** The king of thieves gains no additional weapon or armor proficiencies.

**Hide in a Basket:** At 1st level, the king of thieves counts as being one Size category smaller for the purposes of hiding. A Medium-sized king gains a +4 size bonus on Hide checks, and can hide inside Small-sized objects, or behind cover that would not normally be big enough to conceal him.

**Steal Dreams:** At 2nd level, the king of thieves' skill at legerdemain is such that he can steal the night-dreams of a sleeper. Stealing a dream requires the king of thieves to make a successful Pick Pocket check, at a DC equal to the Will save of the dreamer; he must make the check within 30 ft. of the dreamer, who must be asleep at the time. Stolen dreams can be kept in a glass bottle. Anyone who opens the bottle as he falls asleep will dream the stolen dream. For 1d6 days after experiencing another creature's dream, the king of thieves gains a +2 bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, and Sense Motives against him. Viewing another's dreams gives the king an insight into how his psyche operates.

**Scent Wealth:** At 3rd level, the king can smell gold. If he makes a successful Search check (DC 20), he can catch the scent the nearest treasury, merchant caravan or wealthy traveler within a number of miles equal to the result of the Search roll.

**Hide In A Sack:** At 4th level, the king of thieves counts as being two Size categories smaller (to a minimum of Fine) for the purposes of hiding. His weight is proportionally reduced — a king hiding in a sack of grain can be picked up and carried without effort by a servant, as long as he remains hidden.

**Bandit Hideout:** At 5th level, the king can magically create a comfortable hideout. He can only do this in confined areas — for example, he can't make a hideout in the open desert, but he can make a small crack in a cliff or a blind alley in a sewer open into the extradimensional space of the hideout. The hideout is structurally identical to a *secure shelter*. The king can create the hideout at will by saying a command phrase. Items can be stored in the hideout even when the magical entrance is closed but will be lost if the king changes the location of the hideout.

**My Brothers Beside Me:** At 6th level, the king can grant his hide in a sack ability to one other character per level, as long as they are within 30 ft. of him.

**Hide in a Pocket:** At 7th level, the king counts as being three Size categories smaller (to a minimum of Fine) for the purposes of hiding.

**Steal Voice:** At 8th level, the king can take the voice of another person. A successful Pick Pocket check at a DC equal to 10 + the Will save of the target is required, which the king must make within 30 ft. of the target. If the king steals the voice, he may either use it himself for one day (gaining a +15 bonus on all Disguise checks if disguised as the owner of the voice), or put it in a glass bottle for later use. Anyone who opens the bottle can use the voice for one day. If the owner of the voice had any special voice-related abilities, or had prepared any spells with only a verbal component, a character using the voice can use those abilities or cast those spells as if he was the actual owner of the voice. The owner of the voice cannot speak for one day after his voice is stolen, regardless of how long the king holds onto it.

**Hide In The Eye Of A Needle:** At 9th level, the king counts as being four Size categories smaller (to a minimum of Fine) for the purposes of hiding.

**Open The Secret Cavern:** At 10th level, the king gains access to a magical treasure cave. This ability is identical to the Bandit Hideout ability, except that the king can create a *magnificent mansion* instead of a *secure shelter*.

TABLE 2-4: KING OF THIEVES

Base Class	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+2	+2	Hide in a basket
2	+1	+0	+3	+3	Steal dreams
3	+2	+1	+3	+3	Scent wealth
4	+3	+1	+4	+4	Hide in a sack
5	+3	+1	+4	+4	Bandit hideout
6	+4	+2	+5	+5	My brothers beside me
7	+5	+2	+5	+5	Hide in a pocket
8	+6	+2	+6	+6	Steal voice
9	+6	+3	+6	+6	Hide in the eye of a needle
10	+7	+3	+7	+7	Open the secret cavern

## MASTER OF THE DESERT NOMADS

The nomad tribes that wander the desert are as numberless as the sands and as aimless as the sirocco winds. Each nomad is far tougher and more deadly than the slow, water-fat child-men who dwell outside the desert crucible, but each nomad tribe is proudly independent and rarely do they unite against outsiders. When the tribes do unite, under the leadership of a master of the desert nomads, it is as if the sandstorm itself rides out to war.

To become a master of the desert nomads, a warrior must bend both the desert and the tribes to his will. He must prove himself to be a peerless warrior and inspiring leader. If he fails, the vultures will pick his bones. If he succeeds, he shall seize the reins of fate.

**Hit Dice:** d10.

### REQUIREMENTS

To become a master of the desert nomads, a character must fulfill all the following requirements:

**Base Attack Bonus:** +6.

**Diplomacy:** 4 ranks.

**Intimidate:** 4 ranks.

**Intuit Direction:** 4 ranks.

**Ride:** 6 ranks.

**Feat:** Leadership.

**Special:** The master of the desert nomads must win the loyalty of multiple tribes of nomads. Each tribe will have a unique method for testing the strength of will of prospective leaders. The master might have to endure torture, solve a riddle, slay a monster or defeat the current tribe leader. At least three tribes must acknowledge the character's leadership before he may become a master of the desert nomads.

### CLASS SKILLS

The master of the desert nomads' class skills (and the key ability for each) are Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 2 + Int modifier.

### CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the master of the desert nomads prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** masters of the desert nomads gain no additional weapon or armor proficiencies.

**Tribal Contacts:** At 1st level, the master begins to forge links between the tribes. He gains a +2 Insight bonus to all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate and Sense Motive checks made when dealing with nomad matters.

**Peerless Mount:** At 2nd level, the master gains a special horse or other riding animal. This mount is identical to the special mount gained by a paladin. However, it is not sent by any divine power; it is merely an animal that recognizes the nobility and strength of the master's spirit.

**Bonus Feat:** At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the master gains a bonus feat. He must still meet all prerequisites for the feat, and each feat may only be chosen once. The feats must be chosen from the following list: Alertness, Caravan Master, Combat Reflexes, Desert-blooded, Endurance, Far Shot, Great Fortitude, Inspire Devotion, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus, Weapon Finesse, Whirling Dervish Attack.

**Inspire Courage:** At 4th level, the master of the desert nomads can rally the spirits of his followers. All allies within 30 ft. of the master gain a +2 morale bonus to Will saves against fear effects.

TABLE 2-5: MASTER OF THE DESERT NOMADS

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Tribal contacts
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Peerless mount
3	+2	+1	+1	+3	Bonus feat
4	+3	+1	+1	+4	Inspire courage
5	+3	+1	+1	+4	Wildfire crusade
6	+4	+2	+2	+5	Bonus feat
7	+5	+2	+2	+5	Inspire heroism
8	+6	+2	+2	+6	Peerless warrior
9	+6	+3	+3	+6	Bonus feat
10	+7	+3	+3	+7	Sirocco war

## SAND SHAPER

**Wildfire Crusade:** At 5th level, the master's reputation has grown so great that he may summon more followers out of the desert. These nomads fight to defend their homes, for plunder, or for religious reasons. The master gathers a number of followers equal to his Charisma modifier per day, up to a maximum of his class level multiplied by his Charisma modifier. These followers will be mostly first level characters, but 1d6-1 of them will be higher-level characters determined by the DM. The followers will depart when they have completed one task under the leadership of the master. The master of the desert nomads may declare a Wildfire Crusade once per month.

**Inspire Heroism:** At 7th level, the master can inspire greatness in his followers. As long as they follow the master's commands, the followers gain a number of temporary hit points equal to the master's Charisma modifier. These temporary hit points work exactly like normal hit points, but vanish 24 hours after the follower leaves the master's service or the master dies.

**Peerless Warrior:** At 8th level, the master must become a paragon to affirm the faith of his followers. He must be the greatest warrior among them, the best rider, the wisest sage and the holiest leader. Once per day, he may gain an Insight bonus to any skill for one hour equal to the highest number of ranks in that skill possessed by any of his followers. For example, if one of the master's followers has six ranks in Knowledge (Religion), the master may gain a +6 Insight bonus to Knowledge (Religion) checks for one hour.

**Sirocco War:** At 10th level, the master of the desert nomads can summon all the nomads together for a great purpose. The nomad army may be many thousands strong and composed of skilled and dedicated warriors. They will unquestioningly follow the master for the duration of the war, living and dying fanatically for him. The master may declare a Sirocco War a maximum of once every decade. He gains followers as per the wildfire crusade ability, but he may acquire a maximum of 100 warriors times his level in this prestige class.

When solid forms are worn away to nothing, all that remains is dust. A rock, an armored corpse, a castle, a jewel — all are reduced to anonymous sand by the endless howling winds. Yet the sand retains the memory of all that it once was.

The sand shaper restores shape to sand, molding it to his will. He calls up the lost shapes with his magic. A dune can become a castle, or a garden, or an army. A single grain of sand is full of infinite possibilities for him.

Any spell-casting class can potentially enter this prestige class, but most sand shapers are druids or wizards. Druids guard the precious life within the desert by drawing on the power of the sand, while wizards use the sands as the foundation of their arcane power.

**Hit Dice:** d4.

## REQUIREMENTS

To become a sand shaper, a character must fulfill all of the following requirements:

**Craft (sculpture):** 6 ranks.

**Knowledge (architecture and engineering):** 6 ranks.

**Spellcraft:** 6 ranks.

**Wilderness Lore:** 6 ranks.

**Feat:** Desert-blooded.

**Special:** Ability to cast at least three conjuration (summoning) or transmutation spells.

## CLASS SKILLS

The sand shaper class skills (and the key ability for each) are Alchemy (Int), Animal Empathy (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (sculpture) (Int), Scry (Int), Spellcraft (Int), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 2 + Int modifier.

TABLE 2-6: SAND SHAPER

Base Class	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per day
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Sand summoning	+1 level of spellcasting ability
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Riches of the desert	+1 level of spellcasting ability
3	+1	+1	+1	+3		+1 level of spellcasting ability
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	Sandcastle	+1 level of spellcasting ability
5	+2	+1	+1	+4		+1 level of spellcasting ability
6	+3	+2	+2	+5	Summon from the storm	+1 level of spellcasting ability
7	+3	+2	+2	+5		+1 level of spellcasting ability
8	+4	+2	+2	+6	Improved sand summoning	+1 level of spellcasting ability
9	+4	+3	+3	+6		+1 level of spellcasting ability
10	+5	+3	+3	+7	Dust to dust	+1 level of spellcasting ability

## CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the sand shaper prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** Sand shapers gain no additional weapon or armor proficiencies.

**Spells:** Sand shapers gain spellcasting levels in one of their previous classes at a rate of one every class level.

**Sand Summoning:** At 1st level, the shaper learns to call forth forms from the sand. When the sand shaper casts a conjuration (summoning) spell (such as *summon monster* or *summon nature's ally*) spell, he may choose to instead create the creatures called by the spell from the sand. The summoned creatures rise up out of the dunes. Such creatures have only 1d4 hit points per hit die, but when reduced below zero hit points, they dissolve into sand and reform in the next round. Sand creatures cannot act in the round during which they reform, nor can they be permanently killed by damage, but they are still vulnerable to *disintegration*, *banishment*, *death* effects and other such destructive abilities or spells. When the spell that created them ends, they collapse back into the sand.

**Riches of the Desert:** At 2nd level, the sand shaper may use a handful of sand instead of the regular material component of a spell that does not require components above 1 gp in value. The spell functions normally.

**Sandcastle:** At 4th level, the sand shaper can now create permanent structures out of sand. He may shape a structure whose total internal square footage equals 50 feet per level. The building's walls may be up to 5 feet thick. The shape of the sand must be renewed each week — a renewal only takes a moment, but the sand shaper must touch the sand.

This limits the size of the structure that the shaper can create — most create a comfortable tower or small castle. If structures created by the shaper are not renewed, they collapse back into sand.

**Summon from the Storm:** At 6th level, the shaper's mastery over sand now extends to airborne sand. If he casts a conjuration (summoning) spell within a sand-storm, the summoned creatures form out of the flying sands. The creatures can now *fly*, as the spell cast by a sorcerer of the shaper's level, and may reappear anywhere within the storm if slain.

**Improved Sand Summoning:** At 8th level, creatures created using sand summoning now have either half their regular number of hit points or 1d4 hit points per hit die, whichever is greater. They still reform after being killed.

**Dust to Dust:** On reaching 10th level, the character's soul merges with the sand of his realm. If the sand shaper is reduced below -9 hit points, he reforms in the next round with 1d4 hit points. The sand shaper cannot be slain by hit points of damage alone, though death effects and spells such as *slay living* kill him as normal.



## DESERT FEATS

Life in the desert breeds toughness and tenacity in those who survive there. The following feats are all appropriate to characters and NPCs who hail from a desert culture or spend extensive time in such an environment.

### CARAVAN MASTER [GENERAL]

You are aware of the general condition of travelers and pack animals under your care.

**Prerequisite:** Wis 13+.

**Benefit:** You automatically know how many subdual hit points any of your fellow travelers have lost to heat, thirst, starvation or fatigue. You must have traveled with a character or animal for at least one day before you can determine how much subdual damage he has taken. You can keep track of a number of characters or animals equal to your Wisdom score.

**Special:** If you have the Leadership feat, you may also keep track of your followers and cohorts. They do not count towards the total number of characters you can keep track of.

### CLOSED MIND [GENERAL]

You are mistrustful of new ideas, which makes it difficult to sway your mind. You prefer traditional methods and beliefs.

**Prerequisite:** Wis less than 8 or Wis 14+.

**Benefit:** You gain a +2 Insight bonus to all saving throws against mind-influencing effects and opposed skill checks attempts to trick or cloud your thoughts, such as Intimidate or Bluff.

### DESERT BLOODED [GENERAL]

You require little rest and less water than most.

**Prerequisites:** Con 13+, Endurance.

**Benefit:** You can go without water for one day plus a number of hours equal to four times your Constitution score. After this, you start to suffer from dehydration as per the DMG, Chapter 3.

**Normal:** A character can go without water for one day plus a number of hours equal to his Constitution score.

### DISTRACTING SWEEP [GENERAL, FIGHTER]

You have learned to use your melee weapon to throw dirt or sand into your opponent's eyes, distracting him.

**Prerequisites:** 5+ ranks in Bluff skill, base attack bonus +2 or higher.

**Benefit:** As part of an attack, you can dig your weapon into the ground and flip debris or reflect sunlight into your opponent's eyes. You suffer a -2 penalty on your attack when using this feat. If your attack hits, your opponent suffers a -2 penalty on his next action. This attack works only if your opponent has discernable eyes and is using vision to target you.

**Special:** A monk may use this feat while unarmed.

### DUNESLIDING [GENERAL]

You can slide in a controlled manner down slopes of sand or loose dirt.

**Prerequisite:** 5+ ranks in Balance skill.

**Benefit:** You can balance and fight while sliding down slopes. Your movement is increased by +5 ft. while moving down a slope, so long as the surface consists of loose material such as snow, sand, or gravel.

**Normal:** Characters move down slope at a normal rate, and may be forced to make Balance checks on unstable ground.

**Special:** If you stand on a shield, you may use Dunesliding to move down a solid slope or staircase.

### NO MEAT FOR BUZZARDS [GENERAL]

You are especially watchful for snakes, scorpions and other small but dangerous creatures.

**Prerequisite:** Alertness.

**Benefit:** You gain a +4 competence bonus to Listen and Spot checks made to detect creatures of size Small or less. This only applies if the creature is within 15 ft. of you.

### SANDBLAST [METAMAGIC]

You can substitute hot sand for fire in your spells.

**Benefit:** Your fire spells inflict part of their damage with hot sand instead of flame. Half the damage from such a spell is considered from the abrasive sand, and is not reduced by fire resistance. A volume equal to a third of the spell's area of effect is filled with sand when the spell is cast. A sandblast spell uses up a spell slot one level higher than the spell's actual level.

### SON OF A CAMEL [GENERAL]

You can make a single mouthful of water last for hours.

**Benefit:** You only require half the normal amount of water each day to avoid dehydration.

**Normal:** Medium-sized characters require a gallon of water per day in normal climates, and two or three gallons in hot climates.

**Special:** You may double the duration of the effects from any magical potions you drink.



**STRIKE FROM AMBUSH [GENERAL]**

You are skilled at attacking from positions of total concealment, and are a master of ambushes.

**Prerequisites:** 5+ ranks in Hide skill, 5+ ranks in Jump skill, base attack bonus of +3 or higher.

**Benefit:** If you had total concealment from (or were invisible to) a target at the start of a round, and the target is surprised, you gain a +1 circumstance bonus to all attack and damage rolls made against the target that round.

**Special:** If you inflict sneak attack damage, you can apply the bonus to damage to each of your sneak attack dice.

**UNWAVERING FOCUS [GENERAL]**

You are trained in ignoring irrelevant distractions that might disrupt your concentration, such as sandstorms, extreme heat, or scorpions crawling over your face.

**Benefit:** You do not suffer a penalty to Concentration checks made to cast a spell due to vigorous or violent motion or violent weather.

**VICIOUS MUGGING [GENERAL]**

You may use your combat skills to steal items from an opponent.

**Prerequisites:** 5+ ranks in Pick Pocket skill, ability to sneak attack.

**Benefit:** When using Pick Pocket on a target, you may choose to launch a flurry of ineffective but distracting punches, kicks and slaps instead of trying to secretly lift the target's purse. You may roll your sneak attack dice and add the result to a Pick Pocket check. For example, if you have a sneak attack of 4d6, you may choose to roll 1d20 + 4d6 when making Pick Pocket checks. Using this feat counts as an attack. Your opponent automatically notices your Pick Pocket attempt.

**WALK WITHOUT RHYTHM [GENERAL]**

You have mastered a technique of walking without a discernable pattern.

**Prerequisite:** 5+ ranks in Concentration skill.

**Benefit:** Creatures with tremorsense cannot perceive you while you are moving. You may use Hide and Move Silently against them as normal. If you attack or take other actions that would foil the use of either of those skills, the creature can use tremorsense to locate you until you attempt to use those skills again.

**Normal:** Creatures with tremorsense can sense a character without seeing them.

**WATER SENSE [GENERAL]**

You can smell the sweet taste of water from miles away.

**Prerequisite:** Son of a Camel.

**Benefit:** You gain a +4 insight bonus on all Wilderness Lore checks for locating water. You may also make a Wisdom check (DC 10) to detect any water within 30 ft., even water hidden underground or behind barriers.

**WHIRLING DERVISH ATTACK [GENERAL, FIGHTER]**

The dervishes' most feared attack combines multiple enhancing spells and flashing scimitar attacks into a single terrible dance.

**Prerequisites:** Dex 13+, Int 13+, 5+ ranks in Spellcraft skill, Dodge, Expertise, Mobility, Spring Attack, Whirling Dervish Technique, Whirlwind Attack, base attack bonus +5 or higher, spellcaster level 1st+.

**Benefit:** You may cast one spell with each attack in the Whirlwind Attack. Each spell must fulfill the requirements described in the Whirling Dervish Technique.

**WHIRLING DERVISH TECHNIQUE [GENERAL]**

The dervishes of the desert are famed for their ability to merge magic and swordfighting in their whirling dances.

**Prerequisites:** Dex 13+, 5+ ranks in Spellcraft skill, base attack bonus 5+ or higher, spellcaster level 1st+.

**Benefit:** You may combine spellcasting with an attack action. You may only cast 0 or 1st-level spells using this feat, and the spell may not have material or focus components (other than a weapon). The spell must be one that targets you or your weapon, or has a range of touch. You may deliver touch spells through your weapon using this feat.

**Normal:** A character cannot cast a spell and attack in the same round.

**Special:** This feat may be chosen more than once. Every time this feat is taken, the maximum level of a spell that can be used with this feat is increased by 1. If the feat was taken twice, you could attack and cast a 2nd-level spell as one action.

**WORM RIDER [GENERAL]**

You have learned to hook and ride the giant sandworms of the desert.

**Prerequisites:** Dex 15+, 5+ ranks in Concentration skill, 4+ ranks in Ride skill, Walk without Rhythm.

**Benefit:** If you are adjacent to a sandworm (or similar worm-like creature), you may make a Ride (DC 20) check to climb onto the worm's back. You can then wriggle inside one of the worm's hiderings and be carried along as the worm travels beneath the sand.

See the sandworm description on page 62 for details.

## DESERT SPELLS

In a realm as harsh and unforgiving as the desert, spellcasters must develop unique magics capable of protecting and sustaining them in the toughest conditions.

**Al-Khalid's Silken Shade**

Transmutation

**Level:** Sor/Wiz 1

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./level)

**Area:** An oval area, 25 ft. + 5 ft./level wide and 50 ft. + 10 ft./level long

**Duration:** 1 hour/level

The caster throws the silk into the air, where it expands into a vast silken shade that floats over the caster and his companions. The silk is large enough to shade the average trade caravan.

The area shaded by the silk is 30 degrees F cooler than the surrounding area, and characters within the silk get a +2 circumstance bonus to any Fortitude checks to avoid heatstroke. The silk follows the caster's movement until the spell's duration ends. When the spell finishes, the silk dissolves into a cool mist.

*Arcane Material Component:* A piece of silk.

**Dunewave**

Transmutation

**Level:** Sor/Wiz 4

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./level)

**Target:** One dune

**Duration:** Concentration

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** No

By means of this spell, the caster causes a sand dune to move at great speed through the desert. The caster can choose to ride along on the top of the dune, or use it to overwhelm and batter enemies. The spell's area of effect depends on the size of the dune animated.

The dune moves at up to 120 ft. per round (120 miles per hour). A DC 10 Concentration check is required to maintain the spell if the dune moves faster than 30 ft. per round, due to flying dust and sand. The check is required every round in combat, and every ten minutes while travelling. The dune constantly recreates itself out of the sand as it moves — the spell creates a wave motion in the sand that moves through the desert, it does not move the physical sand itself. Therefore, the dune cannot move through areas where there are no sand or pebbles. The caster of the spell rides atop the dune on a stable 5 ft. wide piece of sand, carried by the moving ground. The caster can choose to create other stable areas in the dune (upon casting) to carry more passengers. Each stable area created is 5 ft. × 5 ft. in size, and increases by 5 the DC of the Concentration check required to maintain the spell. The caster can choose to drop stable areas at will, but cannot create more without recasting the spell.



Anyone not on a stable area who is standing on the dune when the spell is cast, or who is lifted up by a moving dune must make a DC 15 Balance check or slip into the shifting sands. Those who fail the check are knocked prone and take 1d6 points of abrasion damage.

*Arcane Material Component:* A conch or other seashell filled with water, must be buried in the sand of the dune.

### Forced Mirage

Illusion [Phantasm]

**Level:** Brd 2, Sor/Wiz 1

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Target:** One creature

**Duration:** Concentration

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

In the emptiness of the desert, the mind plays tricks. Travelers see castles in the air. Men dying of thirst crawl after impossible ponds of clear blue water, while a pilgrim sees the temple he has searched for all his life.

This spell compels the target to see a mirage. The caster has no control over *what* the target hallucinates, although he can also see what the target sees. The nature of the mirage is usually determined by what the target wants to see when the spell is cast, but occasionally a passing thought may be picked up and made manifest by the spell. For example, a nomad idly wondering if there are any foxes in the desert might see a mirage of a fox.

### Greater Spirit Seal

Abjuration

**Level:** Clr 6, Sor/Wiz 6

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 hour

**Range:** Touch

**Area:** A room or container with only one exit no larger than 20 ft. by 20 ft./level.

**Duration:** 25 year/level or until broken.

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** No

As *spirit seal*, except the duration and area of effect are increased.

*Arcane Material Component:* The dust of an emerald and the dust of a diamond, both worth 5,000 gp each.

### Hydrate

Evocation (Water)

**Level:** Clr 3, Pal 2, Water 2

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** One person

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This spell instantly infuses every part of the body of the target with life-giving and rejuvenating moisture. This has different effects depending on the target.

A normal creature is instantly healed of any subdual or regular damage inflicted by thirst. The creature does not need to drink again for 48 hours, and gains a +1 resistance bonus to all Fortitude checks made in that time. If *hydrate* is cast on a victim of a *horrid wilting* spell within six rounds, the victim regains half the hit points lost to the *horrid wilting*.

Fire creatures suffer 1d6 points of damage per caster level to a maximum of 10d6, as the water dampens their internal flames.

Water creatures are healed for 1d6 points of damage per caster level.

If a character casts *bless water* and then casts *hydrate* in the same round or the next round, the water created is turned into holy water. If the *hydrate* is cast on an undead creature, that creature suffers 1d6 points of damage per caster level to a maximum of 10d6.

### Lens of the Sun

Transmutation

**Level:** Sor/Wiz 5

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Area:** 5-ft.-radius circle

**Duration:** 1 round/level

**Saving Throw:** Reflex (special)

**Spell Resistance:** No

This spell creates a magical lens by bending the air above the caster. The lens can rotate in any direction according to the caster's mental commands, and focus the light of the hot sun into a beam of heat. The heat beam has a maximum range of 300 ft.

The caster can use the beam to burn a target, though he must make a ranged touch attack to hit with the beam. Once the beam has struck a creature, the lens will automatically swivel to keep the beam trained on the victim. The creature must make a Reflex save to escape. Once the

creature has escaped the beam, the caster may attempt to "reacquire" it in his next action by making another ranged touch attack. The beam inflicts 1d6 of fire damage per round per caster level to a maximum of 15d6. The beam is not a magical attack. It is natural concentrated sunlight.

*Lens of the sun* may only be used during the day or in the presence of a *daylight* spell. It may not be used in overcast conditions such as rain or snow.

**Arcane Material Component:** A piece of volcanic glass or obsidian.

### Song of the Land

Divination

**Level:** Brd 0, Rgr 1

**Components:** V

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** Concentration (special)

You sing a song representing a verbal map of the land around you. The tune rises and falls with the terrain, and the wordless song describes the landmarks. For as long as you remain singing, you gain a +10 insight bonus on all Intuit Direction checks. Each *song of the land* is keyed to a particular region, and the spell fails if you move from one terrain type to another.

You may not sing for longer than a number of hours equal to 1 plus your Constitution bonus (if any).

### Spirit Seal

Abjuration

**Level:** Clr 4, Sor/Wiz 4

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 30 minutes

**Range:** Touch

**Area:** A room or container with only one exit no larger than 10 ft. by 10 ft./level.

**Duration:** 5 years/level or until broken.

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** No

This spell creates a shimmering green symbol that is branded into a door, stopper or other means of preventing egress. The branded portal must be the only way out of the room or container. While the *spirit seal* is in place, creatures within the room or container are blocked from using any form of bodily extradimensional travel. The *spirit seal* blocks the same spells as a *dimensional anchor*.

If the container is opened or broken into, or if anyone enters the room from outside by any means (except the caster), the spell is broken.

**Material Component:** 2,500 gp worth of emerald dust.

### Unsoak

Transmutation

**Level:** Sor/Wiz 0

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Close (25 ft + 5 ft./level)

**Area:** 5-ft.-radius circle

**Duration:** 1 round/level

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** No

This cantrip magically gathers any liquid spilled onto the ground within its area of effect in the last 30 seconds. The liquid rises out of the dirt, and can be safely drunk or scooped into a container. The spell will separate liquids if there are multiple liquids within its area of effect. Once the spell duration ends, the liquids begin to soak back into the ground.

## DESERT MONSTERS

It should come as no surprise that an environment as difficult as the desert would breed dangerous monsters. The creatures of the desert have survived fiery heat, endless drought, and howling sandstorms. A few adventurers with swords, armor, and spells are little challenge to them.

### ARCANE SCARAB

Medium-Size Magical Vermin

**Hit Dice:** 5d8+15 (40 hp)

**Initiative:** +1 (Dex)

**Speed:** 20 ft.

**AC:** 18 (+1 Dex, +7 natural)

**Attacks:** Bite +6 melee

**Damage:** Bite 2d4+4

**Face/Reach:** 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Energy ball attack

**Special Qualities:** Spell-catching, vermin

**Saves:** Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +0

**Abilities:** Str 18, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 1, Wis 8, Cha 3

**Climate/Terrain:** Any desert

**Organization:** Solitary or procession (3–6)

**Challenge Rating:** 4

**Treasure:** None

**Alignment:** Always neutral

**Advancement:** 6–10 HD (Large)

Some believe that the sun is a vast ball of fire, pushed across the sky each day by a celestial scarab. Certainly, earthly scarabs do gather and push spheres of material across the sand. Ordinary scarabs gather dung, but arcane scarabs can manipulate and gather the elemental energy that dances on the surface of the sand. Sages are unsure if the scarabs feed off the energy they gather, or use it for some other purpose. Each scarab leaves an area temporarily cleared of its particular energy type in its wake. Scarabs can only collect energy when moving.

There are three varieties of arcane scarab, each of which collects a different type of energy off the desert surface. Fire scarabs are the most common, and gather heat energy. They push a ball of fire ahead of them on the sand, and leave a cool zone behind them. This zone reheats quickly during the day, but cunning travelers can avoid the desert head by shadowing fire scarabs and staying within the magically cooled area. Fire scarabs have the Fire subtype.

Lightning scarabs gather the electricity that sparks on the crests of dunes, and push a roiling ball of crackling plasma ahead of them. The cleared zone of a lightning scarab is never struck by natural lightning, and anyone within 20 ft. of the tail end of the scarab gains electricity resistance 10.

The rarest scarabs are time scarabs, who somehow gather temporal energy as they go. They push an almost invisible ball that seems to warp space as it goes. Anyone travelling directly behind a time scarab ages at a much slower rate.

### Combat

While arcane scarabs can pinch with their fearsome pincers, they can also use their gathered balls of energy as a weapon.

**Energy Ball Attack (Su):** A scarab can launch its gathered ball of energy as a missile weapon at any target within 120 ft. On impact, the ball explodes in a 20 ft. radius burst. Fire and lightning balls inflict damage (reflex save for half), while anyone struck by a time ball is *slowed* and ages slightly. The amount of damage inflicted depends on how much energy the scarab has gathered. Each round in which the scarab moves, it gathers enough energy to inflict 1d6 points of damage (or 1d6 days of aging, for time scarabs). A scarab cannot gather more dice of energy than its hit dice (for example, a 5HD lightning scarab cannot fire a lightning ball that does more than 5d6 damage). When encountered, a scarab generally has a fully charged energy ball ready.

**Spell-catching (Su):** Scarabs can automatically catch certain spells that target them or any point within their reach, and gather the energy of the spell. Fire scarabs can catch any fire spell, lightning scarabs can catch any lightning spell, and time scarabs can catch *haste*, *slow*, or *time stop*. A spell caught by a scarab is turned into a number of

dice of energy equal to the level of the spell. If that exceeds the amount of energy which the scarab can gather, the excess energy dissipates and cannot be used.

**Vermin:** Immune to mind-influencing effects.

### ELDER GNOLL

**Medium-Size Humanoid**

**Hit Dice:** 3d8+3 (14 hp)

**Initiative:** +0

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**AC:** 13 (+3 natural)

**Attacks:** Longspear +4 melee

**Damage:** Longspear 1d8+3

**Face/Reach:** 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft. (10 ft. with longspear)

**Special Attacks:** Death strike

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 ft., death sense

**Saves:** Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0

**Abilities:** Str 15, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 15, Wis 15, Cha 10

**Skills:** Balance +3, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +3,

Spot +3, Wilderness Lore +3

**Feats:** Cleave, Power Attack

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**Climate/Terrain:** Any desert

**Organization:** Solitary, pair, band (2–7), or temple (5–25 gnolls, 2–5 5th level guardians, plus one high priest of 7th level or higher)

**Challenge Rating:** 3

**Treasure:** Standard

**Alignment:** Usually lawful neutral

**Advancement:** By character class

Gnolls are a fallen race. The chaotic, ravaging monsters whose howls echo across the world are common gnolls, the degenerate descendants of a once-noble people. Their great works are forgotten and not even the gnolls themselves remember their heritage. In the deep deserts, however, a few elder gnolls preserve the traditions of the race.

If there is one thing they do well, it is preservation.

The elder gnolls are worshippers of death. Their basalt temples are located in the harshest regions of the wastelands, surrounded by bleached bones. They are not evil creatures, but stern and foreboding. Their philosophy centers around observing and aiding the transition from life to death. They tend to corpses and mummify the dead; they bring people back from the brink if their death is unclean; and they hunt down and destroy those who defy the will of death by raising the fallen.

### Combat

Elder gnolls move with an unnerving certainty and calm. They do not speak or cry out when fighting; they are silent as the grave. Wielding ornate longspears, they methodically divide and slaughter their opponents.

**Death Strike (Su):** Elder gnolls are so attuned to death, they can draw on its lingering energies. When an elder gnoll uses the Cleave feat, anyone damaged by the feat's extra attack must immediately make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or die. This is considered massive damage as the death is essentially "carried over" to another victim.

Characters who have been *raised* from the dead must make this massive damage save whenever they are wounded by an elder gnoll's melee attack.

**Death Sense (Su):** Elder gnolls can sense the approach of death. This ability allows them to *know alignment* at will, as they can tell what fate awaits a soul upon death. They also gain a +2 insight bonus to their saving throws and Armor Class when facing a character who has been reduced to less than his total hit points.

### Elder Gnolls Characters

An elder gnolls favored class is cleric. Because of their long history of religion and extensive culture, elder gnoll clerics are truly blessed. Elder gnoll clerics may choose any domains. In addition to powers gained for being clerics, all elder gnoll clerics are permanently blessed by *shield of faith* and wear *amulets of natural armor* +2.

Desert rangers and monks are also common among their ranks, with the greatest guardians being fighters and paladins.

### GRAVE SALT

#### Huge Ooze

**Hit Dice:** 6d10+27 (60 hp)

**Initiative:** -1 (-5 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

**Speed:** 20 ft.

**AC:** 5 (-2 size, -5 Dex, +2 natural)

**Attacks:** 2 salt jets +3 ranged

**Damage:** Salt jet 1d6+1

**Face/Reach:** 20 ft. by 20 ft./10 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Blindness, desiccation, engulf

**Special Qualities:** Camouflage, fire/cold/electricity immunity, tremorsense, ooze

**Saves:** Fort +4, Ref -3, Will -3

**Abilities:** Str 9, Dex 1, Con 15, Int 1, Wis 13, Cha 1

**Climate/Terrain:** Desert salt flats

**Organization:** Solitary

**Challenge Rating:** 4

**Treasure:** Standard

**Alignment:** Always neutral

**Advancement:** 7–12 HD (Huge), 13–24 HD (Gargantuan)

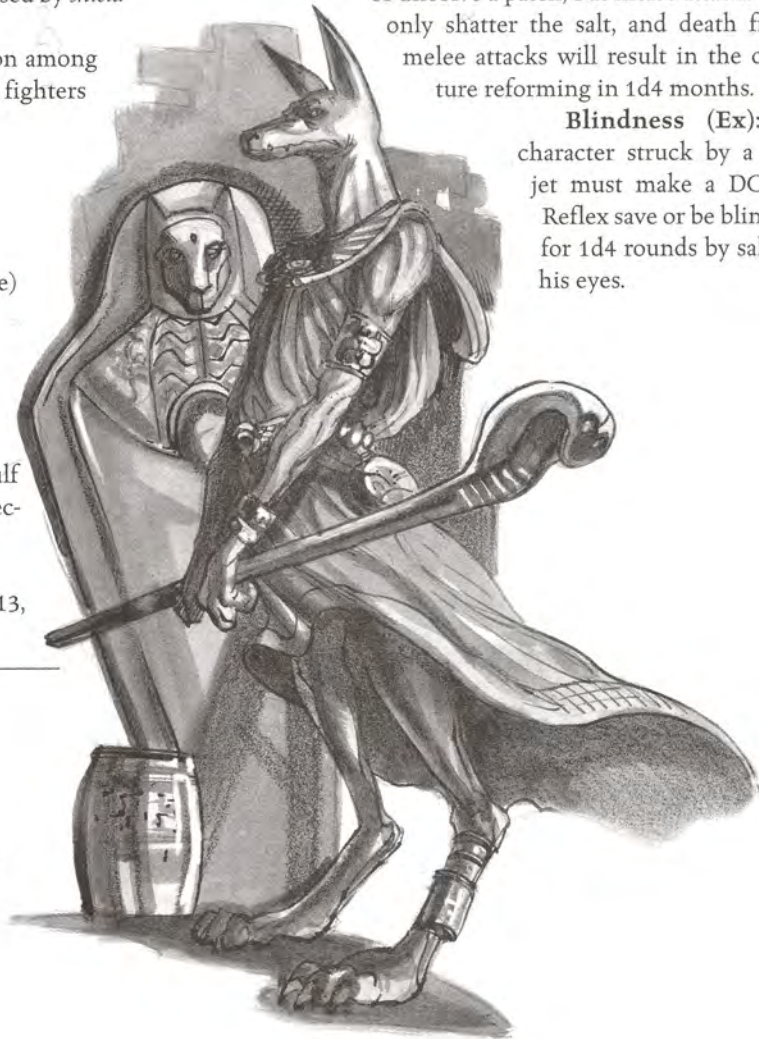
Salt flats are the harshest and most dangerous part of the desert. Vast stretches of the surface are encrusted with the mineral. The sunlight reflects off the crystalline whiteness, and the air is impossibly dry. Few travelers dare to go through the salt flats... but, sometimes, the salt flats come to them.

Grave salt is a bizarre form of mobile, living salt, possibly related to fungi. It is technically an ooze, but it is dry and brittle to the touch. A patch of grave salt consists of a large block of sandy, gray-white salt about six inches thick, dotted with bubbles and pockets of loose salt. It can move with incredible swiftness, expanding outwards like a fast-growing crystal.

### Combat

The primary attack of grave salt is its desiccation ability, but it can also harass opponents by bursting the bubbles in its body to fire sudden jets of salt out of the ground. These salt jets pummel and abrade their target with chunks of rock salt and dirt. Killing grave salt is very difficult — sonic attacks and acid can permanently destroy or dissolve a patch, but melee attacks will only shatter the salt, and death from melee attacks will result in the creature reforming in 1d4 months.

**Blindness (Ex):** A character struck by a salt jet must make a DC 10 Reflex save or be blinded for 1d4 rounds by salt in his eyes.



**Desiccation (Su):** The air around a patch of grave salt is so dry, it leeches moisture and vitality from the skin. Furthermore, the flakes of salt released by salt jets adhere to the flesh, weighing the victim down further. Anyone within 10 ft. of grave salt takes one point of temporary Dexterity damage each round. This damage can be removed by drinking a day's worth of water and scraping off the encrusted salt.

**Engulf (Ex):** Grave salt is very brittle. Anyone walking over a patch of salt must make a Balance check (DC 20) or break the surface. If the surface is broken by a character, he falls into the loose salt, and takes 1d4 points of temporary Dexterity damage due to desiccation. A character reduced to zero Dexterity cannot move, and will slowly be entombed and digested by the grave salt.

**Camouflage (Ex):** Grave salt can hide under a thin layer of sand. It takes a successful Spot check (DC 15) to notice hidden grave salt. Grave salt can stay camouflaged even when moving, and can try to move under a character within range. If the character spots the moving salt, he gets an attack of opportunity and the salt cannot move underneath him. If he fails to spot the salt or misses the attack, the salt positions itself beneath him, and he may be engulfed by it when he moves.

**Immunity (Ex):** Grave salt takes no damage from cold, fire, or electricity-based attacks.

**Tremorsense (Ex):** Grave salt can automatically sense the location of anything within 60 ft. that is in contact with the ground.

**Ooze:** Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and polymorphing. Not subject to critical hits.

## SANDWORM

### Colossal Beast

**Hit Dice:** 40d10 + 400 (680 hp)

**Initiative:** -2 (Dex)

**Speed:** 20 ft., burrow 40 ft.

**AC:** 20 (-8 size, -2 Dex, +20 natural)

**Attacks:** Bite +50 melee

**Damage:** Bite 2d10+20

**Face/Reach:** 40 ft. × 80 ft./15 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Improved grab, swallow whole, collapse sand

**Special Qualities:** Sense water, tremorsense

**Saves:** Fort +35, Ref +10, Will +6

**Abilities:** Str 50, Dex 6, Con 30, Int 1, Wis 8, Cha 8

**Climate/Terrain:** Sandy desert

**Organization:** Solitary

**Challenge Rating:** 16

**Treasure:** Special

**Alignment:** Always neutral

**Advancement:** 41–60 HD (Colossal)

An even larger relative of the purple worm, sandworms are the most feared denizen of the desert. They burrow through the deep sands, occasionally bursting onto the surface to devour travelers. The creatures have magically adapted to the lack of water — now they grow thirstier the more they drink. Most sandworms never taste a drop of water, but those that do are maddened by it, swimming to the nearest water source and drinking until it is exhausted or the worm explodes. The worms can magically sense all water sources within a hundred miles.

Some brave nomads capture and feed water to hatching worms, who then immediately rush for the nearest oasis. The nomad tribes have also mastered the art of riding along in the folds of the skin of an adult worm. The worms can travel very quickly under the sand, but riders risk suffocation if the worm does not surface before their air is exhausted. Some riders use magical breathing masks on long rides.

The fiery belly of a worm is a furnace of magical energies. Stones swallowed by worms sometimes soak up this energy, becoming imbued with magical power. The stones can be carved into ioun stones once removed from the worm.

### Combat

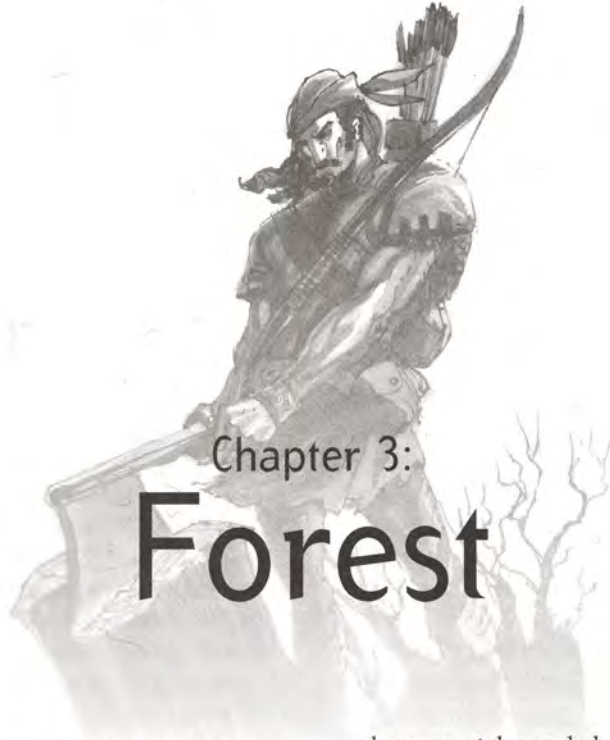
In battle, sandworms either use their Collapse Ground attack to trap prey, or else rise out of the sand to attack before sinking back down and circling again.

**Collapse Ground (Ex):** Sandworms can collapse the loose sand of a dune, forming a conical pit with a depth and radius equal to the sandworm's hit dice in feet. Anyone caught in the pit must make a DC 25 Balance check every five feet, or fall five feet towards the center of the pit. The sandworm emerges in the center of the pit, attacking anyone within reach.

**Improved Grab (Ex):** To use this ability, the sandworm must hit with its bite attack. If it gets a hold, it automatically deals bite damage and can attempt to swallow the foe.

**Swallow Whole (Ex):** A sandworm can try to swallow a grabbed opponent of Large or smaller size by making a successful grapple check. Once inside, the opponent takes 2d8+12 points of crushing damage plus 1d12 points of fire damage per round from the worm's gizzard. A swallowed creature can climb out of the gizzard with a successful grapple check. This returns it to the worm's maw, where another successful grapple check is needed to get free. A swallowed creature may also try to cut its way out using claws or a Medium-sized or smaller slashing weapon to deal 40 points of damage to the gizzard (AC 20). Once the creature exits, muscular action closes the wound; another swallowed opponent must cut his or her own way out.

**Tremorsense (Ex):** A sandworm can automatically sense the location of anything within 60 feet that is in contact with the ground.



## Chapter 3:

## Forest

## THE FOREST ENVIRONMENT

The forest is alive... not only in the sense that it is made up of many living things, but also in that it has a unifying spirit. The Spirit of the Forest is a semi-sentient entity whose body is literally the forest itself. No one knows what the Spirit truly is, but there are a number of theories.

Botamancers believe, almost religiously, that the Spirit is an entity born of arcane magical energy which forms a symbiotic relationship with a forest. To druids (and some rangers and woodsmen), the Spirit is a minor servant of nature itself, like the celestial lieutenant of the gods. Others hold that the Spirit is a collection of all the minor consciousness of every living thing in the forest – every moss, flower, tree, and animal each forms a tiny part of the Spirit.

Of course, the Spirit of the Forest could not be considered a creature by normal terms and is too big to be damaged with conventional methods, so there is no way to fight it. Destroying large parts of the forest might weaken it, but it would mostly just make it angrier.

While the Spirit does have limited control over the forest, it usually takes decades for any noticeable changes to occur. However, when the Spirit is angered, the entire forest mobilizes *en masse* to defend itself and drive out invaders. Those who have wronged the forest will find that roots and vines move to trip them; brambles and thorns scratch at them, resisting their passage with a will of their own; animals, fey, and animated plants attack

them on sight; and the forest in general become a far more dangerous place to be. And this is only the beginning. Once in an eon, it is said, the entire forest will animate and march against some great foe — the wrath of nature unleashed in truth.

However, the Spirit of the Forest is not generally an active entity. Some powerful druids, rangers, and woodsmen act on behalf of the Spirit, while spellcasters use it to enhance their divination. Others simply seek it for advice.

## TAINTED SPIRITS

Sometimes, through powerful magic or long exposure to certain elements, a Spirit of the Forest can become infused with energy in a way that alters the very nature of the forest itself. There are six kinds of energy that can affect a Spirit: elemental fire, elemental cold, positive energy, negative energy, arcane energy, and divine energy. Each one has a different effect on the environment.

**Fire:** Fire-tainted forests are dark and gloomy places. It is stiflingly hot, and a thin layer of fine ash covers everything. The trees, while still very much alive, are slightly charred and seem to still be smoldering. Leaves that fall from the trees catch fire as they fall and burn up before they hit the ground. There is almost no brush or undergrowth, because it rarely lasts long before it spontaneously combusts. There are many fire-based creatures (including a few minor fire elementals and outsiders such as salamanders) inhabiting such woods, and many of the animals have fire resistance or the fire subtype.



**Cold:** Cold tainted forests are frozen and bare. It is always cold and snow constantly covers the ground. The trees, while bare of leaves, are hung with icicles. The entire forest is like a winter that never ends. What few animals there are hibernate, forage what they can, or simply try to survive the predations of frost giants, frost worms, white dragons, and other cold-based creatures. These forests are said to be where winter wolves originated, and they are certainly the most populous species where the Spirit is tainted with cold.

**Positive Energy:** Forests tainted with positive energy are vibrant and full of life. All the colors are vivid and sharp, and the weather is always good. Flora and fauna abound – indeed, the very ground itself hums with the pure dynamic potential for life. The air is fresh and sweet, and the water in the numerous bubbling streams is clear and tastes slightly of strawberries or lemons. Animals tend to be stronger and healthier than in normal forests, and one is hard pressed to find a patch of ground that is not at least covered with moss.

**Negative Energy:** A forest corrupted by negative energy is a dull and grim place. Everything is gray and dreary in color. Plants are withered and the trees are dead and rotten. The stench of death fills the air, and water is usually foul and unsafe to drink. Animals are thin and sickly, and when they die, they often rise again as undead. There is as much unlife in these forests as there is life in a normal forest.

**Arcane:** Forests infused with arcane magic are odd and dynamic places. The terrain shifts regularly, making it easy for unfamiliar travelers to get lost. Most plants and trees are at least slightly magical, and fey and magical beasts of all kinds roam the woods. The air itself seems to shimmer and dance, and those who drink the water have a good chance of being turned into something... different. The area is prone to strange and unseasonable weather, and, if one looks carefully enough, he might see a color which could not exist in normal reality.

**Divine:** Forests affected by divine power are calm and serene. Everything is still and picturesque, less like a real forest than an artist's painting of one. Trees do not look as if they have grown, but rather like they have been molded into a form fancied by some higher being. The air is cool and still, and the water sparkles in placid pools. The animals are perfect representatives of their kind and go about their business peacefully. The weather is always mild (though still what one would expect for the time of year).

## FEY CIRCLES

The enchanted fey are a more powerful force in the woods than many believe. However, they are a subtle and enigmatic group, so the evidence of their influence is minimal. One of the few major symbols of their presence is the fey circles.

Fey circles are formed from large mushrooms or stones arranged in perfect circles in small forest clearings and the like. They are generally between ten and sixty feet in diameter and sit on fairly flat ground. Each circle is unique in some way, and there are dozens of different kinds of objects used to construct fey circles (though stones and mushrooms are by far the most common). The rocks in stone circles are simple, irregular, and often moss-covered; all are of a similar size to each other (stones in different circles range from fist sized to towering boulders). Mushrooms are all of the same kind and often varying in age and height. A few fey circles are found in small ponds, formed by steppingstones or lily pads. Destruction of fey circles brings subtle but effective retribution (though rarely direct violence) to those responsible.

No one has ever *seen* these circles being constructed, however, and most are simply accepted as normal features of the woods. In the day they have no noticeable supernatural power, though some claim that the mushrooms are powerful hallucinogens. At night, though, they become the sites of mysterious (and occasionally raucous) fey rituals, celebrations, or simple gatherings. Come morning, there is no physical sign that these events ever occurred, and those who get close enough to witness them usually wake up with a bad headache and no memory of the night before. However, fey circles are not truly magical in themselves, though a few scholars claim their size and location conform to some obscure mystic geometry.

## TREES AND PLANTS

There are hundreds of species of trees in the forests of the world — and even more bushes, shrubs, herbs, mosses, and other plants. However, a fantasy world would undoubtedly contain many magical plants as well. This section details several unique plants with magical or extraordinary properties, which can be used to add flavor to forests in any campaign world.

**Cinder Oak:** These trees are descended from regular oaks in fire-tainted forests. Looking in most respects like a normal oak tree, the cinder oak has an especially long burning charcoal-black wood and leaves which are blue-white in the spring, pale yellow in the summer, and fiery orange in the fall. When the leaves drop from the tree,

they almost immediately catch fire and burn up. However, if placed in water before being picked, they may be stored safely and will still combust as soon as they are removed (they can retain this property for up to three months, after which they dissolve, turning the water milky red).

**Etherweed:** This short, prickly weed grows simultaneously on both the material and ethereal plane. Unlike normal plants, it is fully solid on the ethereal plane and produces a toxin which forces ethereal creatures who get pricked by its thorny edges to the material plane (save DC 15; initial damage: banishes creature to the material plane until he or she makes the save, secondary damage: 1d6 Strength). Etherweed can also be made into a thick, goopy paste which can be rubbed on a wall or object to make it solid on the ethereal plane (so ethereal creatures could not pass through it). One plant is enough to treat 4 square feet.

**Featherberry Bush:** The extremely rare featherberry bush grows on wooded mountainsides and is highly sought by gourmet chefs. Its fruit is completely weightless: the small, scraggly bush produces large, light purple, cranberry-like berries which will float in the air if left untouched. A handful of featherberries sells for around 15 gold pieces (though a few chefs are willing to pay up to 30 gp). The berries can also be smeared over items to reduce their weight by 10% (each bush produces enough berries to be smeared over 10 square feet).

**Midnight Silkvine:** This thin, late flowering vine not only blooms at night, but is, in fact, supernaturally invisible during the day. In direct moonlight, the vine becomes visible and glows with a silver-blue light equivalent to a candle. It snakes up small trees to a maximum length of 30 feet, so as to catch rays of moonlight from above the canopy. At its center are fibers with the consistency of silk which are sometimes used by elves in their fine clothing (as well as being grown along streets to act as natural lamp posts at night).

**Quickmoss:** Quickmoss is a strange, semi-magical fungus that can turn into a mercury-like substance in the right conditions. Generally no more than a small patch of dark green fuzz, quickmoss grows only on high, warm mountainsides. Every year, when the spring rains come, quickmoss transforms into a translucent, gold-colored blob of liquid with the consistency of quicksilver. It flows down the mountainside and seeps into lakes and streams, where it disperses into millions of tiny gold spores. The spores are carried to the clouds with the evaporating water and returned to the mountain by wind and rain to take root and grow again. In liquid form, quickmoss is sometimes called quickgold, and is highly prized for the making of jewelry.

## FOREST CITIES

While they provide valuable resources (as well as some level of protection) most races find it inconvenient to build large communities in forests. However, there are some civilizations that have thrived in the woods.

**Elven Tree Cities:** Elves have always coexisted harmoniously with nature. One prominent example of this is the tree cities, which resemble elaborate towns of tree houses. Smooth buildings of polished wood nestle among the branches or around the trunks of gigantic redwoods. Many buildings have multiple stories and the largest are supported by several trees at once. Ladders, rope bridges, swings, gondolas suspended from rope and pulley systems, and complex feats of architecture are used to connect the different buildings and serve as “streets” — which suits the dexterous elves just fine. Above small clearings hang large wooden platforms that serve as town squares, plazas, open markets, small parks, or the hubs of the city’s “streets.” The only ways up to the treetops or down to the ground are generally thin spiral staircases at the center of these platforms. Because the elves have learned to build almost anything in the trees, only a tiny percent of the city lies on the ground.

**Gnome Logging Camps:** Gnomes take an interesting approach to logging: rather than start at the edge and working their way in, they make their base in the middle and work their way out — or, more precisely, from the bottom working up. They dig tunnels into the center of the forest, then begin collecting all the wood of the trees, starting with the roots and then slowly lowering the trees down into their underground complex, cutting off sections as the wood descends. Then they fill in the hole and plant a seed of the same kind of tree. The lumber is then processed and transported out through the tunnel like ore from a mine.

## RULES FOR THE FOREST

While forests are basically any area with lots of trees, not all forests are the same. Older, larger trees tend to grow far apart, whereas young, short trees are packed tightly and surrounded by undergrowth. The density of the trees and undergrowth effects how far you can see, but many tall trees have huge canopies that block out the sunlight. The size of a particular forest’s trees (forests mainly consist of a single species of tree) has an effect on many other aspects of the forest and adventuring within. Refer to table 3–1.

These modify the rules in the core rulebooks slightly, but are only guidelines. Magical or unique forests might not conform to these guidelines.

**Tree Height:** Trees grow to different heights depending on the age of the forest and the kind of tree. Tree height is the average height of the tops of the trees in a particular forest. Small trees tend to grow on rugged terrain like mountainsides. Large trees need very flat, even ground to thrive.

**Tree Spacing:** Taller trees tend to grow farther apart, while small trees pack together tightly. In a forest with Close tree spacing, it would be impossible to walk in a straight line without running into a tree, and the gaps between trees might be so small that large objects or creatures (such as horses or wagons) might not be able to get through. Large or bigger creatures move at one-half base speed, as they have to squeeze between trees. Medium spacing is comfortable enough to travel through, but the trees are rarely more than 15 yards apart. Gargantuan or larger creatures move at one-half their base speed. Distantly spaced trees are far apart, and one might be able to walk almost straight through the entire area without having to make more than minor turns.

**Undergrowth:** Undergrowth is the amount of shrubs, bushes, weeds, vines, etc. in the forest. Large trees block out sunlight, so the amount of undergrowth usually varies with the size of the trees. In forests with Dense undergrowth, travelers are practically wading in brush and shrubs, and it is almost impossible to find a patch of clear ground. Moderate forests do not have a lot of undergrowth, but there is still enough to impede progress slightly. In Sparse forests, there is little or no undergrowth, and quite a bit of bare ground.

**Visibility:** In dense forests, trees and undergrowth obscure vision completely past a certain point. After a certain distance, something is bound to be blocking a character's line of sight. Anything past the distance listed on table 3-1 has full concealment and at least 1/2 cover.

**Light:** Large trees have gigantic canopies which block out the sunlight, whereas smaller trees merely provide shade. Table 3-1 shows the equivalent amount of light on the ground level in the forest, during full daylight.

