

CASTLES & CRUSADES

EXPANDED RACES

AMBER DWARVES



BY BRIAN BOONSTRA, HAL GREENBERG & PETER SCHROEDER
CREATED AND APPROVED FOR USE WITH CASTLES & CRUSADES ®

EXPANDED RACES: AMBER DWARVES

CREDITS: Brian Boonstra, Hal Greenberg, and Peter Schroeder

EDITOR: Christina Stiles

ART: Rick Hershey, Emily Mottesheard

LAYOUT: Emily Mottesheard

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AMBER DWARF

Amber Dwarves hail from the deep jungles. Like the jungle around them, amber dwarves are dangerous and mysterious. They possess a hardy constitution and are some of the more stealthy dwarves. They are proud, solitary, and reflective; and they are as long-lived as the trees. Amber dwarves are known for their knowledge of plants and their ability to hide in natural surroundings. In the deep jungles, the dwarves have learned to fight jungle giants and orcs, as well as other dark, forgotten creatures the canopy hides.

DESCRIPTION: Amber dwarves resemble their standard dwarven brothers. They are short, stocky, and well-muscled from years of living in the tangle. They often grow goatees, and keep their hair short and neatly cropped; they tend to remove all other body hair by shaving. Their skin tone tends to vary from a light tan to an almost deep brown. Their hair color ranges from a pale white to a light brown. Their hair color ranges from a pale white to an almost pure black, but is most commonly a shade of brown. Their deep-set eyes tend to be light in color, from a light blue to a light brown. They wear hide or no armor and adorn themselves with jewelry made of kill trophies, like teeth and bones. Having the fullest death necklace is a sign of stature in the community.

PERSONALITY: Amber dwarves, both male and female, take pride in their abilities, whether that is stalking prey, honing their bodies to peak physical prowess, or locating rare herbs and plants. They are always seeking to perfect a skill or fighting style, and

many spend a lifetime practicing their craft in hopes of achieving perfection.

Amber dwarves are fairly solitary. Some spend days on end alone, silently stalking prey in the jungle or searching for rare plants. Others remove themselves from their community to perfect the moves of their unarmed fighting styles, or to perfect their minds and bodies. When they do gather with other amber dwarves, they form small groups called cadres—tight-knit groups of amber dwarves. An amber dwarf thinks of his cadre as family, and he is very loyal to it. These cadres meet a few times a year to exchange news, plan hunting strategies, and to trade amongst themselves. During these gatherings, new cadres are formed, and others are broken. Occasionally, cadres join together to hunt more powerful creatures or to deal with great threats. If the threat is great enough, many cadres unite to form a small army.

In search of perfection and mastery of all they do, amber dwarves are highly principled in nature. In any dealings, they try to be as fair and honorable as they can, and they expect the same from others. Discovery of deception is met with a call to personal battle.

RACIAL AFFINITIES: Amber dwarves do not associate with many other demi-humans or humanoids. They are a solitary race. When they encounter outsiders in their territory, they track or follow the interlopers to determine the newcomers' intentions. Amber dwarves tend toward law and neutrality, and they value the one over the many—an individual can never be assured those around him are worthy and have met perfection; the self is the only thing assured. Even so, an amber dwarf will try to save his cadre mates before any others.

Amber dwarves tend to be a part of a small community and are used to hunting and fending for themselves as individuals. They can work well with other races if those individuals have proven themselves to that specific dwarf. These dwarves are not learned in many social skills, since they tend to live solo or in small groups and tend to be a quiet, thoughtful party members.