**Overland Speed:** Thick undergrowth and tightly packed trees can slow movement. When traveling a trackless path through the forest, multiply your overland speed by the figures in table 3-1.

## HAZARDS

The wood holds its own dangers. Aside from animals and the normal risks of adventuring, travelers in the forest might encounter several other hazards.

**Briar Patch:** A briar patch is a patch of thorny bushes and shrubs. If caught in one, a character is entangled. He suffers a -2 penalty to attack rolls and a -4 penalty to effective Dexterity, and cannot move. He must also make a Concentration check (DC 15) or lose any spell he tries to cast. To get loose from a briar patch, a trapped character may make an Escape Artist check (DC 20) to pluck the thorns from his clothes and generally dislodge himself. He may then move out of the briar patch at half speed. He may also choose to make a Strength (DC 20) check to plow his way out. He moves at half speed, and takes 1 point of damage for every 10 feet he moves, as the thorns and branches scratch at his skin.

**Trip Hole:** A trip hole is a small hole in the ground, often inhabited by rabbits or other small animals, which is obscured by leaves and undergrowth. While not actually dangerous, trip holes have been the bane of many adventurers, who, while running through the forest, have suddenly found themselves flat on their face. Any creature of Small to Large size who passes over a trip hole must make a Spot check (DC 15) or fall prone.

**Forest Fires:** A single careless torch or fire spell is all it takes, sometimes, to set a forest aflame. Many factors come into play during forest fires — including the wind, amount of brush, and size of the trees — but in general there are two kinds of forest fires: low burning and high burning.

**Low Burning:** Low burning fires burn at ground level, feeding on brush and destroying trees. These generally occur in forests with short or medium trees and a large amount of brush. If the trees are large enough, they might survive while the brush burns away, but in general everything is destroyed. The fire burns slowly and methodically, usually no more than 10 ft. per minute. Anyone trapped within a burning area takes 2d6 points of fire damage each round.

**High Burning:** High burning fires burn away the tops of the trees, leaving the ground no more than singed. They occur mostly in forests with medium or tall trees and feed on leaves, twigs, and pine needles without really damaging the trees. These fires can be so powerful that they create their own winds (sometimes up to 70 miles per hour) and can move up to about 150 ft. per round in an exploding cloud of burning leaves and brush. They are also high-

**TABLE 3-1: FOREST TYPES**

Tree Height	Tree Spacing	Undergrowth	Average Visibility	Equivalent Light Level (in full daylight)	Overland Speed
15-30 ft	Close	Dense	40 ft.	Normal	× 1/4
50-80 ft.	Medium	Moderate	80 ft.	Poor (overcast, dusk)	× 3/4
100+ ft.	Distant	Sparse	170 ft.	Moonlight	× 1

ly unpredictable, changing directions without warning and “jumping” across bodies of water. Because the actual fire is high above, creatures on the ground take only 1d6 points of fire damage each minute, but anyone caught amongst the branches takes 4d6 points of fire damage each round.

Each fire is unique, however. The geography, weather, amount of brush, season, and cause of the fire all come into play. Because of this, forest fires can be reasonably tailored to suit the DM's needs.

## WOODSMAN

A hunter, woodcutter, and forester, the woodsman is also a rugged warrior and tracker who makes the forest his home and protects it from those who would plunder its resources. He becomes master of his environment, learning all its dangers and nuances.

**Adventures:** Woodsmen may act as guides or body guards to those traveling through the forest, or take it upon themselves to purge a forest of dangerous or unnatural creatures, or people who would destroy the forest for their own personal gain (even if this means fighting their own race). Of course, while woodsmen love the forest and function best within its borders, that does not keep them from having a keen sense of adventure like any other class.

**Characteristics:** Woodsmen are competent archers and warriors — usually favoring more practical or utilitarian weapons over flashy or gaudy equipment. They are skilled trackers and survivalists, excelling in hunting and foraging in wooded areas and are able to live for years without coming into contact with civilization. Most of all, nearly every aspect of a woodsman's skills focuses on the forest.

**Alignment:** Woodsmen can be of any alignment. Many are neutral, having adopted a life of solitude and caring little for events outside their forests. Many are also chaotic, having abandoned civilization for the primal existence of the woods. Good woodsmen are protectors of travelers, guardians of the woods, and hunters of dangerous beasts. Evil woodsmen take pleasure in the hunt, caring nothing for the nature of their prey.

**Religion:** Woodsmen may revere nature deities or gods of hunting or travel, though they are by no means required to worship at all. They tend to rely on themselves, and often have little use for ecclesiastical concerns.

**Background:** Woodsmen often grow up in or near the forest, the children of hunters or loggers (who may have been woodsmen themselves). Some become woodsmen out of necessity; when banished from their home or lost



in the forest, one must learn to survive or die. These are just stereotypes, however, for each woodsman chooses his path for unique — and often very personal — reasons.

**Races:** Woodsmen are commonly humans or elves, though because of their solitary, self-dependent lifestyle, one cannot really say which races are most likely to join the class. Oddly enough, many dwarf exiles become woodsmen — their natural ruggedness helps them to survive the first few months on their own. Any race with an affinity for the forest has its share of woodsmen, but even that is a generalization; like all adventurers they run the gamut.

**Classes:** Woodsmen tend to live solitary lives away from civilization as a whole, and thus care little about social and racial distinctions. They usually respect anyone who can survive on his own in the wild; they get along well with barbarians and some warriors, and have great respect for druids. They generally dislike “uppity city folk,” especially those arrogant about their social status, including some bards, paladins, and aristocrats. Again, though, most woodsmen treat each individual according to his or her own merits.

### GAME RULE INFORMATION

Woodsmen have the following game statistics.

**Abilities:** Dexterity and Wisdom are important for woodsmen. Being away from cities makes heavy armor scarce, and one doesn't last very long in the forest without a good sense of one's surroundings.

**Alignment:** Any.

**Hit Die:** d10.

### Class Skills

The woodsman's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha, exclusive skill), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Use Rope (Dex), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

**Skill Points at 1st level:** (4 + Int modifier) × 4.

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:** 4 + Int modifier.

### CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the woodsman.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** A woodsman is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, all light and medium armor, and shields.

**Spellcasting:** The woodsman learns to cast 1st level spells from the ranger spell list. At 5th level he can cast one 1st level spell per day; at 11th level he can cast two 1st level spells and one 2nd level spell; and finally at 17th level he can cast three 1st level spells, two 2nd level spells, and one 3rd level spell. To cast a spell, the woodsman must have a Wisdom score of at least 10 + the spell's level. Bonus spells are based on Wisdom and saving throws against these spells have a Difficulty Class of 10 + spell level + Wisdom modifier.

A woodsman prepares and casts spells just as a ranger does. His caster level is one-half his class level.

TABLE 3–2: THE WOODSMAN

Base Class Level	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	Favored enemy, know the forest, track
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	Bonus feat
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	Walk of the woods
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	Favored enemy 2
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	Spellcasting
6	+6/+1	+5	+2	+2	
7	+7/+2	+5	+2	+2	Know the forest (+2)
8	+8/+3	+6	+2	+2	Great hunter, bonus feat
9	+9/+4	+6	+3	+3	Favored enemy 3
10	+10/+5	+7	+3	+3	
11	+11/+6/+1	+7	+3	+3	Spellcasting
12	+12/+7/+2	+8	+4	+4	
13	+13/+8/+3	+8	+4	+4	Trackless step
14	+14/+9/+4	+9	+4	+4	Favored enemy 4, bonus feat
15	+15/+10/+5	+9	+5	+5	Know the forest (+3)
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+5	+5	
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	+5	Spellcasting
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+6	+6	Listen to the spirit
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+6	+6	Favored enemy 5
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+6	+6	Call of the Wild, bonus feat

## FOREST

**Track:** A woodsman gains Track as a bonus feat.

**Favored Enemy:** At 1st level, a woodsman may select a type of creature or organization as a favored enemy. Due to his extensive study of his foes and training in the proper techniques for combating them, the woodsman gains a +1 to all checks made against that creature or organization. The +1 counts for both attack and damage rolls, even against constructs, undead, and other enemies. The damage bonus counts for ranged weapons as well, but only against targets within 30 ft. At 4th level and every 5 levels thereafter (9th, 14th, 19th) the woodsman gains an additional +1 to his bonus, or selects another favored enemy. If another enemy is selected, the bonus gained applies only to that enemy. For example, a 15th level woodsman could either have a +3 vs. dragons, or a +1 vs. goblinoids, giants, and beasts, or have a +2 vs. fey and a +1 vs. vermin.

A woodsman's favored enemy types follow the same rules as the ranger from the PHB, except that he need not be evil to choose his own type or race as a favored enemy. A human woodsman who learns to hunt humans might protect the forest from poachers or track down criminals hiding in the woods.

**TABLE 3-3: WOODSMAN FAVORED ENEMIES**

Type	Examples
Aberrations	Athach
Animals	Lions
Beasts	Owl bears
Constructs	Golems
Dragons	Green dragons
Elementals	Fire elementals
Fey	Grigs
Giants	Hill giants
Humanoid type	*
Magical Beasts	Dragonne
Oozes	Grey ooze
Organizations	*
Outsider type	*
Plants	Treants
Shapechangers	Aranea
Undead	Mohrgs
Vermin	Beetles

\* Woodsman may not select "humanoid," "organization" or "outsider" as a favored enemy, but they may select a more narrowly defined type of humanoid (such as goblinoid or reptilian humanoids), organization (tribe of Kull, mages of the sunspire) or outsider (genie-kind, devils, etc). A desert ranger may select his own race as a favored enemy, no matter his alignment.

**Know the Forest:** At 1st level, the woodsman learns to use the woods to his advantage, gaining a +1 circumstance bonus to Climb, Hide, Intuit Direction, Listen, Move Silently, Search, Spot, and Wilderness Lore checks made within a forest. This bonus increases to +2 at 7th level and +3 at 15th level.

**Bonus Feat:** At 2nd, 8th, 14th, and 20th level, the woodsman gains a bonus feat from the following list: Alertness, Ambidexterity, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge (Mobility, Spring Attack), Endurance, Expertise, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Point Black Shot (Far Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run), Quick Draw, Run, Toughness, Two-Weapon Fighting, (Improved Two-Weapon Fighting), Weapon Finesse\*, Weapon Focus.\*

Some of the bonus feats available to a woodsman cannot be acquired until the woodsman has gained one or more prerequisite feats; these feats are listed parenthetically after the prerequisite feat. A woodsman may choose a feat marked with an asterisk (\*) more than once, but each time it applies to a different weapon. These feats can only be used so long as the woodsman wears light or no armor.

**Walk of the Woods:** At 3rd level, the woodsman can move at his full overland speed while in the forest, no matter how difficult the terrain. He may even move at his normal speed through briars, thorns, dense undergrowth and other such impediments. Also, if he has a Dexterity of 15 or greater, he may move through the treetops at up to half his base speed, so long as the trees are close enough together (DM's discretion).

**Great Hunter:** At 8th level, the woodsman gains a bonus to Wilderness Lore checks to track creatures through the forest equal to half his class level (round down).

**Trackless Step:** At 13th level, the woodsman can no longer be tracked while traveling through the forest.

**Listen to the Spirit:** At 18th level, the woodsman may tap into the spirit of the forest to learn its general size, shape, special properties (such as if it is innately magical or if the spirit has been tainted), and condition. If something specific is aggravating the spirit (such as loggers operating inside the forest's border or beholders invading via a passage to the underworld), he learns that as well. He also knows if any of his favored enemies lurk within the forest. Using this ability is a full round action.

**Call of the Wild:** At 20th level, the woodsman becomes master of the woods. He gains the Leadership feat for free. Rather than draw normal followers and cohorts, he attracts animals whose hit dice equal the listed levels of experience of his followers. For example, a woodsman whose Leadership feat would draw 12 1st-level followers instead gains 12 1-HD animals. If the woodsman already possesses the Leadership feat, the animal followers arrive in addition to the humanoid followers and cohorts he gains from his normal Leadership feat.

## ALPHA

Life can get complicated. Some long for the primal simplicity of nature. A few do more than long. An alpha is one who leaves civilization to live life as an animal — literally. While some variations may exist, almost all true alphas join a pack of wolves. They use their superior intelligence to take leadership of the pack, but as they embrace their animalistic instincts, they slowly become more wolf than person. The alpha abandons a civilized life even more than a barbarian, learning to survive by instinct alone.

Most alphas start off as druids, who use their wild shape ability to make the transition easier. A few alphas are rangers or barbarians.

**Hit Die:** d12.

### REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become an alpha, a character must fulfill all of the following requirements.

**Constitution:** 13+

**Animal Empathy:** 8 ranks.

**Wilderness Lore:** 8 ranks.

**Feats:** Endurance, Iron Will, Track

**Special:** In order to take this class, a character must swear off civilized life permanently. He must live in the wilderness for at least a month without reading or writing, participating in commerce, using any but the simplest tools or weapons, etc. These standards must be maintained at all times; if they are broken the character may never advance in alpha levels again.

Note that the class can be used with other pack animals (subject to the DM's approval) but wolves are the most common and used as an example.

### CLASS SKILLS

The alpha's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha, exclusive skill), Climb (Str), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Wilderness Lore (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 4 + Int modifier.

### CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the alpha prestige class.

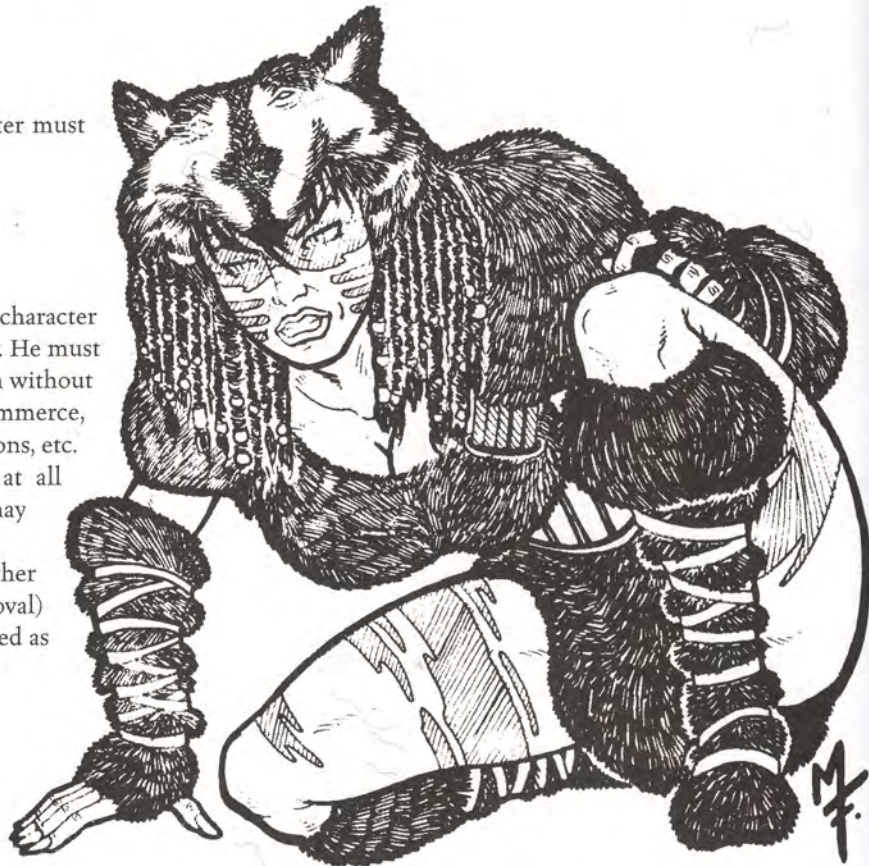


TABLE 3-4: THE ALPHA

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Ability Modification			
						Con	Dex	Str	Int
1	+1	+2	+0	+2	Pack, wolf speak	+1	—	—	-1
2	+2	+3	+0	+3	Wild shape 1/day	+1	—	—	-1
3	+3	+3	+1	+3	Scent, bite attack	+1	+1	—	-2
4	+4	+4	+1	+4	Red jaws, wild shape 2/day	+1	+1	—	-2
5	+5	+4	+1	+4	Run of the wolf, howl	+2	+1	—	-3
6	+6	+5	+2	+5	Wild shape 3/day	+2	+1	—	-3
7	+7	+5	+2	+5	Hide of the wolf, primal mind	+2	+1	+1	-4
8	+8	+6	+2	+6	Lead the pack, wild shape 4/day	+2	+1	+1	-4
9	+9	+6	+3	+6	Eyes of the wolf, ears of the wolf	+2	+2	+1	-5
10	+10	+7	+3	+7	Forever wild	+2	+2	+1	-5

## FOREST

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** Alphas gain no proficiency in any weapon or armor.

**Ability Modification:** As the alpha becomes more animal-like, he gets stronger, faster, and tougher but loses the ability to reason and think clearly. His base ability scores are modified every other level, starting at first, as shown on the progression table. These modifiers apply even when the alpha is in wolf form, and will not reduce the alpha's Intelligence score below 3. These figures represent the total modifications thus far, rather than how much they are modified each level. The alpha never loses skill points or feats from his lowered intelligence due to this Intelligence loss. He has internalized these skills and feats and they are part of his nature.

**Pack:** At 1st level, the alpha is accepted as the leader of a pack of wolves. To do this, he must fight the current pack leader and win. His pack consists of no more than four wolves plus one wolf per every three alpha levels. Treat the pack as animal companions.

**Wolf Speak:** At 1st level, the alpha learns to communicate with wolves. He can speak their language as if he were speaking to a human. The wolves can still only understand simple commands and will not engage in conversation on topics that have no bearing to their way of life.

**Wild Shape:** At 2nd level, the alpha gains the ability to change into a wolf per the *wild shape* ability of a druid. He can use this ability once per day at 2nd level, twice per day at 4th level, three times per day at 6th level, and four times per day at 8th level.

**Scent:** At 3rd level, the alpha's sense of smell becomes greatly enhanced in his humanoid form. He gains the scent ability and a +2 racial bonus to Wilderness Lore checks when tracking by scent.

**Bite Attack:** At 3rd level, the alpha's teeth lengthen and sharpen, and his jaws become much stronger. He gains a bite attack that deals 1d6 points of piercing damage and Weapon Finesse (bite). Like all natural weapons, the alpha may attack without drawing an attack of opportunity.

**Red Jaws:** At 4th level, the alpha gains mastery over his natural weapons. As a result, he receives Weapon Focus (bite) as a bonus feat. In addition, he may choose Weapon Specialization (bite) as a feat, as though he were a 4th level fighter. This applies to his bite in both wolf and human form.

**Run of the Wolf:** At 5th level, the alpha can run as fast as the rest of the pack. His base speed increases by 10 ft. (in addition to other class bonuses that might increase movement) in his humanoid form, and he gains the Run feat.

**Howl:** At 5th level, the alpha gains the ability to let out a piercing wolf howl. Howling is a full round action and grants a +2 bonus to all Intimidate checks the alpha makes against creatures within 30 ft.. This bonus lasts for one minute. A howl can also be used to communicate with members of the rest of the pack within one mile. It sends simple messages, such as "Help!" "Danger! Flee!" "Tough prey, come help," "Come to me," and so on. The alpha can understand howls from other members of the pack as well.

**Hide of the Wolf:** At 7th level, the alpha's skin toughens and his body hair thickens. He gains a +2 bonus to natural armor.

**Primal Mind:** At 7th level, the alpha's thought processes are dominated by primal instinct. He can still think and reason with the same ability as before, but his mind is filled with animalistic ideas more than the concerns of a civilized being. His alignment permanently shifts to neutral. It cannot be altered by any means other than magical and only from sources that have more HD than the alpha.

**Lead the Pack:** At 8th level, the alpha inspires his pack. His mere presence is enough to insure their willingness to fight. When within 30 ft. of the alpha all members of his pack receive a +1 morale bonus to attack and damage rolls and a +4 morale bonus to saves against fear.

**Eyes of the Wolf:** At 9th level, the alpha's eyesight becomes sharper. He gains low-light vision if he does not already have it. If he does, his low-light vision increases to three times (instead of two). In addition, he gains the feat Eyes of the Hawk (see page 147). Finally, he gains a +3 racial bonus to Spot and Search checks.

**Ears of the Wolf:** At 9th level, the alpha's ears become more sensitive in his humanoid form. He gains a +4 racial bonus to Listen checks. He can also hear ultrasonic noises, including those produced when a spell is cast. The alpha automatically knows when a spell is being cast within 30 ft. and may make a Listen check (DC 15 + spell level) to hear spells up to 90 ft. away.

**Forever Wild:** At 10th level, the alpha becomes as much wolf as humanoid. He can now shift between his wolf and his human form at will and can stay in wolf form as long as he wants.



## BOTAMANCER

Plants and trees are the essence of the forest, the physical host and incarnation of the Spirit. The botamancer knows this and attempts to use the connection to power his magical pursuits. Botamancy is the rare and specific magical study based on the nature of plants (especially herbs that have magical or alchemical uses) and their connection to the "magical entity" that is the forest spirit.

Some botamancers form small societies (usually no more than a dozen members) which have both secular and spiritual aspects. These groups spend most of their time sharing and discussing their research pertaining to alchemy, geography, herbalism, and other scholarly studies of nature. However, they also practice a variation of druidic nature worship which states that arcane spellcasters and druids draw magic from the same source. This pseudo-religion is more of a search for enlightenment and harmony than a conventional deity-based religion, also bearing similarities to the practices of the more dogmatic monasteries.

Most botamancers start out as wizards, with some of the more advanced members being wizard/druids or wizard/monks.

**Hit Die:** d4.

### REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a botamancer, a character must fulfill all the following requirements.

**Alchemy:** 5 ranks.

**Knowledge (nature):** 8 ranks.

**Knowledge (arcana):** 8 ranks.

**Profession (herbalism):** 8 ranks.

**Spellcraft:** 6 ranks

**Wilderness Lore:** 4 ranks

**Feats:** Alertness, Skill Focus (knowledge: nature) or Skill Focus (profession: herbalism).

**Spellcasting:** Ability to cast 3rd level arcane spells.

### CLASS SKILLS

The botamancer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Alchemy (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Heal (Wis), Intuit Direction (Wis), Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (nature), Knowledge (all skills), Profession (Wis), Scry (Int), Spellcraft (Int), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 4 + Int modifier.

### CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the botamancer prestige class.

**Armor and Weapon Proficiency:** Botamancers gain no proficiency in any weapon or armor.

**Spells per Day:** A botamancer continues to train in magic as well as studying forests. When a new botamancer level is gained, the character gains a level in a previous arcane spellcasting class for the purposes of learning and casting spells. If he has more than one spellcasting class, he must chose which one he will add to each level.

**Nature Sense:** At 1st level, the botamancer learns about different plants, able to identify their species, specific traits, and whether they are poisonous, edible, or useful in magic or alchemy. He can tell whether water is safe to drink or how old a tree is. He also gains a +2 bonus to Knowledge (nature) and Wilderness Lore checks.

**Herb Substitution:** At 2nd level, the botamancer learns to use the energy of slightly magical plants in place of other material components. Each day he may use herbs to replace up to 100 gp worth of costly material components per botamancer level. He may use this ability a number of times each day equal to his botamancer level, even if the component replaced did not have a gp cost. This ability may only be used provided the botamancer spends at least two hours a week collecting herbs from a forest or other wooded area.

TABLE 3-5: THE BOTAMANCER

Base Class	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Nature sense	+1 level of existing class
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Herb substitution	+1 level of existing class
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	Tap the connection	+1 level of existing class
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4		+1 level of existing class
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Herb addition	+1 level of existing class
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Listen to the whisper	+1 level of existing class
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Greater herb addition	+1 level of existing class
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6	Scent	+1 level of existing class
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6	Enhance herbal link	+1 level of existing class
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7	Spirit and magic as one	+1 level of existing class

**Tap the Connection:** At 3rd level, the botamancer can tap into the connection between the plants of the forest and the spirit of nature. He gains the ability to cast a select set of spells from the druid list as arcane spells. He may add these spells to his spellbook from scrolls or learn them when he gains a level, just as if they were spells from his respective spell list. The spells he can access are: *commune with nature*, *control plants*, *detect plants*, *diminish plants*, *plant growth*, *speak with plants*, and *tree stride*.

**Herb Addition:** At 5th level, the botamancer learns to incorporate the plants he gathers into the creation of alchemical and magical items. The botamancer may reduce the gp cost and XP cost (if any) of performing alchemy or crafting magic items by 10% + 2% per botamancer level (rounding down). This ability may only be used if the botamancer spends at least three hours every week collecting herbs from a forest or other wooded area. This ability applies only to potions and scrolls.

**Listen to the Whisper:** At 6th level, the botamancer gains the feat Listen to the Whisper of the Forest (page 77).

**Greater Herb Addition:** At 7th level, the botamancer's herb addition skill increases. It now affects permanent magic items, and reduces the object's gold and XP cost by an additional 5% + 1% per botamancer level (rounding down).

**Scent:** At 8th level, the botamancer takes part in a rather odd ritual: he brews a sweet-tasting herbal tea and drinks it while breathing alchemically-treated incense. The vapors from the tea and the incense stimulate the olfactory glands, greatly enhancing the botamancer's sense of smell. He permanently gains the scent ability.

**Enhance Herbal Link:** At 9th level, the botamancer can tap into a plant's full potential to garner energy through it from the spirit itself. When these enhanced herbs are used in conjunction with the casting of a spell, the spell's save DC is increased by 2. This ability may be used three times per day, and may only be used if the botamancer spends at least five hours every week collecting herbs from a forest or other wooded area.

**Spirit and Magic as One:** At 10th level, the botamancer opens the floodgates between the Spirit of the Forest and the forces of magic. Once per month, he may fill a forest with magical energy, as the *taint the spirit* spell (arcane energy only) (see the section on spells later in this chapter). This is a spell-like ability.

## NYMPH-LOVED

The beauty of a nymph is legendary. To those who survive seeing one in its full glory, it can be a life-changing experience. A few even go as far as to dedicate their life to protecting such great beauty, and fey in general. The more devoted these people become to fey, the more like them they become. These people are known as the nymph-loved.

Nymph-loved are quickly accepted into the hidden world of fey, often treated as heroes and champions. Sometimes they will take a nymph, satyr, or other fey as a spouse, and many half-fey are born from such unions.

Anyone who sees the great beauty of a nymph can be driven to become a nymph-loved. However, most have a strong appreciation of beauty and nature, such as bards, rangers, and druids. Most nymph-loved are men, but some women appreciate the nymph as the incarnation of nature's beauty.

If a nymph-loved ever willingly and intentionally harms a fey except in self defense or defense of other fey, he loses all class abilities.

**Hit Die:** d6

### REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a nymph-loved, a character must fulfill all of the following requirements.

**Will Save:** +4.

**Knowledge (fey, nature, or arcana):** 5 ranks.

**Speak Language:** Sylvan.

**Special:** The character must have survived the Unearthly Beauty power of a nymph, and then completed the encounter without killing the nymph.

**TABLE 3-6: THE NYMPH-LOVED**

Base Class	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+1	+0	+2	+2	Fey friend	+1 level of existing class
2nd	+2	+0	+3	+3	Detect fey	
3rd	+3	+1	+3	+3	Fey trait	+1 level of existing class
4th	+4	+1	+4	+4	Spell-like abilities 1/day	
5th	+5	+1	+4	+4	No fear of faerie folk	+1 level of existing class
6th	+6	+2	+5	+5	Defend great beauty	
7th	+7	+2	+5	+5	Fey trait	+1 level of existing class
8th	+8	+2	+6	+6	Spell-like abilities 2/day	
9th	+9	+3	+6	+6	Heal fey	+1 level of existing class
10th	+10	+3	+7	+7	Fey transformation	

**CLASS SKILLS**

The nymph-loved's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (fey) (Int), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), Use Magic Device (Cha), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 4 + Int modifier.

**CLASS FEATURES**

All of the following are class features of the nymph-loved prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor**

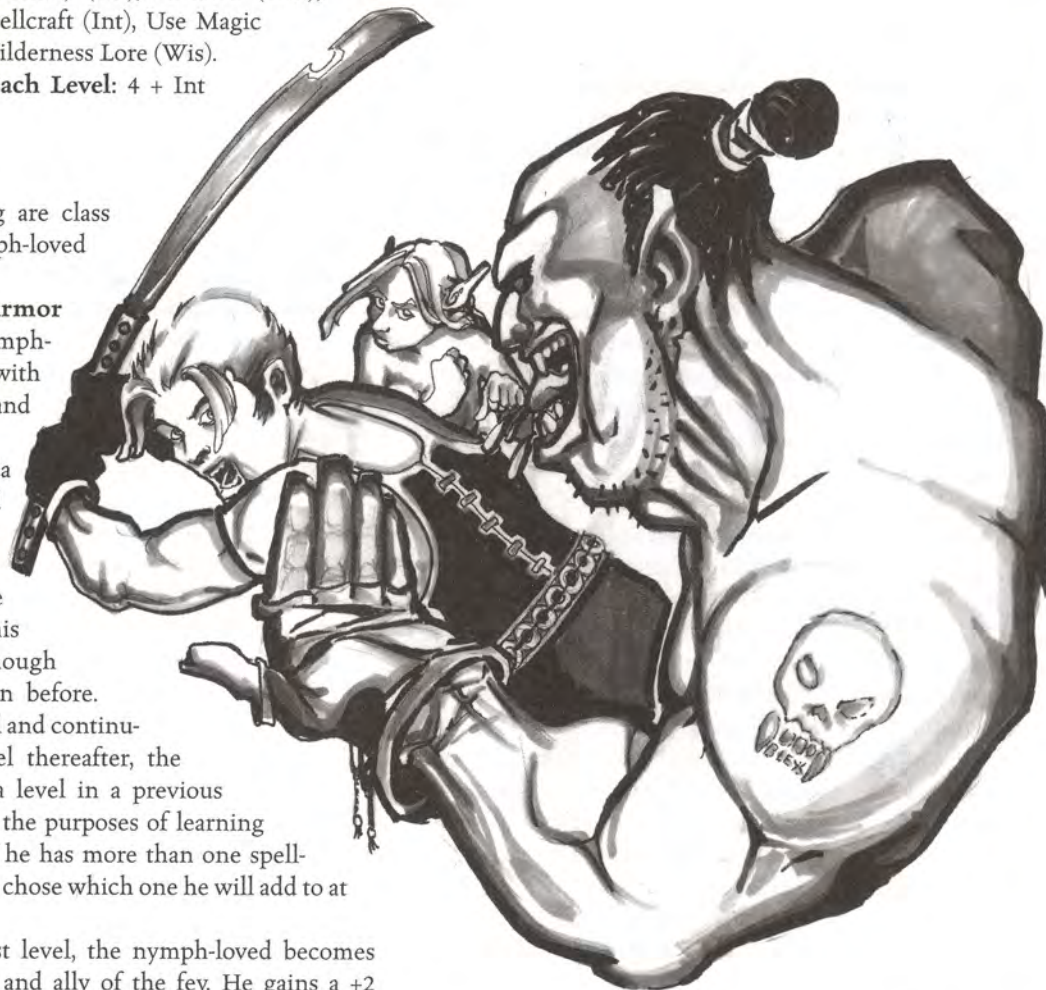
**Proficiency:** A nymph-loved is proficient with all simple weapons and light armor.

**Spells per Day:** If a nymph-loved had been trained in spellcasting prior to taking the prestige class, he continues his magical training, though at a slower rate than before. Beginning at 1st level and continuing every other level thereafter, the nymph-loved gains a level in a previous spellcasting class for the purposes of learning and casting spells. If he has more than one spellcasting class, he must choose which one he will add to at each level.

**Fey Friend:** At 1st level, the nymph-loved becomes accepted as a friend and ally of the fey. He gains a +2 bonus to Charisma-based checks when dealing with fey, and fey respect him enough not to play tricks on him, and even help him if he asks for assistance.

**Detect Fey:** At 2nd level, the nymph-loved learns to sense the energy of fey around him. This works just like the *detect fey* spell (see the section on spells later in this chapter) with a caster level equal to the number of nymph-loved levels he has. This ability is constantly active. In addition to the normal parameters of the spell, the nymph-loved also knows if any of the fey detected has lost more than half of his or her hit points.

**Fey Trait:** At 3rd level, the nymph-loved begins to develop slight traits of fey, as if he had been born with faint fey blood. He gains one feat from the following list: Eyes of the Grig, Flight of Fairies, or Walk of the Dryad (see page 76). If you possess Feats, he may choose any feat associated with the fey (DM's discretion).



He may choose a second feat at 7th level. However, he may not choose the same feat twice.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** At 4th level, the nymph-loved gains the ability to use a spell-like ability common to fey. He may cast *entangle*, *faerie fire*, and *invisibility* each once per day as a sorcerer of his nymph-loved level. At 8th level, he may use these abilities each twice per day.

**No Fear of Faerie Folk:** At 5th level, the nymph-loved becomes immune to all supernatural and spell-like abilities of fey, as well as the hazardous effects of fey circles.

**Defend Great Beauty:** At 6th level, the nymph-loved gains a +2 to all attack and damage rolls, ability and skill checks, and caster level checks made while directly protecting fey creatures from harm.

**Heal Fey:** At 9th level, the nymph-loved gains the ability to heal injuries of fey creatures. This functions exactly like the *lay on hands* ability of a paladin, except that it only effects fey; the nymph-loved may heal a number of hit points each day equal to his Charisma modifier times his nymph-loved level.

**Fey Transformation:** At 10th level, the nymph-loved becomes that which he has sworn to protect. His type changes to Fey. Forevermore, he is treated as a fey rather than a humanoid for purposes of spells. He also gains low-light vision and spell resistance 20.

## NEW USES FOR OLD SKILLS

### ANIMAL EMPATHY (CHA; TRAINED ONLY)

**Normal:** You can use this skill to improve the attitude of animals toward you.

**New Use:** *Fey Diplomacy.* Fey have a subtle connection with nature, and thus are sometimes affected by the same kind of manner as animals. You may use Animal Empathy instead of Diplomacy when dealing with fey.

**New Use:** *Incite Hostility.* You can use this skill to make an animal less friendly and more hostile toward another creature. The animal must already have a Helpful attitude toward you and may not be better than indifferent toward your enemy. You can make a skill check just like normal, but instead the animal's (or beast's) attitude toward a person or creature you select (who must be within 30 ft.) becomes more hostile.

### SCRY (INT)

**Normal Use:** You can use this skill to spy on someone with a *scrying* spell or a *crystal ball* or to perform some divinations.

**New Use:** *Connect with the Spirit.* You can use this skill to learn the general temperament of the Spirit of the Forest. By making a Scry check (DC 15), you can determine how the Spirit feels about current events in the forest (angered by loggers, saddened by the death of a prominent fey, etc.).

**Special:** If you have 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (nature), you get a +2 synergy bonus to connect with the Spirit.

### TUMBLE (DEX)

**Normal:** You can dive, roll, somersault, flip, and so on.

**New Use:** *Grab a Branch.* If, while walking or climbing within a tree or similar environs, you fall due to a failed Balance or Climb check, you may make a Tumble check against DC 15 to grab a branch and sturdy yourself. If successful, you may retry the failed Balance or Climb check.

### USE ROPE (DEX)

**Normal:** With this skill, you can make firm knots, undo tricky knots, and bind prisoners with ropes.

**New Use:** *Branch Tent.* You can set up a tent amid tree branches. This requires twice the normal time and the ability to climb easily and safely up to and around in the tree. The DC for this is 20.

**New Use:** *Secure Tent.* You can secure a tent in strong winds or similar conditions by lashing it to a tree or other stable object. Make a Use Rope check and your tent is secure against winds of up to  $10 + (1/2 \text{ your check result})$  miles per hour (round down).

### WILDERNESS LORE (WIS)

**Normal:** Wilderness Lore allows you to hunt wild game and survive in the wild, avoiding hazards of uncivilized spaces.

**New Use:** *Forge Tracks.* You can spend a few minutes to leave tracks indicating you went in a certain direction or forge tracks of another creature or creatures. You specify the nature of the forged tracks (if they go in a different direction, appear to be made by a different kind or number of creatures, etc.) then make a Wilderness Lore check. Anyone who comes across these markings (and is tracking) must make an opposed Wilderness Lore check. If you win, the tracker believes the scenario you forged the tracks to mimic.

If you have 5 or more ranks in Forgery or Disguise you gain a +2 synergy bonus to forge tracks.

**New Use:** *Identify Habitat.* Dangerous creatures may make their homes in caves or overhangs that are appealing spots in which set up camp or seek shelter. A simple Wilderness Lore check of DC 10 can determine if a clearing, cave, or other location is inhabited by an animal. A DC of 15 can determine what kind of animal or other creature it is.

**New Use:** *Identify Plant.* You can identify the species and special properties of a plant. The DC for this is generally 10, but if the plant is unique or extremely rare, the DC is increased by 5. The DC is also increased by 5 if the plant grows in a terrain or area unfamiliar to you. A druid or other character with the Nature Sense ability automatically succeeds these checks.

**New Use:** *Sense Danger.* You can tell when something dangerous is approaching by changes in the background noise and general feel of the forest. The DC to sense when a dangerous creature or other hazard is approaching is 15. The DM should make this check in secret to determine if the player is alerted to the danger.

**Special:** If you have 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (nature) or Profession (herbalist) you gain a +2 synergy bonus to identify plants.

## FOREST FEATS

### BRANCH WALKER [GENERAL]

You can move as easily through the tree branches as you do on the ground.

**Prerequisites:** Dex 13+, 5+ ranks in Balance skill, 5+ ranks in Climb skill.

**Benefit:** In a fairly densely packed forest or jungle, you can move through the branches at half your base speed. Moving faster requires a Balance or Climb check (DC 20). In order to use this feat, you must, of course, first get to the height at which the trees intersect each other (which may vary, depending on the kinds of trees in the forest; the DM has the final say).

### BRANCH RUNNER [GENERAL]

You are an expert at moving across a wooded canopy, slipping along tree branches and moving from tree to tree. If you climb up into the trees, you can move faster than normal as you evade most obstacles.

**Prerequisites:** Dex 15+, 8+ ranks in Balance skill, 8+ ranks in Climb skill, Branch Walker

**Benefit:** As Branch Walker, but you may now move at your full base movement.

### EYES OF THE GRIG [GENERAL, FEY]

The fey blood in your ancestry makes you harder to deceive.

**Benefit:** You gain a +2 racial bonus to Spot and Sense Motive checks, and a +1 racial bonus to Will saves to disbelieve Illusions.

**Special:** This feat can only be chosen at 1st level. PCs taking this feat are considered “fey touched” and may be targeted by effects that can target fey.

### FLIGHT OF FAIRIES [GENERAL, FEY]

The fey blood in your ancestry makes you very light on your feet.

**Benefit:** You gain a +2 racial bonus on Jump and Tumble checks, and take 1 point less damage per die from falling.

**Special:** This feat can only be chosen at 1st level. PCs taking this feat are considered “fey touched” and may be targeted by effects that can target fey.

### FOREST STALKER [GENERAL]

Learning to hunt and fight among trees has taught you to maximize the advantages of cover.

**Prerequisites:** 5+ ranks in Hide skill.

**Benefit:** When benefiting from cover, you treat it as though it were one class greater. This feat can never be used to grant total cover.

### FRIENDLY SCENT [GENERAL]

Growing up around wild animals in the forest has taught you to interact with them easily and naturally.

**Benefit:** You gain a +2 bonus on Handle Animal checks. Also, wild animals are never naturally hostile toward you and will only attack you out of defense or unusual necessity (such as an abnormal lack of food).

**Special:** This feat can only be chosen at 1st level.

### HEART OF THE FOREST [METAMAGIC]

You can make a material sacrifice to the forest in exchange for supplementing its energy for yours when performing powerful magic.

**Prerequisites:** 5+ ranks in Knowledge (nature), ability to cast 3rd level druid spells.

**Benefit:** When casting a spell with an experience point cost or making a magic item, you may make a sacrifice of crystal, incense, and the like to have the forest use some of its energy to satisfy the XP cost. The sacrifice must have a gp value of no less than 25 times the XP you wish the forest the pay for you. The sacrifice takes 1 minute, at the end of which the sacrificed materials are absorbed into the earth. When you finish the sacrifice, you may proceed to cast the spell or begin work on the magic item, but pay the XP cost of the spell or item minus (the gp cost of the material sacrifice ÷ 25), rather than the full cost. The forest will not help pay for any spell or item that will be used to harm it. You must be in a forest or near trees to use this feat.

**LISTEN TO THE WHISPER OF THE FOREST [GENERAL]**

You know if there are any magical or intelligent plants in the area by listening to the secret communications of the flora.

**Prerequisites:** Wis 13+, 5+ ranks in Listen skill.

**Benefit:** By taking a full round action, you can listen to the secret communications of trees and plants to determine the presence or absence of intelligent, animate, or magical plants within 100 ft. You do not know their location, number, or type, just if there are any in the area. Magical plants must have innate magical properties, not merely produce something that could be made magical.

**NATURE FOCUS [GENERAL]**

You focus on a specific aspect of nature in your spells.

**Prerequisites:** 5+ ranks in Knowledge (nature) skill, ability to cast druid or ranger spells.

**Benefit:** Similar to Spell Focus, your spells based around a certain aspect of nature have the Difficulty Class of their saves increased by 2. The different aspects you can choose from are: plants and trees (such as *entangle* and *control plants*), animals and insects (such as *hold animal* and *insect plague*), earth and stone (such as *soften earth and stone* and *earthquake*), light and fire (such as *produce flame* and *sunbeam*), air and lightning (such as *call lightning* and *whirlwind*), and water and cold (such as *sleet storm* and *chill metal*). Not all spells fit into an aspect, and if it is not obvious, a spell probably doesn't have one (the DM has the final word on whether a spell has an aspect or not).

**Special:** You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new school of magic.

**SWIFT HUNTER [GENERAL]**

You hunt and forage quickly in the forest.

**Prerequisites:** 5+ ranks in Wilderness Lore skill.

**Benefit:** When using the Wilderness Lore skill to provide food and water or gain a bonus to Fortitude saves while traveling in the forest, you may move your full overland speed.

**Normal:** Hunting and foraging for food and water or getting a bonus to Fortitude saves against severe weather, you normally move at up to one-half your overland speed.

**THE ROOTS RUN FAR AND REMEMBER MUCH [GENERAL]**

You can use the trees to increase the effectiveness of your divinations.

**Prerequisites:** 5+ ranks in Knowledge (nature) skill, 5+ ranks in Scry skill, ability to cast 3rd level divinations.

**Benefit:** If you spend 10 minutes concentrating on vibrations of tree roots and stirrings of leaves, you may cast divination spells at +2 caster level for the next hour.



### TREASURES OF THE FOREST [METAMAGIC]

By giving up some of your own life force, you may convince the forest to provide you with costly spell components.

**Prerequisites:** 5+ ranks in Knowledge (nature) skill, ability to cast 3rd level druid spells.

**Benefit:** When casting a spell with a costly material component or focus, or making a magic item, you may sacrifice some of your own life force to the forest, in the form of experience points, and in return it will provide you with the item you need for your spell or the materials (though not the knowledge, equipment, or base item) needed to create the magic item. You must sacrifice an amount of XP that is at least 1/25 the gp cost of the material component or materials you need (minimum of 1 XP; round up). You may not sacrifice so much XP that you lose a level. The sacrifice takes 1 minute, at the end of which a nearby tree root will shift or a branch will bend down, revealing the item or materials you require. The forest will only provide items to power spells or create magic items; the components will disintegrate if used for any other purpose. The forest will also never provide you with magic items. You must be in the forest or near trees to use this feat.

### TREE SLEEPER [GENERAL]

You can sleep soundly in the most precarious of positions, such as up trees.

**Prerequisites:** Dex 13+, 5+ ranks in Balance skill.

**Benefit:** You can sleep in precarious places, including tree branches and small ledges. In a place that would require a Balance check to walk on (though those that require Balance checks because they are slippery), you may make a Balance check with a DC of the spot +5. If you succeed, you may lie down and sleep as normal, without fear of falling off.

### VINE SWINGER [GENERAL]

You are an expert at using vines and ropes to swing from a height.

**Prerequisites:** Dex 15+, 8+ ranks in Balance skill, 8+ ranks in Climb skill, 4+ ranks in Jump skill, Branch Walker, Branch Runner.

**Benefit:** You may swing from a vine or rope to throw yourself at an opponent. You swing up to twice your speed, using the momentum you gain to vault into and through the air. You may choose to combine a charge with this action. If you do so, you deal double damage in addition to the normal benefits and drawbacks for charging.

When determining your daily movement rate through jungle, forest, and other heavily wooded areas you use a multiplier of 1.5.

### WALK OF THE DRYAD [GENERAL, FEY]

The fey blood in your ancestry makes you to seem to blend into the trees.

**Benefit:** You gain a +2 racial bonus on Hide checks in the forest. Also, when not participating in combat or moving fast while in a dense forest, you gain one-quarter concealment. The concealment can be negated with a successful Spot check (DC 10 + your level).

**Special:** This feat can only be chosen at 1st level. PCs taking this feat are considered "fey touched" and may be targeted by effects that can target fey.

### WOODS SPEAKER [GENERAL]

Your childhood in the woods has taught you to communicate with inhabitants of the forest.

**Prerequisite:** Wis 13+

**Benefit:** Animal Empathy and Wilderness are considered class skills. If either is already a class skill, you gain a +1 competence bonus to all relevant checks with that skill. You also gain one of the following languages: elven, sylvan, the language of treants, or the language of wolves (see alpha prestige class, page 70.)

**Special:** This feat may only be chosen at 1st level.

## FOREST SPELLS

#### Detect Fey

Divination

**Level:** Brd 1, Drd 1, Rgr 1, Sor/Wiz 1

As *detect undead*, except that the spell detects fey creatures and magic.

*Arcane Material Component:* A leaf and a butterfly wing.

#### First Blossoms of Spring

Evocation [Force]

**Level:** Drd 6

**Components:** V, S, DF

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft. /level)

**Area:** 25-ft.-radius cylinder (see text)

**Duration:** 1 round/level

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

## FOREST

The blossoms on the trees are imbued with a tiny spark of energy and swirl down to the ground, barraging everyone in the area with hundreds of tiny explosions. Each round, starting when the spell is cast, the blossoms deal 2d6 points of force damage to all creatures and objects in the area, except the native trees and vegetation. The height of the cylinder starts at the tops of the trees in the affected area, and runs down to the ground. This spell may only be cast in the spring, around blossoming trees.

### Last Leaves of Autumn

Evocation

**Level:** Drd 6

**Components:** V, S, DF

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft. /level)

**Area:** 25-ft.-radius cylinder (see text)

**Duration:** 1 round/level

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

The leaves on the trees gain razor sharp edges and swirl down to the ground, slashing at everyone in the area like a thousand tiny blades. Each round, starting when the spell is cast, the leaves deal 2d6 points of slashing damage to all creatures and objects in the area, except the trees and vegetation. The height of the cylinder starts at the tops of the trees in the effected area, and runs down to the ground. This spell may only be cast in the autumn, around deciduous trees.

### Lead Animals

Enchantment (Charm) [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** Drd 3, Rng 3

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft. /level)

**Targets:** Animals totaling no more than 10 HD/level, no two of which can be more than 15 ft. apart.

**Duration:** 1 hour/level

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This spell enchants a group of animals to follow you (similar as to if you were leading them with the Leadership feat). They will follow you into battle, away from danger, and so on. If the animals are openly hostile to you when you cast the spell or if your plans are not in their best interests or put them in unreasonable danger, they get a Will save; if successful, they resist your efforts to lead them.

### Restore the Spirit

Abjuration

**Level:** Drd 9

**Components:** V, S, ME, DE, XP

**Casting Time:** 1 minute

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft. /levels)

**Target:** One forest (up to 10 miles square/level)

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** No

This spell cleanses the spirit of a forest of any unnatural energy that may be tainting it. It dispels the effects of a *taint the spirit* spell or any other form of corruption or tainting, and restores the forest to the state it was in before becoming tainted (animals, plants, weather, etc. all return to normal, but buildings and structures remain).

Any incorporeal spirits (undead or otherwise) with fewer hit dice than you are instantly destroyed and those with greater hit dice are pushed to the edges of the spell. Even in forests that have not been tainted, this spell is an effective way to help a dying forest revive or a healthy forest flourish.

**Material Focus:** A branch from the oldest tree in the forest.

**XP Cost:** 500 XP.

### Taint the Spirit

Transmutation

**Level:** Clr 9, Drd 9, Sor/Wiz 9

**Components:** V, S, M, DE, XP

**Casting Time:** 1 hour

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft. /2 levels)

**Target:** One forest (up to 10 miles square/level)

**Duration:** Permanent

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** Yes (see text)

You taint the Spirit of the Forest with a specific kind of energy (chosen when the spell is cast), which has powerful effects on the nature of the forest. The energies you may choose from are: negative energy (cast as an evil spell), positive energy (cast as a healing spell), fire (cast as a fire spell), cold (cast as a cold spell), divine (Clr only), and arcane (Sor/Wiz only). See elsewhere in this chapter for details about the effects of tainted spirits. *Taint the spirit* cannot be dispelled by normal magic; it takes a *wish*, *miracle*, or *restore the spirit* spell to undo its effects. A forest cannot have more than one kind of taint at a time, and any repeated castings automatically fail. If the forest has magical properties unrelated to spirit taint, the DM may wish to give it spell resistance of 15 +2 for every druid grove or fey circle in the affected area.



**Material Component:** Rare diamond powder incense worth no less than 5,000 gp.  
**XP Cost:** 3,000 XP.

**Tree Symbiosis**

Transmutation [Teleportation]  
**Level:** Drd 7  
**Components:** V, S, DF  
**Casting Time:** 1 minute  
**Range:** Unlimited  
**Target:** Tree touched  
**Duration:** 1 day/level

Similar to the bond between a dryad and her tree, you magically bond yourself to any one tree you touch. From that point on, until the spell expires, you may teleport back to your tree from anywhere on the same plane. You may be bind yourself to a number of trees equal to your caster level at a time, but only one tree each time this spell is cast.

If a tree you are bound to is ever cut down, burned, or otherwise destroyed, you suffer 1d4 points of permanent Constitution damage. A Fortitude save (DC 20) makes the damage temporary instead.

**Climate/Terrain:** Any forest  
**Organization:** Solitary, pair, or family (3–10)  
**Challenge Rating:** 1  
**Treasure:** None  
**Alignment:** Usually neutral  
**Advancement:** 2–6 HD (Tiny)

Nullhares are rabbits who evolved a powerful survival mechanism from living in a magical forest: antimagic. Nullhares are jittery, flighty creatures that dash away at the slightest sound. However, when real danger presents itself, they can be surprisingly cunning and hard to catch (much less kill). Mages often try to catch nullhares for familiars, but, given that a nullhare can easily defeat their magic, very few have been successful.

Nullhares have silver fur that is almost mirror-like. They also have only one eye, which is a solid gold-colored orb. Other than that, they appear to be normal rabbits. Nullhares do not speak a language, but they seem to be able to communicate with each other fluently.

**Combat**

Nullhares will avoid direct combat at all costs, running and hiding and leading pursuers into traps or dangerous areas. When faced with magic, they will use their antimagic cone often.

**Antimagic Cone (Su):** For up to 10 minutes total each day (these do not need to be in consecutive rounds), the nullhare can project a 30-foot antimagic cone out of its eye. This functions just like *antimagic field* cast by a 13th level sorcerer.

**Detect Magic (Sp):** A nullhare constantly senses magic within 60 ft. This is a continuous effect and functions as the spell *detect magic*.

**Black Nullhares**

One in every 100 nullhares is born with jet black fur and a jet black eye. These have an intelligence of 5 and are often leaders of other nullhares. A black nullhare does not have the ability to create an antimagic cone, but rather can shoot a *disintegrate* ray from its eye once per day. This power has a range of 40 ft., a save DC of 17, and functions as the spell *disintegrate*, cast by a 15th level sorcerer.

FOREST MONSTERS

**NULLHARE**

Tiny Magical Beast  
**Hit Dice:** 1d10 (5 hp)  
**Initiative:** +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)  
**Speed:** 50 ft.  
**AC:** 14 (+2 size, +2 Dex)  
**Attacks:** Bite +3 melee  
**Damage:** Bite 1d3–4  
**Face/Reach:** 2.5 ft. by 2.5 ft./0 ft.  
**Special Attacks:** Antimagic cone  
**Special Qualities:** Detect magic, darkvision 60 ft., DR 5/silver  
**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +1  
**Abilities:** Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 9  
**Skills:** Hide +10, Listen +3, Move Silently +10, Spot +3  
**Feats:** Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (bite)

**PYRIX**

Tiny Fey (Fire)  
**Hit Dice:** 1d6+1 (4 hp)  
**Initiative:** +4 (Dex)  
**Speed:** 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)  
**AC:** 19 (+2 size, +4 Dex, +3 natural)  
**Attacks:** Dagger +6 melee; or ember bolts +6 ranged  
**Damage:** Dagger 1d4–3 and 1d4 fire; or ember bolts 2d4 fire  
**Face/Reach:** 2.5 ft. by 2.5 ft./0 ft.  
**Special Attacks:** Spell-like abilities, controlled burning  
**Special Qualities:** Fire subtype  
**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +3  
**Abilities:** Str 5, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 14  
**Skills:** Alchemy +7, Escape Artist +8, Hide +14, Listen +6, Move Silently +8, Search +6, Spot +9  
**Feats:** Alertness, Dodge, Weapon Finesse (dagger)

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**Climate/Terrain:** Temperate and warm forest  
**Organization:** Solitary, gang (2–4), band (6–11), squad (15–20 plus 1–3 small fire elementals), or tribe (20–80)  
**Challenge Rating:** 2  
**Treasure:** No coins; 50% goods, 50% items  
**Alignment:** Always neutral  
**Advancement:** 2–3 HD (Tiny)

Also called a fire sprite, the pyrix (plural pyrixies) is a small and surprisingly serious being charged with protecting fey forests from fire (and sometimes lack of fire). They patrol wooded areas regularly, putting out any small fires they find and clearing excess dry brush that could easily be set alight. Sometimes a pyrix will “scold” travelers and adventurers who are not careful with their campfire or fire magic, putting ash in their food and causing their fire to burn erratically during the night. On rare occasions, pyrixies will gather into a squad to perform carefully regulated “controlled burning,” which burns away overgrown brush and undergrowth to keep the forest healthy.

Pyrixies resemble tiny gnomes, with ash-gray skin, fiery red hair, and small insectoid wings. They stand about 1 foot tall.

**Combat**

Pyrixies attack viciously in melee, but prefer to throw flaming embers and use their spell-like abilities from a distance.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** At will — *quench*; 3/day — *create water*, *flare*, *produce flame*, *protection from elements*, *pyrotechnics*; 1/day — *fire seeds*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 9th level sorcerer (save DC 13 + spell level).

**Controlled Burning (Su):** When ten or more pyrixies get together, they may start a fire over which they have complete control. They determine how fast and how far it spreads, what it uses for fuel, which vegetation is affected, how long it lasts, etc.

**Fire Subtype (Ex):** Fire immunity, double damage from cold except on a successful save.

**SIRINE WILLOW**

Huge Plant  
**Hit Dice:** 8d8+32 (72 hp)  
**Initiative:** –2 (Dex)  
**Speed:** 0 ft.  
**AC:** 16 (–2 size, –2 Dex, +10 natural)  
**Attacks:** 4 roots +8 melee  
**Damage:** Root slam 1d8+9 and 1d4 acid  
**Face/Reach:** 10 ft. by 10 ft./0 ft. (20 ft. with root)  
**Special Attacks:** Wail of despair  
**Special Qualities:** Digestion, plant, SR 17  
**Saves:** Fort +7, Ref +0, Will +1  
**Abilities:** Str 27, Dex 6, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 14

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**Climate/Terrain:** Any forest  
**Organization:** Solitary or grove (7–10)  
**Challenge Rating:** 6  
**Treasure:** 50% standard  
**Alignment:** Always neutral  
**Advancement:** 9–12 HD (Huge); 13–18 HD (Gargantuan)

The sirine willow is indistinguishable from a normal weeping willow tree, however, it constantly produces a sorrowful wail. Sirine willows are animate trees that have developed a unique survival tactic. Creatures who hear its song feel an overwhelming sense of despair and simply want to lie down and cry. Those who succumb often starve to death and eventually decompose, thus enriching the soil around the tree with nutrients.

**Combat**

The sirine willow will not actually engage in combat unless actually damaged, relying on its wail to catch its “prey.” If attacked, its roots will animate, come up out of the ground and attempt to beat off its enemies.

**Wail of Despair (Ex):** Any creature coming within 30 ft. of the sirine willow (and who can hear the wail) must make a Will save (DC 15) or simply lie down next to the tree and cry. Those who succeed are still deeply saddened, as if affected by an *emotion: despair* spell. Creatures must make a save each round they are within the song’s range (30 ft.) until they fail. Those affected will not take any actions (even in self defense) unless influenced by magic or a stronger emotion, in which case they may make another save at +4 to break the influence of the wail.

## FOREST

**Digestion (Ex):** A living creature that dies within 20 ft. of the sirine willow begins to decompose at an accelerated rate. It takes one third the normal time for the creature to decompose completely (leaving only a skeleton), and spells that preserve dead (such as **gentle repose**) are ineffective. The tree is healed 1d4 points of damage for every hit die of the digested creature.

**Plant:** Immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing. Not subject to critical hits or mind-influencing spells or effects.

### WERECHILD

Medium-Size Humanoid

**Hit Dice:** 1d8+4 (8 hp)

**Initiative:** +3 (Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**AC:** 14 (+3 Dex, +1 natural)

**Attacks:** 2 Claws +5 melee

**Damage:** Claws 1d4+4

**Face/Reach:** 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Qualities:** Scent, moon empowerment, silver sensitivity

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +1

**Abilities:** Str 19, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 8

**Skills:** Listen +6, Search +4, Spot +7

**Feats:** Blind-Fight, Power Attack

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**Climate/Terrain:** Any land and underground

**Organization:** Solitary, pair, pack (5–9)

**Challenge Rating:** 1

**Treasure:** Standard

**Alignment:** Any

**Advancement:** By character class



Werechildren are humans descended from lycanthropes, who are afflicted with only a watered-down strain of the disease. It is unknown how this disease is diluted, but werechildren are a race in their own right. While they do not have the ability to change shape like full lycanthropes, their physical prowess is greatly increased by their heritage. Werechildren also gain strength during a full moon and have a sensitivity to silver. Their personalities vary greatly, but many take pleasure in their animalistic nature, enjoying combat, hunting, and other primal activities.

Werechildren stand about 6½ feet tall and have yellow eyes, sharp claws on their hands and feet, slightly wolf-like teeth, and long tangled hair ranging from brown to black. There is no noticeable difference between werechildren descended from different lycanthropes. Men have thick, scraggly body and facial hair (generally in higher quantities than humans), while the women have a soft, short “fuzz” all over their body and tufts of thin, cat-like hair on the tops of their slightly pointed ears.

Werechildren speak Common.

### Combat

Werechildren attack viciously with their claws and are only exalted when blood is spilled. They prefer melee over ranged attacks, but have no qualms about using stealth to catch their prey by surprise.

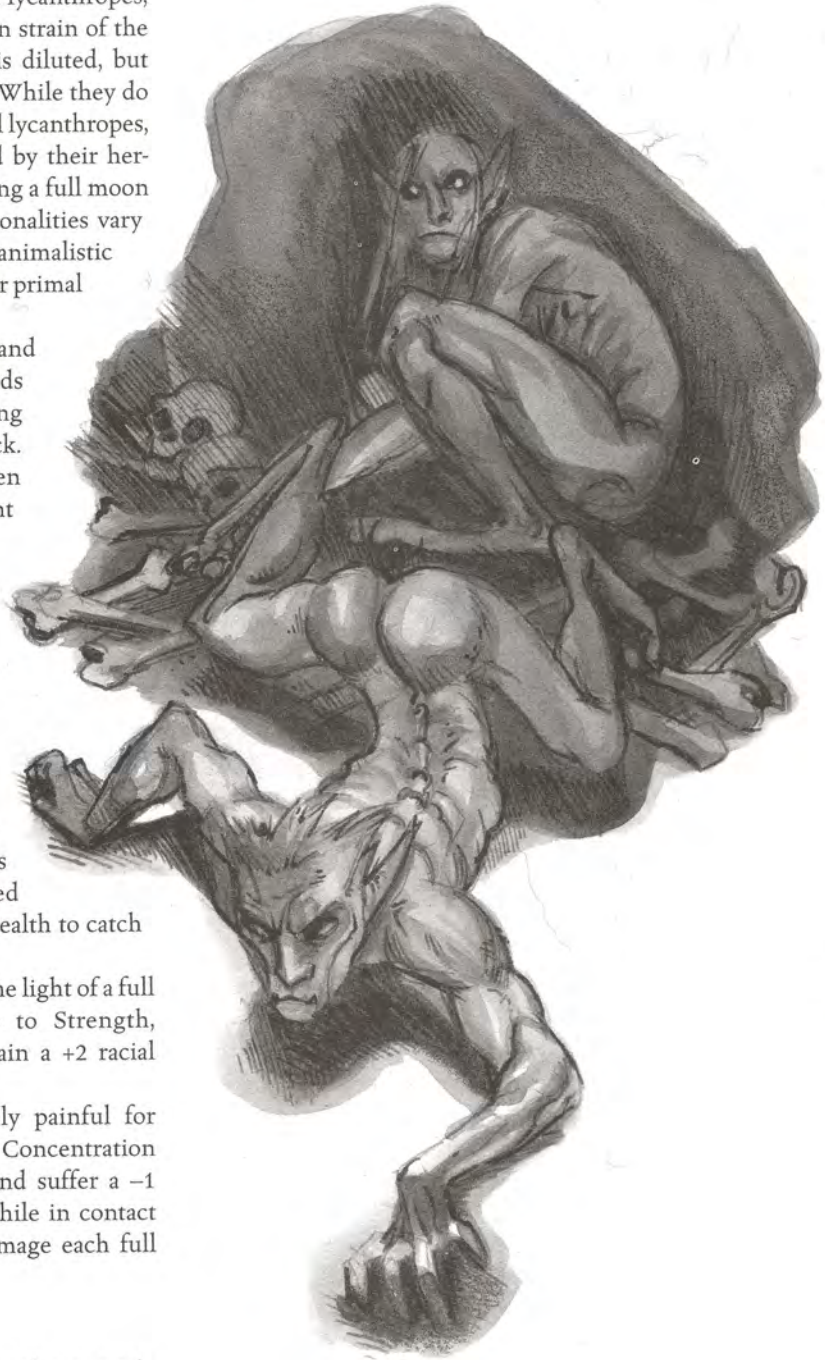
**Moon Empowerment (Ex):** When in the light of a full moon, werechildren gain a +4 bonus to Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution. They also gain a +2 racial bonus to Spot and Listen checks.

**Silver Sensitivity:** Silver is extremely painful for werechildren to touch. They must make a Concentration check (DC 14) to perform any actions and suffer a –1 penalty to attack rolls and skill checks while in contact with silver. They also take 1 point of damage each full minute they are in contact with silver.

### Werechild Characters

A werechild's favored class is barbarian, though many others are rangers or rogues.

Werechildren are more powerful than most races, and thus have an ELC of +3.



## HALF-FEY

The Feys' magical nature allows them to crossbreed with virtually any creature. The resulting offspring, half-fey, have many traits of their supernatural kin.

Sometimes on a whim, fey — such as dryads, nymphs, or satyr — will occasionally make love to charismatic passerby — usually humans, elves, or gnomes. However, some half-fey are born of nymphs or dryads who were taken advantage of by evil creatures like orcs, hobgoblins, or trolls. Either way, offspring born to female fey are usually left with a good family in a nearby settlement of humanoids (usually humans, elves, or gnomes). The child will then be visited periodically by nearby fey (not necessarily the mother), often in the form of a “fairy godmother,” as it were. Half-fey born to female non-fey are usually left with the mother but experience the same kind of visits as those born to female fey.

No matter the form, half-fey are always strangely good-looking, with green or purple tinged skin, large iridescent eyes, and hair of an earthen tone that changes with the seasons.

Half-fey are fickle and mischievous and have a natural love of nature. They dislike evil and the corruption of nature, but they still hate to miss a chance to pull a prank on an uptight official. However, as they get older, they feel more and more drawn toward the wild and less content with civilization. They become loners, preferring to live by their wits on the open road or in the wilderness.

### Creating a Half-Fey

“Half-fey” is a template that can be added to any corporeal humanoid, monstrous humanoid, or giant with an Intelligence score of 4 or more (referred to hereafter as the “base creature”). The creature's type changes to “fey.” It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

**Speed:** There is a 50% chance that a half-fey has insectoid wings. The creature can fly at twice the base creature's normal speed (good maneuverability).

**AC:** Natural armor improves by +1.

**Special Attacks:** A half-fey retains all the special attacks of the base creature and also gains the supernatural ability to use *dancing lights* at will as the spell. Half-fey with an Intelligence or Wisdom score of 8 or higher pos-

sess the following spell-like abilities, using their level as the caster level, as specified in the table below. Unless otherwise indicated, the ability is usable once per day.

Level	Abilities
1–2	<i>Charm person, sleep</i>
3–4	<i>Invisibility 3/day, obscuring mist</i>
5–6	<i>Snare, entangle</i>
7–8	<i>Dimension door, tree shape</i>
9–10	<i>Mind fog, confusion</i>
11–12	<i>Permanent image, mirage arcana</i>
13–14	<i>O's irresistible dance</i>
15–16	<i>Modify memory 3/day</i>
17–18	<i>Summon nature's ally IX</i>
19+	<i>Polymorph any object</i>

**Special Qualities:** A half-fey has all the special qualities of the base creature, plus low-light vision. They also gain immunity to magical sleep and a +4 racial bonus to Will saves against magic from the illusion or enchantment schools.

**Saves:** Same as base creature.

**Abilities:** Increase from base creature as follows: Str +0, Dex +4, Con +0, Int +2, Wis +2, Cha +4

**Skills:** A half-fey has 8 skill points, plus its Intelligence modifier, per Hit Die. Treat skills from the base creature's list as class skills and all others as cross-class. If the creature has a class, it gains skills for class levels normally. All half-fey also treat Perform, Hide, and Knowledge (nature) as class skills.

**Feats:** Half-fey have one feat for every four levels or the base creature's total of feats, whichever is greater.

**Climate/Terrain:** Same as either the base creature or the fey

**Organization:** Same as base creature or solitary

**Challenge Rating:** Same as the base creature +1

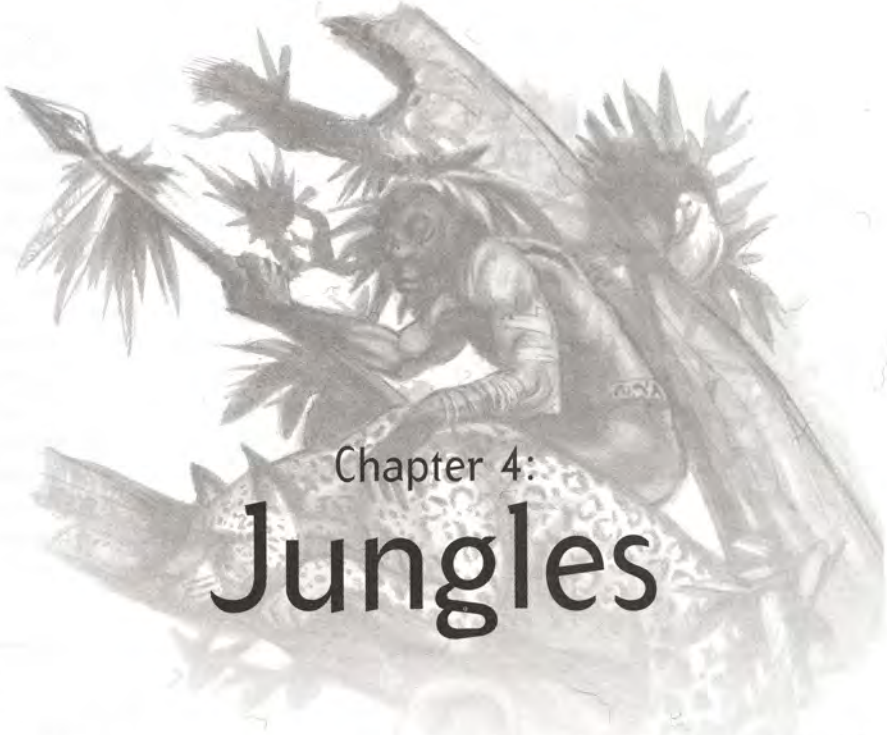
**Alignment:** Any non-lawful, non-evil

**Treasure:** Same as the base creature

**Advancement:** Same as the base creature

### Half-Fey Characters

Half-fey humanoids often have a character class, favoring bards, druids, rangers, and wizards specializing in enchantment or illusion. Half-fey clerics serve chaotic, good, or nature deities.



Chapter 4:  
**Jungles**

**THE JUNGLE ENVIRONMENT**

The thick, dense jungle proves a daunting obstacle for those who have never before ventured into its depths. Explorers and adventurers used to cooler climes may find the oppressive heat, poisonous plants and animals, and disease-carrying pests too much to handle. The jungle adds a touch of the exotic to your campaign. This section presents rules and ideas you can use to bring the jungle to life in your adventures.

**THE BASICS**

The three factors to focus on when presenting a jungle environment are the thick trees and undergrowth, the potentially deadly, though seemingly harmless, wildlife, and the oppressive heat and humidity. The rules presented here focus on drawing out a few unique factors that make the jungle different from other environments.

**TREES, UNDERGROWTH, AND FOLIAGE**

Rain forests and jungles teem with life. With their heat and humidity, plants thrive in these regions, making travel difficult and setting the stage for many unexpected, and unwelcome, surprises you can spring upon the characters. Thick undergrowth, ferns, closely packed trees, vines, and other vegetation provide convenient cover for creatures while cutting down the characters' line of sight. As a rule of thumb, the PCs cannot see more than 60 feet in any direction unless they travel along a road or pathway. You can increase or decrease the density of undergrowth in the jungle as you wish. The table below summarizes the

different progressions of concealment you can use depending on how thick the jungle is. It lists several different undergrowth densities along with the level of concealment it offers based on the distance from an attacker to a defender. For example, a character in an area of light undergrowth has one-half concealment against a monster 20 feet away from him. A target that is closer than the low-end range given for one-quarter concealment is not concealed. The undergrowth is too light at that range to provide any benefits. Remember that creatures with total concealment are blocked from sight. They cannot normally be targeted with direct spells or missile fire.

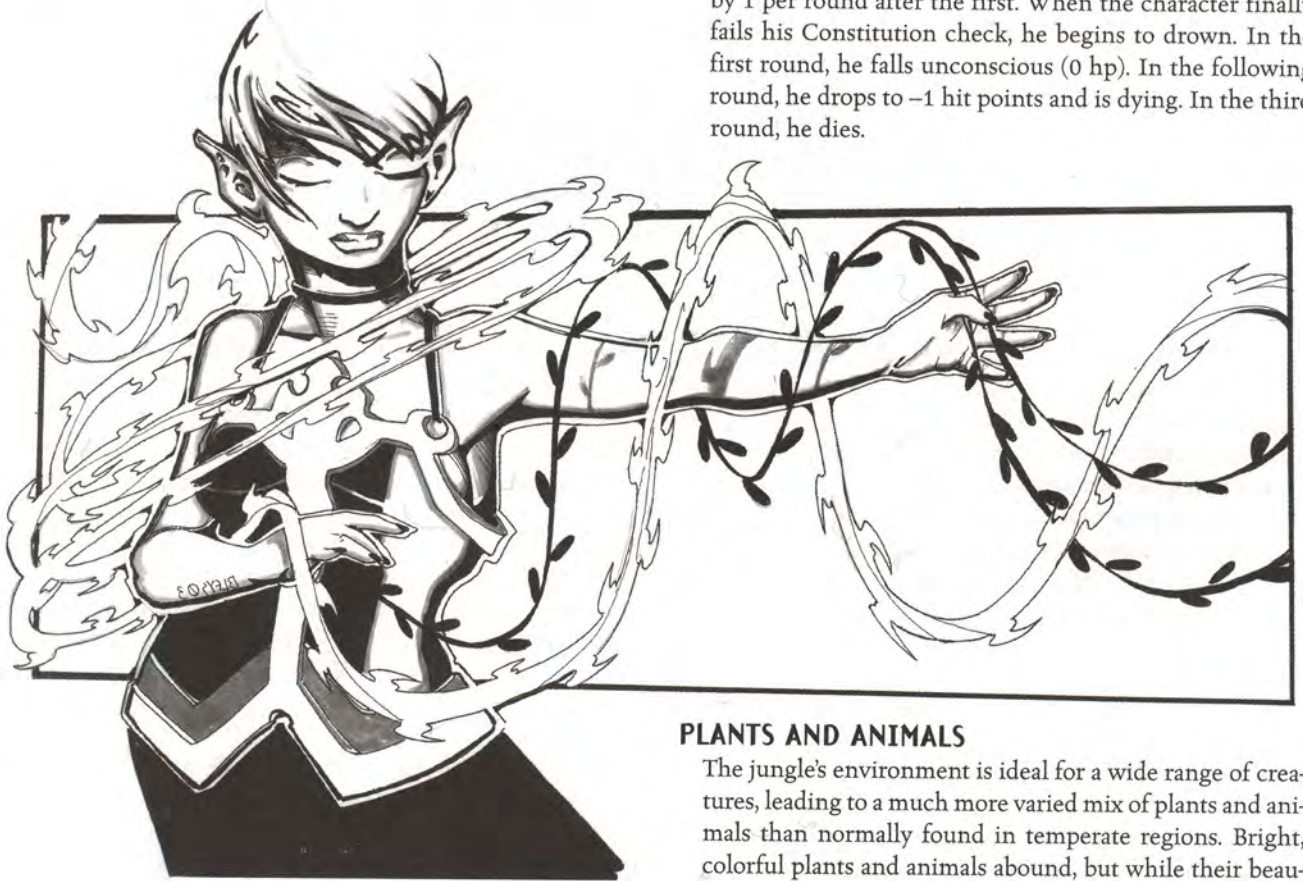
**QUICKSAND**

A staple of adventure books and action movies, quicksand is a mixture of dirt and water that poses a threat because it is hard to spot and tends to prove increasingly difficult to escape the more someone attempts to struggle against it. A patch of quicksand requires a Spot check to notice. The standard DC for this check is 20, but you can increase it to 25 or 30 if branches, debris, or other materials cover it. Allow characters a Spot check with a -5 penalty if they move close to a quicksand patch but are not actively looking for it. A patch of quicksand is essentially a mixture of water and dirt. Determine how deep the quicksand runs by rolling 2d10 or simply assigning it a depth of 10 feet. A character who walks into a patch of quicksand automatically falls into it.

A trapped character can make a Swim check (DC 20) to escape. However, if he fails this check the DC to escape increases by 5 and he may begin to drown. On a successful check, the character swims to the quicksand's edge and can escape. On the other hand, a character who remains still can float to the surface, just as he would in water, though obviously heavy equipment or armor can drag him to the bottom. A character who lies still can decrease the DC of the escape check by 1 per round. Characters in medium or heavy armor or who carry more than 50 lbs. of gear cannot use this option, as their gear is too heavy to allow them to float, and they automatically begin to

A sinking character can also be rescued with a successful Strength check (DC 10 + 2 per 100 lbs. he weighs) attempted by someone at the edge of the quicksand or who is willing to jump into the quagmire. A character who succeeds in his Swim check to escape the quicksand can attempt to rescue a trapped comrade with a Strength check (DC 10 + 2 per 100 lbs. the trapped character weighs). On a successful check, he can swim and drag his friend to safety.

A drowning character can hold his breath for a number of rounds equal to twice his Constitution. After this time, he must make a Constitution check (DC 10) each round to keep holding his breath. The DC of this check increase by 1 per round after the first. When the character finally fails his Constitution check, he begins to drown. In the first round, he falls unconscious (0 hp). In the following round, he drops to -1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, he dies.



drown whether they attempt the Swim check or do nothing. Characters outside the quicksand who have a long pole, branch, spear, or other item they can extend to the trapped character grant him a +10 circumstance bonus to his Swim check.

## PLANTS AND ANIMALS

The jungle's environment is ideal for a wide range of creatures, leading to a much more varied mix of plants and animals than normally found in temperate regions. Bright, colorful plants and animals abound, but while their beauty can be breathtaking, they are also deadly. A colorful frog may coat itself in a deadly toxin to counter predators, while a leafy plant may do the same to keep away herbivores. Here are a few simple species you can use to add color to your jungle adventures. Note that these creatures lack stat blocks. Instead, each lists an animal from the core rules whose statistics you can use for it. Any modifications to that stat block are noted in the animal's description.

## Fire Ants

These bright red insects travel in large masses that overwhelm and destroy all life they encounter. In some regions, truly gigantic migrations of these ants can devastate a wide swath of land and drive away all wildlife. Fire ants are more like a trap or hazard than a monster: standing and fighting them with swords and bows is useless. A swarm of ants moves forward 10 ft. per round. Fire, water, and other similar obstacles can stop them. Any creature standing within a swarm takes 1d6 damage per round, with a Fortitude save (DC 15) reducing this damage by half. A 5 ft. by 5 ft. swarm of ants can withstand 5 points of damage before it is destroyed, but only area of effect attacks, including alchemist's fire and burning lamp oil, can effectively damage them. The ants can scale walls and other sheer surfaces, though cliffs and walls that reach over 20 ft. in height are usually high enough to thwart them. A single 5 ft. by 5 ft. swarm of ants is CR 1/8.

## Gasp Petals

Named for the odd noise these flowers make when they attack, a gasp petal is a bright red flower that grows up to six feet in height. Surrounded by a knotted mass of green fronds and roots that cover the ground around it, the gasp petal feeds by poisoning creatures that approach it and absorbing their bodies as they decompose. Any creature large than Fine size that moves within 5 feet of a gasp petal is hit with a sudden jet of poisonous spores the plant ejects from its flower. The plant makes a ranged touch attack with a total base attack bonus of +4. On a hit, the victim is poisoned. The plant's venom has a Fortitude save DC of 16 and inflicts 1d8 Constitution damage as its primary and secondary effects. Slaying a gasp petal is as simple as slicing its flower from its stem. It has AC 10 and 1 hit point. A gasp petal is CR 1/2.

## Poisonous Frog

This brightly colored amphibian has a scarlet and gold pattern on its back. It glistens in the sun from the thin, moist layer of poison that its pores produce. This contact poison has a Fortitude save DC of 15 and inflicts 1d6 Constitution damage as its primary and secondary effect. Use the game statistics for a toad but increase its CR to 1/2. The frog cannot use its poison as an offensive weapon, but any creature that picks it up or eats it is exposed to the venom.

In addition to the sample animals given above, a variety of monsters and creatures from the core d20 rules that are normally considered strange monsters could be used in the jungle as typical, naturally occurring animals. The list includes: ankheg, arrowhawk, assassin vine, chuul, digester, dinosaurs, dire animals, displacer beast, girallon, krenshar, stirge, and wyvern. You can use these monsters to help make the jungle seem like a more dangerous environment than normal. The PCs could see a wyvern hunting in the distance, come across an arrowhawk chasing its prey, or otherwise encounter these beasts in non-combat situations. By keeping normally dangerous monsters in the background for a scene, you can demonstrate to the players that the jungle is home to a wide range of potentially dangerous creatures.

The monsters described here should be used in addition to the typical jungle inhabitants such as apes, lions, and other real world creatures. Use animals and vermin to fill out the jungle. In keeping with the advice above, sometimes showing the players a creature can have a better effect than simply having them fight it.

## Disease

The vast array of life in the jungle extends to microbes, bacteria, and other disease-causing agents. Disease is a fact of life in the bush: a single mosquito bite can cause more trouble than an orc's sword blow. You can reflect this dangerous aspect of the jungle by requiring characters who are not native to the region make Fortitude saves to resist disease each day. Check on the following table for each non-native character each day to see if he has been exposed to a disease. Tainted water, insects, and other threats can all transmit a contagion to a traveler. Once a character has suffered one of the three diseases listed on the table and survived, he can no longer be affected by it. Characters who recover via magical means do not gain this protection.

TABLE 4-1: UNDERGROWTH

Undergrowth Density	One-Quarter	One-half	Three-quarters	Nine-tenths	Total
Light	10 – 20 ft.	21 – 40 ft.	41 – 60 ft.	61 – 80 ft.	81+ ft.
Medium	5 – 15 ft.	16 – 30 ft.	31 – 45 ft.	46 – 60 ft.	61+ ft.
Heavy	0 – 5 ft.	6 – 15 ft.	16 – 30 ft.	31 – 45 ft.	46+ ft.
Opaque	0 – 5 ft.	6 – 10 ft.	11 – 20 ft.	21 – 30 ft.	31+ ft.



d100	Effect
01 – 05	<b>Jungle Rot:</b> Characters exposed to this disease must make Fortitude saves (DC 13) to resist it. Jungle rot has an incubation time of 1d3 days and inflicts 1d3 Constitution damage. It causes the victim to develop black and green scabs that slowly grow and cause his flesh to rot and drop away.
06 – 10	<b>Bone Chills:</b> This disease requires a Fortitude save (DC 12) to resist, incubates for 1d4 days, and inflicts 1d2 Dexterity damage. Its symptoms include a high fever, rash, and the sensation of stabbing, freezing pain in the joints and bones.
11 – 20	<b>Green Fever:</b> A common sickness in the tropics, green fever causes a slight, greenish tinge across the face and forehead of infected victims, nausea, chills, and cramps. It requires a Fortitude save (DC 14) to resist, has a 1 day incubation period, and inflicts 1d2 Constitution damage.
21 – 100	<b>No exposure.</b> The character manages to avoid contracting any infections or diseases.

The king's agents suspect that a malevolent druid is at work within the jungle, a spellcaster who hopes to expand his influence and power. The truth is much worse and bodes ill for the kingdom's future. Deep within the jungle lies an ancient temple carved of black, obsidian rock. This structure has existed for thousands of years, having been built long before the native tribes established their oral histories. The outer walls are covered in bas-relief carvings of robed figures whose faces are concealed by their hoods and whose feet and hands are kept covered with cloth. What lies in the temple, none can say. The local tribes consider the place taboo and avoid approaching it. According to their legends, on the nights of the new moon dark figures caper and dance upon it and steal into the jungle to kidnap unwary folk and drag them back to the temple, never to be seen again. For decades, the place sat undisturbed.

Finally, a little over a decade ago, a small band of adventurers led by an elderly sage named Harmilo the Secretive journeyed into the Emerald Jungle in search of the temple. Using arcane formulae and passwords uncovered in ancient tomes of knowledge, Harmilo opened the temple and led his followers within it. None of them emerged. Instead of the mountains of gold and gems Harmilo promised them, his followers found only death at the point of his sacrificial knife. The creatures within the temple seized them at his bidding, overwhelming them with their might and numbers and dragging them to the temple's loathsome altar.

The temple is actually an ancient edifice of a long dead god named Hadyar, a being of malignant energy who once dominated all life in the region around the temple. When his power was finally thwarted by a heroic paladin, he managed to escape total defeat by casting his spirit forward in time. Seizing Harmilo's body and casting out his soul, Hadyar gathered followers and made the return trip to his temple. Using his guise as a sage, he was able to sufficiently explain his intimate knowledge of the temple's layout and the chants necessary to gain access to its inner sanctum.

Hadyar lusts for nothing short of utter conquest of the world. Using the temple as a node for his power, he has once again ascended to a near-godlike state. He dominates all life in the jungle, turning it to his use and slowly expanding the realm's borders. Wherever the jungle spreads, so too does Hadyar's power. The Emerald Jungle is now dominated by evil, and if Hadyar's ambitions are left unchecked he could rise to control the entire region. In game terms, Hadyar is a chaotic evil titan. You can enhance his abilities to make him a better match for the

## JUNGLE FEATURES

The following elements and locations are meant to be easily dropped into any jungle setting. In most cases, NPCs and creatures are given general descriptions rather than exact stat blocks to help make these locations as flexible as possible.

### THE DEVOURING JUNGLE

In the southern reaches of the kingdom of Hathar, the farmers and scouts grumble of the ever-increasing problems that originate within the Emerald Jungle. Each year, it seems that the jungle undergrowth and trees expand upon tilled fields and fertile, irrigated farmland. Swarms of fire ants, disease-carrying mosquitoes, and other pests regularly venture forth from the jungle, advancing with a seemingly focused purpose to infest and overrun villages and small towns. The rangers and druids of the south report that virgin tracts of forest show strange developments. Native trees seem to transform into basewood and the varied palms of the jungle, as if a magician used a slow-working spell of transmutation upon them. The apes, jaguars, and rhinos of the jungle are aggressive towards humans, and several druids have reported the beasts of the jungle moving into the northlands and hunting down the native creatures that live there. A few expeditions have ventured into the Emerald Jungle, but none have returned.

party by granting him the half-fiend and vampire templates. Many living creatures within the Emerald Jungle suffer under his tyrannical domination. Wild animals attack travelers for the sheer thrill of murder, while trees animate and crush those who come near. Adventurers who approach the temple find lions, rhinos, and other creatures assaulting them. Trees and other plants animate and attack. Use the treant's stats or those of various animated objects to model these creatures.

The temple is a major artifact in its own right, a chunk of raw negative energy that projects the desires and ambitions of its master across the world. By using the temple, Hedyar can manipulate animals and plants to do his bidding. In other areas, he has offered bribes to evil men and used his magic to help them seize control of different tribes. In time, he hopes to marshal a great host of human tribesmen, orcs, goblins, and other creatures of the jungle to speed his rate of conquest.

Defeating Hedyar is no easy task. The temple is infested with demons and other evil outsiders, including a great number of yuan-ti who worship Hedyar as a god. While Hedyar is perhaps too powerful to oppose directly, he has one critical weakness that he has long overlooked. Beneath his temple lie several levels of crypts and other forgotten passages, watched by minor demons and a number of golems that attack even Hedyar and his minions. The temple's lowermost chamber hides its secret. The artifact itself is sentient, a bizarre creature of pure evil that manipulates those who share its alignment to further its inscrutable ends. Hedyar is in fact no more than a puppet of this being, as are the yuan-ti and the demons gathered here in service to him. It manifests itself as a sphere of pure, black energy. If a good character willingly casts himself into the sphere, the purity of his soul destroys it and causes the temple to collapse into ruin within the space of a half-hour. While the hero who leapt into the sphere appears destroyed, the gods of good rescue him from destruction and, if he so desires, return him along with his gear to the material world at a spot of his choosing. However, the obscure legends that speak of this method to destroy the temple make no mention of this salvation, speaking only of the sure death that awaits the one who defies the temple's spirit. Only one who selflessly gives his life for the greater good has the purity of spirit needed to foil the temple.

## THE LOST WORLD

Dinosaurs are a natural match for a jungle region, given the link between them and the hot, wet climate that dominated their period of existence. An isolated region of jungle could host a variety of prehistoric creatures, with dire lions hunting alongside velociraptors, dimetrodons, and

other such beasts. Since fantasy worlds support such a wide range of creatures, it's easy to create a region where dinosaurs thrive. Isolated from the rest of the world, these dangerous beasts hunt and thrive in a thick, jungle region separate by a forbidding mountain range or hundreds of miles of ocean. Yuan-ti, kuo-toa, and other reptilian or aquatic humanoids could thrive within such an environment, erecting great, walled cities that keep them safe from the dinosaurs that rule the jungle. An entire civilization could arise that employs dinosaurs as pack animals, war beasts, and physical laborers. A draw bridge could be pulled up and eased down by an apatosaurus attached to chains via a great harness, while air cavalry could ride pterodactyls. Trained elasmosaurs could patrol the waters, with wooden platforms hosting archers and crossbowmen strapped to their backs.

## THE RUINS OF MALDRIGAL

The jungle teems with life, plants and animals thriving within its environment. A civilization that stands within it must fight a daily battle against encroaching undergrowth, trees, and pests. Thus, when the ancient civilization of the Maldrigal empire fell to a great plague, the plazas and towers of its cities disappeared beneath the trees, vines, and ferns of the jungle within a decade. Today, the native tribesmen, animals, and monsters of the jungle stride along paths that once hosted hundreds of travelers each day.

Ancient books and scrolls speak of Maldrigal, with a few going so far as to provide complete maps of the empire. A canny adventurer or sage could use those maps to locate the empire on a present day map, marking its location in a great jungle to the south. Smaller scale maps could be used to locate cities or important castles and temples. In the years since the empire fell, the buildings it raised now appear as nothing more than tree-covered hills with the odd piece of stone peaking through the dirt. A traveler could mistake such marks as random stones, but an adventurer looking for them could uncover an entrance to the building's inner areas.

While many great treasures are buried within Maldrigal's cities, they harbor their fair share of monsters and other threats. Deadliest of all is the ancient plague: its spores may still lie dormant within sealed urns or ancient crypts. The disease, known as the red death, causes the victim to sweat blood through his pores until he eventually bleeds to death. The disease has a Fortitude save DC of 20 to resist, a four day incubation period, and inflicts 1d10 Constitution damage. The characters could accidentally unleash the red death, forcing them to race to find a cure or at the very least contain the outbreak. A common jungle herb can cure the disease, but it may take some time to discover that fact.

Worse still, a small cult of Maldrigalian sought to cheat death. A vampire operating within the empire brought to his side some of the most beautiful, richest, and most influential people of the realm. With the human population dwindling due to the plague or fleeing the region, the vampires retreated to tombs that are now buried and hidden throughout the jungle. Some of them have awakened but are unable to escape their crypts. The PCs could allow these undead creatures the chance to escape their coffins and plague the countryside. In some areas, they uncovered tunnels to the deepest earth regions and conduct trade for humanoid victims in return for artifacts, magic items, and coins they unearth from the ruins. As the PCs uncover cities and strongholds, the undead could slowly form a terrible army of zombies, skeletons, and ghouls, with the vampires serving as generals eager to reestablish the lost Maldrigalian empire.

## BEAST LORD

Since the dawn of civilization, humanoids have captured, tamed, and trained animals to serve as guardians, hunters, and helpers. A well-trained beast can prove as effective in battle as a squad of swordsmen, while a dog used as a sentinel can detect and respond to threats that would escape a man or orc's attention. While most folk rely on harsh training methods to domesticate an animal, some share a deeper bond with the creatures they train. In the depths of the tropical realms, legends speak of beast lords, warriors whose powerful personality, regal bearing, and great physical strength mark them as kings of the jungle. The beast lord shares a feral link with the creatures he meets; they fight alongside him out of a sense of fellowship and duty. To his allies he is a capable warrior whose bond with animals offers a wide variety of useful talents. To his enemies, he is a terrifying foe who can turn the very wilds against them in battle.

**Adventures:** Beast lords adventure to explore the outside world, defend their homes, and improve their abilities. An beast lord may travel thousands of miles to track down and defeat an opponent who destroyed his homeland, while others may simply wish to explore the realms beyond the horizon. Like the beasts with which they share a bond, beast lords are free spirits who go where they wish and do what they want. An beast lord may adventure simply because it strikes his fancy or makes an interesting challenge.

**Characteristics:** The beast lord is a skilled warrior capable of holding his own in a fight, but his true talents lie in befriending and training animals. Creatures are naturally drawn to him because of his feral charisma and proud bearing. The beast lord is at his best when he fights alongside his animal companions, working with them to overwhelm his enemies with their coordinated tactics and feral strength.

**Alignment:** Beast lords are never lawful. The spirit of the jungle flows through their veins; to beast lords, laws, rules, and other shackles are antithetical to the ways of the wilderness. Most are neutral in regards to good and evil, caring only for the health and well-being of their jungle homes. Of the remainder, the vast majority are chaotic good. These noble guardians of nature consider themselves kings of the jungle, and as such they seek to aid and defend their subjects, the animals. Evil beast lords are



truly a frightening sight to behold, as they corrupt and subvert the jungle to become a living weapon they can turn against the peoples and realms they wish to conquer. They see themselves as the most powerful predators in the wild, and as such all creatures owe them fealty on pain of death.

**Religion:** Beast lords trust in the gods of animals and nature. In many cultures, they are seen as servants of the gods, charged with a divine mission to lead the animals and protect their territories. Good beast lords worship gods of protection and preservation in keeping with their duty as wardens and keepers of the jungle. Evil ones revere gods of wild destruction, feral cruelty, and conquest.

**Background:** Beast lords come from wilderness areas untouched by the influence of civilization. Most of them hail from regions of jungle and rain forest, as these untouched regions harbor tremendous varieties of animals and beasts. However, less exotic regions can also produce beast lords. In thick, wooded areas, beast lords form bonds with bears, wolverines, and other animals. In some oceans and seas, aquatic humanoids develop the beast lord's powers, creating bonds with whales, sharks, and other creatures of the sea.

**Races:** Elves, and half-elves form the bulk of all beast lords, as their close relationship with the wilds and propensity for working with animals and within nature makes them liable to develop close bonds with their environment. Humans and half-orcs who hail from barbaric regions or isolated, feral realms also commonly become beast lords. Gnomes and dwarves only rarely become beast lords, as they are more concerned with stone and steel than the natural world.

**Other Classes:** Beast lords feel most comfortable around barbarians and druids. Their shared heritage gives them a common ground to build relationships upon. Beast lords respect druids as priests of nature, while they admire the barbarian's feral rage and wilderness homeland. For similar reasons, beast lords enjoy the company of rangers. Fighters, wizards, clerics, rogues, and bards are all treated with a measure of distrust. Too often, beast lords have seen such civilized adventurers mistreat the wilderness or abuse the animals they meet. Monks are utterly alien to the beast lord. The martial arts and the stringent discipline they demand are polar opposites of the beast lord's belief in following his whims and instinct, yet he can respect the monk's disdain of weapons, armor, and other trappings of civilization.

## GAME RULE INFORMATION

Beast lords have all the following game statistics.

**Abilities:** Charisma is important for beast lords, as it determines their ability to attract the loyalty of animals and command them in battle. A beast lord with a good Charisma score draws more animals to him. Since the beast lord is a talented fighter, Strength improves his combat abilities. Dexterity is more important to him than Constitution, as his primitive background denies him the ability to wear medium or heavy armor.

**Alignment:** Any nonlawful.

**Hit Die:** d10.

TABLE 4-1: THE BEAST LORD

Base Class	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	Lord of animals
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	Feral lord (eagle's eyes)
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	Natural armor +1
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	Beast speech
5	+5	+4	+4	+1	Feral lord (tiger's claws)
6	+6/+1	+5	+5	+1	Natural armor +2
7	+7/+2	+5	+5	+2	Howl of the wild
8	+8/+3	+6	+6	+2	Feral lord (cat's grace)
9	+9/+4	+6	+6	+3	Natural armor +3
10	+10/+5	+7	+7	+3	Beasts of war
11	+11/+6/+1	+7	+7	+3	Feral lord (rhino's toughness)
12	+12/+7/+2	+8	+8	+4	Natural armor +4
13	+13/+8/+3	+8	+8	+4	
14	+14/+9/+4	+9	+9	+4	Feral lord (elephant's strength)
15	+15/+10/+5	+9	+9	+5	Natural armor +5
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+10	+5	Lord of beasts
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+10	+5	Feral lord (king of the jungle)
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+11	+6	Natural armor +6
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+11	+6	Nature's fury
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+12	+6	Feral lord (nature's splendor)

## Class Skills

The beast lord's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Ride (Dex), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

**Skill Points at 1st Level:** (4 + Int modifier) × 4.

**Skill Point at Each Additional Level:** 4 + Int modifier.

## Class Features

All of the following are class features of the beast lord.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** The beast lord is proficient with all simple weapons. He is also proficient with the following martial weapons: all bows, greatclub, handaxe, and longspear. The beast lord forswears civilization and its tools, instead trusting in the simple weapons and armor of his jungle home. So long as he wears armor of any sort other than leather, padded, or hide (even magical armor) or fights with a weapon in which this class does not gain proficiency, he loses all abilities granted by this class. He regains these abilities one day after he last violates this stricture. The beast lord's animal companions return to him after this time. Otherwise, they leave his side and refuse to obey his commands.

**Lord of Animals:** The beast lord's feral charisma and personal magnetism draw animals to serve him. He gathers a small herd of birds, beasts, and other creatures that willingly obey his commands and treat him as a sovereign lord. He may cast the equivalent of animal friendship once per day, treating his level in this class as his caster level. In addition to the standard rules for that spell, the beast lord's companions automatically know a number of tricks (as per the spell description) equal to his Charisma bonus.

**Feral Lord:** Starting at 2nd level, the beast lord learns to untap the animal traits that are within him. The same feral aura that draws animals to his side also causes him to develop a variety of fearsome abilities.

**Eagle's Eyes:** At 2nd level, the beast lord's senses become as keen and sharp as an eagle. He gains a +2 bonus to all Listen and Spot checks.

**Tiger's Claws:** At 5th level, the beast lord develops the ability to fight with his natural hands and teeth like a wild animal. If he does not already have natural claw and bite attacks, he gains two claw attacks that deal 1d6 damage and a bite attack that inflicts 1d4 damage. When using the full-attack action, he may forgo his normal armed sequence of attacks to make two claw strikes using his best base attack and a bite attack. (Note that his bite attack suffers a -5 penalty to hit as it counts as a secondary attack.)

**Cat's Grace:** At 8th level, the beast lord's speed and agility become legendary. He gains a permanent +2 bonus to his Dexterity.

**Rhino's Toughness:** At 11th level, the beast lord gains a permanent +2 bonus to Constitution. His long years in the wilds and his status as a half-feral creature allow him to develop toughness and durability far above the civilized norms.

**Elephant's Strength:** At 14th level, the beast lord gains a permanent +2 bonus to Strength. As a warrior of the wilderness, he becomes mightier than the soft, simple folk of civilized lands.

**King of the Jungle:** At 17th level, the beast lord's noble bearing and lordship of the animals shines through in all who see him. All beasts, animals, and vermin must make Will saves (DC 20 + the beast lord's Charisma modifier) to attack him. Otherwise, they refuse to injure him unless the beast lord initiates hostile action.

**Nature's Splendor:** At 20th level, the beast lord becomes a walking force of nature. He gains a +2 bonus to Charisma and a +2 bonus to Strength and Constitution. He doubles the number of creatures who follow him due to his lord of animals ability.

**Natural Armor:** Starting at 3rd level, and every three levels afterward, the beast lord gains a natural bonus to his AC. The bonus starts at +1 and increases by 1, each time. His feral nature allows him to develop superhuman toughness, allowing him to absorb blows like a rhino or other thick-skinned creature.

**Beast Speech:** At 4th level, the beast lord learns to communicate in the primal tongue of all animals. He gains the equivalent of a continual *Speak with Animals* effect used at a caster level equal to his level in this class. As per the spell, this ability may not be used to communicate with creatures other than animals.

**Howl of the Wild:** At 7th level, the beast lord can arouse a primal fear of predators within his enemies. Once per day, as a standard action, he can let loose a terrible battle cry that resembles a wolf's howl or a lion's roar. All opponents who hear this call must make Will saves opposed by the beast lord's Intimidate check. Those who fail suffer a -2 morale penalty to attacks for 2d4 minutes. This counts as a fear-based, mind-influencing effect.

**Beasts of War:** As the beast lord gains power and prestige, the animals that serve him grow in skill and power. At 10th level, all creatures that serve the beast lord due to his king of animals ability gain a +1 bonus to attacks, damage, and saving throws. In addition, they gain +2 hit points per hit die.

**Lord of Beasts:** The beast lord's feral bearing becomes so great that he can command the obedience of strange, powerful creatures. He may now win the loyalty of beasts in addition to animals using his lord of animals ability.

**Nature's Fury:** The beast lord's influence over animals becomes so great that he can call them to attack his enemies in a great press of fangs and claws. Once per week, the beast lord may spend 5 minutes calling out to the wilderness around him. He yells, howls, and speaks in the beast tongue to arouse the wilds against his enemies. One hour after this call, animals whose hit dice total 5 times the beast lord's Charisma arrive to aid him. These beasts obey the beast lord's commands to the best of their ability. They remain under his control for a number of hours equal to his Charisma bonus.

## GREEN MAGE

In the jungle and rain forests of the world, there dwell powerful arcane casters who learn to use their magical talents to tap into the primal energies that sustain the great forests and ecosystems in which they live. Known as green mages, these spellcasters are masters of the jungle who draw animals, plants, and even monsters such as shambling mounds to their side. In time, a green mage transforms into a plant creature. The energies he studies and controls grow so powerful that they alter his body and make him one of the same beings over which his magic gives him dominion.

Green mages operate in a manner similar to druids. Most of them stake out areas of rain forest or jungle that they claim as their own, shepherding the plants and animals of the region to suit their needs or simply to ensure that the ecosystem is vibrant and healthy. Thus, over time a jungle begins to reflect the aims and beliefs of the green mage that lives there. Realms dominated by good green mages grow healthy and prosperous. Treants and other creatures gather to tend the trees, while normally dangerous plant beasts such as shambling mounds grow quiet

and passive. In an area where an evil green mage lairs, the jungle becomes wild and dangerous. Plant monsters stalk the region, assaulting all who cross their paths. The trees twist and warp over time, growing lush and stout but inflicted with tumors and other sicknesses that reflect their master's malevolent desires.

**Hit Die:** d4.

### REQUIREMENTS

To become a green mage, a character must fulfill all the following requirements:

**Knowledge (arcana):** 8 ranks.

**Knowledge (nature):** 8 ranks.

**Wilderness Lore:** 4 ranks.

**Spellcasting:** Arcane spellcaster 5th level.

### CLASS SKILLS

The green mage class skills (and the key ability for each) are Alchemy (Int), Animal Empathy (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (any) (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (any) (Int), Profession (any) (Wis), Scry (Int), Spellcraft (Int), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 4 + Int modifier.

### CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the green mage prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** Green mages gain no additional proficiency with weapons, armor, or shields.

**Spellcasting Ability:** A green mage continues to expand his arcane spellcasting abilities. For each even-numbered level gained in this prestige class, he gains an additional level of arcane casting ability. Stack his levels in this class with the levels he previously gained in any one arcane spellcasting class to determine the number of spells he may prepare each day and the effectiveness of those incantations. Note that abilities other than spellcasting, such as bonus feats or a familiar's abilities, do not improve due to these additional levels of casting ability. The green mage gains only additional spells and improved spell abilities from his previous class.

TABLE 4-2: THE GREEN MAGE

Base Class Level	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1	+0	+2	+0	+2	Green magic	
2	+1	+3	+0	+3		+1 level of existing class
3	+1	+3	+1	+3	Song of leaf and reed	
4	+2	+4	+1	+4		+1 level of existing class
5	+2	+4	+1	+4	Font of life	
6	+3	+5	+2	+5		+1 level of existing class
7	+3	+5	+2	+5	Plant companions	
8	+4	+6	+2	+6		+1 level of existing class
9	+4	+6	+3	+6	Plant master	
10	+5	+7	+3	+7	Avatar of plants	+1 level of existing class

**Green Magic:** At 1st level, the green mage masters the basics of his specific brand of arcane magic. He gains access to the spells listed under the Animal and Plant clerical domains. Casters who prepare spells automatically add these spells to their books, while those who employ spontaneous casting add them to their lists of spells known. In addition, the green mage gains the ability to cast *animal friendship* once per day. This spell and all others gained from this ability count as an arcane spell. Note that the green mage does not gain the ability to use spells that are too powerful for him to cast. Though he adds them to his books or lists, he cannot use them until he has enough talent in using spells to prepare or cast them as normal.

**Song of Leaf and Reed:** The green mage learns to weave spells that have a particularly strong effect on plants. The spell *charm person* now functions against plants in addition to humanoids when he uses it. Furthermore, plants suffer a -2 circumstance penalty to all saving throws against his spells. The green mage's spells are all tinged with energies that especially resonate with plants.

**Font of Life:** The green mage becomes continually surrounded by a halo of energy that is particularly beneficial to plant life. Grass seems to grow thick and healthy near him, while plants turn their flowers and leaves towards him to absorb the life-giving magic that flows through and near his form. All plant creatures that are friendly towards him gain +1 hit point per hit die and a +2 bonus to all Fortitude saves.

**Plant Companions:** The green mage develops the ability to summon intelligent plant creatures to his side that serve him in much the same manner as the animal companions he gains with his *animal friendship* spell. The green mage's may use *animal friendship* to befriend plants, counting them towards his hit dice allotment of companions as per that spell's description. Note that as the green mage counts *animal friendship* as an arcane spell, his arcane caster level determines the total hit dice worth of plants and animals he may befriend.

**Plant Master:** The ambient energy that surrounds a green mage grows so powerful that it can awe plant creatures into refusing to attack him and avoiding him if he is hostile to them. Any plant creature that is hostile to the green mage must make a Will save (DC 20 + the green mage's Charisma modifier) in order to attack him. Plants that fail this save may take no hostile action towards the green mage, though they may attack his companions and allies as normal. However, plants that fail this save find the magical aura that surrounds the green mage so intimidating that they avoid contact with him. A hostile plant creature that begins its action in the green mage's threatened area must move out of it before taking any other

actions. Note that a plant creature cannot be forced into a dangerous area by this ability. They do not move into areas where they would take damage due to environmental factors, such as leaping off a cliff or moving into a raging fire in order to avoid contact with the green mage.

**Avatar of Plants:** At 10th level, the green mage undergoes a radical transformation. The ambient plant energies that flow through him alter his anatomy and turn him into a plant creature. His creature type changes to plant and he gains the benefits of that type. He becomes immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing. He is no longer subject to critical hits. He also gains a +2 natural bonus to AC. The green mage's appearance changes radically. His skin becomes tough and woody, while his hair falls away and is replaced with a growth of thick, tough, grassy plants.

## MASTER HERBALIST

The jungle's flora is deceptive. Bright flowers may seem like a welcoming, beautiful souvenir, but the deadly poison that coats their petals could kill a man in the space of a moment. Straggly weeds that seem no more than bothersome obstacles could have enough nutrients and water to sustain a man for a day, yet a starving explorer may hack through them without a second thought. The people of the jungle, however, long ago learned to extract the best traits from the plants around them and put them to good use. Almost every wandering barbarian tribe, jungle city, or village boasts a master herbalist: an expert in collecting strange plants and producing antidotes, healing balms, and magical potions with them.

The master herbalist is a cleric, druid, ranger, or even a paladin who has studied the many uses of a wide range of plants. By applying his knowledge of herbs and roots, he can create a wide range of useful concoctions. He is an expert in creating potions, combining his magical talents with the natural properties of plants to create mixtures that are much stronger than those produced by wizards and clerics who lack his specialized knowledge.

Most master herbalists are members of an order of sages and healers known as the Keepers of the Cauldron. This brotherhood seeks to catalog and study the plants of the world. Its members freely exchange their findings, and during times of war or plague they gather to do what they can to save lives. A potential Keeper must prove himself worthy of a master herbalist's training by demonstrating his selfless devotion to helping others, engaging in a quest to find a rare or magical plant, or rendering aid to the Keepers during a crisis. A new member of the Keepers is granted a plain, iron cauldron inscribed with runes and sigils of good luck.

# JUNGLES

In addition to the Keepers, many evil humanoid tribes develop master herbalists. These cruel, vicious spellcasters focus on developing poisons and using their healing talents as leverage to gain political power within the tribe. In some areas, they serve as witch doctors and priests while in others they seize power with their poisons and spells.

**Hit Die:** d8.

## REQUIREMENTS

To become a master herbalist, a character must fulfill all the following requirements:

**Alchemy:** 8 ranks.

**Craft (poisons):** 8 ranks.

**Knowledge (nature):** 8 ranks.

**Feat:** Brew Potion.

**Spellcasting:** Divine spellcaster 5th level.

## CLASS SKILLS

The master herbalist class skills (and the key ability for each) are Alchemy (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (any) (Int), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (any) (Int), Profession (any) (Wis), Scry (Int), Spellcraft (Int), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 4 + Int modifier.

## CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the master herbalist prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** Master herbalists gain no additional proficiency with weapons, armor, or shields.

**Spells:** A master herbalist continues to expand his divine spellcasting abilities. For each level gained in this prestige class, he gains an additional level of divine casting ability. Stack his levels in this class with the levels he previously gained in any one divine spellcasting class to determine the number of spells he may prepare each day and the effectiveness of those incantations. Note that abilities other than spellcasting, such as turning undead, *wild shape*, or preferred enemy, do not improve due to these

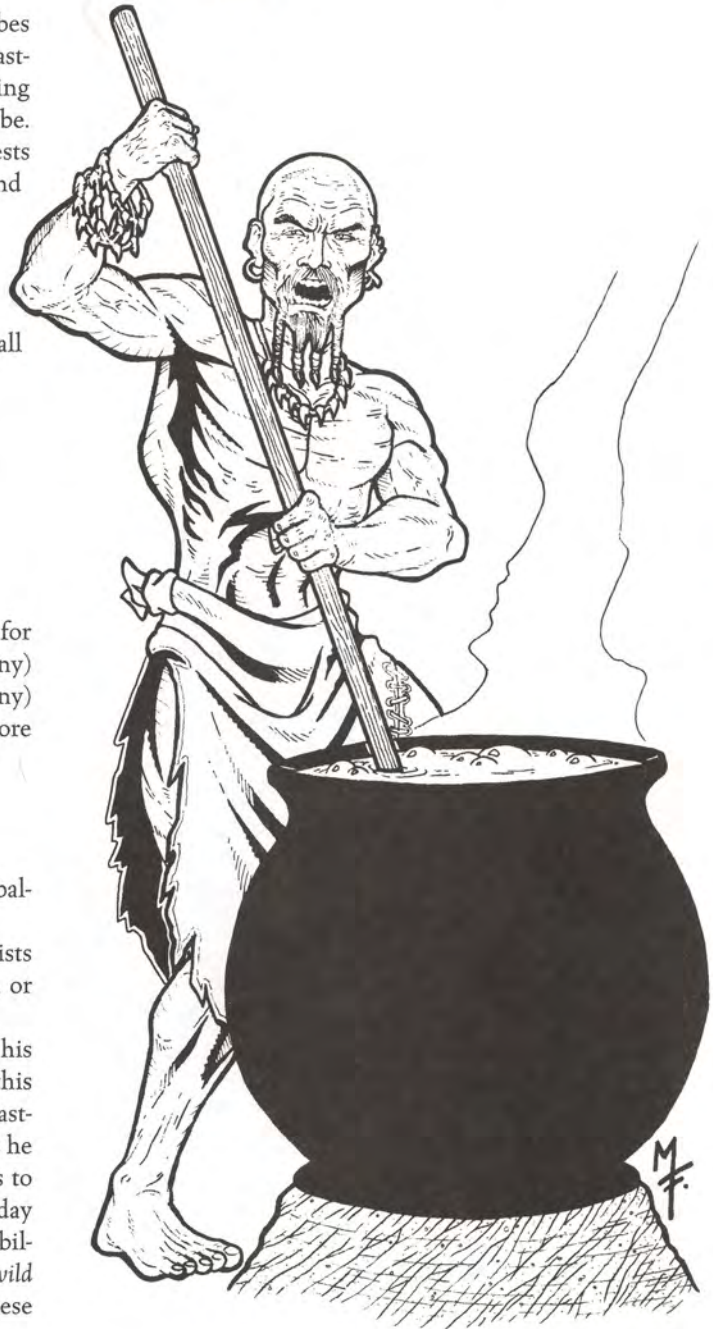


TABLE 4-3: THE MASTER HERBALIST

Base Class Level	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1	+0	+2	+0	+2	Initiate of the cauldron, poison crafter	+1 level of existing class
2	+1	+3	+0	+3	Leaf finder	+1 level of existing class
3	+1	+3	+1	+3	Master healer (1d6)	+1 level of existing class
4	+2	+4	+1	+4	Clever alchemy	+1 level of existing class
5	+2	+4	+1	+4	Master of venoms	+1 level of existing class
6	+3	+5	+2	+5	Master healer (2d6)	+1 level of existing class
7	+3	+5	+2	+5	Journeyman of the cauldron	+1 level of existing class
8	+4	+6	+2	+6	Master leaf finder	+1 level of existing class
9	+4	+6	+3	+6	Master healer (3d6)	+1 level of existing class
10	+5	+7	+3	+7	Master of the cauldron	+1 level of existing class



additional levels of casting ability. The master herbalist gains only additional spells and improved spell abilities from his previous class.