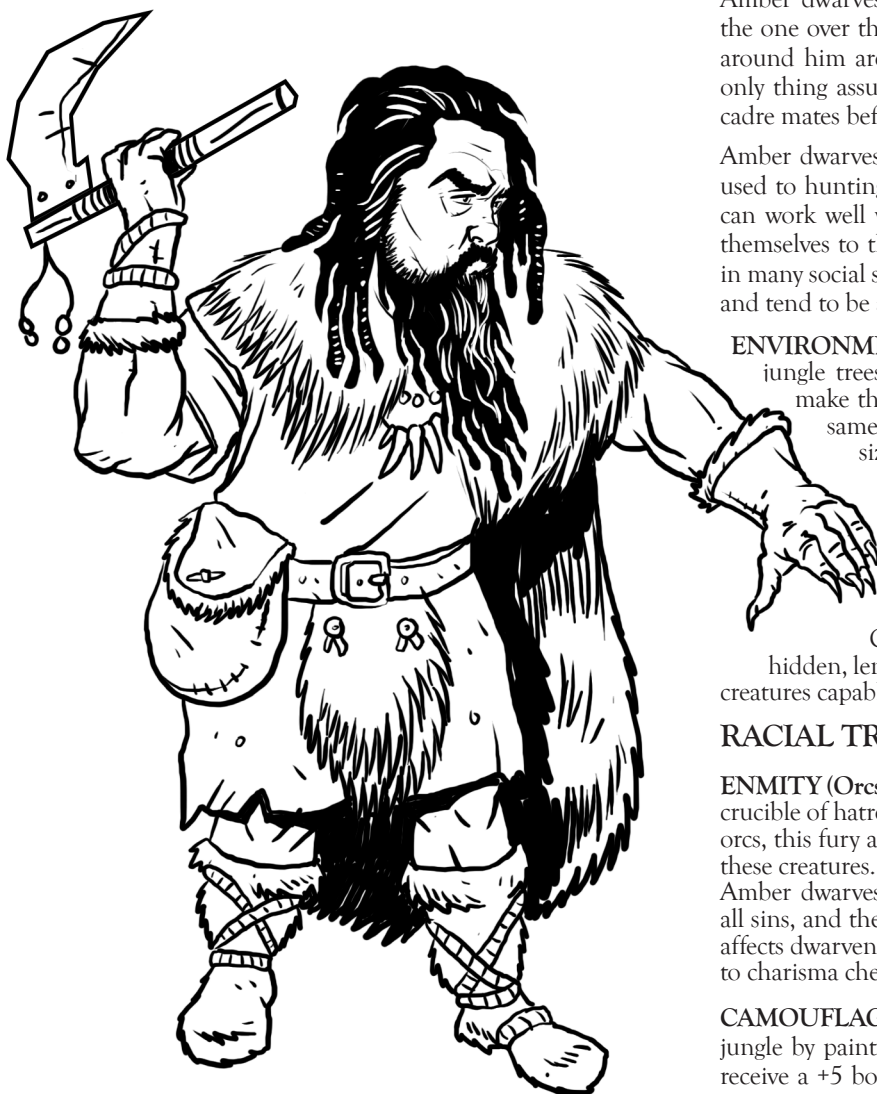
ENVIRONMENT: Amber dwarves live in cadres beneath the jungle trees, hollowing out the base of large tree trunks to make their homes. In fact, several cadres often live in the same complex under the central tree, forming thorp-sized communities. Together, the dwarves dig a central tunnel beneath the tree's base, and then carve out various rooms. They then plaster the rooms' walls and floors with a mixture of mud, clay, and certain plant extracts, making each water resistance. The plaster also provides the dwarves a medium upon which to carve or paint designs.

Generally, the entrances to these complexes are well hidden, lending to the myth that amber dwarves are ghost-like creatures capable of materializing out of thin air.

RACIAL TRAITS AND ABILITIES

ENMITY (Orcs): Eternal wars against orcs have created an undying crucible of hatred for these vile creatures. When in combat against orcs, this fury and hatred grants amber dwarves a +1 bonus to hit these creatures. Amber dwarves have a similar distrust of half-orcs. Amber dwarves find inter-breeding with orcs to be the worst of all sins, and their powerful antipathy towards pure orcs negatively affects dwarven relations with half-orcs. Amber dwarves suffer a -4 to charisma checks when interacting with half-orcs and orcs.