**Initiate of the Cauldron:** The master herbalist is an expert at discovering rare and strange ingredients to create his potions. While more traditional spellcasters cling to the typical recipes and methods, the master learns to adapt the plants and fungi of the jungle to his needs. When the master herbalist attempts to create a potion, he pays less gold and xp to produce the same results as other casters. The master herbalist may subtract one from either the caster level or the spell level when creating a potion, to a minimum of one each. If both values are no higher than one, he may reduce the base total cost to produce the potion by half. The effective caster level of the potion remains unchanged. This modification only applies when determining the potion's cost.

**Poison Crafter:** As part of his training and expertise in handling herbs and other substances, the master herbalist learns to properly use and create poisons. He does not suffer a chance to poison himself when making or using poisons.

**Leaf Finder:** With his encyclopedic knowledge of plants and trees, the master herbalist can always find a useful root, leaf, or herb in his immediate surroundings. While in an outdoor setting that features copious plant life, such as a jungle or forest, the master herbalist may make a Knowledge (nature) check (DC 20) to find a plant useful in treating a poison or disease. With a half-hour of work, he can uncover 1d6 doses of a useful plant that grants a +2 bonus on Fortitude saves to resist a specific poison or disease. This bonus applies only to the next saving throw the patient attempts, and if 24 hours pass without the need for a save he loses its benefits. The master herbalist picks which venom or illness the plant functions against before he makes his Knowledge (nature) check. Herbs gathered in this way remain fresh for one day, after which they lose their potency.



**Master Healer:** The master herbalist always carries a small supply of herbs and poultices useful in healing injuries. By using his Heal skill, he can remove a small amount of damage that a creature has suffered. With 10 minutes of work and a successful Heal check (DC 20), the master herbalist can heal 1d6 hit points of damage. A given creature may be healed in this manner once each day.

As the master herbalist gains skill and experience in tending wounds he increases the amount of damage he can heal. At 6th level, he heals 2d6 damage with this ability. At 9th level, the total he heals increases to 3d6.

**Clever Alchemy:** As the master herbalist's experience and skill grows, he becomes more efficient in the methods he uses to produce potions. When using his Brew Potion feat, he can produce two potions per day. Normally, brewing a potion takes one full day of work.

**Master of Venoms:** The master herbalist learns not only to heal, but also how to incapacitate creatures with his herbal concoctions. When using his Craft (poisons) skill to produce venom, he may augment his work's effectiveness. He may increase the save DC to resist poison by 2 or increase the ability score damage by 1. If the poison inflicts hit points of damage, he may opt to increase this damage by 1d6. For any single dose of poison he produces, the master herbalist may choose one of these three effects to apply to it. He may not choose more than one.

**Journeyman of the Cauldron:** At 7th level, the master herbalist's mastery of potion brewing allows him to radically expand the range of effects his creations may produce. He may choose any 10 arcane spells of 3rd level or lower that may normally be used in a potion. He may now brew potions using those spells, though he does not add them to his spell lists and may not cast them unless he otherwise has the appropriate arcane caster levels.

**Master Leaf Finder:** At 9th level, the master herbalist achieves almost perfect knowledge of plants and their use in potions, herbal remedies, and alchemical mixtures. When using his leaf finder ability, it only takes the master herbalist 15 minutes of searching to find the plant he seeks and it confers a +4 bonus to saving throws rather than +2.

**Master of the Cauldron:** At 10th level, the master herbalist reaches the apex of his art. He can create potions that dwarf those produced by lesser talents. In addition to the benefits of his initiate and journeyman of the cauldron abilities, the master herbalist can apply the effects of the Empower or Extend Spell feats to his potions without altering their gold or experience costs. He may only apply one feat, not both, to each potion, but he does not need to possess these feats in order to apply them to his potions.

## SHADOW STRIKER

Amongst the small elven enclaves that live in tropical regions, the shadow striker is an elite archer and sniper. He trails after enemies who violate the jungle's integrity and picks them off one by one. Yet shadow strikers are more than simple archers. They cultivate a magical bond to the jungle, immersing their spirits in the ebb and flow of nature. This deep, spiritual connection allows them to literally fade into the background, disappearing from view as they find a secure location from which they can rain arrows down upon their enemies from hiding. Shadow strikers gain the ability to alter the color of their skin, eventually achieving such mastery over this ability that they can appear virtually transparent as their bodies reflect their surroundings.

Shadow strikers are a cloistered band of elite warriors. Many of them reflect their attachment to the wilds with totem bracelets and necklaces crafted from the bones of their enemies, while others grow to scorn all civilization. These shadow strikers are referred to as the jungle ghosts.

They continue to stalk and kill their enemies, but have become so deeply attached to the jungle that leaving it would be akin to suicide. In some areas, an old elf known as little more than a cranky hermit could in fact be a deadly archer and warrior who ambushes and kills dozens of monsters each year before they can pose a threat to the nearby settlements. In some forests, decades have passed since a living creature has lived to tell of an encounter with a shadow striker, but the regular discovery of arrow-riddled orc, goblin, and ogre corpses stands as proof of their continued activity.

**Hit Die:** d8.

### REQUIREMENTS

To become a shadow striker, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

**Race:** Elf or half-elf.

**Base Attack Bonus:** +5.

**Craft (bowmaking or arrowcrafting):** 4 ranks.

**Hide:** 8 ranks.

**Wilderness Lore:** 6 ranks.

**Feats:** Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Skill Focus (hide), Weapon Focus (any bow).

**Spellcasting:** Divine spellcaster level 1st.

### CLASS SKILLS

The shadow striker class skills (and the key ability for each) are Climb (Str), Craft (Wis), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Spot (Wis), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 2 + Int modifier.

### CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the shadow striker prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** Shadow strikers gain no additional proficiencies with weapons, armor, or shields.

TABLE 4-4: SHADOW STRIKER

Base Class Level	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	Lurker in the leaves, sniper shot +1d6
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	Phantom strike
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	Sniper shot +2d6
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	
5	+5	+4	+4	+1	Sniper shot +3d6
6	+6	+5	+5	+2	Shadow warrior (1/day)
7	+7	+5	+5	+2	Sniper shot +4d6
8	+8	+6	+6	+2	Hide in plain sight
9	+9	+6	+6	+3	Sniper shot +5d6
10	+10	+7	+7	+3	Shadow warrior (2/day)

**Lurker in the Leaves:** The shadow striker's primal connection to the jungle allows him to blend into his environment to a supernatural degree. By studying his surroundings, he can alter his skin's coloration to match his surroundings. Patterns of leaves and vines appear on his body, and his skin, hair, and eyes turn green or brown to match the undergrowth around him. As a full-round action, the shadow striker may activate this ability to gain a +2 bonus to his Hide checks. This ability functions in any environment (the shadow striker can change his skin to match almost any color), but it confers no benefits if the striker wears medium or heavy armor. In such cases, the shadow striker's protective gear covers his skin and spoils any benefits he would gain by changing its color.

**Sniper Shot:** Shadow strikers learn to target vulnerable points on their enemies' bodies, hitting vital organs or sensitive spots that allow them to slay a foe with a single arrow. The shadow striker inflicts an additional 1d6 damage against targets that lose their Dexterity bonuses to AC against his ranged attacks. This bonus damage does not apply in melee attacks or against creatures that are immune to critical hits or sneak attack damage. This damage increases by 1d6 at every odd-numbered level in this prestige class. Sniper shot damage applies only to creatures within 60 ft. of the shadow striker. This ability cannot be used against creatures that gain the benefits of concealment.

**Phantom Strike:** At 2nd level, if a shadow striker uses a standard action to make a single ranged attack (one shot) from hiding against a target at least 30 ft. from his position, he may remain concealed from view. The shadow striker must make a Hide check as normal and remain hidden before making his attack. After his attack, his enemies must make successful Spot checks as normal to discover his current position. In essence, the shadow striker can snipe at his enemies, making attacks from hiding without revealing his position. This ability works only with a single shot; subsequent shots may be attempted, by applying the Hide check for each as described above.

**Eyes of the Shadows:** With his great experience and great training in fighting with a bow in the jungle, the shadow striker learns to fill in details of his target that would otherwise be concealed by shadows, mist, branches, and foliage. When making a ranged attack against a target that gains the benefits of concealment, the shadow striker may re-roll his miss chance if his attack is foiled by his opponent's concealment. Alternatively, the shadow striker may forgo his ability to re-roll his miss chance. In return, he does not lose his sniper shot bonus damage against his target due to concealment. Otherwise, the standard rules for sniper shot damage apply.

**Shadow Warrior:** Shadow strikers learn to call on the spirits of the jungle to conceal them, cloaking them in a field of energy that bends light and conceals their presence. Once per day, the shadow striker can activate his shadow warrior ability for one round per level in this prestige class. During this time, the shadow striker's form becomes blurry and transparent. He gains a +10 bonus to Hide checks and all attacks against him suffer a 20% miss chance.

A shadow striker gains an additional daily use of this ability at 10th level.

**Hide in Plain Sight:** The shadow striker learns to so cunningly blend his skin and equipment into the environment around him that he can walk openly through an area without drawing any notice to himself. He could stand in the middle of the room and the chameleon-like nature of his skin would render him virtually transparent. The shadow striker suffers no penalty to Hide checks when moving up to his normal speed and a -10 penalty when running or charging. Even while under direct observation, the shadow striker may still attempt to hide with a -10 penalty to his check.

## JUNGLE FEATS

Between the heat, the exotic creatures, and the vegetation-choked terrain, traveling through the jungle is a daunting task at best. The following feats are designed to aid adventurers who operate in such an environment and to reflect special abilities and skills a someone native to a jungle region could develop.

### BRANCH WALKER [GENERAL]

You can move as easily through the tree branches as you do on the ground.

**Prerequisites:** Dex 13+, 5+ ranks in Balance skill, 5+ ranks in Climb skill.

**Benefit:** In a fairly densely packed forest or jungle, you can move through the branches at half your base speed. Moving faster requires a Balance or Climb check (DC 20). In order to use this feat, you must, of course, first get to the height at which the trees intersect each other (which may vary, depending on the kinds of trees in the forest; the DM has the final say).

## BRANCH RUNNER [GENERAL]

You are an expert at moving across a wooded canopy, slipping along tree branches and moving from tree to tree. If you climb up into the trees, you can move faster than normal as you evade most obstacles.

**Prerequisites:** Dex 15+, 8+ ranks in Balance skill, 8+ ranks in Climb skill, Branch Walker

**Benefit:** As Branch Walker, but you may now move at your full base movement.

## BUSHWHACKER [GENERAL]

You are adept at using natural terrain to cloak your presence, waiting for the exact right moment to rise up and strike an opponent. In areas of thick undergrowth and vines, you are a daunting foe.

**Prerequisites:** 4+ ranks in Hide skill, base attack bonus +5 or higher.

**Benefit:** If you gain concealment from any effect, such as thick jungle foliage or a spell such as *obscuring mist*, you may force an opponent to re-roll his miss chance. You may use this ability only once per round and against only one specific attack.

## COOL BLOODED [GENERAL]

You grew up in or have spent many years in the sweltering, hot climes of the world's jungles. You feel perfectly comfortable in oppressive conditions that leave others sweating heavily and on the verge of passing out.

**Prerequisite:** Con 13+.

**Benefit:** You gain a +2 bonus to all saving throws made to resist heat damage and fire or heat-based spells. You receive a +4 bonus to resist the effects of hot weather.

## JUNGLE VETERAN [GENERAL]

You have spent many long days trekking across the jungle. You are acclimated to extreme heat and humidity and have been exposed to a wide variety of diseases, particularly those spread by mosquitoes and other jungle pests.

**Prerequisites:** Con 13+, 4+ ranks in Wilderness Lore skill.

**Benefit:** When determining your overland movement through a jungle area, you treat the terrain as plains. Furthermore, you are resistant to sicknesses as you have been exposed to a wide variety of contagions. You gain a +4 bonus on all saving throws against disease.

## NOWHERE SHOT [GENERAL]

You are an expert at firing through vines, leaves, and other jungle foliage. While other, lesser archers may have trouble fighting in such a confined environment, you have learned to lead a target and fire through foliage that blocks your line of sight.

**Prerequisites:** Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, base attack bonus +5 or higher.

**Benefit:** Once per round, you may reroll your miss chance due to concealment when making a ranged attack. You have an intuitive sense of your target's location and can lead him through mist, foliage, and other features.

## POISON EXPERT [GENERAL]

You have handled a wide range of poisons. Many times, you have accidentally exposed yourself to them, developing a strong resistance to a wide range of venoms.

**Prerequisite:** 4+ ranks in Craft (poison) skill.

**Benefit:** You gain a +4 bonus on saving throws versus poison.

## POISON MASTER [GENERAL]

Your extensive work with poisons allows you to treat them with the proper care and respect. While others may make mistakes, you have learned to watch yourself.

**Prerequisites:** 6+ ranks in Craft (poison) skill, Poison Expert.

**Benefit:** When using poisons with your weapons, you do not suffer a chance to poison yourself.

## VINE SWINGER [GENERAL]

You are an expert at using vines and ropes to swing from a height.

**Prerequisites:** Dex 15+, 8+ ranks in Balance skill, 8+ ranks in Climb skill, 4+ ranks in Jump skill, Branch Walker, Branch Runner.

**Benefit:** You may swing from a vine or rope to throw yourself at an opponent. You swing up to twice your speed, using the momentum you gain to vault into and through the air. You may choose to combine a charge with this action. If you do so, you deal double damage in addition to the normal benefits and drawbacks for charging.

When determining your daily movement rate through jungle, forest, and other heavily wooded areas you use a multiplier of 1.5.

## WAR PAINT [GENERAL]

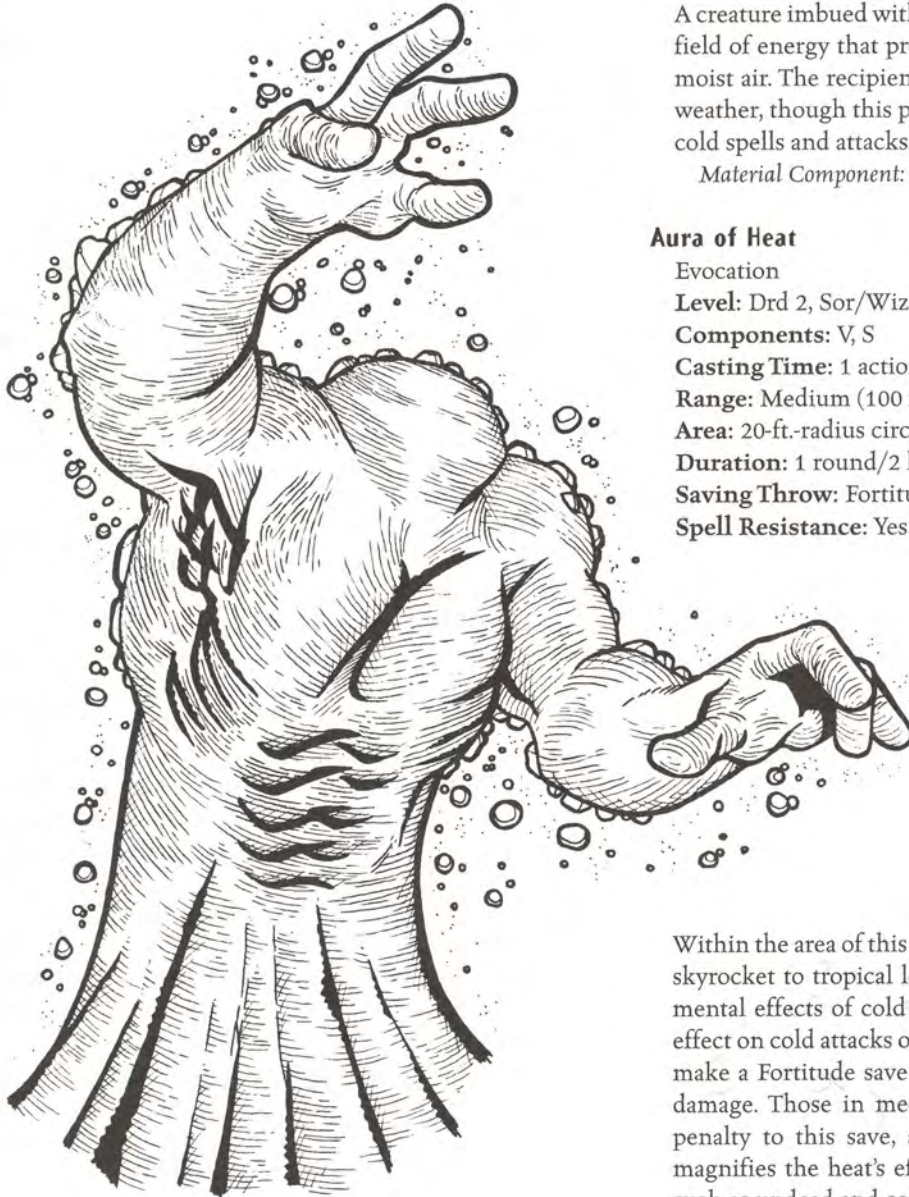
You are talented in creating intimidating designs with body paints, ashes, and similar materials to lend yourself and your allies a terrifying appearance.

**Prerequisite:** 4+ ranks in Craft (war paint) skill.

**Benefit:** With 10 minutes of work and a successful Craft (war paint) check (DC 15), you can outfit yourself or an ally with a war paint design that inspires fear in your enemies. The recipient of your war paint gains a +2 circumstance bonus to Intimidate checks made during combat and your enemies suffer a -1 morale penalty to saves against fear-based effects. The warpaint normally lasts for 1 hour; the DC of the Craft check increases by 2 for each additional hour the character wants the camouflage to last.

## JUNGLE SPELLS

While mages and priests of civilized realms may expect the spellcasters of the jungle to be backward, primitive hedge mages, in reality they are as every bit as talented and skilled as their brethren of the cities. The spells presented here represent a few specialized types developed by spellcasters who originate from tropical regions.



### Aura of Comfort

Abjuration

**Level:** Drd 1, Sor/Wiz 1

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** Creature touched

**Duration:** 2 hours/level

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates (harmless)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

A creature imbued with this spell is surrounded by a small field of energy that provides him with a supply of warm, moist air. The recipient ignores the effects of hot or cold weather, though this protection has no effect on heat and cold spells and attacks.

*Material Component:* A small fan or a lump of coal.

### Aura of Heat

Evocation

**Level:** Drd 2, Sor/Wiz 2

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Area:** 20-ft.-radius circle

**Duration:** 1 round/2 levels

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude partial

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

Within the area of this spell, you cause the temperature to skyrocket to tropical levels. You cancel out any environmental effects of cold weather, though this spell has no effect on cold attacks or spells. Creatures in this area must make a Fortitude save each round or suffer 1d4 subdual damage. Those in medium or heavy armor suffer a -4 penalty to this save, as their thick, stifling equipment magnifies the heat's effects. Creatures that are not alive, such as undead and constructs, and those immune to fire attacks or with sufficient fire resistance ignore the effects of this spell.

## Primal Fury

Enchantment (Compulsion)  
**Level:** Brd 2, Drd 2, Sor/Wiz 3  
**Components:** V, S, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 action  
**Range:** Touch  
**Target:** Creature touched  
**Duration:** 1 round/level  
**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

By using this spell, you incite an intense bloodlust in the creature you touch. Similar to a barbarian's rage, this bloodlust grants the recipient a +2 bonus to Strength and Constitution for the duration of the spell, along with a +2 bonus to Will saves against fear-based effects. A creature under the effects of this spell suffers a -2 penalty to AC. After the spell's duration completes, the recipient suffers a -2 penalty to Strength and Dexterity and cannot run for the remainder of the encounter. Any spell or effect that would halt a barbarian's rage counters this spell's beneficial effects. In such a case, the penalties to Strength and Dexterity still apply for the rest of the encounter.

*Material Component:* A pinch of blood from a bull, tiger, or similar aggressive creature.

## Quagmire

Transmutation  
**Level:** Drd 1  
**Components:** V, S, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 action  
**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)  
**Area:** 30-ft.-radius circle around targeted area  
**Duration:** 1 minute/level  
**Saving Throw:** None  
**Spell Resistance:** No

You transform an area of rock, dirt, or stone into a muddy quagmire, causing creatures who attempt to move through it to struggle along at half their normal speed. This spell may only be used against the floor of an area and can only affect areas of dirt, rock, or sand. Wooden or metal surfaces are immune to this spell. Any creature within this area moves at half speed and cannot run or charge. Furthermore, due to the treacherous footing and difficult ground all creatures within this area suffer a -2 penalty to AC.

*Material Component:* Water splashed on the ground while the spell is cast.

## Snake Charm

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]  
**Level:** Drd 3  
**Components:** V, S, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 action  
**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)  
**Target:** One creature/2 levels  
**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 minute/level  
**Saving Throw:** Will negates  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes

With a long, droning incantation you can lull one or more creatures into a vacant, passive state — much like a snake charmer handles a snake. So long as you concentrate on this spell, your targets sway back and forth in place. They lose all actions, but still defend themselves from attack and are aware of their environment. Thus, they do not lose their Dexterity bonuses to AC and are not considered helpless. When casting this spell, you may choose any creatures within range to target within the limitations noted above.

*Material Component:* The eye of a snake.

## Stream of Mud

Conjuration  
**Level:** Drd 2, Sor/Wiz 2  
**Components:** V, S, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 action  
**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)  
**Target:** One creature  
**Duration:** Instantaneous  
**Saving Throw:** Reflex partial (see below)  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes

You create a forceful stream of boiling mud that slams into your target and quickly hardens over him, inhibiting his movement and slowing him down. This spell inflicts 1d6 damage for every 2 caster levels, to a maximum of 5d6 damage. A Reflex save halves this damage. On a failed save, the mud hardens and partially traps the target of this spell. He suffers a -4 penalty to Dexterity and cannot run or charge. As a full-round action, the victim or one of his allies can remove this hardened mud and nullify the Dexterity penalty and movement restriction.

*Material Component:* A fistful of mud.

## Viper Touch

Transmutation  
**Level:** Drd 2, Sor/Wiz 2  
**Components:** V, S, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 action  
**Range:** Personal  
**Target:** You  
**Duration:** 1 round/level

Upon completing this spell, your lower arm and hand on your right or left side (your choice) transforms into a writhing snake. Your arm ends in a long, scaled serpent with an eyeless, fanged mouth. You may attack with this appendage in melee. Count attacks made with this limb as armed strikes that inflict 1d6 damage and have a reach of 10 ft. Furthermore, you may inflict touch spells when you make attacks with this serpentine limb. You may not grasp or carry anything with the affected hand, and suffer a -4 penalty to all grapple checks for the duration of this spell, as your transformed limb is thin and difficult to handle in close quarters.

## JUNGLE MONSTERS

The jungle is home to a wide variety of threats, from simple beetles and frogs to ferocious werejaguars that stalk the shadows and hunt intelligent creatures for the sheer challenge of the fight. The creatures presented here are all at home in thick, jungle or rain forest areas.

### MUD ELEMENTAL

Large Elemental (Earth, Water)  
**Hit Dice:** 8d8+32 (68 hp)  
**Initiative:** +0  
**Speed:** 20 ft.  
**AC:** 15 (+6 natural, -1 size)  
**Attacks:** Slam +11 melee  
**Damage:** Slam 2d6+6  
**Face/Reach:** 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.  
**Special Attacks:** Engulf, improved grab, smother  
**Special Qualities:** Amorphous form, elemental qualities, mud lurker  
**Saves:** Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +3  
**Abilities:** Str 22, Dex 10, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 10  
**Skills:** Hide +6, Listen +8, Spot +8  
**Feats:** Alertness

**Climate/Terrain:** Warm forest and marsh  
**Organization:** Solitary or swarm (2-12)  
**Challenge Rating:** 8  
**Treasure:** Standard  
**Alignment:** Usually neutral evil  
**Advancement:** 9-16 (Large); 17-24 (Huge)

A strange fusion of earth and water elemental energies, the mud elemental dwells in damp, wet forests and jungles. While only dimly intelligent, these creatures have a fundamentally malevolent nature that drives them to lurk in hiding and pounce upon adventurers, travelers, and others who come close to their hiding spots. Mud elementals have no need to eat organic matter. Rather, they hunt simply because they love the feel of a dying creature trapped in their suffocating embrace.

Mud elementals are a deadly threat to most animals and folk of the jungle, as their ability to remain hidden until they strike allows them to attack from ambush and quickly overwhelm a victim before he can offer any real resistance. Luckily, they lack the intelligence to employ hit and run tactics. Usually, after a few beasts and people go missing along a trail, the local folk send a hunting party to root out and destroy the creature.

### Combat

In battle, the mud elemental relies on surprise and its ability to grab and engulf its opponents. Typically, it hides within a pool of stagnant water or a patch of quicksand located beside a jungle pathway. When a potential victim wanders by, the elemental surges forth to attack. Mud elementals are cowardly, preferring to strike lone travelers or small, seemingly defenseless creatures. They lack the intelligence to deduce a creature's abilities from its dress and equipment, leading them to attack creatures based exclusively on size. Thus, a mud elemental might allow a cow to pass unmolested while it attacks a heavily armed and armored human.

**Engulf (Ex):** The mud elemental may attempt to pull a creature it holds within its grasp into its body. With a successful grapple check against a creature that it is grappling, it surrounds its foe with mud and slime. An engulfed creature may be freed with a successful Strength check opposed by the mud elemental's Strength check. Trapped creatures may not cast spells with verbal or somatic components. They may attack the mud elemental with weapons no larger than Small size with a -4 circumstance penalty to hit. Creatures trapped within a mud elemental are immediately freed if it dies.

**Improved Grab (Ex):** To use this ability, the mud elemental must hit with both its slam attack. If it gets a hold, it attempts to use its engulf attack on its next action.

**Smother (Ex):** A creature engulfed within a mud elemental suffers 2d6 points of damage each round. A successful Fortitude save (DC 20) halves this damage.

**Amorphous Form (Ex):** The mud elemental's liquid, swirling form causes many physical attacks to pass through it without dealing any damage. It gains DR 5 against all physical attacks, including those made with magical weapons.

## JUNGLES

**Elemental Qualities (Ex):** Immune to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, and critical hits. Cannot be flanked.

**Mud Lurker (Ex):** Due to the mud and water composition of their physical bodies, mud elementals gain a +10 circumstance bonus to all Hide checks they make while lurking within mud, water, quicksand, and similar materials.

### PIRANHA

Tiny Animal (Aquatic)

**Hit Dice:** 1/4d8 (1 hp)

**Initiative:** +4 (Dex)

**Speed:** Swim 60 ft.

**AC:** 16 (+4 Dex, +2 size)

**Attacks:** Bite –2 melee

**Damage:** Bite 1d6-4

**Face/Reach:** 2½ ft. by 2½ ft./0 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Ferocious swarm

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +0

**Abilities:** Str 3, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 6

**Skills:** Spot +5

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**Climate/Terrain:** Warm rivers

**Organization:** School (4–24)

**Challenge Rating:** 1/4

**Treasure:** None

**Alignment:** Always neutral

**Advancement:** 1/2d8–2d8 (Small)

Piranhas are small, vicious fish renowned for their ability to strip flesh from bone in a matter of seconds. Rivers and pools infested with them can become death traps for travelers. While individually weak, piranhas are deadly when encountered in great numbers.

Piranhas are small fish with flat bodies and large, bulging eyes. Their distinguishing characteristic is their sharp, triangular teeth. From a distance, a piranha may appear to be nothing more than a harmless jungle fish. At close range, however, its toothy maw reveals its true nature.

### Combat

In battle, piranhas rely on large numbers and their vicious nature to quickly tear prey to pieces. As animals, piranhas strike when hungry or threatened. They rarely attack out of a malevolent desire to do harm or other, more abstract motives. In some areas, these fish are kept in moats and other watery barriers to serve as a deterrent to thieves and intruders.

**Ferocious Swarm (Ex):** Piranhas are most dangerous in great numbers, when they work together as a group to strip the flesh from their victims. A group of piranha can make a single attack against a creature, wherein all piranha combine their efforts into one die roll. Make one attack roll for the group using a piranha's base attack with a +1 bonus for every piranha involved in the attack beyond the first. On a successful hit, the piranha swarm inflicts +1 damage for every two piranha involved in the attack. For example, Sir Turlo stumbles into a pool of water infested with six piranhas. The piranhas attack as a group, resolving a single attack at +5 to hit and +6 damage.

### PIRANHA, DIRE

Medium-Size Animal (Aquatic)

**Hit Dice:** 2d8+4 (13 hp)

**Initiative:** +2 (Dex)

**Speed:** Swim 80 ft.

**AC:** 14 (+2 Dex, +2 natural)

**Attacks:** Bite +3 melee

**Damage:** Bite 1d8+2

**Face/Reach:** 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Ferocious swarm, overturning attack

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +0

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 6

**Skills:** Spot +5

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**Climate/Terrain:** Warm rivers

**Organization:** School (4–24)

**Challenge Rating:** 1

**Treasure:** None

**Alignment:** Always neutral

**Advancement:** 3d8–5d8 (Medium-size)

Dire piranhas are larger, more predatory versions of the typical flesh-eating fish encountered in tropical settings. They can reach up to 5 feet in length, and are aggressive hunters that attack humanoids and other large creatures without provocation. Rivers and lakes infested with these fish are quickly stripped of life as the dire piranhas devour everything they encounter in the area before moving on to new hunting ground.

While the typical piranha can sometimes be captured and put to use as guardians or obstacles, dire ones are exceedingly difficult to domesticate. Some druids and wizards manage to win these creatures' loyalty, usually with magical means such as *charm monster* or *animal friendship*. Orcs and hobgoblins of the jungle revere these creatures as totem animals, sometimes keeping large pools of them in which they cast captured humanoids as sacrifices.



## Combat

Dire piranhas lurk near the shoreline of lakes and rivers, waiting for a creature to blunder into the water. Usually, they swim in large swarms that work together to strip the flesh from a creature, leaving it little more than a bony husk. Dire piranhas have been known to attack rafts and river boats, slamming into them to overturn them and feast upon the unfortunates who tumble into the water.

**Ferocious Swarm (Ex):** Like their smaller cousins, dire piranhas are most dangerous when encountered in a group. A swarm of piranha can make a single attack against a creature. Make one attack roll for the group using a piranha's base attack with a +1 bonus for every piranha involved in the attack beyond the first. On a successful hit, the piranha swarm inflicts +1 damage for every two piranha involved in the attack.

**Overturning Attack (Ex):** Piranhas sometimes strike at the underside of boats and rafts in an attempt to turn them over and dump their occupants into the water. A piranha can attempt this maneuver with a Strength check to tip the boat over as a full-round action. The DC of this check is 10 + 5 per 100 lbs. aboard the boat, counting its weight. For example, a 50 lb. raft carrying 300 lbs. of gear would require a DC 25 Strength check. Multiple piranha can work together to tip over a boat using the standard rules for a group working together and a skill check.

## RAZOR BIRD

Small Beast

**Hit Dice:** 1d10+1 (6 hp)

**Initiative:** +5 (Dex)

**Speed:** 10 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

**AC:** 18 (+5 Dex, +2 natural, +1 size)

**Attacks:** Beak +1 melee

**Damage:** Beak 1d8-2

**Face/Reach:** 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Flock of razors, slicing dive

**Special Qualities:** Razor beak

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +0

**Abilities:** Str 6, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 4, Wis 10, Cha 8

**Skills:** Hide +9, Spot +5

**Climate/Terrain:** Warm forest

**Organization:** Solitary or flock (4–24)

**Challenge Rating:** 1

**Treasure:** Standard

**Alignment:** Always neutral

**Advancement:** 2–4 HD (Medium-size)



Razor birds are amongst the deadliest threats of the jungle, though many travelers fail to regard them as dangerous. Reaching four feet in length and with a wing span that reaches 10 feet, they roost in the mid-height branches of trees, relying on their green and brown plumage to keep them hidden from predators. Despite its great size, the razor bird's most notable trait is the sharp, sword-like beak. Sharpened to a deadly edge, it makes a deadly weapon that slices the bird's prey to pieces. When attacking in great flocks, razor birds can overwhelm and slay even a heavily armored warrior.

Razor birds usually travel in small flocks. Despite the danger they pose to travelers, they only rarely attack other creatures. Most of the time, razor birds use their beaks to chop open vines, trees, and other plants, cutting them into small, easily-eaten portions. However, when startled or threatened a flock of razor birds can become aggressive, swarming upon a target with their deadly beaks.

**Slicing Dive (Ex):** As a standard action, a razor bird may fly 60 ft. and at any point during its move attack with its razor beak. The bird may move before and after its attack, and it does not draw an attack of opportunity for moving from the target of its attack.

**Razor Beak (Ex):** The razor bird's sharp, edged beak allows it to easily evade grappling attempts and most nets and other snares. A person attempting to grapple a razor bird automatically suffers 1d8–2 damage per round he grapples him. This damage is inflicted at the end of his turn if he has a hold on the bird. A razor bird trapped in a net automatically inflicts 1d8–2 damage to it each round it remains caught.



**Combat**

Razor birds react aggressively to any attack, whether real or perceived. A woodsman chopping down a tree could disturb a nest and incite an attack, as could a wizard who carelessly looses a *fireball* or *lightning bolt* near a flock. In battle, razor birds descend upon a target with frightening speed, swooping by to slice with their beaks. They make extensive use of their razors and slicing dive abilities, swooping past their opponents in great waves to overwhelm and slay them.

**Flock of Razors (Ex):** Multiple razor birds can combine to commit a single attack against one or more targets. A razor bird may use its slicing dive ability but forgo its attack in order to grant a +1 bonus to hit to a single other razor bird that attacks the same target that round. The razor bird still uses a standard action as normal to complete its slicing dive. For example, five razor birds attack a single target. Four of them could forgo their attacks to grant the fifth a +4 total bonus to hit. Note that a razor bird could opt to use the aid another action to grant its ally a +2 bonus to hit, but that action requires an attack against AC 10 to successfully confer a bonus.

**WEREJAGUAR**

Medium-Size Shapechanger

**Hit Dice:** 9d8+27 (67 hp)

**Initiative:** +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

**Speed:** 60 ft.

**AC:** 18 (+4 Dex, +4 natural)

**Attacks:** 2 claws +10 melee, bite +5 melee

**Damage:** Claws 1d8+4, bite 1d6+2

**Face/Reach:** 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Blood drain, frenzy, spell-like abilities

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 ft., DR 15/+1, king of jaguars, shadow friend, shapechanger, SR 20, telepathy

**Saves:** Fort +9, Ref +10, Will +9

**Abilities:** Str 18, Dex 19, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 12

**Skills:** Hide +13, Listen +11, Move Silently +13, Spot +11

**Feats:** Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack

**Climate/Terrain:** Warm forest

**Organization:** Solitary or pair

**Challenge Rating:** 9

**Treasure:** Standard

**Alignment:** Usually neutral evil

**Advancement:** 10–15 HD (Medium-size); 16–24 HD (Large)

## JUNGLES

Werejaguars are vicious, demonic predators that stalk humans and other intelligent creatures in the jungle realms they inhabit. Dangerous not only for their ability in battle but for their magical ability to appear as mundane animals, werejaguars are voracious hunters who delight in spreading terror and pain.

By day, werejaguars appear as ordinary jaguars, usually accompanied by several normal jaguars. They rely on their deceptive appearance to move across the savanna and through the jungle without drawing undue attention. By night, a werejaguar's appearance radically changes. Its skin turns pitch black while its eyes turn red and glow with a malevolent radiance. Inky, black shadows flow around it like liquid, hindering its foes and helping it avoid attacks.

Keenly intelligent, werejaguars are clever enough to spread their activities over as wide an area as possible. Normally, these beasts claim a few victims in an area before moving on to a different region, relying on stealth and continual movement to stymie any efforts to uncover their actions and track them down. Werejaguars seek out areas gripped by war, as they can stalk and kill isolated patrols and soldiers without drawing undue attention to themselves.

### Combat

In battle, werejaguars make extensive use of their magical abilities. Normally, they send their jaguar followers ahead to attack in order to probe their prey's defenses and reveal their magical and combat abilities. After a round or two of combat, the werejaguar bounds into the fray. By day, it relies on its mundane appearance to surprise its victims and tip the odds in its favor. By night, its shadow friend ability allows it to avoid attacks and foil its opponent's strikes.

If a werejaguar has time to stalk an opponent, it uses *spider climb* and *invisibility* to move into position to attack from above, preferably dropping down on an unarmored victim from a tree. As it attacks, it bids its jaguar followers to leap into the fray to confuse and surprise its opponents. If pressed by superior foes, it uses *obscuring mist* to cover its retreat. Werejaguars prefer to plan an attack, using spells such as *expeditious retreat* and *mirror image* to prepare for battle. When stalking a solitary victim, they prefer to use *hold person* to overwhelm their target without risking an armed confrontation.

**Blood Drain (Ex):** When a werejaguar hits with its bite attack, its fangs penetrate its victim and drain blood from him. The werejaguar inflicts 1d4 temporary Constitution damage with its bite.

**Frenzy (Ex):** When a werejaguar closes with its prey, it enters a howling fury driven by its insatiable lust for blood. Once per day, a werejaguar may enter an intense blood frenzy as a free action. It gains a +4 bonus to Strength for 5 rounds, after which it suffers a -2 penalty to Strength for the rest of the encounter. While in this frenzy, the werejaguar cannot use its spell-like abilities.

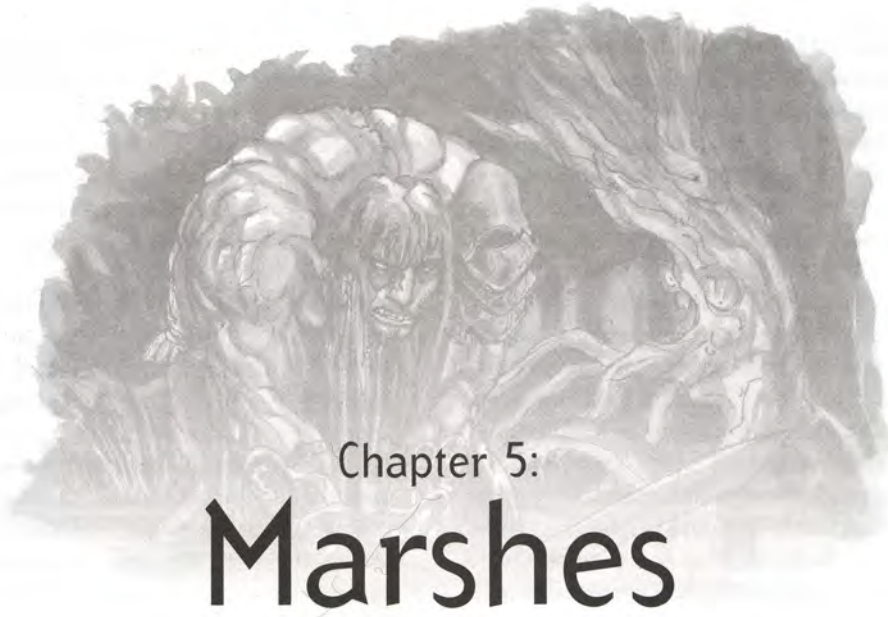
**Spell-like Abilities (Sp):** The werejaguar may use the following spells as a 9th-level sorcerer. The save DC against these effects is 11 + the spell's level. Usable at will: *expeditious retreat*, *obscuring mist*, *spider climb*; usable 3/day: *invisibility*, *jump*; usable 1/day: *hold person*, *mirror image*.

**King of Jaguars (Su):** The werejaguar's terrible majesty draws mundane animals to its side, turning them into fanatic servants. A werejaguar is accompanied by 1d8 normal jaguars that obey its mental commands without hesitation. These jaguars willingly give their lives in service to their master.

**Shadow Friend (Su):** By night, the werejaguar is surrounded by an aura of inky, black shadows that flow and move like liquid. The werejaguar gains the benefits of one-half concealment, granting all attacks against it a 20% miss chance. In addition, as a free action the werejaguar can direct its shadowy aura to flow around creatures within its threatened area, grasping their arms and hindering their attacks. Creatures within the werejaguar's threatened area suffer a -2 circumstance penalty to all attacks and skill checks.

**Shapechanger (Su):** The werejaguar is capable of adopting two forms, one it uses by day and another it employs by night. By day, the werejaguar appears as a normal jaguar. It is indistinguishable by sight from its mundane cousins. By night, it transforms into an ebon skinned beast with glowing red eyes and monstrous fangs. In both forms, the werejaguar has the same abilities.

**Telepathy (Su):** Werejaguars can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language, and with all animals.



## Chapter 5:

# Marshes

## THE SWAMP ENVIRONMENT

Muddy, wet, and miserable, swamps have earned their reputation in fantasy games as the home of horrid monsters and dangerous beasts because of their real world traits. A swamp is home to a multitude of insects and other pests. The water at best is cloudy with mud and debris. Decay, both spiritual and physical, has long been attributed as a core characteristic of swamps.

### SALT-WATER SWAMPS

Swamps on the coastline or river deltas are dominated by mangroves and similar plants. Vegetation in these swamps is often larger and thicker than in fresh water. The tidal nature of these swamps makes navigation especially difficult, as the terrain changes greatly in a few hours. This increases the DC of all Intuit Direction and Wilderness Lore checks to avoid getting lost by 5.

These swamps are notoriously dangerous and filled with hostile creatures. On average, the encounter level for a salt-water swamp will be 1 higher than the surrounding lands. There are also many more dangerous parasites in salt-water swamps.

### FRESHWATER SWAMPS

Freshwater swamps arise in flat areas of insufficient drainage inland. Such marshes are less overgrown, allowing travelers to see the vast expanse of mud and stagnant water that stretches for miles around them. This makes such swamps easier to navigate.

### SINKHOLES

Shifting moisture beneath the surface of the swamp may result in the land suddenly collapsing. The size of a sinkhole varies depending on how long pressure has been building underground, and the nature of the disturbance that triggers the sinkhole. Any large explosion can trigger a sinkhole, although they can happen without warning. There is a 1% chance per five points of damage from a *fireball* or other explosive blast than a sinkhole occurs. The size of such unnatural sinkholes is equal to twice the radius of the blast that caused the sinkage.

Sinkholes range in size from five feet to a quarter-mile in radius. Anyone caught in a sinkhole faces the danger of being sucked down. After 20 rounds (ten rounds if the character is heavily encumbered), the character slips beneath the surface and begins to drown in the mud. Each round before the character sinks, he is allowed to make a Balance check to remain on the surface. The DC for the first check is 10, and this DC increases by 1 in each subsequent round. If the character passes the check, he does not sink any further this round, but neither does he move any closer to safety.

A trapped character may attempt to move to the edge of the sinkhole by making a DC 15 Swim check. If this check is passed, the character moves 10 ft. in the swamp. If the check is fails, the character sinks deeper into the mud. Reduce the number of rounds before the character begins to drown by one.

## SWAMP GAS

Rotting organic material beneath the swamp releases foul vapors, which are both flammable and dangerous. Most swampfolk avoid areas contaminated by gas, although alchemists and some dwarvish and gnomish inventors have experimented with capturing them. All swamp gas hazards have radius equal to 2d6 times 10 feet, or you can simply place them as appropriate to the adventure or encounter.

**Fouled air:** Swamp gas rises from the ground, and creates areas of foul air. Characters who encounter an area of foul air must make a DC 10 Fortitude save or take 1d3 points of subdual damage per round. Inhaled swamp gas is rarely lethal, unless the gas has collected underground or in some other confined space.

**Explosions:** Swamp gas burns readily, and a large concentration of gas can explode if touched by flame. The amount of damage caused by such an explosion obviously varies depending on how much gas is present, but will usually be between 2d6 and 12d6.

**Gas Jets:** More often, small bursts of gas catch fire and burn out instead of a large concentration building up and exploding. These small jets may burn for a long period of time, or erupt irregularly. A DC 20 Spot check is required to notice the tiny rippling in the air that betrays the location of an unlit gas jet, although creatures with the Scent feat can detect it automatically. If a jet suddenly erupts or is set alight, a character can make a DC 12 Reflex save to avoid the flames. Gas jets inflict from 1d6 to 3d6 fire damage, depending on the size of the jet.

## VILLAGES

Structures in swamps are often built atop poles, to support the building where there is no solid ground for foundations. These poles are sunk deep into the swamp. Those who live in the buildings use ladders or ropes to reach their homes.

Climbing up a pole is a DC 10 climb check. Breaking such a pole requires a DC 25 Strength check, and may collapse the structure.

Swampfolk tend to be isolationists, living outside of civilized regions and acknowledging no higher authority than village elders. They fear and mistrust outsiders, but have a strong tradition of mutual help and defense. Those who choose to dwell in the swamp will find they are among friends; those who invade find the swamp has more dangers than mud and monsters.

Swamp communities are rarely larger than a hamlet. The chance for a swamp community to have a monstrous power center is double normal. Equipment not produced in the swamp costs 150% of normal prices; alchemical and herbal preparations may cost less than normal or include items not available elsewhere.

## CULTS

The secrecy and inaccessibility of swamps makes the terrain a haunt for outlaws and cultists. The lack of any large structures in the swamp means that such groups will probably not have a fortress or temple, but will live in scattered huts or small villages, and hold ceremonies at an open meeting place deep in the marshes.

Most cult members are commoners, but a few of the more intelligent and ambitious cultists become adepts. Their magic is weak compared to that of a trained wizard or fiery-blooded sorcerer, but cultists are far more willing to cut deals with evil Outsiders. Cut off from both arcane learning that might warn them of the danger and divine inquisitors and demon-hunters who might stop the rituals, swamp cults often call up creatures they cannot hope to bind.

Swamp cults are feared and hated because of such disastrous incidents. To protect themselves, most cults adopt measures to ensure they are not discovered. Members hide their faces behind masks or hoods; those asking questions about the cult are sent into the deepest and most lethal regions of the swamp; and the cult's meeting place will be ringed with hidden traps and guardian beasts.

Some cults were founded for a specific purpose (such as revenge) by defeated peoples driven into the swamp as their only refuge. Other cults were inspired by infernal forces, or by ancient nightmares lurking in the shadows of the trees.

## SWAMP ALCHEMY

The combination of rare plants, swamp gas, water and isolation has led to alchemy flourishing in the fens. Alchemists in other regions are carefully regulated and watched out of fear of explosions and other disasters. In the swamps, there is no such authority, and progress is faster — if occasionally lethal.

Several products of swamp alchemy are now in common use.

*Gas lanterns* are small bags of swamp gas contained in a brass frame. A valve lets a small amount of gas leave the bag to feed a flame. These lanterns illuminate a 60 ft. radius, but are prone to explode for 1d6 fire damage if dropped or damaged. Gas lanterns cost 15 gp.

*Bugbane* is a form of incense that is very effective at driving insects away. A stick of bugbane costs 2 gp, and burns for eight hours. While the incense is burning, normal insects must make a Fortitude save (DC12) to come within 15 ft. of the bugbane. Characters who approach within 5 ft. of burning bugbane must make a DC 10 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1d3 rounds.

## SWAMP HERBALISM

The rich soil and dense ecosystems of the fens give rise to many rare plants. Curative herbs found nowhere else flourish amid the mists. Characters with Knowledge (nature) may identify these plants and tell beneficial ones from those that harm. Finding a particular plant requires a Wilderness Lore check.

Name	Find DC	Identify DC	Cost
Seed of wisps	10	12	5 gp
Erefoil	12	10	10 gp
Hydrael	12	10	10 gp
Nireflower	15	15	20 gp
Swallow's regret	20	15	25 gp
Dreamwood	20	20	50 gp

**Dreamwood:** Inhaling powdered dreamwood causes a trance state. The character using the herb must make a DC 20 Will save. If the save is successful, the character experiences a *divination* (as the divine spell cast by a 7th level cleric). If the character fails, he suffers from incapacitating and terrifying hallucinations for 1d6 hours.

**Erefoil:** This small green leaf can be boiled into a tea that enhances memory, giving a +2 Insight bonus to all Knowledge checks for 2 hours.

**Hydrael:** Just as catnip entrances cats, so does hydrael delight hydras. A hydra who scents this seven-leaved herb will stop at nothing to find and devour the hydrael, attacking any living creature that carries it to the exclusion of other targets.

**Nireflower:** A red-streaked flower, nireflower pollen makes *charm* spells harder to resist. Anyone inhaling the pollen suffers a -2 circumstance penalty to Will saves against mind-influencing effects.

**Seed of Wisps:** These whitish sulphurous puffballs explode noisily when crushed or burnt. The noise is loud enough to be used as an alarm.

**Swallow's Regret:** This rare herb grows only at the edge of sinkholes. When chewed, it temporarily improves lung capacity for 2d6 rounds. A character gains a +6 enhancement bonus to Constitution for the purposes of holding his breath.

## DUNWATER KEEPS

Any structure made by mortal hands in the swamp is a declaration of war against rot, a bulwark against the sucking mud. The building of a castle signifies that the wilderness shall not hold sway in the swamplands forever. Even if the building fails, and sinks into the marsh, this sense of purpose and structure is not lost.

Dunwater Keeps are the specters of buildings that fell into the swamp despite the effort of their builders. They are not alive, nor undead, but they have a strange sentience formed from mortar and mist. The Keeps manifest out in the swamp, seeking dwellers strong enough to keep the building intact and whole. A traveler who passes by the place where a building once stood in a marsh may find himself haunted by the ghost of that building. It will loom out of the twilight night after night. Every path that the traveler takes will lead to the building's door.

If a character enters a Dunwater Keep, he will be confronted by a maze of monsters, traps, and stone walls that flow like muddy water. After centuries of abandonment, the spirit of a Dunwater Keep is usually bitter and lonely, and will seek to test a prospective lord. If the character can find his way to the foundation stone of the keep, and lay his hand on it, the keep will heave itself out of the marsh and become a normal building once more, as if it had never sunk into the mire.

However, if the character fails to find the foundation stone before the Keep grows weary of him, he will be trapped within as the building crumbles back into the swamp. Previous tenants of Dunwater Keeps often become undead who haunt the keep. Most Dunwater Keeps are castles or fortresses (the phenomenon is named after a ghostly swamp castle of legend), but Dunwater Keeps in the form of wizard's towers, temples, mansions or entire villages are not unknown.

## THE GREEN DREAM

By means of magic, a druid can speak to a plant. The spell does not imbue the plant with any sentience that was not present before. Instead, the spell draws the attention of the plant away from the Green Dream. All that lives and grows dreams the Green Dream. All life can partake in it, but few intelligent beings do. Animals enter the dream more frequently, and plants never leave it save by magic. The Green Dream cannot be expressed in words or symbols, for they are tools of consciousness, which is utterly alien to the Green Dream. Humans and most other races reason as they do because they do not dream the Dream. The highest art of many druidic sects is to wholly join the Dream in waking life.

Swamps are full of life and decay. The ragged edge of death lets the Green Dream bleed into reality. Humans exposed to the Dream perceive bizarre images and glimpses of other places as seen by Dreamers. Characters can sometimes tap into the power of the Dream, allowing them to access druidic magic, but it is more likely to drive them mad. The Dream's intersection with reality can also give rise to strange creatures like Woodremes.

Tapping the Dream requires that the character find an area where life is feeding on decay, because such places are strong nexuses of the Green Dream. An untrained character can make a Wisdom check at a DC equal to 10 plus (the level of the desired spell  $\times$  5) to gain a spell. If the check is failed, the character is driven insane for (1d4  $\times$  level of the desired spell) days. Treat this insanity as the spell *confusion*. Spells gained in this fashion must be cast immediately.

## FIGHTING IN MUD

There are few more treacherous places to fight than a swamp. A character steps in one spot, his foot sinks ten inches deep into the mud. He steps in another, and slips. A third spot is solid ground. Where does the character tread?

At the start of any fight in a swamp, the DM should determine a Slip Number to each character by rolling a d10. If the dice roll for any unsuccessful attack or check made by that character during the fight is equal to the Slip Number, the character must make a DC 10 Balance check or fall prone. The character's Slip Number is re-rolled after a fall to maintain the uncertainty.

A character can avoid the danger of slipping by making a cautious move. A cautious move is a move-equivalent action where the character moves at half speed but automatically considers any d20 rolls made for Balance and Dexterity check to be the result of the roll (before modifiers) or 10, whichever is higher.

## NAVIGATION IN SWAMPS

While swamps are no more difficult to navigate than any other dangerous, unpleasant, near-trackless region, the lack of safe and stable footing makes travel extremely slow for inexperienced characters. Characters are faced with a choice between slowly picking their way through the mud, carefully hopping from solid ground to solid ground, or else blundering through the swamp, wading or swimming where necessary. Characters choosing the former option must make a DC 15 Search check every ten minutes of travel. If the check is passed, the characters find a dry route through that portion of the swamp, and travel at the normal rate for that terrain. If the check is failed, the characters make no progress in that ten-minute period.

Characters choosing to blunder through always move at the normal rate for traveling in a swamp, but suffer more from diseases and vermin (see below).

A character with 5 or more ranks in Wilderness Lore is experienced enough to pick a dry path through the swamp, and does not need to make Search checks to find a route.

## DISEASE AND INFECTION

The humid rot of the swamp breeds pestilence like no other environment short of a charnel field. Characters dwelling near a swamp face a much higher risk of disease. For each month spent in a swamp, roll 1d4-1 for each character and subtract that character's Constitution modifier. The character is exposed to that many diseases, and must make Fortitude saves to avoid becoming sick. The nature and effect of the diseases varies depending on the swamp. Most illnesses will not greatly affect an adult, but some especially dangerous diseases such as blinding sickness can severely incapacitate a character.

Infected wounds are another danger in the swamp. If a character is wounded, and the injury is not healed or treated with the Heal skill within 15 minutes, it may become infected. The character must make a Fortitude save against a DC of 10 + the following modifiers.

- +1 per point of damage inflicted in the single most damaging attack on the character.
- +2 if the character was wounded by vermin.
- +2 if the character was wounded by a poisonous creature.
- +5 if the character was wounded by a disease-carrying creature.
- +1 if the character is slogging through the mud instead of traveling on a boat or a dry path.

For example, a character is bitten twice by a dire rat, once for 4 points of damage and once for 2 points of damage. The character's wounds are not properly treated, so he must make a Fortitude save. The DC for this save is 10, plus 4 (the damage from the most damaging attack), plus 5 (disease-bearing creature), for a total of DC 19. This comes in addition to the normal Fortitude save to avoid the Dire Rat's disease ability.

If a wound is infected, the character loses 1 hit point per day to the infection. A character can make a Healing check at a DC equal to the DC for the original Fortitude check to cure the infection. A *cure disease* spell can also cure an infection.

Wounds can become infected outside of a swamp, but it is less common. The DC to avoid infection outside a pestilence area is 5 + the modifiers described in table XX.

## INSECTS AND PARASITES

Anyone traveling through a swamp attracts a varied and interesting complement of passengers and parasites. Characters who have not spent two weeks living in a swamp suffer a -1 circumstance penalty to all skill checks due to the distraction of things crawling over their skin. Followers and hired servants find swamps extremely unpleasant, as the constant vileness and tormenting insects sap morale.

## MARSHES

If a character is blundering through the swamp without picking a safer and drier path, he is even more vulnerable to parasites and vermin. He automatically suffers the distraction penalty listed above, even if he is used to living in a swamp.

**TABLE 5-1: SWAMP DEBRIS (WHAT'S ON YOUR SKIN)**

1d20	Object
1	1d3 beetles
2	1d3 hungry leeches
3	1d6 leeches
4	1d10 leeches
5	Dried mud
6	Flies
7	Frogspawn
8	Hairy caterpillar
9	Infected insect bite
10	Insect bite
11	Insect eggs
12	Leaves
13	Ooze
14	Organic matter
15	Rash or sores
16	Slimy mud
17	Stick insects
18	Whatever it was, it just flew away
19	Unidentifiable slime
20	Roll twice — one result is eating the other

### SWIMMING AND BOATING

Small, flat-bottomed boats are an excellent way of traveling through swamps, if one can avoid the large number of hidden obstacles and dangers beneath the shallow waters. A DC 15 Profession (sailor) or similar skill check is required for every hour of travel within the open waters swamp. If the boat is flat-bottomed, the sailor receives a +10 circumstance bonus to the check. Ocean-going, keeled boats do not gain such a bonus. The flipside of this is that sailors in flat-bottomed boats suffer a -10 circumstance penalty when trying to sail in storms or high seas. If the check fails, the boat has run aground on some underwater obstacle. The damage inflicted is given in terms of time to repair. If the DM is using a more detailed system for damage to vessels, he may apply an appropriate amount of damage instead.

**TABLE 5-2: UNDERWATER OBSTACLES**

1d20	Obstacle
1-4	Fallen Log. May inflict medium damage on the boat
5-7	Floating Branch. May inflict light damage on the boat. Characters keeping watch are allowed a DC 10 Spot check to notice the branch before it hits.
8-9	Land. The water grows so shallow that the bottom of the boat comes to rest on muddy land. The boat is aground.
10-12	Mudbank. May inflict medium damage on the boat. Boat may (50% chance) run aground.
13-15	Root system. May inflict light damage and slow movement as weeds do.
16-17	Sandbar. May inflict light damage on the boat. Boat may (25% chance) run aground.
18-19	Weeds. Chokes the boat's tiller or catches boatsman' pole. Slows movement by 75%.
20	Sleeping creature. The boat bumps into a large creature, such as a crocodile, which was submerged in the water.

*Light damage* to a boat requires a DC 12 Craft check and an hour of work to repair. A boat that has suffered light damage may still be watertight, although anyone sailing the boat suffers a -2 circumstance penalty to all sailing checks until the damage is repaired.

*Medium damage* to a boat requires a DC 15 Craft check and 2d6 hours of work to repair. A boat that has suffered medium damage cannot be used until the damage is repaired.

Characters who are willing to swim while traveling in a swamp will make much faster progress. If a character succeeds at a DC 15 Swim check, he may increase his movement in a trackless swamp from  $\times 1/2$  to  $\times 3/4$ . The Swim check must be made each hour. This ability does not stack with the swamp ranger's increased overland movement ability.

If the Swim check fails, the character makes no progress in that hour, due to swimming down the wrong channel, or encountering an impassable obstacle.

### MORALE IN SWAMPS

The constant wetness, the threat of disease and the ever-present skin-crawling insects make the swamp a deeply unpleasant place to be. The spirits of anyone not used to the swamp inevitably flag in the face of such conditions. This has the following effects on NPCs hirelings and followers:

Characters must make a Wisdom check (DC 10) each day spent traveling in the swamp. This DC is modified as follows:

- +2 if the character is lost in the swamp.
- +2 if the character is being tormented by insects and parasites.
- +2 if the character is ill or has an infected wound.
- +1 if the character's clothing is damp due to slogging through the swamp.
- 2 per other person in the group.
- 2 per bard in the group.
- 2 per character with 5 or more ranks in Wilderness Lore.



If this check fails, the character suffers a  $-1$  morale penalty to all rolls made outside combat. Every successive time this check fails, the morale penalty increases by 1, to a maximum of  $-5$ . If the check is passed, the penalty resets to 0.

## SWAMP RANGER

The swamp is alive. From the creeper-choked treetops to the muddy depths, a rich web of life thrives amid the muck. For most swampfolk, this web is full of dangers and predators, and the swamp threatens to be a watery grave for them. Swamp rangers, on the other hand, fear little that lives in their domain. Some exist in harmony with this web of life. Others are simply the hardest bastards in the whole damn puddle of mud, and put anyone who crosses their path into a watery grave.

**Adventures:** Anyone who lives in the swamp for long picks up a few of the skills and tricks of the swamp ranger no matter what their other interests are. Those who focus on the way of the swamp ranger often become hunters or trappers. The fecund swamps produce many rare plants, herbs and strange creatures, and some rangers travel into the treacherous swamps to gather these natural riches for trade. Others dwell in the swamp precisely because it is inaccessible and private, and pursue abstruse interests in the shadow of the trees.

**Characteristics:** Communities are rare in the swamp. There are few spaces large enough for villages, let alone larger towns, so most people live alone or in small families. Swamp dwellers therefore tend to be rugged individualists and loners, and rangers are no exception. Most are surly and scornful of others, or quiet and quirky.

**Alignment:** Swamp rangers can be of any alignment, but many tend to be chaotic. Good rangers might defend the swamp from attackers, or keep watch for rampaging monsters that rise out of the muck. Neutral rangers might be fierce iconoclasts, traders, or herbalists. Evil swamp rangers often use their realm as a hiding place or marshalling ground for dark forces.



**Religion:** Religion in the swamplands is a thing of blood and heat. Faith takes second place to violent rituals in the mud and buzzing voices from the trees. The folk there have little time for abstract philosophies or faraway gods. Swamp rangers normally worship either nature spirits or else divinities who take a close interest in life, such as Saulein or Derek Tor.

**Background:** Most swamp rangers were born and bred in the muck, and are trained as rangers from an early age. Few people willingly move to the swamp from outside, but wanderers and exiles may have nowhere else to go.

**Races:** Humans and half-orcs who live in the swamp commonly become rangers. There is also a surprising number of feral halflings who live in swamps, and they make lethal ambushers and hunters. There are slightly more gnomish swamp rangers than elves, but both are exceedingly rare — and dwarven swamp rangers are unheard of.

**Classes:** Swamp rangers tend to be mistrustful of especially lawful or civilized characters like paladins, monks, and some clerics and wizards — such order is foreign to the swamp. They appreciate the canniness of rogues and bards, and tolerate fighters and barbarians who can keep their footing. Druids are not so much venerated as feared in the swamp.

## GAME RULE INFORMATION

Swamp rangers have the following game statistics.

**Abilities:** Strength and Dexterity are valued by the fiercely practical swamp rangers. Swamp rangers do not always use spells, so there is no Wisdom score requirement.

**Alignment:** Swamp rangers can be of any alignment, but tend towards chaos.

**Hit Dice:** d10.

### Class Skills

The swamp ranger's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha, exclusive skill), Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Intuit Direction (Wis), Knowledge (Nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Use Rope (Dex) and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

**Skill Points at 1st level:** (4 + Int modifier) × 4.

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:** 4 + Int modifier

## Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Swamp Ranger class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** A swamp ranger is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, all light and armor, and shields. In addition, he may select a single Exotic Weapon Proficiency of his choice.

**Track:** A swamp ranger gains Track as a bonus feat.

**Favored Enemy:** At 1st level, a swamp ranger may select a type of creature or organization as a favored enemy. Due to his extensive study of his foes and training in the proper techniques for combating them, the ranger gains a +1 to all checks made against that creature or organization. The +1 counts for both attack and damage rolls, even against constructs, undead and other enemies. The damage bonus counts for ranged weapons as well, but only against targets within 30 ft. At 4th level and every 5 levels thereafter, the ranger gains an additional +1 to his bonus, or selects another favored enemy. If another enemy is selected, the bonus applies only to that enemy. For example, a 15th level swamp ranger could have either a +3 vs. dragons, or a +1 vs. goblinoids, giants and beasts, or a +2 vs. fey and a +1 vs. vermin.

A swamp ranger's favored enemy types follow the same rules as the PHB, except that he need not be evil to choose his own type or race as a favored enemy. A halfling swamp ranger who learns to hunt halflings might be hunting thieves who hide in the swamp.

TABLE 5-3: SWAMP RANGER FAVORED ENEMIES

Type	Examples
Aberrations	Beholders
Animals	Snakes
Beasts	Stirges
Constructs	Golems
Dragons	Black Dragons
Elementals	Water elementals
Fey	Dryads
Giants	Hill Giants
Humanoid type	*
Magical Beasts	Basilisks
Oozes	Black pudding
Organizations	*
Outsider type	*
Plants	Shambling mounds
Shapechangers	Wererats
Undead	Zombies
Vermin	Spiders

\* Swamp rangers may not select "humanoid," "organization" or "outsider" as a favored enemy, but they may select a more narrowly defined type of humanoid (such as goblinoid or lizardmen), organization (druids of the Black Stump, bog grave cultists) or outsider (barghests, devils, etc). A swamp ranger may select his own race as a favored enemy, no matter what his alignment.

## MARSHES

**Swamp Lore:** At 1st level, the ranger gains a +2 circumstance bonus to Climb, Hide, Intuit Direction, Move Silently, Spot, Swim and Wilderness Lore checks made within the swamp. At 3rd level and every 5 levels thereafter, the swamp ranger gains more knowledge about the swamp and becomes more adept at surviving within it.

At 3rd level, the ranger learns to hide even the smallest traces of his passage. Anyone attempting to track the ranger or his companions through the swamp adds 5 to the DC.

At 8th level, the swamp ranger gains increased overland movement within the swamp. Trackless swamp now counts as road movement to him and his party, while road movement counts as highway.

At 13th level, the swamp ranger gains the Trackless Step ability within the swamp; the mud swallows his footsteps and he cannot be tracked.

At 18th level, the swamp ranger gains a +2 circumstance bonus to all Initiative checks while in the swamp.

**Ranger Option:** A swamp ranger can select one ranger option at 2nd level, another at 5th level, and every 3 levels thereafter (8th, 11th, 14th etc.). The options are stated below, and unless otherwise stated, the same option may be taken more than once.

*Option 1:* The swamp ranger chooses one feat from the list of feats below. He may take this option more than once, but a different feat must be selected each time. Feats gained by means of this ability can only be used as long as the ranger is in light or no armor.

The list of feats for the swamp ranger is: Alertness, Ambidexterity (applies to double weapons), Blind-fight, Combat Casting (only after choosing option 9, below), Combat Reflexes, Dodge (Mobility, Spring Attack), Endurance, Expertise, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Point Blank Shot (Far Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run), Quick Draw, Run, Two-Weapon Fighting (applies to double weapons), (Improved Two-Weapon Fighting (applies to double weapons)), Weapon Finesse\*, Weapon Focus\*.

Some of the bonus feats cannot be acquired until the ranger has gained one or more prerequisite feats; these are listed parenthetically after the prerequisite feat. Feats marked with a \* can be chosen more than once, but only for a different weapon each time.

*Option 2:* The swamp ranger suffers no penalties for fighting in mud or in water.

*Option 3:* The swamp ranger may increase his favored enemy score by 1.

*Option 4:* The swamp ranger may increase his natural armor class by 1.

*Option 5:* The swamp ranger doubles the amount of time he can hold his breath while swimming.

*Option 6:* The swamp ranger permanently gains a +2 bonus to all saving throws against poison and acid.

*Option 7:* The swamp ranger gains the ability to sneak attack as a rogue. He gains sneak attack +1d6, which can only be increased by taking this option again.

TABLE 5-4: THE SWAMP RANGER

Base Class Level	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	Swamp lore, favored enemy, track
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	Ranger option
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	Swamp lore 2
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	Favored enemy 2
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	Ranger option
6	+6/+1	+5	+2	+2	
7	+7/+2	+5	+2	+2	Bonus feat
8	+8/+3	+6	+2	+2	Swamp lore 3, ranger option
9	+9/+4	+6	+3	+3	Favored enemy 3
10	+10/+5	+7	+3	+3	
11	+11/+6/+1	+7	+3	+3	Ranger option
12	+12/+7/+2	+8	+4	+4	Bonus feat
13	+13/+8/+3	+8	+4	+4	Swamp lore 4
14	+14/+9/+4	+9	+4	+4	Ranger option, favored enemy 4
15	+15/+10/+5	+9	+5	+5	
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+5	+5	
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	+5	Bonus feat, ranger option
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+6	+6	Swamp lore 5
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+6	+6	Favored enemy 5
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+6	+6	Web of life

**Option 8:** The swamp ranger is lethal where there is concealment. If he is fighting in water, thick underbrush or fog that could grant concealment, he may slip in and out of sight of his opponents. He might sink into the water for a moment, only to rise up again and strike his opponents from behind. The swamp ranger may use Wilderness Lore (on land) or Swim (in water) instead of Tumble for the purposes of avoiding attacks of opportunity and moving through enemies. He gains a +2 circumstance bonus to all his attack rolls. Generally, this ability only applies when fighting in a swamp, though the DM may allow it to come into play in other similar circumstances.

**Option 9:** The swamp ranger gains spellcasting. He may cast 1st level spells, following the progression listed below, where X is the level at which this option is chosen. If he chooses this option again, he may cast 2nd level spells and so on, using the same progression. The swamp ranger must have a Wisdom score of at least 10 + the spell's level. Swamp ranger bonus spells are based on Wisdom and saving throws against these spells have a DC of 10 + spell level + Wisdom modifier.

A swamp ranger casts and prepares spells as a cleric does, though he cannot use spontaneous casting, unless he chooses the spontaneous casting option. A ranger's casting level is one-half his class level.

**TABLE 5-5: SWAMP RANGER SPELL PROGRESSION**

Level	Spells per Day
X	0
X+1	1
X+2	1
X+3	1
X+4	1
X+5	1
X+6	2
X+7	2
X+8	2
X+9	2
X+10	3

**Option 10:** The swamp ranger gains spontaneous casting, as long as he has already chosen option 9. The ranger follows the same rules as a cleric for spontaneous casting.

**Web of Life:** At 20th level, the swamp ranger enters into a mystic symbiosis with the swamp. He may sustain his own health at the cost of the life energy of the swamp. As a free action, he may transfer up to (swamp ranger level multiplied by his Wisdom modifier) hit points per day from the rest of the swamp life. These hit points are drained from swamp creatures. The ranger may choose to drain a particular swamp creature (in which case, the creature is allowed a Fortitude save, DC 20 + the ranger's Wisdom modifier), or simply tap the general life energy of the swamp. Only creatures making their home in the swamp or who were born there can be affected by this ability.

## FINDER OF THE LOST

In the swamps, many things are lost, but nothing is gone forever. A traveler might stray from the path and be sucked deep into the mire, his flesh devoured by grubs and his bones entombed in the deeps for an age of the world — but all that he was still resides within the swamp.

The strange order known as the finders of the lost delve deep into the secret places of fen and mist. They know that the endlessly renewing life of the swamp preserves all that is lost. Monsters, treasures, castles, kingdoms, dreams and stories — all have sunk into the mire, and wait there still for someone who knows where to look.

The finders welcome into their ranks all those driven by curiosity and compulsion. Some were once thieves grubbing for lost gold; others were fathers looking for lost children, or wizards seeking ancient lore, or druids questing for the memories of fallen trees. As long as a man looks for his future beneath bogwater and mud, he has a place among the finders.

**Hit Dice:** d8.

**TABLE 5-6: THE FINDER OF THE LOST**

Base Class	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Alertness
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Memory of the past
3	+2	+1	+1	+3	Scent
4	+3	+1	+1	+4	Haunted by the lost
5	+3	+1	+1	+4	Find the living truth
6	+4	+2	+2	+5	Memory of the past II
7	+5	+2	+2	+5	Find the hidden path
8	+6	+2	+2	+6	Wake the lost
9	+6	+3	+3	+6	Memory of the past III
10	+7	+3	+3	+7	Guerdon of the swamp



## REQUIREMENTS

To become a finder of the lost, a character must fulfill all the following requirements:

**Gather Information:** 4 ranks.

**Intuit Direction:** 4 ranks.

**Search:** 8 ranks.

**Wilderness Lore:** 8 ranks.

**Feats:** Endurance or Great Fortitude, Track.

**Special:** The finder of the lost must have either lost something precious to him within a swamp, or else nearly drowned within a swamp.

## CLASS SKILLS

The finder of the lost class skills (and the key ability for each) are Appraise (Int), Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge (geography) (Int), Knowledge (legends) (Int), Ride (Dex), Scry (Int), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Use Rope (Dex), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 6 + Int modifier.

## CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the finder of the lost prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** Finders of the lost gain no additional weapon or armor proficiencies.

**Alertness:** At 1st level, the finder of the lost gains the Alertness feat if he did not already possess it. He also gains a +2 bonus to all Intuit Direction and Wilderness Lore checks.

**Memory of the Past:** At 2nd level, the finder of the lost learns to delve into the secret memories of wood and stone. If he touches an object and passes a DC 15 Scry check (modifiers may be set by the DM), he magically perceives important events in the object's past. For example, if a dagger was used to murder a prince, the finder of the lost would see the murder from the perspective of the dagger. The images perceived are confused and hazy, as if seen through silty water. The finder of the lost can only see images from up to two months per level in the past (or two years per level if the object was drawn out of a swamp.)

At 6th level, the finder can see images from up to two years ago per level, or two decades per level if the object was drawn out of the swamp. At 9th level, the limit increases again to two decades per level, or two centuries if the item was drawn out of the swamp.

**Scent:** At 3rd level, the finder of the lost gains the Scent feat if he did not already possess it.

**Haunted by the Lost:** At 4th level, the finder can call up a spirit of one who died while lost. He may call a shadow as a full-round action. The shadow is not under his command, but will perform one service for the finder, and will attack the finder's enemies if he so wishes. All finders can call at least one shadow per day — however, if the finder was responsible for another person dying while

FLITKNIFE

lost, the finder may call up that person's shadow as well. A finder cannot be haunted by more shadow than his level (a fourth level finder may be haunted by up to four shadow, for example). All the shadows may be called with a single action at once, or singularly. A shadow departs after carrying out one service for the finder.

**Find the Living Truth:** At 5th level, the finder of the lost learns to merge his mind with the living consciousness of the swamp. He may cast *commune with nature* at will while in the swamp, or up to three times per day outside the swamp.

**Find The Hidden Path:** At 7th level, the finder of the lost learns the hidden ways. He may select a specific geographic area, and cast *tree stride* and *find the path* once per day within that area, at his finder class level. In addition, he base speed while within his chosen area increases by 5 ft.

**Wake the Lost:** At 8th level, the finder of the lost can raise lost objects out of the mire. As long as he has a portion of an object, he can cause that object to rise out of the mud where it was lost. Decayed or destroyed objects or structures will partially reform — for example, if a character uses *Wake the Lost* on a piece of stone from a ruined tower, the tower will rebuild itself out of the swamp, but will still be covered with filth and weeds.

If *Wake the Lost* is used on a piece of a corpse, the spirit of the dead character returns as a shadow. Those summoned in this manner are not under the control of the finder, but will listen to him and consider what he has to say.

This ability may only be used once per day, and only in the finder's chosen geographical area.

**Guerdon of the Swamp:** At 10th level, the character finds all that has been lost. He may cast *sCRY* up to nine times per day on a pool of swamp water. Any character submerged in the scrying pool is *teleported without error* to the location of the scrying sensor. The finder of the lost may also use the pool to look back in time, as per his memory of the past ability. Characters who enter a pool which is showing images of the past may be sent back in time, or erased from history, depending on the whim of the DM.

Swarms of insects choke the heavy air. A traveler slogs through the mud, slipping over slick rocks and disintegrating clods of earth. The trees here are like ragged undead fingers, clutching at his cloak. For a moment, he thinks he glimpsed a shadow moving through the marsh, but he dismisses it as a foolish fancy brought on by tired eyes. He laughs at himself.

The swarms of insects scatter for a moment, as a blur of movement in the swamp below alarms them. They circle uncertainly, then alight to feed and spawn on the warm corpse of the traveler. The flitknife wipes his blade and melts back into the darkness.

Flitknives are warriors to rely on speed and accuracy instead of strength and fortitude. In the swamp, a slow fighter is a dead one. Flitknives are constantly moving, dancing through the melee and using their momentum to cut bloody swathes through opponents.

**Hit Dice:** d6.

REQUIREMENTS

To become a flitknife, a character must fulfill all the following requirements:

**Base Attack Bonus:** +6.

**Balance:** 6 ranks

**Tumble:** 6 ranks

**Feats:** Run, Spring Attack

CLASS SKILLS

The flitknife class skills (and the key ability for each) are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the flitknife prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** Flitknives gain simple and martial weapon proficiencies. While flitknives commonly use blades, especially poisoned daggers, they

TABLE 5-7: THE FLITKNIFE

Base Class Level	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+0	+2	+0	The cut is deep
2	+2	+1	+3	+1	Sneak attack +1d6
3	+3	+1	+3	+1	Fast movement
4	+4	+1	+4	+1	The mist of knives, sneak attack +1d6
5	+5	+2	+4	+2	Death is all around, fast movement

may use any weapons. They gain no additional armor proficiencies.

**Note:** None of the flitknives' class abilities will not work if the flitknife is wearing medium or heavy armor.

**The Cut Is Deep:** At 1st level, the flitknife masters a technique of using his own speed to cut deeper. If he charges, he may increase the damage inflicted by each attack by one point for every 5ft. moved before making the attack.

**Sneak Attack:** At 2nd and 4th level, the flitknife gains a sneak attack of +1d6. This sneak attack stacks with any other sneak attacks from other sources.

**Fast Movement:** At 3rd and 5th level, the flitknife's movement increases by 10 ft. when wearing no armor, light armor or medium armor, and not carrying a heavy load. This increased movement stacks with any other Fast Movement from other sources.

**The Mist of Knives:** At 4th level, the flitknife manages to channel his momentum into even more damaging strikes. He may now charge without having to move in a straight line. He must still move at least 10 ft. when charging. However, as long as he does not enter the same space more than twice during a single move, he may turn and change direction while charging.

**Death is All Around:** At 5th level, the surrounding terrain becomes the flitknife's ally. He may bounce off walls, trees or even other creatures to build up momentum. As part of a charge, he may make a Jump or Tumble check as he moves over or off each obstacle. The first check has a DC of 15; each subsequent check increases the DC by 5. If any check fails, the flitknife falls prone and loses his attack. For each successful check, the flitknife gains a +1 circumstance bonus to his attack and damage rolls this round.

## SKIFF HUNTER

There are few roads in the swamp, and few wide rivers. Flyers are blocked by the knotted branches of the trees. For most travelers, the only option is a slow slog through the marshes. Paths run into shallow streams that become weed-choked dead ends. The advice given to most travelers considering a journey through the swamp is "don't — or don't expect to survive."

The best advice, though, is to travel with a skiff hunter.

These boatmen fearlessly pilot their agile craft through the darkest reaches of the swamp. They know the quickest routes through the marshes, and are the one reliable link between isolated swamp communities and the outside world.

**Hit Dice:** d6.

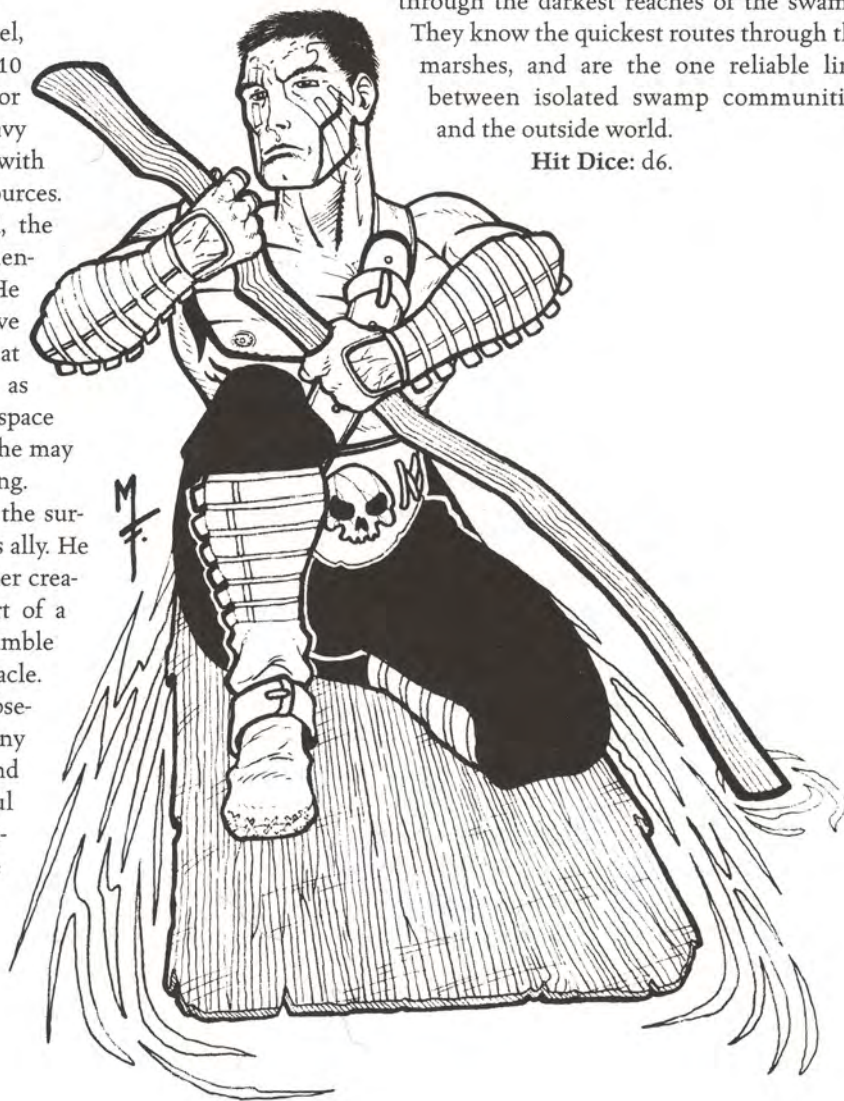


TABLE 5-8: THE SKIFF HUNTER

Base Class Level	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	Like the back of my hand, weapon focus
2	+2	+3	+3	+1	The taste of wood
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	Know the river, mounted combat
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	Hidden rapids
5	+5	+4	+4	+2	Surf the dragon's back, ride-by attack

## REQUIREMENTS

To become a skiff hunter, a character must fulfill all the following requirements:

**Balance:** 4 ranks

**Intuit Direction:** 4 ranks

**Profession (sailor):** 6 ranks

**Wilderness Lore:** 6 ranks

**Feat:** Alertness

**Special:** The skiff hunter must own a small boat, such as a skiff, raft, flat-bottomed boat or currach.

## CLASS SKILLS

The skiff hunter class skills (and the key ability for each) are Appraise (Int), Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Innuendo (Wis), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Use Rope (Dex), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 4 + Int modifier.

## CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the skiff hunter prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** The skiff hunter has proficiency with simple weapons and light armor proficiencies.

**Like The Back Of My Hand:** At 1st level, the skiff hunter learns “the knowledge,” the lore of the secret waterways and channels in the swamp. He gains a +2 insight bonus into all Intuit Direction, Wilderness Lore and other piloting-related skills.

**Weapon Focus (pole):** At 1st level, the hunter gains the Weapon Focus feat with his barge pole or oar for free.

**The Taste of Wood:** At 2nd level, the skiff hunter can use his boat as a shield, fighting platform, and weapon. He can drive the prow of his vessel into the skull of one enemy while striking the second with his barge pole.

While fighting from his vessel in any combat round, the hunter can choose to gain a +2 bonus to his armor class, a +2 bonus to all his attacks, or inflict 1d6 bludgeoning damage on any opponent adjacent to his boat.

**Know The River:** At 3rd level, the hunter’s sensitivity to vibrations and ripples in the water allows him to use the tremorsense ability while in the water (see page XX).

**Mounted Combat:** At 3rd level, the hunter gains the Mounted Combat feat for free, which he may use to transfer attacks made on his vessel to him.

**Hidden Rapids:** At 4th level, the skiff hunter can glean every bit of added speed out of every current and breeze in the swamp. The speed of his vessel is increased by 50%.

**Surf the Dragon’s Back:** At 5th level, the skiff hunter’s mastery of his vessel allows him to ride the magical energy of transportation spells. The hunter, his vessel, and all cargo and passengers count as a single person for effects such as *teleport* or *wind walk*.

**Ride-by Attack:** At 5th level, the skiff hunter gains the Ride-by Attack feat for free.

## SYMBIOTIC CHAMPION

Nature is capricious and cunning. The druids know that in the endless green web of life there is an emergent intelligence. Some call it a goddess, or the spirit of the land. The druids venerate it, and rangers serve it. In civilized lands, it is tame, manifesting in ordered hedgerows and fertile fields; in the forests, it forms a great living cathedral of mighty trees and arcing branches... but in the swamps, this invisible force of nature broods and rots. Few druids venerate this dark aspect of web of life — and those who serve it do not always do so willingly.

TABLE 5–9: THE SYMBIOTIC CHAMPION

Base Class	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	The calling
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	Symbiosis 1
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	Wounds of the world
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	Fast Healing
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	Living weapon 1
6	+6	+5	+2	+2	Symbiosis 2
7	+7	+5	+2	+2	Champion of the beasts
8	+8	+6	+2	+2	Symbiosis 3
9	+9	+6	+3	+3	Living weapon 2
10	+10	+7	+3	+3	Symbiosis 4





The symbiotic champion is created by the swamp. Some champions are created to defend the land against despoilers, others arise when the swamp is hungry, and desires bloodshed. A character may willingly become a symbiotic champion by entering the swamp and submitting to the dark urges of twisted nature, but other champions are dragged into the role. A dusting of pollen on a character's arm blossoms into a fungal infection, which spreads and spreads until all that remains is the cruel greenness.

**Hit Dice:** d10.

## REQUIREMENTS

To become a symbiotic champion, a character must fulfill all the following requirements:

**Alignment:** Any non-lawful

**Base Attack Bonus:** +5 or higher

**Base Fortitude Save:** +6 or higher

**Heal:** 4 ranks

**Wilderness Lore:** 8 ranks

**Feats:** Endurance, Great Fortitude, Iron Will

**Special:** Constitution must be higher than 13.

## CLASS SKILLS

The symbiotic champion class skills (and the key ability for each) are Animal Empathy (Cha), Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Disguise (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 2 + Int modifier.

## CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the symbiotic champion prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** Symbiotic champions are proficient in all simple and martial weapons. They also gain natural armor as they progress in level.

**The Calling:** At 1st level, the symbiotic champion becomes aware of his growing connection to nature. He gains a +2 to all Animal Empathy, Handle Animal, and Wilderness Lore checks. He gains a +1 natural armor bonus.

**Symbiosis 1:** At 2nd level, the symbiotic champion enters into a state of harmony with the germs and microflora in his body. He becomes immune to all diseases, and gains a +2 Inherent bonus to all Fortitude checks. He also gains the Toughness feat.

As the symbiotic champion becomes closer to nature, he become further from humanity. Use his Symbiosis level as a penalty to all Charisma skills and checks when dealing with people (not animals).

**Wounds of the World:** At 3rd level, the champion attunes to the injuries and indignities suffered by life. He can *detect undead* at will, and may also receive visions of enemies engaged in despoiling nature. The constant knowledge of the agony suffered by nature causes him to rage (as a barbarian) once per day. This rage ability is in addition to rages gained from other sources.

At this level, the champion's bond to nature is permanent. He has become an extension of the section of swamp or woodland that created him. If the character fails to protect the swamp, or fails to carry out quests assigned to him by nature, he will sicken and wither.

**Fast Healing:** At 4th level, the symbiotic champion begins to bond with the plant life around him. He gains the Plant type (but retains other creature types). He acquires the vitality of plants, and now regenerates 1 hit point per round. His skin becomes more like bark, and small tendrils and shoots of ivy sprout in places where hair normally grows. He gains a +1 natural armor bonus.

**Living Weapon 1:** The symbiotic champion is a weapon forged by the wilds. At 5th level, he enters into a symbiotic relationship with his own weapons. His three most commonly used weapons bond with his flesh, and become a part of his body. The weapons gain a +1 enhancement bonus, and he may absorb or sprout them from his hands as a free action. He still counts as armed when attacking, but spells and effects that target weapons no longer affect his symbiotic equipment. Spells and effects that affect natural weapons now affect the symbiotic equipment. He may not use any weapons other than his symbiotic weapons.

If the character does not use weapons, he grows claws that inflict an additional 2d4 damage when he strikes with an unarmed attack.

At this level, the symbiotic champion must slay at least one creature with a Challenge Rating equal to his level per month as a sacrifice to nature. If he fails to do this, he loses all symbiotic champion abilities until he atones in some fashion.

**Symbiosis 2:** At 6th level, the symbiotic champion can tap the endless forms of nature. If he touches an animal or beast, he may choose to copy one of the creature's attributes, attacks, special abilities, movement rates, feats or natural armor class bonus. For example, if the champion touched a lion, he could choose to gain the lion's Strength,

or claw attack, or 40ft. movement rate, or Pounce feat, or any other quality possessed by the animal. The champion's body warps to reflect the acquired ability — if he copies a lion's bite attack, his teeth grow and his face becomes more leonine. The champion may copy only one quality at a time. The champion now counts as an Animal in addition to a Plant and his initial creature type.

**Champion of the Beasts:** At 7th level, the symbiotic champion becomes a leader of the forces of nature. He gains the Leadership feat, and acquires a retinue of animal servants. He gains a +1 natural armor bonus.

**Symbiosis 3:** At 8th level, the champion can also copy the abilities of Oozes and Vermin. He counts as both types as well as any previous types.

**Living Weapon 2:** At 9th level, the champion's symbiotic weapons become awakened with aspects of his consciousness. They each gain a single primary ability, and mental abilities scores of Intelligence 3d6, Wisdom 2d6+5, and Charisma 2d6+5. The weapons will reflect parts of the character's personality, but will be more loyal to nature than the character.

If the character has claws instead of weapons, his claws gain an additional +2d4 damage.

**Symbiosis 4:** At 10th level, the champion's apotheosis is complete. He may dissolve his body at will. He may reform it anywhere one round later where nature rules unchallenged. This functions as a *transport via plants* spell, but does not require the destination to be a plant' it just has to be a living thing. As long as the champion remains within the swamp that created him, he is unaging, an eternal weapon for nature.

## SWAMP FEATS

Creatures that survive for any amount of time in the swamp learn a wide range of tricks and talents needed to flourish in that hostile environment. The feats detailed here are meant for characters and NPCs who live in the swamp or spend much of their time there.

### ANIMAL WRESTLER [GENERAL, FIGHTER]

You are skilled at wrestling with non-humanoid opponents.

**Benefit:** Your grapple attacks do not provoke attacks of opportunity when attacking non-humanoids.

**Normal:** Grapple attacks provoke attacks of opportunity.

## BUSY HANDS [GENERAL]

You are practiced at making simple items while traveling or performing other tasks.

**Benefit:** You may use certain Craft skills (such as bow-making or basketweaving) while traveling, studying, keeping watch, etc. You cannot use Craft skills that involve forging or any sort of specialized equipment (such as autopsy or glassblowing).

**Normal:** Characters may sometimes use certain craft skills while engaged in other work, but suffer -5 to -10 penalties to their skill checks.

## CHANGE KINGDOM [METAMAGIC]

You can alter what sort of entity is affected by certain spells.

**Benefit:** The four kingdoms are animal, vegetable, mineral, and elemental. By means of this feat, you can make a spell that affects an entity from one kingdom affect an entity from another. Any spell that targets an Animal, Plant, stone or mud, or an Elemental can be made to target one of the other types as well.

A changed kingdom spell uses up a spell slot two levels higher than the spell's actual level.

## EXOTIC WEAPON PROFICIENCY (BLOWPIPE) [GENERAL, FIGHTER]

You are trained in the use of the blowpipe weapon.

**Benefit:** You can use a blowpipe. Blowpipes are narrow, handheld tubes commonly used in jungles and swamps, because they do not require much room to fire. Other missile weapons often get tangled in the thick vegetation. Many blowpipe needles are tipped with poison.

**Normal:** A character who uses a blowpipe without being proficient with it suffers a -4 penalty on attack rolls.

## FLIGHT OF STARTLED BIRDS [GENERAL]

Your familiarity with the animals of an area alerts you to dangers and hidden attackers.

**Prerequisites:** 4+ ranks in Spot skill, 4+ ranks in Wilderness Lore.

**Benefit:** By watching the movements of animals and insects, you gain greater insight into your surroundings. A hidden enemy might accidentally alarm birds in the trees, or an invisible stalker might be given away by insects scurrying away. You can pick up on these signs. As long as there are animals nearby, you gain a +4 bonus on all Spot and Search checks when looking for hidden creatures or objects not commonly encountered in your current terrain.

**Special:** You must choose a terrain type when you take this feat, and you may only use the feat in the chosen terrain. You may take this feat multiple times, choosing a different terrain type each time.

## FLOTSAM [GENERAL]

You can use cover and deception while swimming, making enemies think you're just a piece of flotsam.

**Benefit:** You gain a +3 circumstance bonus to your Move Silently and Hide checks made while swimming.

## GHOST OF THE MISTS [GENERAL]

You can use fog to cover your retreats.

**Prerequisites:** Dex 15+, 6+ ranks in Hide skill, Dodge, Mobility, Shadow in the Mists.

**Benefit:** You may only use this ability immediately after moving from no or partial concealment to full concealment in mists or fog. You may double your movement speed and jumping distances.

## GNAT STRIKE [GENERAL, FIGHTER]

Your accuracy with the blowpipe is such that your targets do not know they are being wounded.

**Prerequisite:** Exotic Weapon Proficiency (blowpipe).

**Benefit:** When firing a blowpipe at a target who is unaware of your presence, you may choose to have your blowpipe inflict no damage to your target's hit points — your dart barely pierces the skin, and feels like the stinging of an insect. Your target must make a DC 15 Wisdom check to even realize he has been attacked. Although your darts do no damage, you may still use the blowpipe to deliver poison. Targets suffer a -2 penalty to all Fortitude saves against poison delivered with the Gnat Strike feat, as they do not brace their bodies against the toxin.

## GOOD HEALTH [GENERAL]

You rarely if ever get sick.

**Benefit:** You gain a +4 bonus to all Fortitude saving throws against diseases and infection.

## MORE THAT HE CAN CHEW [GENERAL, FIGHTER]

You're quick enough to drive a stick or weapon into the mouth of a creature trying to bite you.

**Prerequisites:** Dex 13+, Combat Reflexes.

**Benefit:** If a creature makes a bite attack on you, and that creature has the swallow whole ability or can inflict more than 2d6 damage with a bite, you may immediately jam an item in your hand into the creature's mouth. The creature must break the item to continue with the bite attack, and may not make another bite attack until the item is broken. If the item shoved into the creature's

Weapon	Cost	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Blowpipe	2sp	1	x2	20 ft.	1lb	Piercing

mouth is an edged weapon, the creature takes damage when the weapon breaks. The damage suffered by the creature is equal to the weapon's normal damage plus the creature's strength modifier.

## PIT FIGHTER'S INTRODUCTION [GENERAL]

You can dodge at exactly the right moment to make attacking enemies hit each other.

**Prerequisites:** Dex 13+, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility.

**Benefit:** If you are flanked, and one of the enemies flanking you misses a melee attack on you, you may immediately redirect the missed attack to the enemy on the far side of you. The attacker must retake the missed attack, which is now targeted on the second enemy. You may only use this ability once per round. Using this feat counts as a standard action. You may hold your action to use this feat against an opponent as normal.

## READY WITH THE KNIFE [GENERAL]

When surprised, your instinctive reaction is to strike back.

**Prerequisites:** Alertness, ability to sneak attack.

**Benefit:** If you are caught flatfooted or surprised, you may immediately declare that you are making a Ready with the Knife attack on the creature who surprised you. You must declare you are making this attack even before you know who or what is attacking. This attack is a normal attack at a -4 penalty, although characters with sneak attack can apply the damage to this attack. The attack happens at your initiative in the surprise round.

Note that this attack happens before you are aware of the identity of your attackers, and you may therefore accidentally attack friends who appear suddenly.

## SHADOW IN THE MISTS [GENERAL]

You are especially adept at using mist and fog for concealment.

**Prerequisite:** 4+ ranks in Hide skill.

**Benefit:** You may treat your concealment as being one category higher (one-quarter concealment becomes one-half, one-half becomes three-quarters) if you are concealed by fog. You gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Hide and Move Silently checks while in fog.

## SNAKE HANDLER [GENERAL]

You are experienced at dealing with small, poisonous creatures.

**Prerequisite:** Dex 13+, 4+ ranks in Handle Animal skill.

**Benefit:** You gain a +2 insight bonus to your armor class when dealing with Tiny creatures. You may throw such creatures, like scorpions or small snakes, at your opponents as if the creatures were shuriken. The creatures will automatically make a bite attack on the target if they hit, and are considered to be charging. Only mundane varieties of these vermin may be used in this manner.

## SOLID FOOTING [GENERAL]

You are astonishingly surefooted.

**Prerequisites:** Dex 13+, Dodge.

**Benefit:** If you fail a Balance check, you may immediately make a second Balance check at the same DC plus 5. If you succeed at this second check, you regain your stable footing, but may only take a partial action as your next action.

**Normal:** Characters who fail a Balance check fall.

## STREAKED WITH MUD [GENERAL]

By coating yourself with mud and leaves, you camouflage yourself and make it harder to see you in the swamp.

**Prerequisite:** 4+ ranks in Hide ranks.

**Benefit:** You gain a +4 circumstance bonus to Hide checks while in the swamp. You may also apply the mud to others, giving them a +2 circumstance bonus to Hide checks made in the swamp.

## UNAPPETIZING [GENERAL]

Insects consider you distasteful and avoid you whenever possible.

**Benefit:** The character gains a +3 circumstance bonus to all saves or checks to avoid attacks from leeches, mosquitoes, and other blood-sucking vermin. Creatures attacking out of hunger will choose other targets if possible. The character will essentially always be eaten last if any alternatives are available.

**Special:** If two characters in a party are Unappetizing, the one with the lower Constitution is considered the most unappetizing.

## WATER WALKER [GENERAL]

Your steps are so fast, so light and so precise you can almost walk on water.

**Prerequisites:** Dex 13+, Dodge, Mobility, Run, Solid Footing.

**Benefit:** As long as you are making a double move or run, you may move freely over surfaces such as quicksand or snow that would normally hinder your steps. By making a Balance check at a DC equal to one-fifth of your character's weight in pounds, you may move over surfaces that would never normally support you, such as water, thin branches, or spiderwebs.

**WILLOWSHIELD [GENERAL]**

By cunningly dodging at the right time, you can make opponents tangle their weapons in swamp creepers, drive their blades into tree-trunks, slip in the mud or otherwise trap their weapons in nearby vegetation.

**Prerequisites:** Dex 13+, Dodge.

**Benefit:** If you are in thick undergrowth or adjacent to a tree or other plant, and an opponent attacking you misses with an armed attack, he must make a Reflex save (DC of 15 + your Dexterity modifier) or drop his weapon.

**SWAMP SPELLS**

Necromancers and other spellcasters of ill repute frequently make swamps their homes, as the aura of decay and death found there is beneficial for their magic. Other spellcasters, knowing well the swamp's dangers, have developed incantations to make travel through it easier.

**Animate Liquid**

Transmutation

**Level:** Cleric 3, Sor/Wiz 4

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./level)

**Target:** 1 gallon/level

**Duration:** Concentration

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** No

When cast, *animate water* gives shape to a volume of water or other liquid, which heaves itself out of its container and turns into a vaguely humanoid shape. The magical field holding the liquid in place is easily pierced, and any blow will pass through it, splattering the water inside. However, as long as the spell is maintained, the liquid figure will reform almost instantly. The creature cannot attack with a weapon, but it can grapple, using the caster's base attack bonus and ability scores. If it pins an opponent, it can flow over him and drown him.

The caster can use Craft (sculpture) to alter the shape of the animation, and can pour dyes and other colored liquids in to alter its hue. The animation can therefore be made to look like almost anything. It has a Disguise skill equal to the total of its caster's Disguise and Craft (sculpture).

*Material component:* A piece of clay or tree gum.

**Forced Shape**

Transmutation

**Level:** Drd 3

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** Creature touched

**Duration:** 24 hours

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

As *polymorph other*, but this spell uses the druid's own *wild shape* ability to power the transformation. In essence, the druid forces a *wild shape* upon the target. Casting the spell uses up one of the druid's *wild shape* uses for the day, and the druid can only turn the target into a shape that the druid could assume.

**Godmist**

Abjuration

**Level:** Clr 9

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 24 hours

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./level)

**Target:** One swamp (up to 10 miles square/level)

**Duration:** One year/level

**Saving Throw:** Will Special (see below)

**Spell Resistance:** No

This tremendously potent spell enhances the obscuring effect of the mists in a swamp, the divination-clouding effects of plant life, and the shadows cast on the material plane by the nature-spirits and dark divine forces of the bayou. In short, it turns a swamp into a divine "blind spot." Deities cannot perceive anything within the *godmist's* area of effect. Spells such as *commune* or *contact outer plane* are unlikely to provide any information about the swamp (unless the entity contacted has a mortal informant in the swamp, the entity will know nothing about current events in the swamp). Any spellcasters trying to prepare divine spells within the swamp must make a saving throw against the *godmist*. If the spellcaster fails, he is unable to prepare divine spells that day. Characters trying to use abilities that require a direct invocation of divine power must also make a saving throw against the *godmist*.

The caster of the *godmist* may choose a single deity who will not be affected by the spell. That deity can see what is happening in the swamp, and followers of that deity receive divine spells as normal. Powerful evil clerics use this spell to create regions that are unassailable by holy warriors. Good clerics can use the *godmist* to create a hidden refuge for good.

*Material Component:* The heart of a Solar or Balor.

## Lifejump

Necromancy

**Level:** Drd 5

**Components:** V

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 1 mile/level

**Target:** You

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Will avoids

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

Casting this variation on *reincarnate* instantly kills the caster. His soul is not destroyed, but instead leaps into the web of life that connects all things, and moves from there into a random animal within range. If an animal passes its saving throw, the spell tries another lifeform. Saving throws should only be made for important or especially powerful creatures. In usual circumstances, just use the table in the *reincarnate* spell, and re-roll if the result is not an animal or beast. The spell normally begins with the nearest creature. The druid's soul will merge with the animal's spirit, as if he had been reincarnated into that form. The druid's intellect and other abilities remain unchanged, as per the *reincarnate* spell.

Druids use this spell to save themselves in the face of overwhelming danger.

## Lighten

Transmutation

**Level:** Sor/Wiz 1

**Components:** V, S M

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./level)

**Target:** One creature or object of up to 10 cu. ft./caster level

**Duration:** 10 minutes/level

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates (object)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This variation on *reduce* does not affect the size of the target, but does decrease the target's weight. The target's weight is reduced by an amount that varies with the level of the caster.

Caster Level	Weight Reduction
1	-30% (x 0.7)
2	-50% (x 0.5)
3	-60% (x 0.4)
4	-80% (x 0.2)
5+	-90% (x 0.1)

All equipment worn or carried by a creature is reduced by the spell. The caster can choose to merely decrease the

weight of a creature's equipment and leave the creature's own weight unchanged. Magical properties are not decreased or affected by this spell. The damage inflicted by bludgeoning weapons is reduced by a number of points equal to one-twentieth of the weight reduction (rounded down). For example, if a weapon's weight has been reduced by 80%, its damage is reduced by 4 points.

Swamp wizards use *lighten* to cross over ground that would otherwise suck them down.

Multiple magical effects that reduce weight do not stack.

*Material Component:* A soap bubble.

## Solidify Mist

Transmutation

**Level:** Sor/Wiz 3

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** One mist cloud (see text)

**Duration:** 5 rounds/level

**Saving Throw:** Reflex avoids

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

By means of this spell, the caster imbues natural mist or fog with strength and form. The mist continues to float, but is now solid. The caster can touch a 5 ft. cubic area of mist in a round. The solidified mist has the same material strength as wood. Solidified fog can be used to create the following effects:

- *Fog Bonds:* By solidifying the fog wreathing around a creature, the caster traps that creature in a web of mist. The caster must make a successful touch attack to trap the creature; if trapped, the creature must spend a round and make a DC15 Strength or DC10 Escape Artist check to escape.
- *Fog Walk:* The caster solidifies the fog as he moves, creating a floating path through the mist. The caster can move at 5 ft. per round, but can move vertically as well as horizontally. Other people can also travel on this path, but must make a DC15 Balance check to avoid falling in any round where they move more than a Cautious Step.
- *Fog Wall:* The caster solidifies a whole fog bank, creating a wall. He may create a 5 ft. x 5 ft. section of wall per round.
- *Fog Shield:* The caster touches the fog around him, creating several floating solid shields. Each round spend

fortifying a 5 ft. square area increases the amount of cover available in that area by one step — i.e. in the first round, the cover moves from one to one-quarter, the next from one-quarter to one-half, etc.

When the spell ends, the solidified fog instantly melts back to insubstantiality.

**Spelleech**

Transmutation  
**Level:** Drd 3  
**Components:** V, S, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 action  
**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5ft/level)  
**Target:** 1d4 leeches/level  
**Duration:** 2 hours/level  
**Saving Throw:** Will negates  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes

Only normal leeches can be the targets of this spell, which transforms them into spelleeches. Instead of blood, the creatures now suck magical energy. The leeches will still attach themselves to passing warm-blooded creatures and attempt to drain sustenance from them, but while the spell lasts, the spelleeches can only feed on magic.

If a spelleech attaches to a character with spells prepared or spell slots unused, the leech will begin to drain spells from the character. A single leech will drain a single 0-level or 1st level spell per hour. Multiple leeches can combine to drain higher-level spells — for example, four leeches can drain one 4th level spell, two 2nd level spells, one 3rd and 1st, or any combination adding up to four (0-level spells count as 1st level for spelleeches). Higher level spells are more succulent and pleasing to the leeches, so the leeches will drain the highest level spell they can first.

Each hour, the victim of the leeches is allowed a Will save (DC 15) to avoid losing spells that hour. The victim will usually be unaware that the leeches are draining him, and a character will only discover his spell energy has been drained when he attempts to cast a spell.

*Material Component:* Leeches and the torn-up remains of an unused spell scroll.



**Time Track**

Divination  
**Level:** Drd 1, Rng 1, Sor/Wiz 1  
**Components:** V, S  
**Casting Time:** 1 action  
**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5ft/level)  
**Target:** One footprint  
**Duration:** Instantaneous  
**Saving Throw:** None  
**Spell Resistance:** No

The spell must be cast on a footprint that is at least half an inch deep. The spell causes water to well up from the bottom of the footprint. The water carries material signifying the most important action recently taken by the creature who made the footprint. For example, if the creature had recently been involved in a fight, blood might swirl through the water. If the creature had crossed an ocean, the water might smell of salt, and carry tiny seashells. If the creature found a great treasure, a single golden coin might appear in the water.

*Time track* will recall the most significant event in the life of the creature that happened within the last 6 hours per level of the caster. The spell is notoriously unreliable and cryptic, and the clues that well up with the water are often very hard to interpret.

## SWAMP MONSTERS

A harsh environment breeds tough, vicious animals. The creatures that survive in the swamp flourish because no matter how dangerous the swamp is, they are much deadlier.

**Wake the Filth**

Necromancy

**Spell Level:** Sor/Wiz 4

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Personal

**Effect:** 30ft Aura emanating from the caster

**Duration:** 1 round/level

**Saving Throw:** Partial (see below)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

*Wake the filth* sends a wave of negative energy flooding through the area, infusing all the little bits of discarded dead matter with undeath. Every dead leaf, rotted log, insect carapace and speck of dead skin rises up with unnatural life. The spell's effect varies depending on the amount of dead matter in the area. It will have a very limited effect within very sterile areas, such as a well-scrubbed and maintained temple. Its effects will be greater in areas already heavy with filth and death, like slums, sewers, or swamps.

The spell only affects dead organic matter that has not been crafted. A fallen log might be affected, but not a chair made from a fallen log.

The following effects happen within the spell's area of effect under average conditions:

- The air is filled with hundreds of dead insects, blown dead leaves, and other scraps. This causes a  $-2$  circumstance penalty on all skill checks and attack rolls. This also makes it more difficult to cast spells — a concentration check is required, as per the normal rules for casting spells under difficult circumstances.
- Any Tiny corpses are animated, and attack any living creatures other than the caster. These insects are unlikely to be of any real danger individually, but can be lethal as a horde or to incapacitated or unconscious victims.
- Bits of dead skin, hair and scar tissue detach and squirm and crawl and skitter and writhe underneath the clothing of any creatures within the area of effect. A Will save is required to avoid being nauseated for 1d4 rounds. The nausea ends immediately if the creature moves outside the area of effect.

*Material Component:* A vial of pure water.





**BOG ZOMBIE**

Medium-Size Undead  
**Hit Dice:** 2d12 +3 (16 hp)  
**Initiative:** +0  
**Speed:** 30 ft.  
**AC:** 12 (+2 natural)  
**Attacks:** Slam +2 melee  
**Damage:** 1d6+1  
**Face/Reach:** 5 ft. × 5 ft./5 ft.  
**Special Qualities:** Undead, partial actions only  
**Saves:** Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +3  
**Abilities:** Str 13, Dex 10, Con —, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 3  
**Feats:** Toughness

**Climate/Terrain:** Swamps  
**Organization:** Gang (2–5) or squad (6–10) or mob (11–20)  
**Challenge Rating:** 1  
**Treasure:** Standard  
**Alignment:** Varies  
**Advancement:** By character class

The swamp preserves. Long-dead corpses have been dug out of the bog with still-supple limbs and unrotted flesh. Unlike more common zombies, bog zombies created from such preserved corpses retain much of their dexterity and skills. Bog zombies even have enough intellect to learn a limited amount of new information. Necromancers value mire-preserved corpses, and often use them as overseers and assassins.

Sometimes, bodies can be so well-preserved that when they are unearthed, the departed spirit is confused, and returns to its mortal shell. Such corpses arise as semi-intelligent, free-willed undead, staggering in search of the remnants of their mortal lives. These zombies often band together into packs, and roam the swamps that sustained them. More than a few lost travelers have been rescued from certain death by the uncertain dead. Other freewilled bog zombies pitifully attempt to recreate their former lives. Ramshackle villages and castles made of mud and fallen branches, inhabited only by the undead, dot the lands haunted by bog zombies.

**Combat**

Animated bog zombies lumber mindlessly forward into battle. Free bog zombies are capable of using ambushes and other complex tactics. Bog zombies use their undead state to their advantage — lacking breath, for example, zombies often submerge themselves and hide underwater.

**FETID BOAR**

Large Beast  
**Hit Dice:** 9d8 + 54 (118 hp)  
**Initiative:** –1 (Dex)  
**Speed:** 40 ft., swim 30 ft.  
**AC:** 15 (–1 Dex, –1 size, +7 natural)  
**Attacks:** Gore +14 melee  
**Damage:** Gore 2d8d+8  
**Face/Reach:** 5ft. × 10 ft./5 ft.  
**Special Attacks:** Disease, Ferocity, Tidal Surge  
**Special Qualities:** Scent  
**Saves:** Fort +13, Ref +5, Will +4  
**Abilities:** Str 26, Dex 7, Con 24, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6  
**Feats:** Power Attack, Improved Bull Rush

**Climate/Terrain:** Swamps  
**Organization:** Solitary  
**Challenge Rating:** 5  
**Treasure:** None  
**Alignment:** Always neutral  
**Advancement:** 10–14 HD (Large), 15–18 (Huge)

Some boars are too mean to die. They just live on, growing bigger and nastier. When their bulk becomes almost too great for their legs to support them, they retreat into the swamp to wallow in the mud, and let the water carry most of their weight. Over the decades, thousands of diseases and parasites flourish on the beast's rank hide. Eventually, roots and grass are no longer enough for the beast. The last sound many unfortunate swampfolk hear is a muffled, watery snorting before the boar devours them.