CAMOUFLAGE: Amber dwarves are skilled at hiding within the jungle by painting themselves to blend in with the foliage. They receive a +5 bonus to hide checks in the jungle via this painting



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OPTIONAL: RACIAL ABILITIES

APE DEXTERITY: Twice a day, an amber dwarf can summon inner energy when needed. The amber dwarf's dexterity increases by 1d2+1 points for 4 rounds. This racial trait replaces defensive expertise.

CLIMB: The amber dwarf can climb trees and vines without a dexterity check and with minimal equipment, but his hands must be free. If the amber dwarf is heavily equipped, a dexterity check is required. While climbing the amber dwarf's movement is reduced by 1/4. This racial trait replaces enmity.

DETERMINE DEPTH AND DIRECTION: Amber dwarves can sense their approximate longitude and latitude as naturally as a human can sense which way is up. This racial trait replaces set traps.

JUNGLE LORE: An amber dwarf can identify plants and animals with perfect accuracy in jungles. This identification ability allows the amber dwarf to determine the species of a plant or animal and the special qualities or abilities of the species. The amber dwarf can also determine whether water is safe or dangerous to drink. This racial trait replaces set traps.

JUNGLE STRIDE: Amber dwarves have the ability to move through the jungle without impairment. When doing so, amber dwarves leave no trail and cannot be tracked. However, enchanted or magically manipulated flora still effect the amber dwarf. This racial trait replaces resistant to arcane magic.

SURVIVAL: In the jungle, the amber dwarf can find shelter, food, and water for himself; start a fire; and determine direction. Also, the amber dwarf can start a fire in 1d10 turns by natural means, as long as the needed materials are available. This racial trait replaces set traps.

process.

DEFENSIVE EXPERTISE (Giants/Ogres): Long regarded as a food source by many giants, amber dwarves have developed considerable expertise in fighting them. Combined with their small size, this tactical expertise allows amber dwarves to offer resistance to the powerful giants. When fighting giants or ogres, amber dwarves receive a +4 bonus to armor class.

POISON DARTS (Wisdom): Amber dwarves can prepare poison darts without accidentally poisoning themselves. The components for the poison can be extracted and brewed by an amber dwarf with a successful wisdom check.

RESISTANT TO ARCANES MAGIC: As unshakable as granite or iron, amber dwarves are particularly resistant to arcane magic. They receive a +3 bonus to all saving throws against arcane spells and spell-like effects.

RESISTANCE TO HEAT: Hailing from warm terrains, amber dwarves' bodies are developed to resist the harmful effects of the heat. Any heat-based damage that the amber dwarf would normally suffer is reduced by half. If the effect grants the amber dwarf a saving throw and the saving throw is successful, the damage is reduced to 1/4.

RESISTANT TO POISONS (Constitution): Amber dwarves are imbued with great constitutional fortitude. Poisons that might fell a normal human are less likely to affect a dwarf. Amber dwarves receive a +2 bonus to all poison saving throws.

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ITEMS OF NOTE

HUNTING SUIT

This is a suit constructed of a light cloth with mud, leaves, and twigs plastered to it. When wearing the suit, the character receives a +2 to hide checks when in natural surroundings. [Value: 1,000 gp.]

SLEEP POISON

Those who are struck by a weapon covered in this poison must roll a constitution save (CL 3) or fall asleep for 1d6 rounds. Amber dwarves are immune to this poison. [Value: 200 gp.]

WATER- AND FIRE-RESISTANT PLASTER

Amber dwarves have discovered a formula of different muds, clays, and herbal extracts that make a waterproof plaster. They put this on their walls and floors of the tunnels they dig to keep out water. They also apply this mixture in hollowed-out logs to make canoes. A few enterprising amber dwarves have been working on ways to incorporate this plaster into their leather made shields. They claim it makes a light-weight, strong shield that could resist fire and cold. [Value: 50 gp.]

SET TRAPS (Wisdom): An amber dwarf can set simple traps in a wilderness environment. These include snares, pit traps and similar devices. Amber dwarves cannot set complicated mechanical traps, such as those found on treasure chests or on doorways. On a successful traps check, the amber dwarf successfully builds and conceals a snare or pit trap. Snares can capture and hold creatures of up to medium height, and pit traps can be dug to deliver 1d4 points of damage (halved if the creature falling in it makes a successful dexterity saving throw).