The death of a fetid boar is a great event in the swamp. When such a beast dies, it releases all the foulness and pestilence that it harbored within its flesh. The grave of a fetid boar is the epicenter of a miasma of disease and insects and foul rot. If a boar dies near a village or fishing ground, it can be disastrous. Swamp dwellers must therefore chase the boars into the uninhabited areas of the wilderness before killing them. Those brave enough to “course the boar” win great acclaim.

**Combat**

Fetid boars spend the majority of their lives in water, and normally attack by lunging out of the water, goring its prey, then sinking back.

**Disease (Ex):** Fetid boars are home to thousands of diseases. The stench and foulness surrounding them means that anyone with 10 ft. of a boar must make a DC10 Fort save or be nauseated for 1d4 rounds.

**Ferocity (Ex):** A boar is such a tenacious combatant it can keep fighting even when disabled or dying.



**Tidal Surge (Ex):** Fetid boars are strong enough to charge through the water. This charge creates a small tidal wave. Anyone within 10 ft. of a charging boar in a river or lake must make a DC10 Fort save or be knocked down.

## JUSSIASH

Large Aberration

**Hit Dice:** 5d8 (25 hp)

**Initiative:** +2 (Dex)

**Speed:** Fly 30 ft. (perfect)

**AC:** 11 (-1 size, +2 Dex)

**Attacks:** Slam +3 melee

**Damage:** Slam 1d6

**Face/Reach:** 5 ft. × 10 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Poison Gas

**Special Qualities:** Flammable, Gaseous

**Saves:** Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +1

**Abilities:** Str 6, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 6

**Skills:** Perform (Ghastly storytelling) +2, Sense Motive 4

**Feats:** Flyby attack

**Climate/Terrain:** Swamps

**Organization:** Solitary or cloud (2–5)

**Challenge Rating:** 4

**Treasure:** Standard

**Alignment:** Usually chaotic evil

**Advancement:** 6–10 HD (Large), 11–15 HD (Huge)

Jussiashi are living clouds of swamp gas. They manifest as ghastly greenish faces floating in the treetops. The jussiashi have little society or culture, other than sharing tales of travelers dying in the swamp, which is a genre of storytelling that they have an endless enthusiasm for. As a species, they are gleefully morbid and cruel.

Jussiashi reproduce by magically infusing a wisp of marsh gas with life. Marsh gas comes from rot, and the strongest jussiashi arise from gas released from the decaying bodies of intelligent creatures. The young gas-monsters feed on the former intellect and memories of the corpse, and often acquire some skills or knowledge before “birth.” This can be especially nightmarish for friends of a deceased traveler, as they are taunted by a jussiashi who fed off their fallen comrade’s memories.

The one thing the jussiashi fear above all else is fire. The creatures are very flammable, and will burn away to nothing in a few seconds if set alight. Burning jussiashi always charge their killer and try to take as many victims with them as possible.

Some alchemists have succeeded in bottling jussiashi. The creatures can survive for months without sustenance, and bottled jussiashi are sometimes used as living missile weapons. A combined volley of flaming pitch and trapped jussiashi from a siege catapult can inflict terrible damage on even the strongest defenders.

## Combat

Jussiashi attack by forming pseudopods from their gaseous bodies and striking. A jussiash usually only attacks when bored of taunting a victim, or if it suspects it will soon be attacked with fire.

**Poison Gas (Ex):** Anyone struck by a jussiash must make a DC10 Fortitude save to avoid breathing in the creature's poisonous fumes. If the save is failed, the character is nauseated for 1d4 rounds.

**Flammable (Ex):** If a jussiash is struck by a flaming weapon, torch, or other source of fire, it must make a Reflex save at a DC equal to 10 + the amount of fire damage it just took. If the jussiash fails the save, it is set alight. While the jussiash is burning, it takes 2d6 damage per round, is enraged (+4 to Strength, +4 to Constitution, -2 to armor class), and anyone struck by it takes 1d6 fire damage. When the burning jussiash reaches -10 hit points, it explodes. Anyone within 10 ft. of an exploding jussiash takes 3d6 damage (Reflex save, DC10 for half).

**Gaseous (Ex):** Jussiashi are permanently in a gaseous state, which gives them the same abilities as a creature in *gaseous form*.

## TYRANT LIZARD

Medium-Size Humanoid (Reptilian)

**Hit Dice:** 4d8+8+3 (29 hp)

**Initiative:** +0

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**AC:** 16 (+2 large shield, +4 natural)

**Attacks:** Scimitar +5 melee or shortbow +3 ranged or bite +3 melee

**Damage:** Scimitar 1d8+2 or shortbow 1d6 or bite 1d10+2

**Face/Reach:** 5 ft. × 5 ft/5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Rend

**Special Qualities:** Scent, spell-like abilities

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +4

**Abilities:** Str 16, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 14

**Skills:** Hide +4, Intimidate +6, Listen +4, Spot +3, Swim +4, Wilderness Lore +6

**Feats:** Power Attack, Scent, Toughness

**Climate/Terrain:** Marsh

**Organization:** Solitary or hunting party (3d4 tyrant lizards, an equal number of riding monsters, and 2d6 velociraptors, deinonychuses, or other hunters) or legion (100–500 tyrant lizards plus 10–50 5th level masters plus 1 to 5 high-level overlords).

**Challenge Rating:** 4

**Treasure:** Standard

**Alignment:** Usually lawful evil

**Advancement:** By character class. Tyrant lizards with more than 6 Hit Dice grow to become Large creatures; tyrant lizards with more than 12 Hit Dice are Huge.

The tyrant lizard civilization flourished aeons ago. They are kin to the dinosaurs and just as those great lizards mostly died off, so too did the tyrant lizards diminish. But rather than surrender to fate, the lizards wove a spell so vast it encompassed their entire empire. A vast, vast swamp was conjured, and it drew them and their cities down into the mud. There, they have slept for millennia. Much of this huge swamp subsequently dried up or drowned beneath the sea. Still, pockets of it survived, and in the hidden reaches of these survivals from antiquity, the tyrant lizards sometimes wake.

They are slow and patient monsters. Their awakening takes generations — their swamp seeps into the very veins of those who live there, turning them into half-lizard horrors called servitors who are guided in dreams by their slumbering monsters. When the time is right, the servitors dig deep into the mud and uncover the tyrant lizards. The lizards then assemble into an army and march out to conquer the dry lands.

Tyrant lizards are fearsome opponents. Their society is a strict hierarchy, where the strongest are the unquestioned rulers. Therefore, if a tyrant lizard master commands one of his soldiers to sacrifice himself, the soldier will do so immediately. Servitors obey all lizards, lizards obey masters, masters obey overlords, and the overlords bow only to the supreme tyrant who will one day (according to thunder lizard beliefs) devour the godhead.

The tyrant lizards seek to resurrect their empire. They were so evil that their own creator god turned his face from them. They intend to find a way to defeat the god, then drain his divine power and use it to make their empire rise again from the swamp. As far as they are concerned, the other races are nothing more than a momentary infestation that will soon be swept away...

## Combat

Tyrant lizards use barbed longswords and heavy shields made from the hide of their fallen kin. They fight with a combination of strict discipline and animal viciousness. One common tactic is to carefully and patiently surround an opponent, then eat him alive.

## MARSHES



**Rend (Ex):** If a tyrant lizard hits while using his Power Attack feat, he may immediately make a bite attack on the same opponent.

**Spell-like Abilities (Su):** All tyrant lizards can cast *enlarge*, *hypnotism*, *jump*, *spider climb*, *detect thoughts* and *blur* up to three times per day each, as a 5th level sorcerer. They may charm monster at will, also as a 5th level sorcerer, but this ability is usable only on reptiles and servitors.

**Advancement:** By character class. The favored class for tyrant lizards is sorcerer, but they also respect fighters. They have no clerics, paladins or other divine spellcasters.

**Servitors:** Humanoids born in the swamps inhabited by tyrant lizards may become servitors, as the cursed swamp-water warps the unborn child. Servitors are identical to normal members of their race, with the following

changes: they gain a +1 bonus to Constitution and a -1 penalty to Charisma; they may take the Scent feat; and they gain the Reptile subtype in addition to any other type.

### WOODREME

Medium-Sized Aberration

**Hit Dice:** 10d8+20 (100 hp)

**Initiative:** +1 (Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**AC:** 16 (+1 Dex, +5 natural)

**Attacks:** 2 claws +11 melee

**Damage:** Claw 2d6+4

**Face/Reach:** 5 ft. × 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Spell-like abilities

## MARSHES

**Special Qualities:** Reawaken

**Saves:** Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +8

**Abilities:** Str 20, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 7, Wis 7, Cha 10

**Skills:** Disguise +1, Hide +7, Spot +5, Wilderness Lore +7

**Feats:** Track

**Climate/Terrain:** Swamps

**Organization:** Solitary

**Challenge Rating:** 7

**Treasure:** Standard

**Alignment:** Varies

**Advancement:** By character class

Deep beneath the swamp sleep the symbiotic champions, the anointed defenders of the wilderness. Once human, they now slumber and wait for the time when they must rise up for battle. As they sleep, they dream. Mostly, they dream of the green force that drew them into the swamp, but sometimes, their dreams grow darker, and they remember all that they failed to do as humans.

Woodremes are formed by the broken dreams of sleeping champions. They resemble ramshackle humanoid figures

made of mud, rot and fallen branches. The woodremes stumble out of the swamp, clumsily trying to fulfil the half-forgotten dreams of their creator. Some woodremes pretend to be humans and search for the life abandoned by the dreamers. Others are driven by darker desires, such as revenge.

If a woodreme is especially destructive, its creator may sense the ruin caused by the creature, and send another woodreme born out of guilt to stop the first. Such woodremes often assemble allies before challenging the troublesome dream.

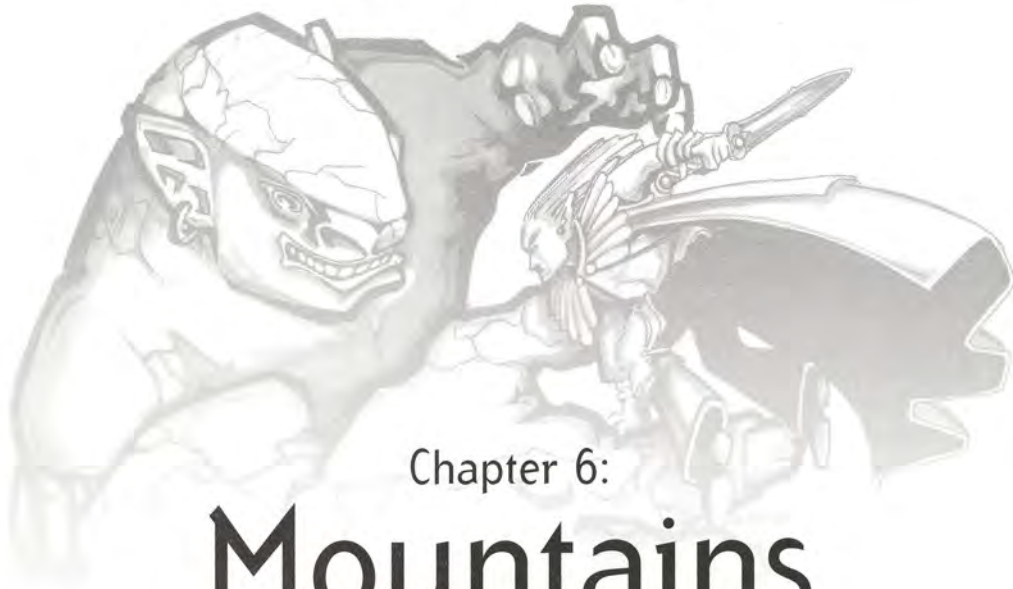
### Combat

Woodremes are often shy and secretive, but vicious when forced into a fight. They are cunning enough to use their spell-like abilities to prepare for a fight.

**Spell-like Abilities:** At will: *animal friendship*, *endure elements*, *pass without trace*. 3/day: *call lightning*, *poison*, *giant vermin*. 1/day: *insect plague*, *harm*.

**Reawaken (Su):** As long as the sleeping symbiotic champion who created the woodreme is troubled, the woodreme cannot be permanently slain. A destroyed woodreme will reform after 1d4 months.





## Chapter 6:

# Mountains

## THE MOUNTAIN ENVIRONMENT

Amongst the most difficult terrain to cross, mountains pose many daunting threats in addition to the strange, powerful monsters that dwell there. This section approaches the mountains as a whole and suggests obstacles and difficulties the characters may face in cross or adventuring within them. Many sections of mountains are wholly impassable, making them an attractive barrier to use in developing your campaign world and channeling the characters to certain regions. If no road runs through the mountains, chances are the players must seek out a different route to explore unless they have an overwhelming reason to risk a tough journey across the peaks.

### THE BASICS

Mountains are difficult to cross for a few simple, obvious reasons. They rise above terrain around them, forcing travelers to spend at least half their trip walking or riding up a slope. Their altitude leads to frigid weather near their peaks, with snow, ice storms, and other threats all common. At the highest points, thin air makes it difficult for those accustomed to the surface to operate at their full capacity. Even the heartiest warrior may find himself winded after only a few moments of exertion due to the thin air. Finally, since the mountains are difficult to travel through and pose a daunting obstacle for an army, mon-

sters, evil humanoids, and other threats can gather there in relative safety. An orc tribe has a much better chance of fending off attacks from a nearby human kingdom if it establishes its base high in the mountains. From there, the orcs can wait, gather their strength, and eventually launch a devastating raid. These factors all play a role in establishing the mountains as a dangerous place.

### MOUNTAIN SLOPES

Characters who wish to travel across mountains had best resign themselves to spending many miles walking upward. Obviously, mountains reach higher than the terrain around them. Characters moving through mountains proceed at only one-quarter their normal pace, as the slopes, broken ground, and rocky terrain all combine to make travel difficult. You can use these factors to add some twists to the battles the characters fought.

The typical d20 fight is assumed to take place on flat terrain. In the mountains, clear, flat space should be the exception, not the rule. When setting up encounters, be sure to add plenty of sloped areas to the battle grounds you create. Characters cannot run up slopes, and move at half their normal rate when going up one and up to double their rate when going down. A character who charges down a slope gains an additional +1 bonus to hit. Remember that if the attacker occupies higher ground than the defender, he receives a +1 bonus to hit.

**CLIFFS**

Cliffs must be crossed with ropes, pitons, and the Climb skill. As a rule of thumb, most mountain cliffs require a DC 15 Climb check to ascend. They are craggy and cracked enough to allow a skilled climber a good chance to cover their surface with relatively little effort. Other surfaces might not be so easy. Cliffs with fewer cracks and crevices have a DC of 20, while those that have been worn smooth by wind or water have a DC of 25.

Cliffs offer a natural guard position or defensive point. In particular, humanoid tribes may place guards atop them to watch for intruders and rain arrows and stones down upon enemies who move below them or attempt to climb them. During an encounter, a cliff provides a handy barrier to close off a potential path of movement. You can use a cliff to channel the characters along a certain direction or cut down on their room to maneuver. In addition, some monsters can easily scale such surfaces. A swarm of spiders could attack a group of PCs attempting to climb a cliff, with the vermin scuttling about with ease while the PCs are left in a vulnerable position.

When placing cliffs in the PCs' path, be sure to leave the Climb DCs to cross them low enough that they remain within reach of all the characters. While a cliff should be dangerous, falling damage shouldn't be the greatest threat the PCs face.

**MOUNTAIN PASSES**

While mountains present a daunting obstacle, they are by no means impassable. Most explorers seek mountain passes to help cut down the time needed to make it across a series of peaks. A pass is any pathway that cuts down the time and energy needed to travel through a mountainous area. It could cut through the peaks along a pathway that snakes around the highest regions, keeping to the low ground and offering a relatively flat and easy road. Other passes may have formed due to rivers and other waterways that dried up long ago but left flat, easily navigated riverbeds behind. When traveling along a mountain pass, the characters move at half their normal overland rate instead of one-quarter. While a pass offers a much easier path than heading directly across the mountains, it is still a relatively difficult journey.

Mountain passes are critically important strategic resources. Since they offer an accessible path through difficult terrain, the realms at both ends most likely keep fortresses and patrols active along them. A pass could represent one of the few clear invasion routes into a kingdom, making it a critically important part of the realm's defensive plans. Economically, passes allow for the flow of trade goods across mountains. As such, they attract more

traffic than the typical road and, with their many caravans, are a breeding ground for thieves. Since the nearby mountains offer good cover for a bandits, a gang of raiders could camp close to their hunting ground without fear of an attack. Organizing an army to enter the mountains and clear out the bandits is an intimidating task, as the other monsters present there and the difficult terrain can make such a campaign long, arduous, and costly. More likely, a trading company, merchant guild, or noble could hire adventurers to enter the mountains and defeat bandits in return for a bounty.

**VOLCANISM**

Since volcanoes are basically mountains with lava vents that occasionally belch forth molten rock, some mountain ranges could have regions of volcanic activity. In the real world, mountains are formed when two tectonic plates collide. Since the regions where plates meet are the most volcanically active spots in the world, relatively young mountain ranges are the continuing sites of earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

A major volcanic eruption can easily kill any characters caught near it. Since telling the players that their characters died in a massive explosion they had no way of predicting or averting isn't very fun, it is much more exciting and appropriate to use smaller scale eruptions and lava flows. A volcanic eruption can take two forms. The characters could be caught in an area during a minor eruption, with pressure building up to cause an earthquake and spread smoke, ash, and rock over the area. During this type of eruption, the ground shakes violently. The characters must make Reflex saves (DC 15) or fall to the ground. In addition, the shock could touch off a rockslide (see below). Next, debris and rocks pelt the area. The characters must make Reflex saves (DC 20) or suffer 2d6 damage from falling rocks and debris. Finally, the dust and smoke from the eruption fill the area and restrict sight as per the *obscuring mist* spell. This smoke and haze remains in place for 1d6 times 10 minutes.

In addition to a sudden, violent explosion, a volcano can unleash a flow of lava that destroys anything in its path. A lava flow could cut off travel if it crosses a pass, disrupting an entire region's economy and possibly isolating it from the outside world. Lava deals 10d6 damage per round to a creature exposed to it. Lava can travel very fast as it moves forward, particularly if it is forced outward by an explosion or other violent event. As a rule of thumb, it can proceed forward at a speed of 5 to 60 feet per round. On average, it moves on the slower end of that scale.

Lava takes time to cool and harden. Usually 2d4 days after an eruption lava cools enough to be safe to walk on. Remember that when lava cools it forms solid rock, possible altering pathways the characters used in the past. You can confuse the characters and throw an unexpected wrench into their plans of the paths they used in the past have been blocked or altered by lava. Forced to find a new route, the characters could journey into parts unknown or take a more difficult pathway than they originally planned.

## EARTHQUAKES AND TREMORS

Whenever an earthquake or tremor hits, creatures walking on the ground must make Reflex saves (DC 15) or be knocked prone. A tremor can last up to 10 rounds. During one, all creatures on the ground move at half speed, while all skill checks involving physical actions, such as Climb or Jump, suffer a -4 circumstance penalty. Spellcasters must make Concentration checks (DC 15 + spell's level) or lose any incantations they attempt to cast due to the distraction of the shaking ground.

## FALLING ROCKS

Avalanches and rockslides are a threat in any area frequently hit by tremors and other disturbances. Avalanches also fall under this category and use the same rules. A character caught in a rockslide must make a Reflex save (DC 20) or suffer 4d6 damage. Furthermore, a character who fails this save must make a Strength check with a DC equal to the damage he sustained or be knocked prone. A character knocked prone and covered by a rockslide suffers an additional 4d6 damage and must be dug out. Digging a trapped character out of a rockslide requires three successful Strength checks (DC 15). The trapped character can attempt to free himself with three Strength checks against DC 20. Each round a character remains trapped in the rocks he suffers 1d6 damage from the crushing weight upon him.

A character who seeks to survive a rockslide must attempt to escape its path. The rocks tumble at a speed of 80 ft. per round, making it difficult for an armored person to simply outrun them. Usually, it is best to seek high ground or move away from the rocks' path. When designing rockslides, be sure to note the slide's general path and any safe zones the characters can use. The rocks must end up somewhere, possibly sealing a dungeon entrance or blocking the characters' path forward. In either case, the rockslide could have far more important effects than the simple physical threat it poses to the party.

An avalanche uses the same rules as a rockslide. While it consists of falling snow as opposed to rocks, the net results and the general effect is the same.

## WEATHER AND WIND

Atop a mountain's highest reaches, the weather tends to be colder and windier than normal. At lower altitudes, the weather mirrors the conditions found in surrounding areas. In these regions, the difference in altitude is not enough to create any major changes to weather patterns. In other words, unless it's already snowing the characters shouldn't meet sub-zero temperatures and howling blizzards the moment they set foot on a mountain. The weather effects described here exist at a mountain's highest reaches.

Wind can reach tremendous speeds high on a mountain. Most of the time, these winds have little effect on how the characters travel and act, but in extreme cases they are strong enough to affect their actions and abilities. Moderate winds have a 50% chance of extinguishing small, unprotected flames, such as candles. These winds are stronger than a breeze or even the typical gust. Cloaks and other loose objects flap in a moderate wind, while snow and loose sand may be spread in light clouds. Strong gusts automatically extinguish unprotected flames and impose a -2 penalty to ranged attacks and to Listen checks. These winds are enough to drive most creatures into shelter or cover. The extreme winds automatically extinguish any unprotected flames, and cause protected flames (such as those of lanterns) to dance wildly and have a 50% chance of extinguishing. Ranged weapon attacks and Listen checks are at a -4 penalty. This is the velocity of wind produced by the *gust of wind* spell and is powerful enough to drive birds from the sky and leave all but the heartiest wildlife cowering under cover.

You can use the following table to determine wind conditions in a particular area. Each category is rated by the frequency and strength of the winds found there. A result of no or mild winds indicates that the wind is not strong enough to have any in-game effects. You can check each hour for wind conditions while the PCs travel through a region. The higher up the mountain they journey, the greater the chance of entering a wind-swept area. Generally speaking, the lowest regions of a mountain should be calm, the middle altitudes up to the edges of the highest regions average, and the peaks wind-swept. You can change this progression to create specific areas of high winds or relative calm. The different wind levels are defined in the paragraph above.

1d20	Calm Area	Average Area	Wind-Swept Area
1 - 5	No wind	No wind	Mild wind
6 - 10	No wind	Mild wind	Moderate wind
11 - 13	Mild wind	Mild wind	Moderate wind
14 - 16	Mild wind	Moderate wind	Strong wind
17 - 18	Moderate wind	Moderate wind	Strong wind
19 - 20	Moderate wind	Strong wind	Extreme wind



**FRIGID TEMPERATURE**

As the atmosphere thins at high altitudes, the temperature becomes progressively colder. An explorer could find that, while climbing a chain in the midst of a steaming jungle, the peak of a towering mountain could be covered in glacial tundra.

Cold and exposure deal subdual damage to the victim. This subdual damage cannot be recovered until the character gets out of the cold and warms up again. Once a character is rendered unconscious through the accumulation of subdual damage, the cold and exposure begins to deal normal damage at the same rate.

An unprotected character in cold weather (below 40° F) must make a Fortitude saving throw each hour (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or sustain 1d6 points of subdual damage. A character who has the Wilderness Lore skill may receive a bonus to this saving throw and may be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well.

In conditions of extreme cold or exposure (below 0° F), an unprotected character must make a Fortitude save once every 10 minutes (DC 15, +1 per previous check), taking 1d6 points of subdual damage on each failed save. A character who has the Wilderness Lore skill may receive a bonus to this saving throw and may be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well. Characters wearing winter clothing only need check once per hour for cold and exposure damage.

A character who sustains any subdual damage from cold or exposure suffers from frostbite or hypothermia and is fatigued. These penalties end when the character recovers the subdual damage he took from the cold and exposure.

As the characters climb higher, the temperate steadily drops. As a general guide, as the characters reach the highest point of a mountain, the temperature should drop near freezing. As they progress even higher, they could enter areas where the temperate is 30 or 40 degrees below the freezing mark. If the characters forgot to pack sufficient cold weather gear, they could be in serious trouble.

**THIN AIR**

At the highest points of the mountains, the thin air makes it difficult for characters adjusted to the oxygen available at sea level. Physical exertion can leave even the stoutest adventurer gasping for breath. Introducing thin, mountain air into an adventure can present the characters with an additional challenge to overcome while bringing out a minor detail of the mountains they may otherwise overlook.

The key to thin air is that it enervates the characters, causing them to take penalties for sustained periods of activity. Creatures native to the area or who have lived there for a month or more are immune to these effects.

After 10 consecutive minutes of exertion, including combat, a character must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or suffer a -1 circumstance penalty to all attacks, checks, and saves. Every additional 10 minutes forces an additional Fortitude save with a DC of 15 + 1 per every 10 minutes of activity. For each failed save, increase the circumstance penalty the characters receive by -1. Every five minutes of rest reduces this penalty by 1. Travel, combat, and any other physical work all qualify for this penalty, possibly forcing the characters to stop and rest at regularly, short intervals.

Alternatively, you can use the core d20 rules for exposure to thin air. Characters in conditions of low oxygen, such as on top of a mountain, must roll a Fortitude saving throw each hour (DC 15, +1 per previous check), taking 1d6 points of subdual damage each time they fail. A character who sustains any subdual damage from lack of oxygen is automatically fatigued. These penalties end when the character recovers the subdual damage he took from low oxygen.

Long-term oxygen deprivation due to high altitude affects mental and physical ability scores. After each 6-hour period a character spends at an altitude of over 20,000 feet, he must make a Fortitude save (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or take 1 point of temporary damage to all ability scores.

**MOUNTAIN FEATURES**

The following elements and locations are meant to be easily dropped into any mountain setting. In most cases, NPCs and creatures are given general descriptions rather than exact stat blocks to help make these locations as flexible as possible.

**THE FIELD OF SCREAMING STONES**

In the ages before the rise of civilization, a great battle tore the earth asunder and led to the rise of the mountains. None can say who fought on either side, nor can they guess at why the battle was fought or even who was the victor, but a few scattered signs of the struggle remain. Atop a small plateau near the common trade routes through the peaks stands the field of screaming stones, a strange place where the rocks themselves howl and scream in the wind. This place is a covered with number of roughly hewn stone columns, none more than 10 feet in height, that are arranged seemingly at random. Oddest of all, the rocks are all connected to the broad, flat stone floor of the plateau. The plateau and the blocks that dot its surface appear to be one, single rock formation. Not a single seam or crack separates them.

During windstorms or while a strong gust blows through the area, the stone columns let up a shrieking, maddening scream. In some ways, this noise resembles a human scream, but the tone and echoes indicate that some other race produces it. The sound emanates from the stones, though they lack any visible means of creating noise. Several diviners and occultists have attempted to discover the stones' secrets, but all have failed. The noise is loud enough to be heard from the roads that cut near this place. Caravan guards are superstitious of the area, and most travelers avoid it if possible or march twice as fast to put it behind them. All creatures within a mile of the field of screaming stones suffer a  $-1$  penalty to Listen checks due to the distraction of the screams. This penalty increases to  $-2$  for creatures within a half-mile of the place and  $-4$  for creatures and characters who stand within it.

In truth, the stone is the petrified remains of an ancient demon that was once active in this area. When the mountains arose, they dragged forth many dark and dangerous things that dwelled at the center of the earth. The demon that formed the field of screaming stones was but one of these creatures. While the beast is long dead, its malignant life force remains. Gates to the lower realms spontaneously form here, allowing demons and devils access to the material plane where they can wreck evil as they wish. Each day, there is a 1% chance that a portal opens and disgorges 2 – 12 random, evil outsiders who remain on the material plane for 3d4 days. During this time, they raid and pillage as they wish.

Casting spells while on the plain is a dangerous proposition. The lingering evil energy and the demonic essence that pollute the air cause spells to sometimes misfire and injure their users. Anyone casting a spell must make a Spellcraft check (DC 15 + spell level) to successfully complete it. On a failed check, the spell fizzles. It counts as having been expended but otherwise has no effect. If this check fails by 10 or more, the spell has a subtle but dangerous effect. It appears to fail as normal, but instead the collected magic used to power the incantation is absorbed into the surroundings. At midnight, a gate opens as described above and unleashes twice the normal number of outsiders. A canny villain could use this to his advantage, unleashing successive waves of demons, devils, slaad, and other creatures to attack and loot nearby towns and distract the heroes from the true threat they face.

### THE SPIRE OF THE WORLD

Standing atop the tallest peak of the mountain, the Spire of the World is a powerful nexus of divination magic. This alabaster tower was carved from the rock of the mountain, blasted into existence by a small team of beholders using

their *disintegrate* ability. The beholders' influence on this place's design is obvious in its alien architecture and frustrating layout that is difficult for bipedal, non-flying creatures to use.

From the outside, the Spire is a jeweled beacon that shines in the sun. Its pure, white outer walls are set with windows whose glass is tinted blue, green, and red. The uppermost section of the tower opens to a large, flat platform above which three slender, white columns soar. These columns flow away from the tower then back towards its center, meeting at a single, clear crystal. This prism, the Spire's Eye, is the center of its magical capabilities.

The Spire's interior is broken into four separate floors, each of which forms a single, round room 50 feet high. Platforms set on to the walls serve as rooms, with screens and sloped roofs granting privacy to each area. Holes in the floor and ceiling allow flying creatures to move from one level to another. The first floor has several ledges that serve as sleeping quarters, the second one holds supplies, while the third one hosts a variety of work chambers, libraries, and studies.

The fourth and highest floor is the center of the tower's purpose. Here, a single stone platform suspended in midair hangs beneath a great opening in the ceiling directly below the Spire's Eye. A wide, shallow basin is carved in the direct center of this platform. A creature that sits or rests within this depression gains the benefits of the Spire's true abilities. Built on a nexus of ley lines, this place is a veritable center point of divination energy. Almost every action or event committed in the world causes magical ripples that trace back to this place to be collected in the Spire's Eye and transported to this spot. The creature sitting here gains the ability to cast the following spells at will as a 20th-level wizard: *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *contact other plane*, *discern location*, *greater scrying*, *legend lore*, *locate object*, *scrying*, *vision*. He gains a  $+20$  competence bonus to all Scry checks. In addition, anyone who sits in this nexus gains the following abilities from the tower:

- While standing within the tower, the current master gains a  $+5$  bonus on all saving throws and, acid, cold, and fire resistance 20.
- Wizards gain knowledge of all known arcane spells. They do not gain spellbooks. Rather, they prepare spells as normal but may choose any spells they wish. By using the tower, they can scry for any spell they need, study it, and prepare it as normal.
- Sorcerers double their spells known and may choose any available spell to fill their new slots.
- These abilities cease to function when the spellcaster leaves the tower.

The Spire of the World is a fiercely contested prize, with a variety of powerful mages and creatures struggling to control it. The small cabal of beholders that originally built the tower hoped to lead and coordinate an invasion of the surface world by a great host of enslaved kuo-toa, drow, and troglodytes, but the time they spent away from their subterranean lair allowed the slaves to rise up and overthrow their conquerors. The beholders were soon defeated by a group of necromancers who, ignorant of the tower's abilities, left the edifice abandoned for many years. A wizard or sorcerer villain could take control of this place and use it to harass the characters. With the magic it grants its owner, the tower can allow a villain to keep a continuous watch on the heroes' actions and plans.

### The Troll Bridge

For many years, a large tribe of trolls plagued the northern mountains. These brutes prowled the mountain passes and harassed travelers, slaying and devouring those that did not have enough gold, gems, and jewels to pay for safe passage. In time, the neighboring kingdoms sought to defeat the trolls, but the craggy mountains and the creatures' intimate knowledge of the terrain spelled defeat for adventurers and armed sorties alike. The kings of the region were convinced that the trolls were continuing nuisances that they would simply have to bear. So long as the brutes were too lazy and disorganized to turn their grip on the mountains into a chokehold, their depredations continued unabated. Merchants and other travelers made sure to carry bright, shiny gems to capture the trolls' interest and buy their safety, though even the world's richest gem could do little to dissuade a hungry troll.

For decades, this state of affairs held sway. While the merchants and travelers grew fewer in number and poorer in wealth, the trolls grew fat, bored, and greedy. Then their chieftains gathered together in a great congress to plan a great war of conquest. By happenstance or good fortune (or ill luck, from the troll's perspective) the archmage Argallo the Sour was forced to trek by foot across the mountains. As Argallo traveled the mountains, the trolls gibbered in excitement. With the archmage defeated, the civilized lands would be much easier to conquer. His robe was encrusted with diamonds and rubies worth an emperor's ransom, and his round belly promised that he would be a succulent meal. With the trolls already organizing an army, their chieftains decided to set every last troll on the mountains at Olweg's Bridge, an ancient structure spanning a mighty river that flowed down from the mountains to the lands below.

There, the trolls fell upon Argallo in a great horde. And there, the trolls meet their first and final defeat. Argallo was no fool. His protective wards had warned him long ago that the trolls were massing for an attack. When they appeared, he simply plucked two otherwise unremarkable pouches from his belt, cast them upon the ground, chanted a spell, and caused two of the largest black dragons ever seen by mortal eyes to emerge from them and blast the trolls with their acidic breath. Soon, the troll host was nothing more than a writhing pile of melted flesh, bones, and organs. Unfortunately, in the midst of battle Olweg's bridge had been destroyed.

Needing a conveyance across the gap and left without his dragon allies (who, having fulfilled the terms of the curse that bound them to service, departed for their lairs) Argallo worked a mighty spell that collected the runny puddles of melted trolls and crafted a new bridge from them. This structure, known as the troll bridge, is a writhing mass of rubbery green flesh that still stands across the gap. Travelers who cross it can sometimes hear the muffled screams of the trolls from within it, and any damage dealt to it heals in the manner of a troll.

Today, the bridge is a frequent site of battles and ambushes. With the trolls defeated, a variety of lesser humanoid races and mercenary bands have raced to fill their position. For a time, a small tribe of goblins held the bridge, demanding tribute from all who crossed it. They were driven off by a band of paladins who attempted to build a watchtower to guard the bridge. An incursion of fire giants swept the paladins from the area, and for many years since various gangs and tribes have fought for control of the territory.

The troll bridge works just like a normal, stone bridge that has regeneration 5 against all damage save for fire and acid. The ruins of the paladins' watchtower still stand near it, and bandits love to use that place as a nest from which they can watch for approaching travelers. It is said that the trolls retain some sentience within the bridge. Over the years, their hatred of humanoids in general and spellcasters in particular has reached a boiling point. While the characters are upon the bridge, any non-troll must make a Balance check (DC 15) or be knocked prone by an unexpected sway or shudder. Spellcasters who are prone must make Reflex saves each round to stand up (DC 15) and at the end of their actions if they are still prone they must make another Reflex save (DC 15) or be rolled 10 feet towards the nearest edge. The trolls remember that a wizard put them into this state and they do what they can to avenge themselves against sorcerers, clerics, shamans, and the like.

The troll bridge is a 50-foot long structure that is a uniform 20 feet wide. It lacks handrails or other protective measures, forcing most travelers to tend near its middle. The bridge's sinister reputation causes most caravans to proceed single file across it. It spans a gorge that drops 50 feet down to a swiftly running river. As the bridge rests on a strategically important path through the mountains, it is the frequent site of caravan raids and pitched battles between the various rival kingdoms, tribes, and bandit gangs that struggle for control of the mountains.

surfaces with ease. After spending so much time in the thin, cold air of the mountains he is tougher than average and can exert himself for much longer periods of time than other characters. Unlike the typical ranger, the mountaineer hones his combat skills to a razor's edge. The beasts of the upper peaks are amongst the most dangerous in the world, requiring the mountaineer to learn how to fight in order to survive.

## MOUNTAINEER

Amidst the swirling winds of the highest mountain peaks, many dangers threaten to trap or kill travelers. From the fearsome yeti to a sudden avalanche, the mountains can claim lives in a variety of ways. The mountaineer, a variant of the ranger class, knows the peaks better than almost anyone or anything. He climbs rock faces others consider impassable, and dwells in comfort where the bravest explorers fear to tread.

**Adventures:** Mountaineers act as guides and wardens, helping their companions travel through wilderness areas in the easiest manner possible. They can help their companions scale cliffs, survive in brutally cold weather, and find food and water in even the most desolate areas. While their skills are most useful in mountainous areas, their talents are applicable in almost any dangerous wilderness setting.

**Characteristics:** As a veteran of a dangerous environment, the mountaineer is skilled with many weapons and types of armor and knows how to handle himself in a fight. He is an expert climber, capable of moving up cliffs and other sheer



## MOUNTAINS

**Alignment:** Mountaineers can be from any alignment. Most are neutral, as they are lone men and women who find peace and solitude amongst the mountain peaks. They care for their own safety above that of others (though in no way do they actively do harm to those they meet), and see the mountain as the ultimate test of their talent and skill. Mountaineers sometimes band together in small groups that live and travel together, but these alliances are the exception, not the norm. Neutral mountaineers love the mountains for their harsh beauty, the challenge to strength, stamina, and intelligence they provide, and the spiritual reward they offer to those who earn the right to call themselves their masters. These mountaineers usually think of flatlanders (or those who hail from regions below the mountains) as coddled, civilized weaklings, but while they may poke fun at them they bear them no hatred.

Good mountaineers are guides who help travelers make their way across dangerous mountain passes in safety. They see it as their duty to use their knowledge and abilities to help others survive in the inhospitable wilderness. These mountaineers establish havens in the peaks, stocking them with food and water to aid stranded travelers. Others wander the passes, keeping trails open, helping to stave off avalanches, and hunting dangerous monsters such as yeti, hill giants, and ogres.

Evil mountaineers are deadly bandits and robbers. They stake out territory to watch for poorly armed travelers, particularly merchants who may carry valuables or who can be held for ransom. Using their knowledge of the terrain, they launch deadly ambushes from hiding that catch their targets unaware. A favored tactic amongst these vil-

lains is to set off an avalanche to block off escape routes or crush a caravan in one fell swoop, leaving treasure and other valuables buried for them to recover.

**Religion:** Mountaineers worship gods based on their alignment, with good ones favoring deities who protect and sustain nature, neutral ones praying to uncaring masters of the wild, and evil ones seeking the blessings of the gods of murder, greed, and slaughter.

**Background:** Most mountaineers learned their skills on their own after many years in the wilds or through the training of a single master who worked with them one-on-one. The mountaineer tradition passes down from generation to generation of frontier families. In other areas, highly specialized military units train as mountaineers. Dwarves, gnomes, and humans who live in mountainous areas are the most likely to form and maintain such regiments.

**Races:** Dwarves are commonly mountaineers. Hailing from the mountains, these tough, independent souls tend to the lands above the mines with the same relentless dedication traditional dwarven fighters exhibit in guarding the gold veins and workshops. Gnomes also frequently become mountaineers. Gnomes are not as warlike as dwarves, so these explorers focus on learning to survive in the mountains and preventing monsters from evolving into threats. Human mountaineers are the most likely to seek solitude in the peaks, caring little for the trappings of civilization. Half-orc mountaineers are typically bandits and raiders, though a sizable portion of them spurn both sides of their heritage for the simple life amongst the peaks. To these half-orcs, monsters and extreme weather are easier obstacles to deal with than the antipathy their

TABLE 5-1: THE MOUNTAINEER

Base Class	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	Nimble climber
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	Cold resistance 1
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	Broken ground fighter
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	Bonus feat, cold resistance 2
5	+5	+4	+4	+1	Expert climber
6	+6/+1	+5	+5	+2	Cold resistance 3
7	+7/+2	+5	+5	+2	Team climbing
8	+8/+3	+6	+6	+2	Bonus feat, cold resistance 4
9	+9/+4	+6	+6	+3	Survivor
10	+10/+5	+7	+7	+3	Cold resistance 5
11	+11/+6/+1	+7	+7	+3	DR 1/-
12	+12/+7/+2	+8	+8	+4	Bonus feat, cold resistance 6
13	+13/+8/+3	+8	+8	+4	DR 2/-
14	+14/+9/+4	+9	+9	+4	Cold resistance 7
15	+15/+10/+5	+9	+9	+5	DR 3/-
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+10	+5	Bonus feat, cold resistance 8
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+10	+5	DR 4/-
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+11	+6	Cold resistance 9
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+11	+6	DR 5/-
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+12	+6	Bonus feat, cold resistance 10

# MOUNTAINS

heritage draws to them. Elves and half-elves rarely become mountaineers, as they are much more strongly drawn to forests and wooded areas. However, a few find their homes in the scattered woods that dot the highest mountain slopes. While halflings may seem ill-suited to this class, in some regions that race finds isolated mountain realms the easiest to defend from raiders and other threats. The mountaineers amongst them serve as guides, scouts, and warleaders.

**Classes:** Mountaineers tend to be somewhat aloof towards all the other classes, as in their home terrain they are the acknowledged masters. Still, they value the magical abilities druids can bring to bear and see rangers as kindred (if perhaps softer) spirits. Most mountaineers care more about what a person can do rather than how he does it. Thus, any class that offers valuable talents in an adventure meets with their approval.

## GAME RULE INFORMATION

Mountaineers have all the following game statistics.

**Abilities:** Strength improves a mountaineer's ability to climb and makes him a better fighter in close quarters. Wisdom improves many of the mountaineer's key skills, such as Listen, Spot, and Wilderness Lore. A high Dexterity gives the mountaineer a better AC (as he typically wears light armor) and aids several of his skills such as Hide and Move Silently.

**Alignment:** Any

**Hit Die:** d10.

## Class Skills

The mountaineer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha), Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Inuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Spot (Wis), Use Rope (Dex), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

**Skill Points at 1st Level:**  $(4 + \text{Int modifier}) \times 4$ .

**Skill Point at Each Additional Level:**  $4 + \text{Int modifier}$ .

## Class Features

All of the following are class features of the mountaineer.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** Mountaineer are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, light armor, and shields.

**Nimble Climber:** Mountaineers are expert climbers capable of scaling slopes in mere moments. While climbing, they move at their standard speed with a full-round action and half speed with a move-equivalent one. A mountaineer's Climb check must fail by 10 or more for him to fall to the ground.

**Cold Resistance:** The mountaineer's experience in exploring frigid climes allows him to develop a resistance to cold attacks. At second level, he gains cold resistance 1. This resistance increases by 1 at each even-numbered level.

**Broken Ground Fighter:** The mountaineer is an expert at fighting in enclosed, difficult, or otherwise hindering terrain. He ignores all circumstance penalties to attacks and checks caused by environmental factors such as temperature, unsteady ground, and so forth — in essence, any circumstance penalty not caused by a creature, a status or effect attached to the mountaineer, or a spell qualifies for this ability.

**Bonus Feat:** At 4th level and every four levels thereafter, the mountaineer gains a bonus feat. He may select this feat from the fighter's list of bonus feats, though as a non-fighter he may not take Weapon Specialization.

**Expert Climber:** At 5th level, the mountaineer learns to fight more effectively while climbing. Those who attack him no longer receive a +2 bonus to hit while he is climbing and he does not lose his Dexterity bonus to AC while climbing.

**Team Climbing:** While the mountaineer prefers to work on his own, he learns to help others scale cliffs and other obstacles. When the mountaineer and his allies must make Climb checks, he may make one skill check to aid up 6 of his friends. Furthermore, he grants his allies a +4 circumstance bonus rather than a +2 bonus to their checks.

**Survivor:** At 9th level, the mountaineer becomes accustomed to a wider range of dangers and environments. He adapts the toughness and endurance that served him so well in the mountains to the new environments he has encountered. At 9th level, he may choose one of the following energy types: acid, electricity, fire, and sonic. He gains resistance to the energy type he chooses equal to half his cold resistance. If his cold resistance class ability increases, recalculate the resistance he gains from this ability.

**Damage Reduction:** At 11th level, the mountaineer's gritty toughness allows him to shrug off blows and ignore injuries. He gains damage reduction 1, allowing him to reduce the damage inflicted against him from any source by 1. This damage reduction increases by 1 at levels 13, 15, 17, and 19.



## GIANT KILLER

Amongst the mountain peaks, giants of all types represent a continuing threat to travelers, settlers, and even the hardy mountaineers who master the environment. The dwarves are renowned for their continuing feud with hill, stone, and frost giants who raid their caravans, while ogres frequently attempt to pick off lone dwarves or small parties who venture away from well-guarded areas. Fire giants sometimes attack from the realms below, as they utilize volcanic passages and lava vents to move through the earth and strike at the lowest mine levels. To combat this menace, the dwarves train giant killers: fanatical warriors who hunt down and slay giants wherever they appear. Over time, other races have inherited this knowledge from the dwarves, who are all too happy to share their methods of slaying their traditional enemies.

Giant killers are experts at fighting large creatures. They study giant anatomy and drill in battling creatures that stand much taller than a human. While most fighters train against opponents of the same size, giant killers employ an elaborate series of exercises to adjust their attacks and defenses to tall opponents. This training, combined with their study of giant anatomy, allows them to excel in their chosen craft. A giant killer learns to place his strikes to rupture and destroy organs, tendons, and ligaments. While giants may have the size and strength to drive an opponent into the ground with a single blow, that same size and bulk makes their vulnerable organs and joints much bigger targets for attacks.

TABLE 5-2: THE GIANT KILLER

Base					
Class	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	
Level	Bonus	Save	Save	Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	Giant slayer (bonus damage)
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	Nimble evader
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	Spiked defender
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	Giant slayer (improved critical)
5	+5	+4	+4	+1	Giant tracker
6	+6	+5	+5	+2	Spiked rebuke
7	+7	+5	+5	+2	Giant slayer (hindering strike)
8	+8	+6	+6	+2	Artful dodger
9	+9	+6	+6	+3	Disrupting maneuver
10	+10	+7	+7	+3	Giant slayer (death attack)

## MOUNTAINS

Giant killers dress in bright, flashy clothes in a bid to attract the attention of their enemies. Some carry banners into battle that bear oaths and swears insulting to giants, though most giant killers drop these once battle is joined. The vast majority wear spiked armor, as part of their training teaches them to maximize such protective equipment. When a giant or another large creature attempts to grasp a giant killer, spiked armor can deliver an effective attack that tips the battle in the giant killer's favor.

**Hit Die:** d10.

### REQUIREMENTS

To become a giant killer, a character must fulfill all the following requirements:

**Base Attack Bonus:** +5.

**Tumble:** 4 ranks.

**Feats:** Dodge, Power Attack, Track, Weapon Proficiency (spiked armor), Weapon Proficiency (spiked shield).

### CLASS SKILLS

The giant killer class skills (and the key ability for each) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (giants) (Int), and Tumble (Dex).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 2 + Int modifier.

### CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the giant killer prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** Giant killers are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, light and medium armor, and all shields.

**Giant Slayer:** The giant killer learns to fell his chosen enemy with a single, devastating blow. By studying giants' anatomy and learning their tactics, he trains to place his blows in the most advantageous spot possible. At 1st level, he gains a +2 bonus to damage against giants. This bonus applies to melee attacks and ranged attacks made against targets within 30 ft.

At 4th level, the giant killer's study and talent allow him to consistently find critical points on his opponent's body. When attacking giants, he gains the benefits of the Improved Critical feat with his weapon.

At 7th level, the giant killer's telling blows leave much more permanent damage than normal. When he successfully confirms a critical hit against a giant, he may choose to deal temporary ability damage to his target rather than hit points of damage. He may elect to inflict 1d4 plus his Strength modifier temporary damage to the giant's Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution scores. He must choose which ability to target before resolving his damage.

At 10th level, the giant killer perfects the art of quickly and cleanly defeating his chosen enemy. On a successful critical hit, he may elect to attempt to slay his opponent in one mighty blow. He deals damage as normal and may also force his target to make a Fortitude save (DC 25) or die. The giant killer may use this ability once per day. This ability functions only against the giant subtype.

**Nimble Evader:** The giant killer must use an ideal mix of speed and armor to close with giants without being smashed by their powerful attacks. He may use his Tumble skill even while wearing medium armor. Normally, the Tumble checks are impossible while a character's speed is reduced due to armor.

**Spiked Defender:** The giant killer learns to optimize his use of spiked armor. While other warriors may treat iron spikes and barbs as little more than intimidating accoutrements, the giant killer uses them to great effect. When a creature attempts a grapple check against the giant killer — even one allowed by improved grab — he is allowed a free attack with his armor or shield spikes against the grappler with a +2 circumstance bonus to hit and damage.

**Giant Tracker:** With his great experience in fighting giants and his study of their tendencies, the giant killer is an expert at spotting their signs and analyzing evidence of their actions. When using his Track skill to study an area, the giant killer gains several additional pieces of information by studying his quarries' markings. When using Track against giants, he learns the total number of giants in the group, their breakdown by gender, the total number of children, and the general purpose of their movement, such as hunting, raiding, migration, and so on. In addition, the DC modifier due to the passage of time is +1 for every four days. These abilities and modifiers apply only when the giant killer attempts to track giants.

**Spiked Rebuke:** The giant killer's armor spikes are his most valued weapons. They transform his protective gear into an effective weapon. Whenever a creature attacks the giant killer with its natural weapons, such as claws, a slam, or a bite, it provokes an attack of opportunity from him. The giant killer may make this attack of opportunity using his armor or shield spikes and no other weapons.

**Artful Dodger:** By the time the giant killer reaches 8th level, he has perfected the techniques necessary to defend himself against a larger creature's fearsome strikes. When a creature bigger than him and at least of size Large attacks him, it doubles the size penalty it suffers to attacks. The giant killer learns to use his foe's size against him, dodging between his feet, moving within his reach, and otherwise disrupting his attacks.



**Disrupting Maneuver:** As a full-round action, a giant killer can move into the space occupied by a creature and disrupt its attacks for the round. The target of this ability may not use the full-attack action. The giant killer moves between the creature's legs, distracts it, or otherwise forces it to waste precious moments focusing on him. This ability may be used against any creature of a size larger than the giant killer and at least Large size.

## SKYSEEKER

Clerics of the sky deities flock to the mountain peaks, there hoping to come closer to their gods and grant greater power to the prayers they send towards them. Some amongst these worshippers study the wild gusts of wind and howling storms that gather about the mountains, seeing the raw power of elemental air. Known as skyseekers, these clerics band together in small splinter sects of their religions to worship and study the wind. To outsiders, these rituals seem to be the acts of madmen. Skyseekers congregate at particularly wind-swept cliffs and peaks and throw themselves off them, handing their lives over to the care of their gods and the spirits of the air. Some of these fanatics are dashed upon the rocks below, but those with sufficient skill in divine magic and with faith in their gods soar into the air, gifted with the ability to fly as a reward for their great faith and trust.

Skyseekers are the elite of their religions, fanatics who have transcended the mere study of texts and litanies to embrace the power of elemental air. They learn to channel their talent for divine magic into a specialized elemental effect, that allows them to literally grow wings and fly. Skyseekers form magical, gossamer wings that grant them the ability to soar through the air. With practice and experience, they learn to fly faster and with greater maneuverability and fight on the wing with deadly skill. Many of the temples erected at the mountains' highest points rely on well-trained squadrons of skyseekers to drive away the giants and other monsters that threaten their existence.

**Hit Die:** d8.

TABLE 5-3: THE SKYSEEKER

Base Class	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+2	+2	+0	Sky chaser
2	+1	+3	+3	+0	Aerial charge
3	+2	+3	+3	+1	Aerial dodge
4	+3	+4	+4	+1	Improved flight
5	+3	+4	+4	+1	Master of the winds
6	+4	+5	+5	+2	Improved flight
7	+5	+5	+5	+2	Air combat expert
8	+6	+6	+6	+2	Improved flight
9	+6	+6	+6	+3	Soaring flock
10	+7	+7	+7	+3	Improved flight

## REQUIREMENTS

To become a skyseeker a character must fulfill all the following requirements:

**Base Attack Bonus:** +4.

**Knowledge (religion):** 8 ranks.

**Feat:** Extra Turning.

**Spellcasting:** Divine spellcaster level 3rd+.

**Special:** Access to the Air domain.

## CLASS SKILLS

The skyseeker class skills (and the key ability for each) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Heal (Wis), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Spot (Wis), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 4 + Int modifier.

## CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the skyseeker prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** Skyseekers gain proficiency with light and medium armor. They also gain proficiency with the following weapons: javelin, lance (light and heavy), and longspear. Skyseekers employ several different weapons that are well-suited to their unique magical abilities and talents.

**Sky Chaser (Su):** At 1st level, the skyseeker masters the first mystery of his cult's training. By spending one of his daily turning attempts as a standard action, he causes a pair of spectral wings to appear on his back. He can use these wings to fly at a speed of 30 ft. with clumsy maneuverability. These wings last for a half-hour before they fade out of existence. If the skyseeker is in the air when his wings fade, he floats to the ground as if under the effects of *feather fall*.

This ability counts as a supernatural effect cast by a cleric whose level equals the skyseeker's total divine caster levels combined with his levels in this prestige class.

## MOUNTAINS



**Aerial Charge:** While flying, the skyseeker may charge a land-bound target with a lance or similar weapon to deal tremendous damage. By putting his weight and flying speed behind his weapon, the skyseeker can skewer a foe with a powerful attack. A flying skyseeker that charges an opponent with a lance, javelin, longspear, or shortspear deals double damage on a successful hit. This doubling stacks with any additional damage scored on a critical hit with a flying charge attack.

**Aerial Dodge:** A skyseeker can turn and bank to avoid attacks with a skill that exceeds his normal ability to maneuver in the air. By calling on the power of wind to buffet and shield him as he moves through the sky, he can dodge attacks or summon gusts to knock missile weapons to the ground. If a skyseeker uses a full-round action to take a normal move while flying, he gains a +2 dodge bonus to AC. His erratic motions and a slight protective shell of wind around him foil his opponents' attacks.

**Improved Flight:** As the skyseeker progresses through this prestige class, he learns to better control his flight, moving with greater speed and superior maneuverability.

At 4th level, the skyseeker's speed while using his sky chaser ability increases to 40 ft. and his maneuverability becomes poor.

At 6th level, his speed increases to 50 ft. and his maneuverability improves to average.

At 8th level his flying speed reaches 60 ft. while his air maneuverability reaches good.

Finally, at 10th level he achieves mastery of his flight ability. He may now fly at a speed of 80 ft. with perfect maneuverability.

**Soaring Flock:** At 9th level, the skyseeker gains the ability to call the winds to him and bid them to carry his friends along with him. When he uses his sky chaser ability, he may select up to 6 other creatures to travel with him. These creatures must be within 40 ft. of the skyseeker when he uses that ability. The targets he nominates follow him through the air, and maintain the same distance and relative position to him as they fly. Otherwise, they have no control over their speed and direction, instead matching the skyseeker's speed and heading perfectly. An unwilling creature who wishes to avoid this effect must make a Will save (DC 15) to remain on the ground.

**Master of the Winds:** The skyseeker's close attunement to the air grants him an improved ability to command or rebuke creatures with his domain ability. He gains a +2 bonus to his Charisma check to determine the Hit Dice of the most powerful creature he can affect with a turning attempt made to command or rebuke air creatures.

**Air Combat Expert:** With his many hours spent soaring through the air and his religious and mystical connection to the aerial realms, the skyseeker develops unparalleled talent in fighting in the sky. While flying, he gains a +2 competence bonus to all melee attacks.

## STONE FIST DEFENDER

High in the mountain peaks, the stone fist defenders sit in quiet contemplation. In their isolated monasteries, they spend long hours in meditation studying the properties and aspects of elemental earth. A stone fist defender grasps a thick block of granite while he slips into his trance, casting his mind's eye into its structure and learning to match the rhythm and pulse of his inner energy to match its patterns. In this manner, the stone fists learn to strike as hard as a rock and deflect blows from his body like swords bouncing off a stone wall. Stone fist defenders seek to become one with the mountain. They look to it as an exemplar of the ideals their order holds dear. It stands implacable in the face of all danger, endures the most terrible disasters and events with calm patience, and is proof against all physical attacks. Their mystic studies and martial arts training allows them to find weaknesses in inorganic objects, defeat earth creatures and constructs, and tear apart armor and weapons with their bare hands. Their most famous ability is the stone fist stance, a specialized martial art that allows them to gain the strength and toughness of granite.

Stone fist defenders are most commonly dwarves, gnomes, and humans. As the three races most commonly found in mountainous terrain, it is only natural that they would develop a talent for combining earth elemental energies with the monk's martial arts. Amongst the hobgoblins, the stone fist tradition is the most common of the alternative martial arts. Those cruel humanoids value the strength and power it confers, though they see that power as a right to subjugate and rule others than a study in quiet perseverance and survival.

**Hit Die:** d8.

### REQUIREMENTS

To become a stone fist defender, a character must fulfill the following requirements:

**Unarmed Base Attack Bonus:** +6.

**Feats:** Improved Unarmed Strike, Power Attack, Sunder.

TABLE 5-3: THE STONE FIST DEFENDER

Class	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	Special
Level	Bonus	Save	Save	Save	
1	+0	+2	+2	+2	Earth hammer (elemental damage), monk abilities
2	+1	+3	+3	+3	Stone fist defense (1/day)
3	+2	+3	+3	+3	Sundering strike
4	+3	+4	+4	+4	Earth hammer (sunder construct)
5	+3	+4	+4	+4	Shield punch
6	+4	+5	+5	+5	Stone fist defense (2/day)
7	+5	+5	+5	+5	Earth hammer (perfect fist)
8	+6	+6	+6	+6	Crushing fists
9	+6	+6	+6	+6	Sword catcher
10	+7	+7	+7	+7	Stone fist defense (3/day)

### CLASS SKILLS

The stone fist defender class skills (and the key ability for each) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 4 + Int modifier.

### CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the stone fist defender prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** Stone fist defenders gain no additional proficiencies with armor, weapons, or shields.

**Earth Hammer:** Due to their close study of the creatures of elemental earth and the distinct nature of the *ki* energy they gather, stone fist defenders excel in combat against earth creatures. When attacking an elemental creature with the earth subtype, the stone fist defender gains a +2 bonus to damage and he may use the monk class's stun ability against them even if they are normally immune to stun.

At 4th level, this damage bonus extends to constructs. As creatures built from inanimate objects, they are vulnerable to the stone fist's unique martial arts. The stone fist gains a +2 bonus to damage against all constructs and he may use his stunning blow ability against them even if they are normally immune to stun.

At 7th level, the stone fist's deadly martial arts and knowledge of mystic earth energy combine to make him a lethal opponent of earth elementals and constructs. Against such creatures, his unarmed strikes ignore all damage reduction those creatures may possess. Cloaked in the power of earth, his fists rend and break such opponents.

**Monk Abilities:** A stone fist defender continues to study the martial arts. Determine his unarmed attack bonus, unarmed damage, and AC bonus by stacking his levels in this prestige class with his levels in monk. Note that this continued improvement does not apply to the monk's improved unarmored speed. Furthermore, a stone fist defender gains the ki strike ability at +1 if his total monk and stone fist levels equal 10, at +2 when they total 13, and at +3 when they equal 16.

**Stone Fist Defense:** The heart of the stone fist defender's unique, mystic martial arts is a series of exercises that allow him to channel and control ki with a strong infusion of earth elemental energy. Once per day as a free action, the stone fist defender enters a trance that allows this ki to flood his body and alter his form. His skin becomes as strong as stone, while his muscles burst with renewed energy and power. The stone fist defender gains a +4 bonus to Strength and a +5 natural bonus to AC. He also gains immunity to critical hits. While stronger and tougher, however, he also becomes heavier and more ponderous. He suffers a -20 penalty to his speed. This ability lasts a number of rounds equal to 5 plus the stone fist defender's Constitution modifier.

At 6th level, the stone fist may use this ability twice per day. At 10th level, he may use it three times per day.

**Sundering Strike:** The stone fist's attunement to earth energy and his study of the properties of metal and stone give him unique insights into the weak points found in every inanimate object. When a stone fist uses an unarmed strike to break an item, he gains a +5 bonus to damage.

**Shield Punch:** A stone fist strikes with such force that even protective gear is quickly sundered and destroyed by his attacks. When a stone fist makes an unarmed attack against an opponent who bears a shield, there is a chance he may crack his foe's shield with his strike. If the stone fist's strike misses, compare the result of his attack against his foe's shieldless AC. If he would hit this AC, he has struck his opponent's shield. In essence, the attack would have hit if the target did not block with his shield. Resolve the stone fist's damage against the shield as if he attempted to sunder it.

**Crushing Fists:** While armor and other protection may prove useful against swords and arrows, they offer little shelter from the stone fist's relentless blows. If a stone fist makes an unarmed strike against an armored opponent and misses, the stone fist may opt to use either his shield punch ability (if his foe bears a shield) or this ability. Compare the result of his attack against his foe's AC without his armor but still counting his shield. If his attack hits this AC, the stone fist strikes his foe's armor. Resolve this attack as if the stone fist attempted to sunder his opponent's armor.

**Sword Catcher:** This special ability is only usable while the stone fist uses his stone fist defense ability. While in that state, the stone fist defender can catch and break his opponent's weapon. As a standard action, the stone fist enters his sword catcher stance. Until his next action, he may choose to attempt to catch and break a weapon used to attack him. When the stone fist's chosen attacker strikes him, he makes an attack roll opposed by his foe's total attack. If the stone fist succeeds, he grabs his opponent's weapon and immediately inflicts double his normal sundering damage against it. His opponent's attack automatically misses whether the stone fist breaks his weapon or not. A stone fist may use this ability once per day.

## MOUNTAIN FEATS

Life on the mountain is treacherous, with avalanches, rockslides, and other natural threats ready to end an explorer's life. The following feats are all designed to provide characters, both PCs and NPCs alike, an advantage in traveling this difficult terrain.

### CANNY MOUNTAINEER [GENERAL]

While you are a talented climber, you realize that despite your precautions your skill may sometimes fail you. You have learned to brace for a fall in order to improve your chances of surviving one.

**Prerequisite:** 4+ ranks in Climb skill.

**Benefit:** When you fall for any reason, you may make a Fortitude save (DC 15 + 1 for every 5 feet fallen) in order to take half damage from the fall.

### EYES OF THE HAWK [GENERAL]

Your eyesight is exceptionally sharp and keen, allowing you to spot objects at great distances.

**Prerequisite:** Alertness.

**Benefit:** You gain a +2 bonus to all Spot checks. From a high vantage point or similar perch, you can pick up detail on objects you see. Make a Spot check to find the details of an object or creature up to Medium-size. The DC of this check is 15 plus 5 per mile of distance between you and the object. Note that you must have clear line of sight to the object. On a successful check, you can see a level of detail as if the creature was 50 feet away from you. You can see facial features, clothing, and obvious symbols or signs, but tiny details evade your notice.

**FOOTMAN'S NAP [GENERAL]**

Through the course of military service or many years spent traveling through difficult terrain, you have learned to catch sleep while you can. During long, dull hours of marching, you can doze without losing pace.

**Prerequisite:** Con 13+.

**Benefit:** When traveling cross country, whether on foot or on horse or a similar method, you count every two hours of travel as worth one hour of sleep. You can march all day and stand guard all night. However, if you are attacked or ambushed while marching you suffer a -4 penalty to your Initiative roll as you must spend a moment to rouse yourself and prepare for battle.

**GROUND BOUND FIGHTER [GENERAL]**

Amidst the mountains, creatures such as rocs, griffons, and hippogriffs pose a continual threat. A sudden assault from above can catch a traveler by surprise and spell his doom. You have learned to repel such attacks and are an expert in battling flying creatures.

**Prerequisite:** Base attack bonus +1 or higher.

**Benefit:** When fighting a flying creature that is currently in the air, you gain a +1 bonus to hit with missile and melee attacks. Against flying opponents you gain a +4 dodge bonus to AC, though this bonus applies only while they are in the air. For example, you do not gain this bonus against a griffon that attacks you while it walks on the ground.

**IMPROVED ROCK THROWING [GENERAL]**

You are an expert in using thrown rocks as weapons, allowing you to deal more damage than normal with them.

**Prerequisites:** Dex 13+, Rock Throwing.

**Benefit:** When using the Rock Throwing feat, you count your size as one category larger, with a minimum size of Large, when determining the damage your thrown rocks inflict.

**MOUNTAIN GUIDE [GENERAL]**

You are skilled at leading others through difficult terrain. Under your guidance, they proceed quickly across mountain paths. You have an intuitive sense for finding clear paths and avoiding trouble spots.

**Prerequisite:** Mountain Walker or Roughrider.

**Benefit:** When determining your overland movement through a mountainous area, you and anyone traveling with you treat the terrain as plains.

**MOUNTAIN MAN [GENERAL]**

You are an experienced mountain traveler, having scaled the highest peaks, blazed trails through snowdrifts, and survived avalanches and worse. In a mountain setting, you are an expert in survival and navigation.

**Prerequisite:** 4+ ranks in Wilderness Lore skill.

**Benefit:** While in a mountainous setting, you gain a +2 competence bonus to all Wilderness Lore, Intuit Direction, and Handle Animal checks.

**MOUNTAIN VETERAN [GENERAL]**

Many times you have traveled the daunting mountain passes, relying on rope, grappling hooks, pitons, and your courage to see you up sheer cliffs and across yawning chasms.

**Benefit:** You gain a +2 benefit to all Climb checks and a +1 bonus to all Fortitude saves. As an experienced mountain traveler, you are tougher than normal and a natural climber.

**MOUNTAIN WALKER [GENERAL]**

You have walked hundreds of miles across mountainous terrain, giving you the experience and toughness needed to easily navigate broken ground.

**Benefit:** When determining your overland movement through a mountainous area, you treat the terrain as plains.

**ROCK THROWING [GENERAL]**

You have a natural talent for throwing rocks, turning simple debris into a useful weapon.

**Prerequisite:** Dex 13+.

**Benefit:** In your hands, stones are effective weapons. When you throw a rock, you deal 1d4 damage and use a range increment of 20 feet. Furthermore, if you are in an area where there are many usable rocks and stones you can "reload" with more rocks as if you had the Quickdraw feat. This ability allows you to use the full-attack action to attempt multiple attacks without using actions to reload.

**Normal:** A rock counts as an improvised thrown weapon that does 1d3 damage and has a range increment of 10 feet.

**Special:** Creatures larger than Medium-size deal more damage with this feat, as they can pick up heavier rocks. Use the table below to determine the damage they inflict.

Creature Size	Rock Damage
Large	1d6
Huge	1d8
Gargantuan	2d6
Colossal	2d8

## ROUGH RIDER [GENERAL]

While others balk at riding a horse over broken mountain passes, you skillfully guide your mount through difficult terrain.

**Prerequisite:** 4+ ranks in Ride skill

**Benefit:** When determining your overland movement through a mountainous area, you treat the terrain as plains while you are mounted. You easily guide your horse, elephant, or other mount through broken ground.

## SLOPE FIGHTER [GENERAL]

In the mountains, the broken, jagged terrain provides many areas where a smart warrior can claim the high ground against his enemies. You have learned to make the most of this position, transforming a minor asset into a critical advantage.

**Prerequisite:** Base attack bonus +1 or higher.

**Benefit:** When you gain the higher ground bonus to hit an opponent, you also gain a +2 dodge bonus to AC against that foe — you use his restricted arc of attack to your advantage. This bonus applies only to opponents against whom you would gain the bonus to hit for occupying higher ground.

**Normal:** Having higher ground than your opponent gives you a +1 bonus to hit.

**Special:** This bonus applies only if you have the higher ground due to terrain, not if you are riding a horse or similar mount.

## WARM BLOODED [GENERAL]

You are well-adapted to the frigid climes of the mountain's utmost reaches, allowing you to shrug off freezing conditions that would hamper other, less experienced travelers.

**Prerequisite:** Con 13+.

**Benefit:** You gain a +4 bonus to all saving throws made to resist cold damage and spells with the cold energy descriptor. You receive a +8 bonus to resist the effects of cold weather as per the core d20 rules.

## MOUNTAIN SPELLS

The mountains are places of power, a region where air and earth meet to form the highest points in the land. A variety of spells dealing with earth and stone have been developed by mages and druids who live amongst the peaks.

## Cone of Earth

Evocation

**Level:** Drd 5, Sor/Wiz 6

**Components:** V, S, MF

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Area:** Cone

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Reflex partial

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

With this spell, you create a shock wave in the ground that causes rock and dirt to flow towards your foes like an earthen tsunami. All creatures within the spell's area of effect are pushed backwards to the edge of the spell's cone. They sustain 1d6 damage per caster level to a maximum of 15d6. A successful saving throw halves this damage and allows the creature to maintain its position.

Against structures, the spell inflicts double damage and ignores all hardness. Small huts and houses can be toppled when the wave of earth disrupts their foundations and pushes their wreckage into a smashed heap.

*Material Focus:* A small wooden shovel or pick.

## Earthen Embrace

Conjuration (Creation)

**Level:** Drd 2, Sor/Wiz 2

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Effect:** One earthen hand

**Duration:** One round per caster level

**Saving Throw:** None (see below)

**Spell Resistance:** No

With this spell, you call into existence a large fist of earth and rock that sprouts from the ground and seeks to grasp your foes. The fist occupies a single 5 ft. by 5 ft. area and has a reach of 5 feet. On your action, the fist may attempt to grapple an opponent within its threatened area. It attacks using your base attack bonus and has a Strength of 14 + 1 per 2 caster levels. The earthen fist uses all grappling options as normal, and may choose to inflict damage on an opponent or hold him place. The fist has hit points equal to half your normal maximum total and an AC of 18. It uses your saving throws to resist effects and is considered an elemental creature. It is immune to stun, sleep, critical hits, poison, and paralysis. The fist threatens the area it can reach and may flank opponents as normal. The fist may take on standard action per round and cannot move from its initial position.

*Arcane Material Component:* A clod of dirt that you crumble in your clenched fist as you complete this spell.

### Stone Fist

Transmutation (School Subtype) [Descriptors]

**Level:** Drd 1, Sor/Wiz 1

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** Creature touched

**Duration:** 1 minute/level

**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

Stone fist grants the hands of the creature touched a tough, rocky skin while enhancing their strength and grip. The recipient of this spell gains a +4 bonus to Strength for all checks that involve grasping, crushing, or gripping an object (including attempts to disarm or sunder a weapon). In addition, he makes unarmed attacks as if he had the Improved Unarmed Fighting feat. His fists deal 1d6 damage. In addition, his fists gain a +1 enhancement bonus to hit and damage per three caster levels to a maximum of +5.

*Material Component:* A small piece of granite.

### Wind Blast

Evocation

**Level:** Drd 2, Sor/Wiz 2

**Components:** V, S, F

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Target:** One creature or object

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Reflex partial

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

With this spell, you create a focused blast of wind that you can use in two different ways. You can project the blast of wind at a target to batter him and knock him to the ground. This inflicts 1d4 damage per caster level to a maximum of 10d4. A successful save halves this damage. In addition, on a failed save the target is pushed backwards 2 feet per caster level and is knocked prone.

Alternatively, you can target the blast at an item an opponent carries. The target of the spell saves as normal. On a failed save, you knock the item from his hand and push it 5 feet per caster level away from him. You may place the object anywhere you wish within this range, as the wind blast captures the object and flings it away from the target in a direction of your choosing. Only objects 10 lbs. or lighter may be targeted in this manner.

*Material Focus:* A small paper fan.

## MOUNTAIN MONSTERS

A variety of dangerous creatures stalk the mountain peaks. Presented here are a few monsters known to inhabit mountainous regions.

### LAVA BEAST

Large Elemental (Fire)

**Hit Dice:** 8d8+24 (60 hp)

**Initiative:** +4 (Improved Initiative)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**AC:** 17 (-1 size, +8 natural)

**Attacks:** Slam +8 melee

**Damage:** Slam 2d6+3 and 1d6 fire

**Face/Reach:** 5 ft. by 10 ft./10 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Gout of flame

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 ft., DR 10/+1, elemental qualities, fire subtype, SR 16

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +1

**Abilities:** Str 16, Dex 11, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 8, Cha 3

**Skills:** Listen +5, Move Silently +6

**Feats:** Improved Initiative

**Climate/Terrain:** Any volcanic mountains

**Organization:** Solitary, swarm (2–12)

**Challenge Rating:** 7

**Treasure:** Standard

**Alignment:** Always neutral

**Advancement:** 9–15 HD (Large); 16–24 HD (Huge)

Lava beasts are troubling pests that hale from the elemental plane of fire. Drawn to the material plane through elemental vortices that develop in areas of extreme volcanic activity, they seek out organic matter to burn and devour. Like simple animals, they hunt and attack creatures to satisfy their hunger, not out of a sense of malice. They are aggressive hunters who treat all targets as potential meals, making it equally likely a swarm of lava beasts attacks a blue dragon as a small group of halflings. Hunting far from their home plane, they lack the experience and intelligence to focus on appropriate targets.

### Combat

Like most wild animals, lava beasts employ limited tactics in stalking their prey. Usually, a lava beast finds a stone bridge or other safe path across a lava-flooded area and waits there to ambush travelers and animals. A beast opens its attack with its gout of flame, then rushes forward to overwhelm the nearest opponent.

**Gout of Flame (Ex):** Once every five rounds, a lava beast can expel a roaring gout of fire and lava. This attack takes the form of a cone 60 feet in length. All creatures within this area must make a Reflex save (DC 15) or suffer 6d6 fire damage. Those that succeed suffer half damage.

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Furthermore, the area covered by this attack is left covered in a boiling mass of superheated slime. A creature that ends its action in this area must make a Fortitude save (DC 16) or suffer 2d6 fire damage. This fiery goo burns away four rounds after the lava beasts uses this attack.

**Elemental Qualities (Ex):** Immune to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, critical hits. Cannot be flanked.

**Fire Subtype (Ex):** Fire immunity, double damage from cold except on a successful save.

### MOUNTAIN TROLL

Large Giant (Earth)

**Hit Dice:** 10d8+60 (105 hp)

**Initiative:** +0

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**AC:** 24 (-1 size, +15 natural)

**Attacks:** 2 claws +12 melee, bite +10 melee

**Damage:** Claw 1d6+6, bite 1d6+3

**Face/Reach:** 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Rend 2d6+9

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 90 ft., perfect camouflage, regeneration 5, scent, stone mason

**Saves:** Fort +13, Ref +3, Will +4

**Abilities:** Str 23, Dex 11, Con 23, Int 6, Wis 9, Cha 6

**Skills:** Jump +10, Listen +5, Spot +5

**Feats:** Alertness, Iron Will, Multiattack

**Climate/Terrain:** Any mountains

**Organization:** Solitary or gang (2-4)

**Challenge Rating:** 7

**Treasure:** Standard

**Alignment:** Always chaotic evil

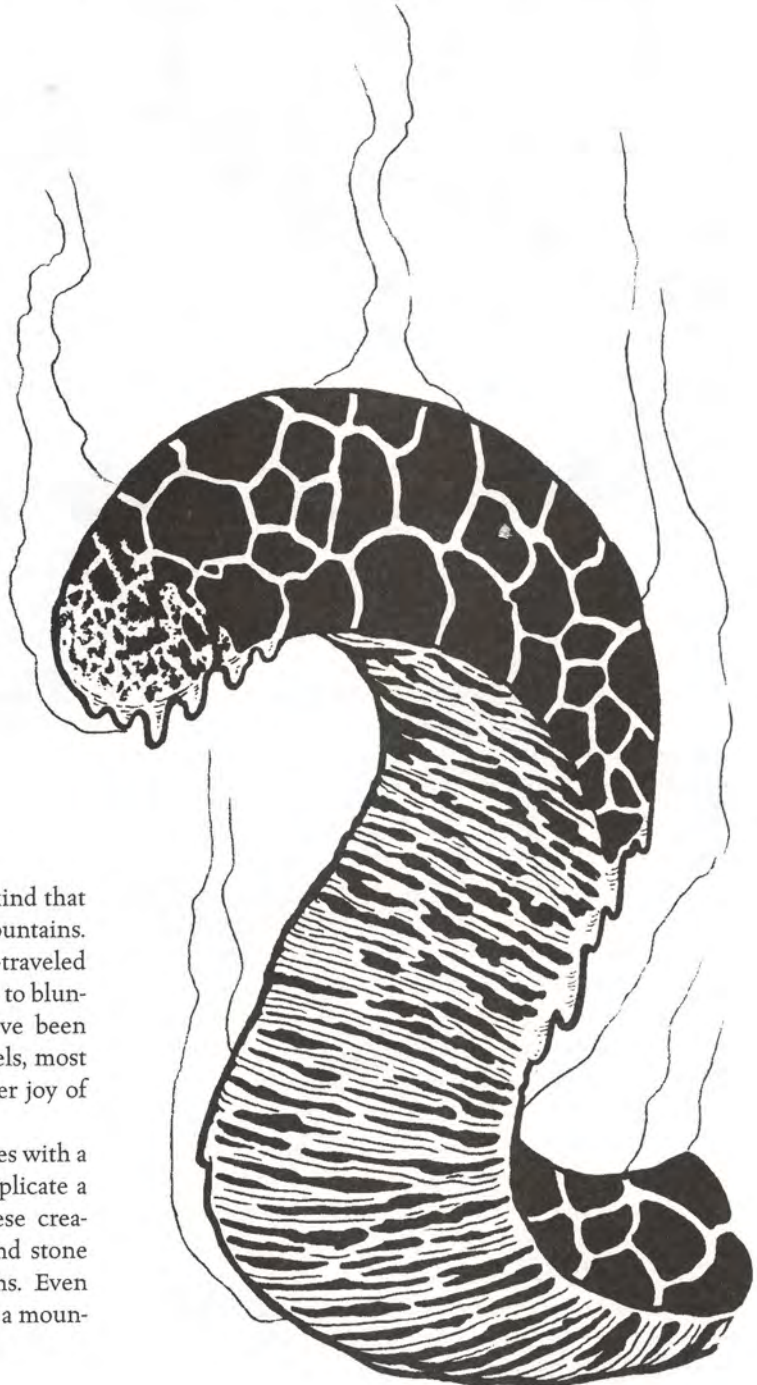
**Advancement:** By character class

Mountain trolls are a specialized species of trollkind that make their home in the high slopes of the mountains. Lurking along passes, trails, and other commonly-traveled areas, these brutes lie in wait for innocent victims to blunder into their traps. While mountain trolls have been known to collect shiny rocks and glittering jewels, most of them attack their victims for food or the sheer joy of inflicting pain.

A mountain troll is a tall, thick-bodied creature with a body that resembles a stone statue carved to duplicate a mundane troll's form. While unintelligent, these creatures are crafty and they use their coloration and stone bodies to blend into cliffs and rock formations. Even observant rangers and scouts can easily overlook a mountain troll lurking in hiding.

### Combat

Invariably, mountain trolls attack from ambush. Only puny victims that seem to be easy targets draw a direct attack from these beasts. Using their unique coloration, mountain trolls wait motionless besides a path. When a victim walks by, the troll leaps forward to attack with its claws and fangs. As creatures with a close connection to the earth elemental plane, mountain trolls have an innate





## MOUNTAINS



ability to bend and twist stone like soft clay. They use this ability to weaken bridges, cause avalanches or rock slides, and form cunning niches from where they can launch their ambushes.

**Rend (Ex):** If a mountain troll hits with both claw attacks, it latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This attack automatically deals an additional 2d6+9 points of damage.

**Perfect Camouflage (Ex):** When a mountain troll stands perfectly still, it is almost indistinguishable from the stone around it. While in this state, the troll gains a +20 competence bonus to Hide checks. Its total bonus to Hide after accounting for Dexterity, size, and this ability is +16.

**Regeneration (Ex):** Fire and acid deal normal damage to a mountain troll. If a troll loses a limb or body part, the lost portion regrows in 3d6 minutes. The creature can reattach the severed member instantly by holding it to the stump.

**Stone Mason (Su):** Mountain trolls have a natural affinity for rock. With a mere touch, they can bend and mold stone to fit their needs. In a more intelligent, less violent race's hands this ability could lead to useful tools and items, but the simple, vicious trolls use their talent to weaken bridges, build cave networks, and carve hidden spots where they can lurk to ambush travelers. A mountain troll can cast *stone shape* once per day as a 5th-level druid.

### PEAK GUARDIAN

Large Outsider (Earth)

**Hit Dice:** 12d8+60 (114 hp)

**Initiative:** +0 (Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**AC:** 17 (–1 size, +8 natural)

**Attacks:** 2 fists +18 melee

**Damage:** Fist 2d6+7

**Face/Reach:** 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Improved grab, power throw, spell-like abilities

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 ft., DR 20/+2, SR 22

**Saves:** Fort +13, Ref +8, Will +10

**Abilities:** Str 24, Dex 10, Con 20, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 10

**Skills:** Climb +21, Hide +12, Listen +18, Move Silently +14, Spot +18

**Feats:** Alertness, Blind-Fight, Power Attack, Sunder

**Climate/Terrain:** Any mountains

**Organization:** Solitary, sentinel (2–6)

**Challenge Rating:** 12

**Treasure:** Standard

**Alignment:** Always neutral

**Advancement:** 13–18 HD (Large); 19–25 HD (Huge)

## MOUNTAINS

Peak guardians are stone creatures crafted to guard the planar gates that appear when the junction of earth elemental energies (in the form of titanic mountains) intersects with the howling wind elemental energies of the upper atmosphere. At these points, gates between the material plane and almost any point across the outer planes can form. While normally such energies would spawn portals to the elemental planes, the unique interplay between earth and air creates a unique form of gateway. Earth's tendency towards strength and stability combine with air's propensity for speed over vast distances to form gateways that can reach almost any realm imaginable.

To watch these gateways and prevent their abuse, the elemental lords created the peak guardians. These faceless stone statues carved from the mountain's living rock stand at the gates to prevent mortals from too easily accessing the realms beyond. The gates are so durable that no method has yet been found to destroy them. Many epic tales tell of heroes who had to find a gateway and defeat the peak guardians watching it in order to complete their quest.

Peak guardians owe allegiance to the elemental lords who, through a compact with the gods, crafted them to watch the mountain portals. All other creatures they seek to restrain from entering or leaving the gates. While the guardians may not be powerful enough to hamper all who would use the passages, their defeat or destruction soon draws the attention of the elemental lords who, depending on the nature of the infraction, may send stone giants, xorn, or other creatures to avenge their loss.

### Combat

In battle, peak guardians rely on their spells and combat abilities in equal measure. They prefer to guard narrow mountain passes near cliffs and other sharp drops, allowing them to maximize their power throw ability. With their Blind-Fight feat, they usually use *obscuring mist* to provide themselves with cover and force their enemies to fight at a disadvantage. Once their opponents are lured in close, they use *blade barrier* to separate them or keep them at a distance and *animate objects* to quickly produce some useful allies.

**Improved Grab (Ex):** To use this ability, the peak guardian must hit with both its fist attacks. If it gets a hold, it attempts to use its power throw attack on its next action.

**Power Throw (Ex):** If a peak guardian makes a successful grapple check against an opponent it is grappling, it may pick up its opponent and throw him. As a base, a guardian can throw an opponent up to 100 feet. For every full 100 pounds the creature weighs, reduce this distance by 10 feet. A thrown creature takes 1d6 damage for every 10 feet it was thrown in addition to any falling damage it may suffer. Peak guardians usually attempt to throw their opponents off cliffs, into pits, or towards other spots that can remove them from the battle.

**Spell-like Abilities (Sp):** To aid them in their task, peak guardians have access to a number of divine spells. They can cast the following spells as a 12th level cleric: at will — *cause fear, command, obscuring mist*; 3/day — *air walk, invisibility purge, greater command, hold person, silence*; 1/day — *animate objects, blade barrier, harm*. The save DC to resist a peak guardian's spells is 12 plus the spell's level.



**THUNDER SPIRIT**

Large Elemental (Air)

**Hit Dice:** 12d8+60 (114 hp)

**Initiative:** +2 (Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

**AC:** 22 (+3 Dex, -1 size, +10 natural)

**Attacks:** Stormhammer +16/+12 melee

**Damage:** Stormhammer 2d8+8 and 2d6 electricity

**Face/Reach:** 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Beacon of lightning, lightning bolts, stormhammer

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 ft., DR 10/+2, elemental qualities, SR 20

**Saves:** Fort +9, Ref +11, Will +6

**Abilities:** Str 18, Dex 16, Con 20, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 16

**Skills:** Climb +13, Jump +13, Spot +11, Listen +11

**Feats:** Power Attack, Weapon Focus (stormhammer)

**Climate/Terrain:** Any mountains

**Organization:** Solitary, war band (2–10)

**Challenge Rating:** 10

**Treasure:** Standard

**Alignment:** Always neutral evil

**Advancement:** 13–18 HD (Large); 18–28 HD (Huge)

Thunder spirits are malicious raiders from the elemental plane of air who love to cause havoc and misery across the world's mountain ranges. They appear as spectral, 10-foot tall barbarian warriors clad in furs, leather, chainmail, and other, similar warlike garb. In battle, they fight with massive, enchanted hammers they carve from a metal found on the air elemental plane: the solid form of wind and electricity.

On their home planes, thunder spirits are wild marauders and conquerors. They soar upon the winds in longships perched on the backs of giant, flying lizards. While they are capable of flight, they rely on these transports to carry the treasure and loot they claim from their victims. The dukes of air hate them with a passion, and a state of war has long existed between the air elemental kingdoms and the thunder spirit raiders that prowl their borders. The few that journey to the prime plane come seeking easy pickings, preferably poorly-armed merchant caravans bearing the gold and jewels they so strongly covet.

**Combat**

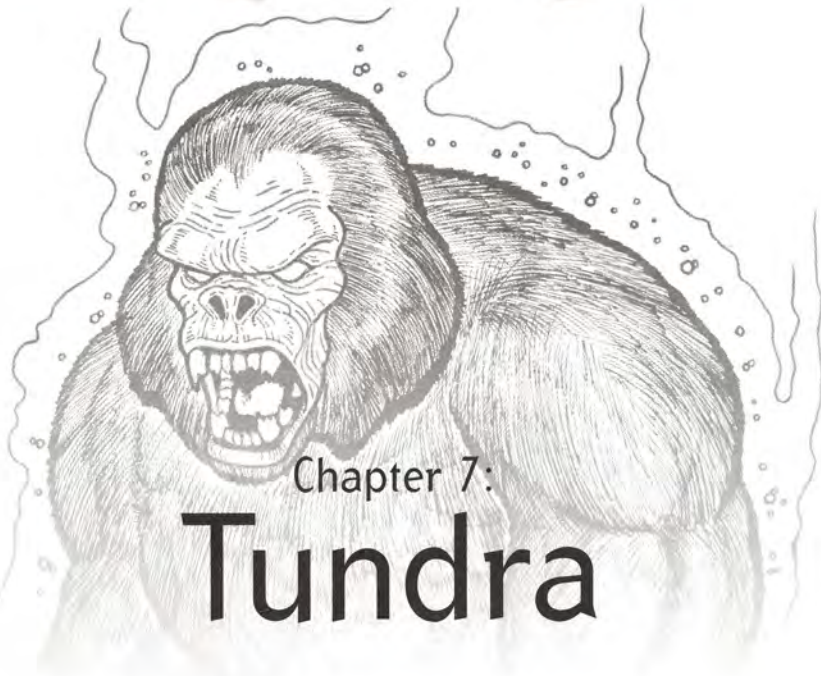
In battle, thunder spirits prefer to attack from above: residents of the prime plane are not always canny enough to look for an attack from the air. They use their beacon of lightning ability to blast their enemies with lightning and scatter them with strong gusts of wind. If possible, a thunder spirit attacks near a cliff or pit into which its winds can push its foes. Otherwise it wades into combat with its stormhammer, starting first with the weakest-looking enemies it can find and finishing with the most powerful.

**Beacon of Lightning (Su):** When fighting beneath the open sky, the thunder spirit can call down the wrath of wind and storm. By spending a full-round action to slam the ground repeatedly with its stormhammer, the thunder spirit generates a powerful, localized storm that scatters its foes with mighty winds and pummels them with searing bolts of lightning. All creatures within 60 ft. of the thunder spirit suffer 10d6 electrical damage from lightning bolts that rain from the sky. A Reflex save (DC 16) halves this damage. Furthermore, all creatures within 100 ft. of the thunder spirit must make Strength checks (DC 18) or be blown 30 ft. directly away from the spirit. Creatures forced into solid objects by this effect suffer 3d6 damage. A thunder spirit may use this ability once every 10 rounds.

**Lightning Bolts (Ex):** Thunder spirits carry jagged darts forged from raw lightning bolts in their belts. In battle, they fling these items at their enemies as a *lightning bolt* cast by a 10th-level sorcerer. The Reflex save against this effect is made against DC 16. A thunder spirit carries a maximum of four bolts and replenishes its supply at a rate of one per day.

**Stormhammer (Ex):** Thunder spirits fight with massive sledgehammers forged from a bright, blue metal mined from the elemental plane of air. These weapons are carved with lightning bolts along their hafts and heads, and when wielded by a thunder spirit they crackle with lightning. A stormhammer functions as a +2 weapon that deals an additional 2d6 electrical damage in combat. The stormhammer is bound to the thunder spirit. The creature cannot put it down or allow another creature to take it. It is permanently fused to its body. When the thunder spirit is defeated, this weapon disappears in a puff of blue smoke.

**Elemental Qualities (Ex):** Immune to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, critical hits. Cannot be flanked.



Chapter 7:

# Tundra

## THE TUNDRA ENVIRONMENT

The arctic tundra is one of the world's most dangerous environments, home to killing winds, unforgiving landscapes and mighty wildlife. To survive in this land, you must be tough, wise, and courageous in equal measure, with endless respect for nature's power but enough stubbornness to spit in its face when it tries to kill you (and it will indeed try).

The character classes, spells, feats, monsters and rules below are intended to capture some of the feel of living and adventuring in an arctic tundra environment. Adopt them into your campaign as you will, but remember: no one who enters the arctic tundra forgets it, or remains unchanged.

No one.

## RULES OF SURVIVAL

Adventures in the tundra are unlike those in any other environment. The tundra is arguably the deadliest of natural environments, rivaled only by the deep ocean depths, and nowhere else on the planet will adventurers find themselves locked in such deadly combat with the forces of wind, ice, and stone.

The rules presented below build upon those first introduced in the DMG, and will allow you to conduct adventures in the arctic tundra that will prove dangerous to your characters, and exciting and memorable for both DMs and players alike.

### SNOW BLINDNESS

When the sunlight reflects off hard-packed arctic snow and ice, the effects can be quite debilitating. At the DM's discretion, once a day he can require all characters to attempt a Fortitude save against a DC of 15 to avoid snow blindness. A failed save results in the character's vision being temporarily damaged. He suffers a  $-4$  penalty to all Spot and Search checks, a  $-2$  penalty to all ranged attacks, and a  $-1$  penalty to melee combat attack rolls and to his armor class. A roll of a natural 1 on the Fort save means the effects of snow blindness are permanent until treated by a *lesser restoration*, *restoration*, *regeneration* or *heal* spell. A successful Heal check against a DC of 15 will reduce snow blind penalties by half (min  $-1$ ). As with other environmental weather hazards, a successful Wilderness Lore skill check (DC 15) grants a  $+2$  bonus to Fort saves to resist snow blindness.

### MOVEMENT

Normally, moving across tundra is no different from moving across other wilderness terrains. The movement rates for moving across plains, scrub, forest, hills and mountains (the terrain types most commonly found in the tundra) are unchanged, though it is rare for highways and roads to be found there. Even the equivalent of sandy desert terrain can be found in the tundra, though it consists of trackless, shifting snow fields rather than sand dunes.

That said, there are times when moving through the tundra presents its own unique challenges. Some of these are outlined below.

- **Deep Snow:** Characters engaged in combat in snow more than a foot in depth are hampered in their movements. The check penalties for medium or heavy encumbrance is increased by  $-1$  or  $-2$ , respectively, and the character's speed is reduced by an additional 5 ft. per round. Furthermore, their running speed is reduced to  $\times 3$  for medium encumbrance, and  $\times 2$  for heavy encumbrance.
- **Ice:** Moving across ice, especially when under duress, is no easy task. A character can move a maximum of one half his speed with a successful Balance skill check against a DC of 15. Any faster than that and he must attempt a Balance skill check against a DC of 20; success allows him to move his full normal movement for the round, and failure indicates he cannot move at all and must succeed at a second balance check against a DC of 15 or fall prone. Characters involved in combat while on ice suffer a  $-2$  circumstance penalty to their armor class, to all Ref saves and to all Dexterity-based skill checks. Any character struck by a critical hit caused by a bludgeoning or crushing weapon, or successfully hit by a charge or bull rush, is automatically subject to a trip attempt; the defender must use his Dexterity score when resisting the trip attempt, and the attacker can only be tripped in return if he charged or initiated a bull rush.

### AVALANCHE

An avalanche, that rolling death wave of snow, ice and rock, is one of the arctic's most dangerous hazards. Most avalanches occur on snow-packed mountains and hills with a slope between 30—45 degrees, though they can and do occur on slopes of greater or lesser degree. Avalanches are caused by unstable snow packs, which can be influenced by high winds pushing drifts of snow, heavy precipitation altering the balance of the snow pack, or rapid increases in temperature which cause the snow pack to become wet and infirm. Once any or all of these conditions are met, any action or event which causes movement and vibration in the snow pack, such as objects or beings moving across it or even loud noises, can trigger a deadly avalanche.

**Triggering an Avalanche:** Should the Dungeon Master decide that the conditions are right for a potential avalanche, the following things could conceivably trigger one.

- **Motion:** When walking across unstable snow pack, any creature weighing more than 10 pounds must succeed at a Balance skill check once every five minutes or trigger an avalanche. The DC of the skill check depends on existing conditions. If the snow pack is on a slope between 30—45 degrees, the base DC is 10 to 12. On slopes of greater or lesser degree, the base DC is equal to 5. The base DC is modified as follows. If snow or other precipitation has fallen within the past 24 hours, the DC is raised by  $5 + 1$  for every inch of precipitation beyond 3. The DC is increased by 1 for every 10 miles per hour of wind velocity. Finally, the DC is increased by 1 for each 10 degrees of temperature above the median within the last 24 hours. As a rule of thumb, the average DC for a 30—45 degree sloped, avalanche-ready snow pack is 15, on a greater or lesser slope the DC is 8. Creatures moving across an avalanche-ready snow pack may not take 10 on their Balance skill checks.
- **Impact:** A sufficient impact upon an unstable snow pack is very likely to shift the weight enough to cause an avalanche. Should an object weighing 20 or more pounds directly impact an avalanche-primed snow pack, it is considered an attack against the snow pack's Break DC. Under normal avalanche-ready conditions, a snow pack on a 30—45 degree slope has a Break DC of 8—10, a snow pack on a slope above or below that has a Break DC of 12—15.
- **Sonic:** Though in reality it is a myth that loud noises cause avalanches, in popular myth the vibrations from sonic effects are often more than sufficient to trigger an avalanche. In extreme conditions, even a simple spoken word will trigger a fall. After the casting of any spell with a sonic descriptor, or which causes an eruption of sound when cast, such as the sonic boom of a lightning bolt, the Dungeon Master should roll to determine whether the sound was sufficient to cause an avalanche; the DC of the check is equal to the save DC of the spell. The use of sound based spell-like effects, like a bard's Bardic Music ability, requires a similar check, with the DC equal to the appropriate save DC. Other sounds may, at the Dungeon Master's discretion, require a check as well, with the check DC depending on the scale of noise; normal conversation requires a check against a DC of 5, the clash of weapons and armor 7—10, a shout 10—15, and the roar of a dragon DC 20. For the purposes of the check, an unstable snow pack (per the conditions listed above) on a 30—45 degree slope has no modifier, an unstable snow pack on a slope of higher or lower degree has a  $+5$  to the check. Each time a check is required during a 24 hour period, the check is made with a cumulative  $-1$  penalty, to a maximum of  $-10$ .

**Recognizing a Potential Avalanche:** A successful Wilderness Lore skill check against a DC of 25 allows a character to recognize an area ripe for an avalanche and take steps to avoid it.

*Effects of an Avalanche:* Once an avalanche is triggered, it is impossible to stop, and almost impossible to outrun. A large avalanche can cover an area 30,000 yards square with snow to a depth of 10 ft. or more, and can travel at a rate between 250 and 520 ft. per round — Dungeon Masters wishing to keep a more adventuresome feel might consider lowering the speed to between 100 and 200 ft. a round, so that speedier characters, such as barbarians and especially monks, can conceivably outrun it.

Should a character find himself caught up in an avalanche, he is instantly battered by incredible force, by chunks of packed snow and by incidental debris like rocks and branches. He must attempt a Reflex save (DC 20) or suffer 4d6 points of damage; a successful save reduces the damage to half. He is then caught up in the avalanche and sent tumbling, like a swimmer tossed by rapids, until it halts 3d6 rounds later. Each round, he must attempt a Swim skill check (DC 20) or suffer an additional 1d6 points of damage; success indicates that he is able to remain near the surface of the avalanche and somewhat control his body. On the final round of movement, roll 1d6+4 to determine how many feet below the surface each character is buried; a successful Swim skill check on the final round means the character is buried only 1d4 feet beneath the surface. Once the avalanche halts, characters with ranks in Intuit Direction can make a skill check against a DC of 20 to determine their body orientation; success indicates they know which direction leads to the surface, will not unknowingly dig themselves further into snow, and can jam a hand towards the surface of the avalanche, making it easier for friends to find them. Should the character fail, he can attempt a new check each round, though the DC increases by 1 each time. Characters with ranks in Wilderness Lore can, in the last round of avalanche movement, make a skill check (DC 15) to create a pocket of air in front of them, and to remember to jam their hand towards what they think is the surface.

Once buried in an avalanche, characters are subject to the normal rules for drowning, though characters who succeed in their Wilderness Lore skill check do not risk suffocation until three times their Constitution score in rounds have passed.

*Digging Free:* Characters trapped in an avalanche can attempt to dig themselves free. As the packed snow is hard and unwieldy, each round they must make a Strength check against a DC of 20 to move a foot through the snow. Characters fully buried beneath the snow must immediately begin making Constitution checks to avoid suffocation, due to the exertion involved.

*Searching for Buried Characters:* Characters attempting to find buried companions can attempt a Search skill check against a DC equal to 10 + 1 per foot the character is buried beneath the snow.

## FROSTBITE

Frostbite is literally the freezing of exposed tissue. It is characterized by white, waxy skin which feels numb to the touch, and can result in permanent tissue damage and disfigurement. As an optional rule, a character who suffers frostbite can only be successfully treated by magic, or by a Heal skill check against a DC of 15 + 1 per two hours since the frostbite occurred (maximum DC 25). Healing requires a number of hours equal to the amount of time since the frostbite occurred (maximum 24 hours). An unsuccessful Heal check means the limb is restored to functionality, but is permanently maimed, with blisters, cracks, and purplish swelling, until healed with a *lesser restoration*, *restoration*, or *regenerate spell*. Maimed limbs have no sense of touch, and impose a -1 penalty to all checks which involve their use. Maimed feet or legs reduce normal movement by 5 feet per round, cumulative.

The rules for contracting frostbite are found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

## HYPOTHERMIA

Any character whose body is more than half immersed in arctic water must immediately succeed at a Fort save against a DC of 15 or suffer 2d6 points of subdual damage and contract hypothermia. Each round he remains in the water, the DC of the check is increased by 1, and he must attempt another save. Should he pull himself from the water before hypothermia sets in, he must attempt another save each round, with the DC lowering by 1 each time, until the DC is reduced to 10; at that point, no more saves are required.

A character who succumbs to hypothermia must have his body temperature slowly raised to normal, which requires steady access to a non-direct heat source, like a fire, and a successful Heal skill check against a DC of 15.

The normal rules for contracting hypothermia are found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

## TRACKING

Tracking in the tundra follows the normal rules, with one exception: since the tundra environment is relatively static, the DC to Wilderness Lore skill checks for tracking is raised by one for every 48 hours after the trail was made, rather than 24.

## TUNDRA FEATURES

Tundra derives from the word *tunturia*, meaning “treeless plain.” A barren, frozen wasteland sparsely populated with shrubs, lichen, moss and a few hardy species of animals, at first blush the tundra seems a relatively boring place to adventure (aside from the concerns of freezing to death). Nothing could be further from the truth. Though the tundra is stark and spartan, looking beyond the surface of endless, windblown snow and rock reveals a chill world teeming with possibilities for excitement and danger.

### GENERAL OVERVIEW

The tundra is loosely divided into three areas, each more stark and unforgiving than the last. The three areas are the low arctic tundra, the middle arctic tundra, and the high arctic tundra.

**Low Arctic Tundra:** The low arctic tundra is the largest tundra zone, a land of equal parts ice, gurgling steams, bare rock and frozen dirt, dotted with tufts of scrub grass, berry-producing heath plants and short, hardy coniferous trees, and covered everywhere with enormous patches of moss and lichens. The low arctic tundra is home to caribou, musk ox, arctic hare, arctic fox, wolves, polar bears, lemming, and swarming hordes of mosquitoes and fat flies. During the brief summer months, flocks of migratory birds nest in the low arctic, fleeing to more hospitable climes as winter looms.

**Middle Arctic Tundra:** The middle arctic tundra is found along coastal plains and in areas where level ground prevents moisture runoff. Uneven thaws in the summer leave enormous, widespread and jumbled upheavals of rock everywhere, and the ground is often frozen to a depth of 20 ft or more year 'round. The middle arctic tundra is an extremely dry environment, though snow covers it upwards of 10 months a year — no more than four to eight inches of new moisture, mostly in the form of snow, falls each year. As a result, the plant life is dominated by moisture-efficient moss and lichens, which are fed on by mice, lemmings and caribou, who in turn provide sustenance to a few scattered arctic predators.

**High Arctic Tundra:** The high arctic tundra is almost exclusively restricted to small islands spread throughout seas and lakes. Jutting landscapes of jagged rock, dotted with small tufts of moss and splattered with bird droppings, the islands of the high arctic tundra are inhospitable to almost all forms of life. Occasionally, seals or aquatic fowl will gather on these islands to lay eggs, sleep, eat or simply rest for a moment.

### SPECIFIC FEATURES

**Glaciers:** A glacier is an enormous, millennia-old chunk of ice, packed snow and rock. Glaciers vary in size, with some large enough to cover the side of a mountain peak and others, particularly in a fantasy world, large enough to dwarf the mightiest mountains. Glaciers are responsible for carving most of the steep tundra valleys, and are often times shot through with immense caverns and natural ice tubes, which make fantastic locations for dragon's lairs or the like. Though made up primarily of ice and compacted snow, glaciers are relatively easy to climb, as their craggy surface contains many handholds. Adventurers would, however, be well advised to protect themselves against both arctic winds, which are strong enough to fling the unprepared to their death, and sudden avalanches which can bury climbers beneath hundreds of tons of ice, snow and rock.

**Other Ice Formations:** In addition to glaciers, the arctic tundra is home to countless other ice formations, from immense sheets of ancient ice to enormous free floating bergs. Here are some examples of naturally occurring ice formations that present interesting challenges for adventurers, or simply make for a more interesting landscape.

- **Ice Walls:** Ice walls frequently border arctic oceans and lakes, though they might also be found in areas of cataclysmic upheaval, such as where one ice shelf was pushed below another. Ice walls can reach hundreds of miles in length and hundreds of feet in height, and are almost always sheer, forcing adventurers to risk a difficult climb, extend precious magical resources, or detour hundreds of miles off their chosen path.
- **Ice Waterfalls:** Naturally occurring ice waterfalls are rare, even in a fantasy landscape, but they do exist. Though beautiful, an ice waterfall presents one of the world's most difficult climbing surfaces, with slick and unstable footing, ever-present and precariously balanced spears of ice everywhere and almost impossibly steep angles. That said, an ice waterfall makes for a wonderfully vivid backdrop for an epic battle, and is an excellent location for a lost city, perhaps destroyed in a cataclysmic explosion of primal cold energy.
- **Icebergs:** Free-floating chunks of ice akin to (and often broken off from) glaciers, icebergs are, other than aquatic monsters, the greatest threat to ships plying the arctic seas. The vast majority of an iceberg's surface is submerged, and would serve as an excellent location for a secret wizard's tower.

- **Ice “Sculptures”:** As large chunks of the arctic landscape melt away during the tundra’s short summer months, they often leave behind immense arches, pillars, staircases, and stacked piles of ice. These ice sculptures are sometimes beautiful, sometimes strange, and often-times both. In a fantasy world, ice sculptures also might be the work of an especially artistic and industrious elemental or frost giant, or a naturally-occurring phenomena viewed by primitive tribes as the work of gods. Naturally-occurring ice sculptures are notoriously fragile, and might collapse as a result of loud noise, a misstep, or a poorly-placed blow.

**Chasms:** The deep tundra landscape is split in many places by immense chasms resulting from shifting ice, tremors, uneven thaws or the actions of monsters and men. Ice chasms are a very real danger to explorers, as they are often hidden beneath thin layers of new-fallen snow or ice. Especially daring explorers might risk traversing a chasm by climbing up and down its walls, but the risk of sudden avalanche is great. Some chasms are spanned by narrow, natural or magically-created ice bridges; while some are safe to cross, many will collapse beneath the weight of a bird’s foot.

**Ice Bubbles:** It is not uncommon for pockets of hot and cold air to create ice bubbles, hollow eruptions of ice which push up from the tundra surface. Often hidden beneath a thin coating of snow, ice bubbles are another danger for unwary travelers: a person who falls through the thin layer of bubbled ice could face a fall of up to 30 ft.

**Rivers, Lakes and Streams:** Even in the harshest winter conditions, there are free-flowing bodies of water in the tundra. Wide, shallow rivers and streams crisscross the low tundra, and enormous lakes, many of which are covered by several feet of ice, are scattered about the countryside. During the fleeting summer months, when ice and snow thaw, new streams are born, and countless rivulets of melting ice stream over rock and glacier formations as waterfalls. The water of the rivers and lakes in the tundra is frigid, and either crystal clear or sparkling sapphire blue. Travels must be wary of thin ice, particularly in the summer months, as a wrong step can send them plunging into crystal depths frigid enough to kill in the space of a few breaths.

## FANTASTICAL FEATURES

In addition to its more mundane, natural aspects, the arctic tundra can be home to a plethora of fantastical features, from forests made entirely of ice to vortexes of snow that pull the unwary down to a hideous death. Here is just a sampling of what your characters might find in the land of endless winter.

**The Hall of History’s Echoes:** Deep in the chill heart of a vast landlocked glacier is the Hall of History’s Echoes, a divinely-made chamber of enchanted ice in which the echo of every whisper, every shout, every word or sound spoken or made in the course of world history reverberates. Groups of related sounds are absorbed and stored into a single ice spike as facts would be stored in a tome of paper and ink, and the spikes are catalogued and protected by unusually intelligent and peaceful frost elementals, working at the behest of an unknown god of knowledge. Though the chamber stores every sound in the history of the world, it is absolutely quiet at all times — footfalls, or the clanking of sword on armored hip, even the hiss of quill on parchment, are immediately swallowed up by the enchanted ice.

**The Ice Legion:** Locked in a frozen torrent pouring over a cliffside is an immense legion of undead, known to scholars as the Ice Legion. Skeletons, zombies, wights and other, darker things are counted among their numbers, and they are held immobile in a chill graveyard, some completely entombed by ice, while others have an arm, a leg, head or half their body free. The horde is all that remains of a great necromantic empire, the frozen waterfall that binds them the legacy of the arch-druid who laid their masters low. The crushing weight of ice and time has rendered the undead senseless, and though their hunger for flesh is unabated, most barely stir or even make a sound when living beings walk among them. Should a necromancer of enough power free them, however, they would rise again to serve him, a great host eager to claw down the walls of civilization.

**Elemental Vortexes and The Source of All Frost:** Scattered throughout the heart of the arctic tundra are elemental vortexes, portals of howling winds and snow that lead directly to and from the elemental plane of ice. Most are found in isolated mountain caves, or at the bottom of arctic seas and lakes, where their immense winds and the constant war of energies pushing and pulling through them causes wide, sluggish whirlpools to form. A stunning variety of elemental creatures and beasts who thrive in the cold can be found in the near vicinity, and those capable of reasoning will protect the portals zealously, lest they lose their paradise. The largest of all ice elemental vortexes is the Source of All Frost, a whirlpool of snow and ice, shot through with tumbling chunks of rock the size of a galley, in the heart of a great, flat mountain valley. The wind for miles around the area trembles and sucks at the air like breath issuing from a great mouth, and only creatures of purest ice can stand to live there for long. The area is ruled over by a frost elemental large and ferocious as a dragon, which swims through the vortex as a whale skims the ocean’s depths.



**Forever Spring:** Legends speak of geyser-heated, lush jungle landscapes secreted away in the depths of the tundra ice. These areas are rumored to be populated by savage and primitive humanoid tribes, and by huge and terrifying lizard beasts known to scholars as dinosaurs. Those few scholars who actually believe such oasis exist think they do so only at the whims of nature gods, or thanks to the efforts of great and powerful arch-druids or wizards. What purpose such a place could possibly serve are unknown, but who can presume to fathom the whims and intentions of gods or mighty spellcasters?

**Forsaken Traders:** Sailing in arctic waters is a risky proposition at best. In addition to the dangers of free-floating glaciers and hungry aquatic predators, those who ply the chill waterways of the tundra risk becoming ice-bound as a result of a sudden blizzard or severe drop in temperature. Those who do find themselves so trapped must flee their vessels and hope to reach settled lands, or else remain and hope that another vessel discovers them before they succumb to a lonely, frigid death. All too often, the miraculous rescue never comes. Forsaken traders are ghost ships, ice-locked testaments to the tundra's killing power. Characters who stumble upon a forsaken trader will often find both perfectly-preserved bodies and cargoes within, which can make their fortune or bring their ruin, as the spirits of those who died protecting their investments are jealous and not easily destroyed. A forsaken trader could also serve as a lair for a family of polar bears, a makeshift fortress for a frost giant raiding party, or even as the first treasure horde of a young white dragon.

**The Honeycomb:** One of the tundra's greatest predators is the remorhaz, a ceaselessly hungry subterranean insectile horror whose stomach is a blast furnace inferno. Remorhaz forever traverse the deep tundra, hunting for their next meal, and fighting or mating (or both) on those occasions where their paths intersect. Many of the tunnels they burrow through the permafrost never disappear so there may be an unimaginably large honeycomb network of tunnels hidden beneath a given tundra surface. Enterprising explorers who stumble across the entrance to a remorhaz tunnel can use the dark and winding pathway to escape the dangerous weather above and reach their destination faster, though there is one very considerable danger: a remorhaz fighting in defense of its tunnels is even more dangerous than a remorhaz on the hunt. Should unfortunate explorers chance to meet one or more in their dark, narrow and twisting tunnels, it is doubtful they would escape.

**The Dragon's Graveyard:** In a long forgotten valley rests the Dragon's Graveyard, the last resting place of uncounted ancient white dragons. Those who sense the end of their days approaching take wing to come here, where they throw their aged bodies down among the bones of their fellows and take their final breaths. As they die, the frozen hearts of many white dragons explode — coating their bodies in a thick layer of magical ice — so many of the corpses found here are perfectly preserved. The rest are mummified, their flesh sunken and tightly wrapped around their bones. All animals and most other intelligent creatures avoid the Graveyard, as the spirits, and even bodies, of many of the greatest white dragons still haunt the valley, crushing or ensorcelling those who would dare to disturb their slumber.

**Land of Black Ice:** The accursed Land of Black Ice is a demonic wasteland, a seemingly endless expanse of pitted ice the color of blood and obsidian. The ice is the frozen essence of the lower planes, a malignant corruption that oozed up from the depths following a massive battle between demons and devils on the elemental plane of ice. Those who travel across the Land of Black Ice risk becoming infected by infernal essence, and the landscape is haunted by fiendish wolves and bears, as well as by at least one corrupted dwarf tribe which has fallen into cannibalism and depravity. The boundaries of the Land of Black Ice are guarded by celestial stewards and a few patrols of hardened paladins and clerics, who will test the moral mettle of any who wish to pass into the ice.

## TUNDRA RANGER

Close cousin to both the barbarian and the mercenary ranger, the tundra ranger is tough and self-sufficient, a hunter, stalker, and survivalist without peer.

**Adventures:** Simply surviving a day in the tundra is an adventure in and of itself, but tundra rangers also make forays into the deep wastes to search for lost hunting parties, strike back against marauding giants, or carry messages between far-flung villages.

**Characteristics:** Tundra rangers are masters of the ice and snow, capable of surviving blizzards naked, or starting fires with no flint or tinder. Many tundra rangers are solitary by nature, but others seek out the companionship of like-minded folk, living amongst barbarian tribes or the prospectors who the tundra home.

**Religion:** Religion is a personal thing to the tundra rangers. Most choose to pay homage to one or more gods of luck, nature and winter, seeking every survival edge they can get. Others, particularly those most inclined to self-sufficiency, refuse to pay homage to anyone, let alone distant, impersonal gods.

**Background:** Most tundra rangers begin their lives as the sons or daughters of explorers, hunters and trackers, prospectors, or barbarian tribesmen, but anyone who feels the call of the arctic wilderness can take up the mantle.

**Races:** There are tundra rangers of every race, though humans, dwarves and especially half-orcs are most attracted to the ice wanderer's life.

**Other Classes:** Tundra rangers respect and admire those who are capable of making their way in the wilderness, so they work best with barbarians, druids, other rangers and wilderness-minded rogues. They approach members of other classes on a case-by-case basis, though they rarely see eye-to-eye with bards, whom they consider to be overly fragile dilettantes.

## GAME RULE INFORMATION

**Abilities:** Constitution and Wisdom are critically important to tundra rangers, as both endurance and willpower are vital for those who would make their fortunes in the tundra. Strength and Dexterity are also important, as the lightly armored tundra ranger often finds himself in mortal combat with some of the deadliest beasts in the known world.

**Alignment:** Tundra rangers can be of any alignment.

**Hit Die:** d10.

## Class Skills

The class skills for the tundra ranger, and the key ability score for each skill, are Animal Empathy (Cha, exclusive skill), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Intimidation (Cha), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Use Rope (Dex), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

**Skill Points at 1st Level:** (6 + Int modifier) × 4.

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:** 6 + Int modifier.

## Class Features

All the following are class features of the tundra ranger.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiencies:** The tundra ranger does not have access to the full range of weapons and armor available to his brethren in more civilized areas, and in truth, he does not need them. The tundra ranger is proficient with all simple melee weapons and the following martial weapons: throwing axe, light hammer, handaxe, light pick, short sword, battleaxe, longsword, heavy pick, warhammer, greataxe, greatclub, and greatsword. Tundra rangers are also proficient with darts, slings,

javelins and shortbows, longbows, composite shortbows, and composite longbows. They are proficient with light and medium armor, and with shields.

**Favored Enemy:** The tundra ranger is intimately familiar with the strengths and weaknesses of those creatures who thrive in the chill arctic air. Beginning at 1st level, a tundra ranger gains a +1 bonus to all attack and damage rolls against creatures with the cold subtype. The damage bonus applies to ranged weapons as well, but only when used against targets within 30 ft. At 5th level, and again at 9th, 14th, and 19th level, the bonus to attack and damage rolls either increases by +1 against cold subtype creatures, or the tundra ranger selects a new favored enemy from the list below. If the tundra ranger selects a new favored enemy, the bonus gained applies only to that enemy.

In addition to cold subtype creatures, the tundra ranger can select as a favored enemy any one of the following groups:

**TABLE 7-1: TUNDRA RANGER FAVORED ENEMIES**

Type	Examples
Animals	Polar bears (including all dire animals)
Beasts	Owl bear
Elementals	Frost elemental
Giants	Frost giant
Humanoid Type	*
Magical Beasts	Remorhaz
Organizations	*
Outsider Type	*
Shapechangers	Werebears
Undead	Zombies

\* Tundra rangers may not select "humanoid," "organization" or "outsider" as a favored enemy, but they may select a specific humanoid (goblin, human), organization (winter witches, lords of the white wastes), or outsider (salamanders, demons). A tundra ranger may select his own race as a favored enemy, regardless of his alignment.

**Track:** A tundra ranger gains the Track feat for free at 1st level.

**Tundra Master:** A tundra ranger is the undisputed master of the arctic tundra, and he knows its terrain as if it were his own flesh. Beginning at 1st level, a tundra ranger gains a +2 circumstance bonus to Climb, Hide, Intuit Direction, Listen, Move Silently, Search, Spot, and Wilderness Lore skill checks while in the tundra. At 3rd level, and every 5 levels thereafter (8th, 13th, 18th), the tundra ranger gains more knowledge about the tundra and grows more adept at operating within it.

At 3rd level, the tundra ranger is harder to track within the tundra. Those attempting to track the tundra ranger or a party led by him through the tundra add one half his class level to the DC.

Beginning at 8th level, the tundra ranger ignores most movement penalties when moving through tundra. Overland movement through the tundra by the tundra ranger or a party led by him improves the terrain modifier by one step. Trackless is considered road movement, and road movement is considered highway movement. (There is no benefit if the party is already on the highway.) Beyond that, when in combat, the tundra ranger, and only the tundra ranger, ignores all movement penalties when moving across ice or any type of snow (see Rules of Survival for listings of movement penalties).

At 13th level, the tundra ranger gains the Trackless Step ability while within the tundra; he can no longer be tracked when moving through the tundra.

At 18th level, the tundra ranger gains a +2 circumstance bonus to all initiative checks while in the tundra.

**Ranger Option:** At 2nd level, and again at 6th, 11th, and 20th levels, the tundra ranger can select one of the following ranger options listed below. Unless specified otherwise, the same option can be selected more than once.

**Option 1:** The tundra ranger can select a bonus feat from this list: Alertness, Ambidexterity (applies to double weapons), Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge (Mobility, Spring Attack), Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Point Blank Shot (Far Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run), Power Attack (Cleave, Great Cleave), Quick Draw, Run, Two-Weapon Fighting, (applies to double weapons) (Improved Two-Weapon Fighting) (applies to double weapons), Weapon Focus, or any feat, save I Stand Alone, listed under Tundra Feats below. This feat can only be used while he is wearing light or no armor.

Some of these feats can only be gained after the tundra ranger has gained one or more prerequisite feats; these are listed parenthetically after the prerequisite feat.

**Option 2:** The tundra ranger benefits from 10 ft. extra base movement so long as he wears light or no armor, and so long as he is in a favored terrain type. This bonus stacks with extra movement gained from other classes.

**Option 3:** The tundra ranger may increase one of his favored enemy bonuses by +1.

**Option 4:** The tundra ranger gains a number of hit points equal to his class level (minimum 3).

**Option 5:** The tundra ranger gains the ability to sneak attack his favored enemies as a rogue would. He gains sneak attack +2d6, which only applies to his favored enemies, and can only be increased by selecting this option again.

**Option 3:** The tundra ranger increases his cold resistance by 5.

**Cold Heart (Ex):** A tundra ranger is master of the winter world, and no longer fears the cold as other men do. At 4th level, he gains resistance to energy (cold) equal to the combined sum of his Constitution and Wisdom bonuses, which stacks with any other cold resistance he may possess.

**Ice Heart (Ex):** At 16th level, the tundra ranger's resistance to cold energy increases by +10. This bonus stacks with any other cold resistance he might possess.

TABLE 7-2: TUNDRA RANGER

Base Class Level	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+2	Favored enemy, tundra master 1, track
2	+2	+3	+0	+3	Ranger option
3	+3	+3	+1	+3	Tundra master 2
4	+4	+4	+1	+4	Cold heart
5	+5	+4	+1	+4	Favored enemy 2
6	+6/+1	+5	+2	+5	Ranger option
7	+7/+2	+5	+2	+5	
8	+8/+3	+6	+2	+6	Tundra master 3
9	+9/+4	+6	+3	+6	Favored enemy 3
10	+10/+5	+7	+3	+7	
11	+11/+6/+1	+7	+3	+7	Ranger option
12	+12/+7/+2	+8	+4	+8	
13	+13/+8/+3	+8	+4	+8	Tundra master 4
14	+14/+9/+4	+9	+4	+9	Favored enemy 4
15	+15/+10/+5	+9	+5	+9	
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+5	+10	Ranger option, ice heart
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	+10	
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+6	+11	Tundra master 5
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+6	+11	Favored enemy 5
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+6	+12	Call of the wild, ranger option

**Call of the Wild:** At 20th level, the tundra ranger gains the loyalty of all wild things. He gains the Leadership feat for free. He is considered to have a permanent Leadership score of 10 that can only be modified by his Charisma. All his followers and cohorts are animals, beasts or magical beasts chosen by the Dungeon Master, tundra ranger, or both.

## PRESTIGE CLASSES

The following prestige classes represent some of the unique personalities who dwell in a fantasy tundra environment. Though their powers are based around ice and snow, and they are most effective there, they are no means restricted to the arctic tundra and can be used effectively anywhere.

### KING OF WINTER

The desolation, solitude and danger of the endless arctic tundra is a siren call to some hardy souls. Tired of the trappings of civilization, these hardy few seek truth and happiness in the world's harshest, most unforgiving environment. Many die within a short time of arrival, and others flee the cold and solitude, but a precious few adapt, discovering within themselves an instinct for survival and a hunger for the challenge only the tundra can provide.

The greatest of all these folk are the kings of winter, men and women with ice in their veins, in their hearts and in their souls. They run, alone and unarmored, across the tundra plains, hunting wolves, wrestling great giants and smiting dragons with weapons forged of pure ice drawn from their own essence. Most kings of winter start out as barbarians or rangers, though any warrior with sufficient courage and dedication can pursue the path of cold glory.

**Hit Die:** d10.

#### REQUIREMENTS

The following are the requirements for entering the king of winter prestige class.

**Base Attack Bonus:** +6.

**Base Fort Save:** +4.

**Craft (armorsmith):** 6 ranks.

**Craft (weaponsmith):** 6 ranks.

**Wilderness Lore:** 6 ranks.

**Feats:** Endurance, Great Fortitude.

**Special:** The character must spend a minimum of 6 months in a tundra environment, and must personally slay either a white dragon or frost elemental in single combat, without the aid of fire (magical or otherwise).

#### CLASS SKILLS

The king of winter's class skills, and the relevant ability for each skill, are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (armorsmith, weaponsmith), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

**Skill Points Per Level:** 4 + Int bonus.

#### CLASS FEATURES

All the following are class features of the king of winter.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiencies:** Kings of winter gain no new weapon proficiencies, and have no proficiency with armor or shields.

**Surefooted (Ex):** The king of winter is supernaturally agile and surefooted, able to run across ice floes at full speed, climb frozen waterfalls in blizzard conditions, and leap across ice chasms without fear of stumbling. Beginning at 1st level, the king of winter gains a +2 per class level insight bonus to all Balance, Climb, Jump and Move Silently skill checks. In addition, he retains his normal movement rate when moving or climbing over icy terrain.

**Cold Resistance (Ex):** The king of winter doesn't just survive in freezing temperatures and arctic environments, he thrives in them. For him, the chill touch of arctic air is like a lover's caress. Beginning at 1st level, the king of winter benefits from resistance to energy (cold) equal to  $5 + 2 \times$  his class level. This resistance applies to the effects of both natural and magical cold, so a king of winter has little to fear from exposure to extreme arctic temperatures.

**Ice Blade (Su):** Beginning at 2nd level, the king of winter gains access to his most potent gift; the ability to sculpt weapons from ice and snow. In order to activate this ability, the king of winter need merely plunge his hand into a volume of normal or magical ice or snow equal to 1" square per pound of the weapon's weight for a full round. At the end of this time, the ice and snow is absorbed into the king of winter's body, where it is supernaturally charged and hardened over the course of another round. At the end of the second round, the king of winter must make a Craft (weaponsmith) check against a DC equal to  $10 + \frac{1}{2}$  the weight of the weapon he wishes to create + 1 per enhancement bonus (if any, see below). If the check is successful, the ice flows out of his palm and forms into a flawless weapon exactly as he intended. If the check fails, the ice forms a shapeless mass, suitable only for use as a club and shattering after one successful hit. On a failed check, the weapon also fails to contain any special properties. The ice blade ability can only be used to create melee weapons, and can only generate weapons the king of winter is proficient with. Exclusively ranged weapons cannot

be generated by the ice blade ability — an ice dagger, or any other weapon capable of being used in both melee and ranged combat, could be thrown as normal, but it shatters and disappears after being used in this fashion, whether or not it successfully strikes its target.

The ice and snow absorbed by a king of winter is charged with arcane energy as it passes through his body. If he wishes, the king of winter can activate that latent energy, creating magical weapons of ice as potent as any created by a wizard. The king of winter can add an effective +1 enhancement bonus per level in this prestige class to any magical blade he creates, to a maximum of +5 to hit and damage, with the remainder used to give the weapon any of the following special abilities: *defending*, *frost*, *icy burst*, *keen*, *mighty cleaving*, *speed*, *vorpal*, or *wounding*. If the

king of winter wields more than one ice blade weapon simultaneously, the enhancement bonuses must be split between the two weapons, in any fashion the character wishes.

Weapons formed from the ice blade ability last 1 minute + 1 minute per level in this class + the king of winter's Constitution modifier, if any. Created weapons have hardness and hit points equal to a normal steel weapon, and those with enhancement bonuses can only be damaged by weapons with equal or greater bonuses. As they are charged with supernatural energy, ice blade weapons do not suffer extra damage from fire or heat attacks. A king of winter can be disarmed of his ice blades, but as they are at least partially attached to his body, he gains a +4

bonus to resist disarming. Only the king of winter can wield the weapons he creates — they melt into nothingness when they leave his hand — and he can maintain a maximum of two ice blade weapons at any one time, each of which must be created separately.

**Ice Arrow (Su):** At 3rd level, the king of winter has gained sufficient control over his ice blade abilities to allow him to generate and fire icicle like projectiles from the palms of his hand. 3 times per day, he can fire a bolt of pure ice that inflicts 1d6 points of damage per class level to a single target (Reflex save DC 13 + Constitution modifier for  $\frac{1}{2}$  damage). The projectile has a maximum range equal to 10 ft. + 10 ft. per class level. Firing an ice arrow is a full round action, and requires the king of winter to be in contact (whether with bare hands or feet) with a volume of ice or snow equal to 1 in. square per 1d6 of damage.



**Ice Armor (Su):** Beginning at 4th level, the king of winter gains the ability to absorb ice and use it to create thick but flexible armored plates to protect his vital areas. As with the ice blade ability, the king of winter must first plunge his hand for one full round into volume of natural or magical ice or snow equal to 1 in. square per pound of armor to be created. At the end of that time, the ice is absorbed into his body and magically charged for another round. At the end of the second round, he must attempt a Craft (armorsmith) check against a DC equal to 10 + armor bonus + enhancement bonus (if any, see below). A successful check means the armor functions perfectly, but a failed check means the armor gains only a +1 armor bonus, does not benefit from any enhancement bonuses, and shatters after the king of winter is struck once.

The king of winter can create an icy version of any type of armor he is proficient with, with the armor functioning as a normal suit of armor of that type in all respects (armor check penalty, weight, maximum speed, weight, etc). The king of winter can also add enhancement bonuses, equal to his level in this class, to his ice armor, though he can only add the following special abilities: *acid resistance*, *cold resistance*, *fire resistance*, *fortification*, *invulnerability*, *lightning resistance*, *silent moves*, *slick*, and *spell resistance*.

Armor formed from the ice armor ability lasts for 1 minute + 1 minute per class level + the king of winter's Constitution modifier. Ice armor is not vulnerable to fire or heat attacks, but it can only be used by the king of winter; it melts instantly when no longer in contact with him.

**Self Creation (Su):** Beginning at 5th level, the king of winter is no longer dependant upon outside sources for creating his weapons, armor and icy bolts. Instead, he can use his body's own moisture to create his tools of war, at a cost in temporary hit points equal to 1 + 1 per 5 pounds of created weapon or armor weight (round up) + 1 per point of enhancement bonus. Hit points used in this fashion cannot be healed by magical or normal means while the created item still exists, but as a move equivalent action, the king of winter can absorb one or all of his ice creations back into his body, instantly recovering the appropriate

number of hit points. If a weapon created in this fashion is sundered, or if the king of winter is disarmed or throws his weapon, the temporary hit points become real damage, but can be healed as normal.

If the king of winter chooses to use self creation in tandem with his ice arrow ability, he suffers 1 point of damage per 1d6 dice of damage inflicted. Damage suffered in this fashion can be healed by magic or natural healing as normal.

**Malleable (Su):** Much as snow can be sculpted and reshaped, so too can the king of winter stretch and manipulate his body to a limited degree. Beginning at 6th level, the king of winter reduces the damage of all bludgeoning attacks he suffers by 1 point: his body absorbs the impact the way snow gives way to the weight of footsteps. More importantly, as a full round action, the king of winter can cause his arms and legs to stretch and flow, as an icicle would, giving him increased reach and mobility. A king of winter who lengthens his arms and legs adds 10 ft. to his base movement and gains an additional 10 ft. reach. Unfortunately, while so distorted, his body loses much of its natural grace, and he suffers a temporary loss of 4 Dexterity.

**Winter's Kiss (Su):** Beginning at 7th level, the king of winter can store cold energy as temporary hit points, allowing him to use his self creation ability to create ice weapons and armor without harming himself. He can absorb and store a number of points of damage inflicted by cold attacks or environmental effects equal to the amount of cold resistance he possesses. He still retains his cold resistance even when he has reached maximum absorption.

**Fast Creation:** A king of winter who has reached this level of accomplishment can create weapons and armor of pure ice almost as an afterthought. Starting at 8th level, the king of winter requires only a single full round action to create an ice blade or ice armor, and can create and fire an ice arrow as a standard action. In addition, he gains a +2 bonus to all Craft (weaponsmith) and Craft (armorsmith) skill checks he attempts, but only when using his ice blade and ice armor special abilities.

TABLE 7-3: THE KING OF WINTER

Base					
Class	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	
Level	Bonus	Save	Save	Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+2	Sure footed, Ice resistance
2	+2	+3	+0	+3	Ice blade
3	+3	+3	+1	+3	Ice arrow
4	+4	+4	+1	+4	Ice armor
5	+5	+4	+1	+4	Self creation
6	+6/+1	+5	+2	+5	Malleable
7	+7/+2	+5	+2	+5	Winter's kiss
8	+8/+3	+6	+2	+6	Fast creation
9	+9/+4	+6	+3	+6	Avalanche's swiftness
10	+10/+5	+7	+3	+7	Elemental

**Avalanche's Swiftmess:** At 9th level, the king of winter's base speed is increased by 10 ft. This increase stacks with that gained from other class abilities, such as the barbarian's fast movement ability. This ability only applies in areas of snow or ice, or when the temperature is below freezing.

**Elemental:** At 10th level, the king of winter transcends the limits of mortal flesh and is infused with the essence of elemental ice itself. His type changes to elemental, granting him immunity to poison, sleep, paralysis, and stunning. In addition, he is no longer subject to critical hits or flanking attacks. He also gains immunity to spells and spell-like affects that specifically target humanoids, and possesses darkvision to a range of 60 ft. The transformation also renders the king of winter effectively ageless, and as a result he no longer suffers aging penalties (though he will still die when his time is up, as all mortals must).

The transformation into elemental form causes minor permanent changes in the king of winter's appearance; his eyes take on the crystal blue clarity of purest ice, his hair is white as new snow and limned with frost and his skin is pale blue and cool to the touch. A transformed king of winter sweats in temperatures above freezing, and finds the heat of even a small camping fire uncomfortable.

## SNOW BROTHER

To willingly dedicate oneself to the protection and preservation of the tundra requires a very peculiar outlook on life, a perspective that is rare even among the druid folk. Those few who do have the natural temperament for it are known as snow brothers, for they are one with the ice, the killing winds and endless mountains of snow.

There are, or have been, snow brothers of every race, though the majority of their numbers come from human, dwarf or half-orc stock. Drawn to the tundra's solitude, they resent the presence of civilized folk, though good hearted snow brothers will take it upon themselves to watch over those unprepared to survive in the frozen wilderness.

**Hit Die:** d8.

### REQUIREMENTS

In order to become a snow brother, the character must meet all the following requirements:

**Alignment:** Any neutral.

**Base Fortitude Save:** +5.

**Knowledge (nature):** 9 ranks.

**Spellcraft:** 9 ranks.

**Wilderness Lore:** 9 ranks.

**Feats:** Great Fortitude.

**Spells:** The character must be able to cast druid spells of at least 3rd level.

**Special:** The character must be able to *wild shape* at least 1 time per day.

### CLASS SKILLS

The snow brother's skills, and the relevant abilities for each are Concentration (Con), Heal (Wis), Intuit Direction (Wis), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Spellcraft (Int), Swim (Str), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

**Skill Points Per Level:** 4 + Intelligence bonus.

### CLASS FEATURES

All the following are class features of the snow brother.

**Armor and Weapon Proficiencies:** Snow brothers receive no new weapon proficiencies and gain no new armor or shield proficiencies.

**Spellcasting:** A snow brother continues to gain in spellcasting power as he gains levels. Each time he gains a new level he adds a new druid spellcasting level, as though he had gained a level as a druid. He does not, however, gain any of the other benefits for going up a level in the druid class.

TABLE 7-4: THE SNOW BROTHER

Base						
Class	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will		
Level	Bonus	Save	Save	Save	Special	Spells per Day
1	+0	+2	+0	+2	Snow components	+1 level of existing class
2	+1	+3	+0	+3		+1 level of existing class
3	+2	+3	+1	+3	Frost spell	+1 level of existing class
4	+3	+4	+1	+4	Cold immunity	+1 level of existing class
5	+3	+4	+1	+4		+1 level of existing class
6	+4	+5	+2	+5	Frost elemental, <i>wild shape</i> (2/day)	+1 level of existing class
7	+5	+5	+2	+5	Cold regeneration	+1 level of existing class
8	+6/+1	+6	+2	+6	Frost elemental, <i>wild shape</i> (4/day)	+1 level of existing class
9	+6/+1	+6	+3	+6		+1 level of existing class
10	+7/+2	+7	+3	+7	Elemental ascension	+1 level of existing class

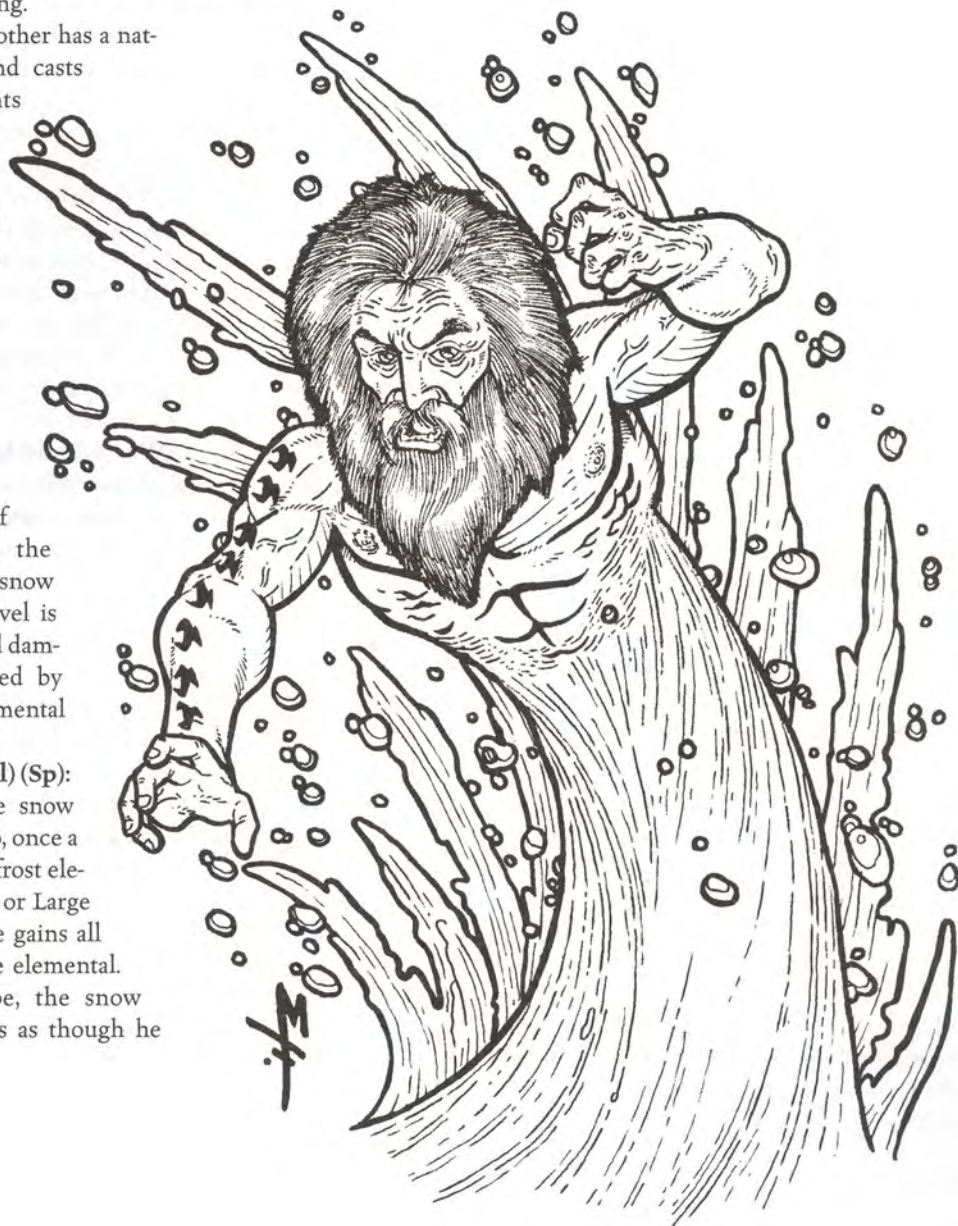
**Snow Components:** Living as they do in the harsh, blasted wastelands of the deepest tundra, snow brothers do not have the easy access to common spell components that other spellcasters do. To compensate for this, they have modified their spells slightly, so that they substitute snow for other inexpensive components. Starting at 1st level, they can substitute a pinch of snow or ice for their divine focus and for any spell component that costs 10gp or less. Only natural snow can be used as a divine focus and material component — magical snow, whether created by spell or generated by some other supernatural effect, does not allow for the proper flow of divine energy necessary for spellcasting.

**Frost Spell:** A snow brother has a natural affinity for cold, and casts spells of other elements only reluctantly. When casting a spell, the snow brother can freely substitute cold for any spell with the energy descriptor acid, electricity, fire or sonic. The spell is cast as normal, but inflicts cold damage.

**Cold Immunity (Ex):** A snow brother thrives in the harshest winter conditions, every inch of his body singing with the power of elemental ice. A snow brother of at least 4th level is absolutely immune to cold damage, whether it be caused by spell or natural environmental conditions.

**Wild Shape (elemental) (Sp):** Starting at 6th level, the snow brother gains the ability to, once a day, assume the form of a frost elemental of Small, Medium or Large size. When he does so, he gains all the special abilities of the elemental. When he changes shape, the snow brother regains hit points as though he had rested for a day.

**Cold Regeneration (Su):** While in his natural environment, the snow brother's body works at maximum efficiency. Beginning at 7th level, any time the snow brother is in an area with a temperature at or below freezing level, he gains the ability to regenerate, healing from any injury at a rate of 5 points a round. The snow brother cannot regenerate fire damage, but he can reattach severed limbs, including his head, so long as he holds the limb to the stump for at least 1 full round.





**Elemental Ascension:** By the time a snow brother reaches this level of ability, ice water literally runs through his veins and his organs and flesh have been well-protected from ravaging time by the energy of elemental ice. At 10th level, the snow brother transforms into an elemental being. His type changes to elemental, he gains an elemental's immunity to poison, *sleep*, paralysis and stunning, and he is no longer subject to flanking or critical hits. In addition, the snow brother gains virtual immortality — he no longer suffers aging penalties (though he will still die when his time is up, as all mortals must).

## TUNDRA FEATS

Those who dwell in the arctic tundra tend to be hardier and more self-sufficient than most, and they can survive hostile environmental conditions that would kill almost anyone else. The new feats presented here reflect the toughness and self-sufficient spirit of those who dare to pit themselves against the lands of endless winter.

### BEAR SKIN [GENERAL]

You have spend so much time in the harsh winter of the tundra that you no feel the effects of cold the way others do.

**Prerequisites:** Con 13+, Great Fortitude or Toughness.

**Benefits:** You gain cold resistance 5. Your resistance protects against the effects of natural or magical cold. This resistance stacks with other natural or magical cold resistance.

**Special:** You can gain this feat multiple times. The effects stack.

### BRIEF SLEEP [GENERAL]

In the arctic tundra, those who sleep too long often don't wake at all. You have trained yourself to sleep for only brief periods, yet you awaken fully refreshed.

**Prerequisites:** Con 13+, Wis 13+.

**Benefits:** You need to sleep for only half the amount of time normally required for a member of your race to gain the normal benefits of a full night's sleep. Typically this means you need only sleep for two hours if you are an elf, or four hours if you are a member of another standard player character race.

**Note:** Arcane spellcasters must still rest a full eight hours to regain spells.

### CRUSHING GRIP [GENERAL]

You have lived among the great ice peaks, glaciers and cliffs of the arctic tundra, and have developed a grip strong enough to find steady purchase on even the slipperiest surface.

**Prerequisite:** Str 15+.

**Benefits:** You gain a +2 bonus to all climb checks, a +1 bonus to all opposed grapple checks, and a +1 bonus to resist disarm attempts.

### EFFICIENT METABOLISM [GENERAL]

Food is not a thing to be idly wasted in the tundra. You have learned to survive on amounts of food that would leave another starved and emaciated.

**Prerequisites:** Con 13+, Great Fortitude, Endurance.

**Benefits:** You need to eat and drink only half of what is normally required for a member of your race. Further, you can go for 1 day + 3 hours per point of Con bonus before you begin to die of dehydration, and 3 days + 6 hours per point of Con bonus before you begin to feel the effects of starvation. Finally, you gain a +1 bonus to Fort saves against spells and spell-like effects.

**Normal:** Normally, you begin to dehydrate after 1 day + 1 hour per point of Con bonus and starve after 3 days without food or water.

### I STAND ALONE [GENERAL]

In the harsh tundra lands, a warrior must always be prepared to stand alone if he hopes to survive. You are a true survivor. When the odds are stacked against you, when you stand alone against the multitude, you are at your best.

**Prerequisites:** Great Fortitude, Iron Will, ability to rage.

**Benefits:** When engaged in combat alone against a single opponent, or group of opponents, whose total challenge rating is equal to or greater than your own, you add your character level to the amount of negative hit points you must be reduced to before you are slain. In addition, while so engaged, you suffer no penalties for being reduced to negative hit points — you continue to fight as normal until you are brought below your negative hit point threshold, at which point you are instantly slain. For example, a 10th level barbarian with this feat in solo combat against a beholder (CR 13) would not die until he is reduced to -20 hit points (-10 + 10 character levels). When the battle is over, if the character is in negative hit points, he has one full round to bring his hit points above 0. Should he fail to do so, he begins to bleed to death as normal, either dying when he reaches -10 or simply falling stone dead if his hit points are already at or below -10.

**Special:** In order for this feat to take effect in battle, one of the following conditions must be met: the character must either enter battle alone, or all other members of his party must be dead or incapacitated. In the first case, the benefits of the feat take effect at the beginning of the character's turn on the third round of combat. In the second, the benefits of the feat begin at the start of the character's next action immediately after his last ally has fallen. The feat's benefits are not cancelled should allies appear or recover after they have taken effect.

### ICE BLOOD [GENERAL]

You have spent so much time in the tundra that the cold truly permeates your being. Your skin radiates cold and serves as a sort of armor against the effects of heat and flame.

**Prerequisites:** Con 15+, Bear Skin, Great Fortitude or Toughness.

**Benefits:** You gain resistance to energy (fire) equal to the amount of resistance to energy (cold) you possess. Your resistance protects against the effects of natural or magical fire.

### LIGHT STEPS [GENERAL]

Many tundra predators track by listening for the crunch of their prey's footfalls or following their footprints in the snow. After years of trudging across ice and snow, you have developed a very light step that makes little sound and leaves few, if any, footprints behind.

**Prerequisites:** Dex 15+, 4+ ranks in Move Silently skill.

**Benefits:** You gain a +3 bonus to all Move Silently skill checks, and all attempts to track you increase the DC by 4.

### MY OWN BEST COMPANION [GENERAL]

People who dwell in the tundra quickly learn to keep their minds active and occupied, lest they go mad from the isolation or succumb to the lure of cold sleep (see below). You have an especially strong mind that does not give in easily to the ravages of madness.

**Prerequisites:** Wis 13+, Iron Will.

**Benefits:** You gain a +1 bonus to all Will saves, which stacks with the bonus gained from Iron Will. Against the spells *confusion*, *insanity*, *feeblemind*, *symbol (insanity)*, or other, similar spells and spell-like effects, the bonus increases to +3.

### SECOND SKIN [GENERAL]

Those who wish to survive their stay in the tundra must stay bundled beneath layer after layer of thick, bulky clothing. You have learned to work around your bulky clothes, and no longer suffer a loss of mobility or body control when wearing them.

**Prerequisites:** 4+ ranks in Wilderness Lore skills, Armor Proficiency (heavy or medium), base attack bonus +3 or higher.

**Benefits:** You reduce the armor check penalty of your armor by 2, to a minimum of 0. Further, you add a +1 to the maximum Dex bonus of any suit of medium or heavy armor that you wear.

In addition, you do not suffer an armor check penalty while wearing Hide armor.

### SHIELDED EYES [GENERAL]

The light of the sun reflected off ice or new snow is enough to cause blindness in the unwary, and those unused to the harsh glare suffer much reduced visibility. Having grown up in a land of permanent winter, you are well schooled in the methods of avoiding such damage and have especially strong eyes, allowing you to see farther than other adventurers.

**Benefits:** You gain a +2 competence bonus to all saves to resist *blindness* or blinding effects. In addition, the distance at which you can make a Spot check to notice an encounter is increased by 25%. For example, if the DM rules that at a distance of 200 ft. your party and an approaching orc army can make Spot skill checks to notice one another, you can attempt the check at a distance of 250 ft. instead.

### SNOW BLIND [GENERAL]

In the tundra, the sunlight reflects off every surface, creating oceans of light so painfully bright it is almost impossible to see objects or living creatures, even those within arm's reach. From your studies, you have gained an intimate understanding of the play of light, and can hide behind a flare of sunlight as though it were a stone wall.

**Prerequisites:** Int 13+, Shielded Eyes.

**Benefits:** When in areas of bright natural light, such as outdoors on a clear day at noon, or when in an area of equivalent brightness, such as in a crystal cavern lit by several torches, you gain a +4 bonus to all Hide skill checks. While in the tundra, or an area of similar brightness such as in the high desert, the bonus increases to +6.

### WIND WISE [GENERAL]

The winds that tear and whip across the tundra are some of the worst in all the world, and any archer who hopes to bring down his kill must learn to compensate for them. You have mastered the art of firing against heavy winds, giving your arrows incredible accuracy over long distances.

**Prerequisites:** Wis 13+, Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, base attack bonus +5 or higher.

**Benefits:** When using a projectile weapon, the range increment penalties for your attacks are reduced to -1 per range increment.

## TUNDRA SPELLS

The following spells are thematically appropriate to the arctic tundra, but are not limited to use there. Selecting these spells will allow your spellcasters to carry a bit of endless winter with them no matter where they go.

**Brittle**

Evocation  
**Level:** Clr 3, Drd 2, Sor/Wiz 3  
**Components:** V, S, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 action  
**Range:** Close (25 ft. +5 ft./2 levels)  
**Effect:** Ray  
**Duration:** 1 round + 1 round/2 levels  
**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

You fire a thin zephyr of chill air at your target, causing their skin, muscle and bones to become brittle and easily shattered. You must succeed at a ranged touch attack to strike the target. The affected target suffers double damage from all bludgeoning and crushing attacks, as their flesh splinters from the impact. Creatures that are immune to the effects of cold, those who possess 5 or more points of resistance to energy (cold), and constructs, immaterial beings and oozes are immune to the effects of this spell.

*Material Components:* A bit of crystal or ice and a small rock.

**Contact Freeze**

Transmutation  
**Level:** Drd 1, Sor/Wiz 1  
**Components:** V, S, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 action  
**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)  
**Targets:** 1 target/2 caster levels  
**Duration:** 1 round/2 levels  
**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes

You fire a blast of pure cold air from your outstretched hands, which chills your opponents and leaves their exposed flesh tacky and prone to freezing to objects they touch. Any time an opponent affected by *contact freeze* brings his exposed flesh into contact with another object, whether by striking or touching, it freezes to that object. Breaking free of the contact causes 1d2 points of damage, as bits of flesh are ripped and torn free from the forced removal. The damage can be avoided if the victim spends a full round breaking contact, but he can make no violent movements, such as attacking, while doing so. *Contact freeze* has no effect on constructs, elementals, undead, or

on creatures with natural armor of +3 or better.

*Material Components:* A piece of metal and a bit of leather, both of which must be pressed flat together.

**Freeze Venom**

Transmutation  
**Level:** Drd 1, Rng 1  
**Components:** V, S  
**Casting Time:** 1 action  
**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./level)  
**Target:** 1 creature per caster level  
**Duration:** 1 round/2 levels  
**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes

With a wave of your hand, you cause the poisons of toxic animals and monsters to freeze in their sacs, rendering them temporarily harmless. Any creature, regardless of origin, which delivers its venom by means of a bite, sting, spit or claw attack, or who exudes a toxin from its pores, can be affected by this spell.

*Material Components:* A snake's poison sac, into which a crystal or bit of ice must be placed.

**Ice Elemental's Touch**

Evocation  
**Level:** Drd 2, Sor/Wiz 2  
**Components:** V, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 action  
**Range:** Creature touched  
**Duration:** 1 round/2 levels  
**Saving Throw:** Fortitude half  
**Spell Resistance:** Yes

Your hands, or the hands of an allied creature you touch, are surrounded by an aura of absolute, freezing cold. While the spell is in effect, all successful unarmed attacks inflict 1d4 points of damage + 1 per 2 caster levels (maximum 1d4+5) in addition to normal unarmed damage. While the spell is in effect, the recipient cannot touch anyone without inflicting the cold damage.

*Material Components:* A bit of crystal or ice.

**Snow Blind**

Evocation  
**Level:** Drd 3, Rng 4, Sor/Wiz 4  
**Components:** V, S, M  
**Casting Time:** 1 action  
**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)  
**Area:** 20 ft. radius burst  
**Duration:** 1 round/2 levels  
**Saving Throw:** Fortitude partial (see text)  
**Spell Resistance:** No



When you cast this spell, an immense flare of light erupts from the ground, as though the sun's rays were being reflected from the surface of a frozen lake. All targets within the area of effect must attempt a Fort save or be blinded, as per the spell *blindness*, for 1 round per 2 levels of the caster (maximum 10 rounds). Those who successfully save still suffer a -2 penalty to all attack rolls and Reflex saves for the duration of the spell's effect.

*Material Components:* A small mirror and a lit candle wick.

### Snow Storm

Conjuration (summoning)

**Level:** Drd 3, Sor/Wiz 3

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Area:** 20 ft. radius

**Duration:** 1 round/2 caster levels

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude partial (see text)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

Casting this spell summons up a swirling gust of chill arctic air and snow, which howls and whirls in a rough circle, inflicting damage upon any who try and cross it. Anyone who enters the *snow storm's* area of effect is buffeted by wind and cold, and must attempt a Fort save or suffer 1d6 + 1 point per caster level (maximum 1d6+10) each round they remain within it. A successful save reduces the damage to one half. Movement within the *snow storm* is reduced to one half, and projectile weapons fired or thrown through the area of effect are at a -1 penalty to hit.

*Arcane Material Components:* A handful of snow, thistle down or bits of wispy cotton, which must be thrown into the air at the time of casting.

## TUNDRA MONSTERS

In addition to the normal dangers of the frozen tundra, the wastelands of the arctic are home to an assortment of vicious monsters and magical creatures. The new monsters presented below embody many of the best and worst qualities of the tundra lands, and will provide a memorable challenge to any hero who faces them.

### FROST ELEMENTAL

Large Elemental (Cold)

**Hit Dice:** 9d8+27 (67 hp)

**Initiative:** +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

**Speed:** 50 ft.

**AC:** 20 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +10 natural)

**Attacks:** Slam +11/+6 melee

**Damage:** Slam 1d8+5

**Face/Reach:** 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Frost mastery, snow storm

**Special Qualities:** Cold subtype, elemental, damage reduction 10/+1

**Saves:** Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +4

**Abilities:** Str 20, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 11

**Skills:** Listen +10, Move Silently +9, Spot +10

**Feats:** Improved Initiative, Power Attack

**Climate/Terrain:** Arctic only  
**Organization:** Solitary or flurry (2–6)  
**Challenge Rating:** 6  
**Treasure:** Standard  
**Alignment:** Usually lawful evil  
**Advancement:** 10–18 HD (Huge)

A frost elemental is the living embodiment of the tundra's savagery. Brutal, merciless and unforgiving, the frost elemental tears across the plains like a blizzard, freezing the flesh of any being it comes across.

A frost elemental is directly related to the water elemental, and comes from an otherworldly plane — eternally locked in ice — that supports no life of any kind. Frost elementals are created when a water elemental blunders into the ice plane and is twisted by its life-stealing energies. Trapped into a form that causes them endless agony, newly created frost elementals wish only to engulf the flesh of living beings, in the vain hope that the body heat they sap will melt their frigid forms.

A frost elemental appears as an immense sheet of living ice, cloudy with bits of matter and flesh picked up during its endless journey across the tundra. Its eyes, twin balls of blue malevolence, roam all over its body, and it can sprout a jagged, craggy mouth from any part of its body.

### Combat

When a frost elemental attacks, it sprouts twin arms, topped with hammer-like fists, and then lurches into close combat. A frost elemental attacks absolutely without fear, equally happy to kill or be killed, as death releases it from the agony of its icy prison. A frost elemental quite willingly throws itself into the path of open flames, and will concentrate its attacks on beings carrying torches or spellcasters who wield magical fire.

**Frost Mastery (Ex):** A frost elemental gains a +1 bonus to all attack and damage rolls so long as both it and its opponent are standing on ice or snow. If either it or its opponent are standing on an area free of ice or snow, the frost elemental suffers a –1 penalty to all attack and damage rolls.

So long as it stands on ice or snow, the frost elemental regenerates 1 hit point a round. It cannot heal damage caused by fire, though it will heal naturally from fire damage.

**Snow Storm (Su):** A frost elemental can transform itself into a furious blizzard of ice and snow once every 10 minutes. The blizzard fills a 20 ft. radius area, and anyone caught within it must attempt a Reflex save against a DC of 13 each round or suffer 1d8 points of damage. All creatures of Medium-size or smaller who are caught within

the effect must attempt a second Reflex save against a DC of 13 or be thrown down by the wind's force, suffering an additional 1d6 points of damage and being knocked prone. Spellcasters within the radius of effect must attempt a Concentration skill check each round (DC 13) in order to successfully cast a spell. While in its snow storm form, the frost elemental gains a +4 circumstance bonus to its armor class.

**Cold Subtype:** A frost elemental suffers no damage from cold. It suffers double damage from fire attacks, unless those attacks allow a save for half damage, in which case it suffers half damage on a successful save and double damage on a failed save.

**Elemental Qualities:** An elemental is immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, and stunning. Since it has no front or back, it is not subject to critical hits or flanking. A frost elemental has darkvision to a range of 60 ft. A frost elemental cannot be raised or resurrected, but it can be brought to life with the aid of a *miracle* or *wish* spell.

### KING CARIBOU

Large Magical Beast

**Hit Dice:** 10d10+50 (105 hp)

**Initiative:** +3 (Dex)

**Speed:** 60 ft.

**AC:** 17 (–1 size, +3 Dex, +5 natural)

**Attacks:** Gore +15 melee, or 2 hooves +10 melee

**Damage:** Gore 1d8+5, hoof 1d6+2

**Face/Reach:** 5 ft. by 10 ft./10 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Powerful charge

**Special Qualities:** Immunities, indomitable, moonlight journey, spell-like abilities

**Saves:** Fort +12, Ref +10, Will +6

**Abilities:** Str 20, Dex 17, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 16

**Skills:** Intimidate +15, Jump +17, Sense Motive +11

**Feats:** Cleave, Iron Will, My Own Best Companion, Power Attack

**Climate/Terrain:** Arctic plains

**Organization:** Solitary, pair, band (2–7), or herd (50–100)

**Challenge Rating:** 8

**Treasure:** None

**Alignment:** Always neutral good

**Advancement:** 11–15 HD (Large)

Northern legends speak of the great king caribou, the noble and wise leader of the great herds that eternally roam the tundra. The king caribou is to its lesser brethren what the unicorn is to the horse; guardian, champion, paragon of beauty and strength. King caribou are rare in the extreme, and dwell only in the deepest tundra, far from the eyes and weapons of men. Yet legends also tell of

king caribou coming to the aid of great heroes, or the old and the young in desperate need of help, and carrying them impossibly far across the tundra in no more time than it takes for the moon to journey across the night sky.

The legends are true.

The king caribou appears as an idealized version of its common brethren. Its fur is thick, clean and shiny, its hooves and teeth sparkling and perfectly shaped, and its rack of horns enormous, razor sharpened and absolutely symmetrical. The king caribou moves with stately, regal grace and its eyes burn with wisdom and intelligence.

### Combat

The king caribou attacks only when it, or the herd it protects, is attacked (though it will not attack hunting animals attempting to bring down a kill). When drawn into combat, it attacks to wound and drive off its opponents, not kill them, unless it is sorely pressed. Whenever possible, it attacks with a charging gore using its immense horns.

Should a humanoid attempt to ride the king caribou, it uses its Sense Motive skill and *detect evil* abilities in an attempt to puzzle out their intentions. Should they prove to be noble, it will resist them, matching its abilities to their own (it will not resist a child as ferociously as it resists a full grown adult, for example). Should their intentions prove less than noble, it attacks ferociously, striking to kill and mangling the remains.

**Powerful Charge (Ex):** The king caribou inflicts double damage with its gore attack at the end of a successful charge. Should the king caribou charge more than 100 ft., he attacks at +4 to hit and inflicts triple damage on a successful gore attack.

**Immunities:** The king caribou is absolutely immune to cold damage, has no need to eat or drink, and is immune to the effects of *sleep* and other, similar spells and spell-like effects.

**Indomitable (Ex):** The DC of any Animal Empathy skill check used to influence the king caribou is raised by 5. In addition, the king caribou benefits from a +5 racial bonus to Will saves to resist the effects of *charm person* or *animal*, *hold animal* or other, similar mind-affecting spells or spell-like effects.

**Moonlight Journey (Su):** Legends tell of the king caribou's greatest power — the ability to journey any distance in the space of one night. The legends are true. If, and only if, a being of noble heart (good alignment) and intent (a hero on a quest, a child fetching medicine for his mother) can tame and mount the king caribou, it can, in the space of one night, travel any distance across the arctic tundra. When making its journey, the king caribou actually passes partially into the ethereal — it is not hampered

by physical terrain, both it and its rider appear as smoky phantoms, and both see visions of other journeys the king caribou has made in the past. While on the moonlight journey, the rider benefits from the king caribou's immunity to cold. No rider can ever make more than one moonlight journey on the same king caribou in a lifetime, though the king caribou will forever recognize him as an ally and friend.

**Spell-like Abilities (Sp):** The king caribou can, at will as a free action, *detect evil* as the spell. In addition, he can, once per day, cast *resist elements* as a 20th level sorcerer.

### WENDIGO

Large Giant (Cold)

**Hit Dice:** 13d8+52 (108 hp)

**Initiative:** +1 (Dex)

**Speed:** 50 ft.

**AC:** 21 (–1 size, +1 Dex, +11 natural)

**Attacks:** 2 claws +18 melee, bite +16 melee

**Damage:** Claw 1d8+9, bite 1d10+4

**Face/Reach:** 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Improved grab, maddening howl, wind storm

**Special Qualities:** Cold subtype, scent

**Saves:** Fort +12, Ref +5, Will +6

**Abilities:** Str 28, Dex 12, Con 19, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 15

**Skills:** Climb +17, Jump +17, Move Silently +14

**Feats:** Iron Will, Multi-Attack, Power Attack

**Climate/Terrain:** Any arctic

**Organization:** Solitary

**Challenge Rating:** 10

**Treasure:** Incidental

**Alignment:** Usually chaotic evil

**Advancement:** 14–26 HD (Huge)

The wendigo is a bestial, murderous hunter that relentlessly stalks the barren lands of the far northern tundra. Common legend holds it to be an otherworldly demon, a nightmare fiend summoned from the lower depths to feed on man flesh. In reality, the wendigo is a primitive relative of the frost giant, a furry, eternally ravenous beast that is boogeyman to the children of its more evolved distant cousin.

Though the wendigo quite happily feeds on any sort of fresh meat, it has a preference for the blood and bone of giants, dwarves and men. The wendigo hunts only by night, preferably under overcast skies, and it prefers to ambush lone travelers or small groups, but if it is hungry enough it will tear through an entire village, slaying indiscriminately and dragging screaming victims off to feed on at its leisure.

The wendigo is a hunched, gaunt ape-like creature with spade-claw hands and an enormous, jutting jaw full of broken but still sharp fangs. It stands nearly twice the height of a tall man, and its arms are so long that its knuckles drag upon the ice when it walks. The wendigo is surrounded at all times by an aura of freezing cold air, frigid enough to cause irreparable frostbite damage to anyone foolish enough to approach it.

### Combat

The wendigo prefers to attack from ambush, using its maddening howl to disorient its victims before striking. When it does attack, it uses its enormous claws to slash and grapple its opponents, hurling them into rocks, bashing them into trees, or simply biting their heads off. The wendigo is not intelligent, but it is smart enough to lash out at the most dangerous-looking opponents first — it has no real concept of the power of magic, however, and equates “dangerous” with visible muscles and weapons. The wendigo also lacks courage, and will flee if presented with a determined, well-coordinated foe.

**Improved Grab (Ex):** When the wendigo successfully strikes with a claw attack, it deals normal damage and can attempt to initiate a grapple without fear of an attack of opportunity.

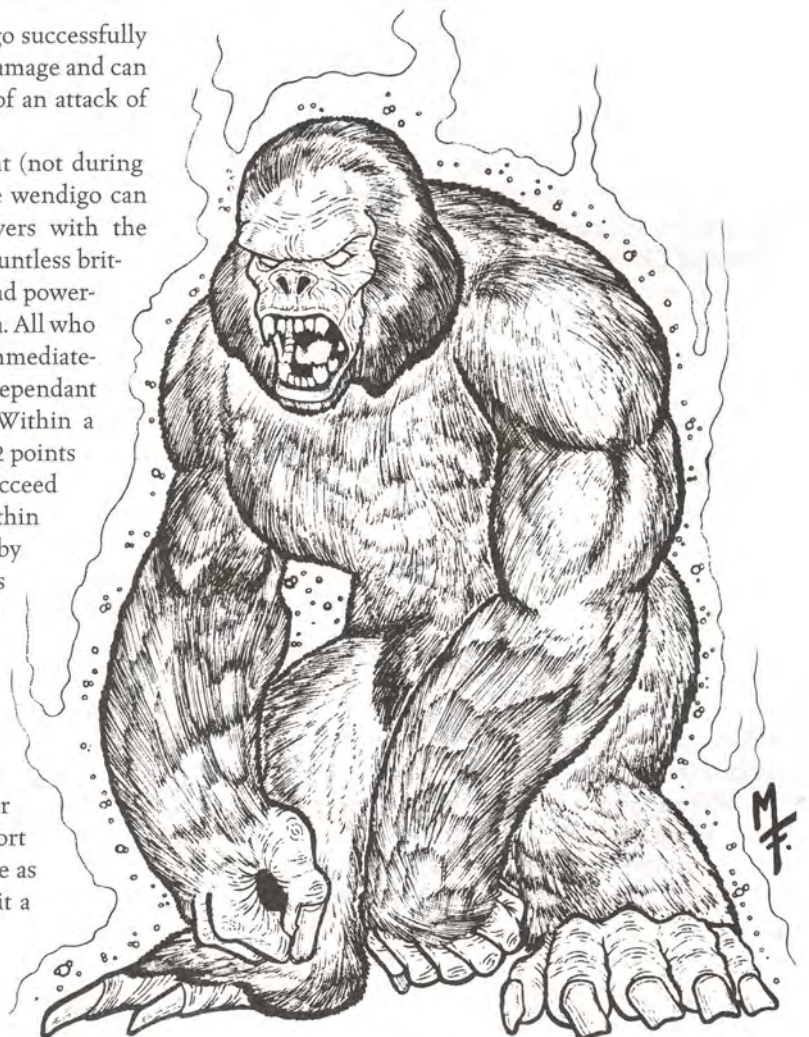
**Maddening Howl (Su):** Once per night (not during daylight hours), as a full round action, the wendigo can unleash a bloodcurdling howl that quavers with the sound of an arctic wind tearing through countless brittle leaves. The howl is astoundingly loud and powerful, and echoes for miles through the tundra. All who hear the sound of the wendigo’s cry must immediately attempt a Will save, the DC of the save dependant upon their distance from the Wendigo. Within a range of 1 mile, the DC is 19, dropping by 2 points for every mile beyond that. Those who succeed are affected as if by the spell *fear*. Those within one mile who fail the save are affected as if by *insanity* until the first light of dawn strikes them. Those beyond one mile who fail are affected as if by *confusion*. The effects of *maddening howl* are cast at 14th level.

**Wind Storm (Su):** The wendigo is at all times surrounded to a radius of 10' by a howling vortex of harsh arctic wind. All who enter within the radius of effect suffer 2d6 points of cold damage per round (Fort save DC 15 for half). The arctic winds serve as a sort of shield for the wendigo, granting it a +4 bonus to AC against all ranged attacks.

**Cold Subtype:** The wendigo is immune to all cold damage. It takes double damage from fire attacks, unless that attack offers a save for half, in which case it takes half damage on a successful save and double damage on a failed save.

**Scent (Ex):** The wendigo possesses an incredibly keen sense of smell. It can smell flesh to a range of two miles, and blood at a range of 10. This powerful sense of smell is both a strength and its greatest weakness. If objects with overpowering scents are thrust into its nose (a handful of sulfur, for example), it must attempt a Fort save against a DC of 17; failure indicated that it is *stunned* for 1 full round.

**Skills:** The wendigo benefits from a +5 racial bonus to Climb, Jump and Move Silently skill checks.



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# WILDS™

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*I'm sure the mountains doesn't pose much of a threat at all. There's nothing out there aside from a few clans of barbarian dwarves, the odd goblin tribe, and a few rogue earth spirits. Little danger to those such as you who wear stout armor, carry sharp swords, and wield mighty spells. Of course, you might accidentally stumble into a patch of fire vines and be forced to take off your armor when your skin breaks out in festering blisters. The goblins are little match in a stand-up fight, but if they drop boulders on you like they usually do those swords will only weigh you down as you try to run away. As for your spells, a blast of fire might singe the dwarf berserkers, but the explosion is liable to bring half the mountain down on your head.*

*As I said, you shouldn't have much to fear. The dwarves are fools who gladly throw themselves on spears and lances, the goblins are poorly trained and flee at the first sign of danger, and the earth spirits are no match for your spells.*

—Olaf Stonestrider, Ranger of the Peaks

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