TWILIGHT VISION: Even under starlight, moonlight or torchlight, amber dwarves have exceedingly good vision. They can distinguish color and detail under these conditions for up to one mile, but only if they are outside.

LANGUAGES: Common, Dwarven, Elven, Giant, Gnome, Goblinoid, Halfling, Ogrish, Troll.

SIZE: Small

MOVEMENT: 20 feet

TYPICAL CLASSES: Monk, Fighter, Ranger, Rogue

ATTRIBUTE MODIFIERS: +1 Constitution, -1 Charisma

SAMPLE CHARACTERS

TYPICAL 1ST-LEVEL AMBER DWARF ROGUE

FGUHD is a 1st-level rogue, chaotic good amber dwarf. His vital stats are 1d6 HD, 7 HP, MV 20 ft. AC 15 (DEX +2, studded leather armor). His primary attributes are dexterity and wisdom. His attributes are strength 12, dexterity 16, constitution 14, intelligence 14, wisdom 16, charisma 12. His basic to-hit bonus is 0. He speaks Common, Dwarven, Elven, Giant, Gnome, Goblinoid, Halfling, Ogrish, and Troll. He carries a blowpipe with 10 darts, a dagger, a hand axe, camouflage paints, and studded leather armor.

TYPICAL 5TH-LEVEL AMBER DWARF MONK

HACDOH is a 5th-level monk, neutral evil amber dwarf. His

vital stats are 5d12 HD, 43 HP, MV 30 ft. AC 14 (DEX +1, monk AC 13). His primary attributes are dexterity and constitution. His attributes are strength 14, dexterity 14, constitution 16, intelligence 14, wisdom 13, and charisma 14. His basic to-hit bonus is +4. He speaks Common, Dwarven, Elven, Giant, Gnome, Goblinoid, Halfling, Ogrish, and Troll. He carries a blowpipe with 10 darts, a hand axe, scimitar, and camouflage paint.

ENCOUNTERS WITH AMBER DWARVES

Amber dwarves can be found in most jungle and tropical climates—meeting one in a different climate is rare. Within the jungle, they live in very small communities called *cadres*, but they can often be encountered alone or within larger communities consisting of several of *cadres*—an elder, usually the one who makes the best plaster, tends to be the community's leader, and this dwarf heads any established council, if the settlement is large enough to warrant one. A typical *cadre* consists of 2-8 amber dwarves; larger communities might house up to 40-60 individuals. All inhabitants, including the children, are generally armed with bows, blowpipes, and axes; and some dwarves carry staves. All amber dwarves learn to fight bare-handed, and they generally wear leather armor or none at all. Only during a great battle do amber dwarves don armor studded with bone and metal.

Amber dwarves live under the jungle floor, and they often camouflage the entrances to these dwellings. They use a special clay they mix and affix to the roof and roots to make a stable, waterproof environment; and these homes tend to have three to five rooms (more with larger *cadres*) per inhabiting *cadre*.

Amber dwarves typically keep a few giant bats near the entrance of their homes, utilizing them as security measure (the bats let out shrill screams when intruders happen upon their lair) and protection. The dwarves take great care of the bats for this reason.

Due to the massive amounts of foliage and prey available, most amber dwarves tend to hunt and gather food rather than learn to farm and plant. Amber dwarves tend to use what the world has given them and often become masters of camouflage. They paint themselves from head to toe in colors matching the jungle foliage. Because they prefer utilize stealth when possible, amber dwarves often train in weapons that make little to no noise, like blowpipes, bows, staves and unarmed combat. They also are attracted to the more stealthy and quieter classes.

CREATURES OF NOTE

BAT, AMBER-CROWNED

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 3-18

SIZE: Large

HD: 1 (d4)

MOVE: 20 ft. 40 ft. (fly)

AC: 12

ATTACKS: Claw (1d2), Bite (1d4)

SPECIAL: None

SAVES: P

INT: Animal

ALIGNMENT: Neutral

TYPE: Animal

TREASURE: Nil

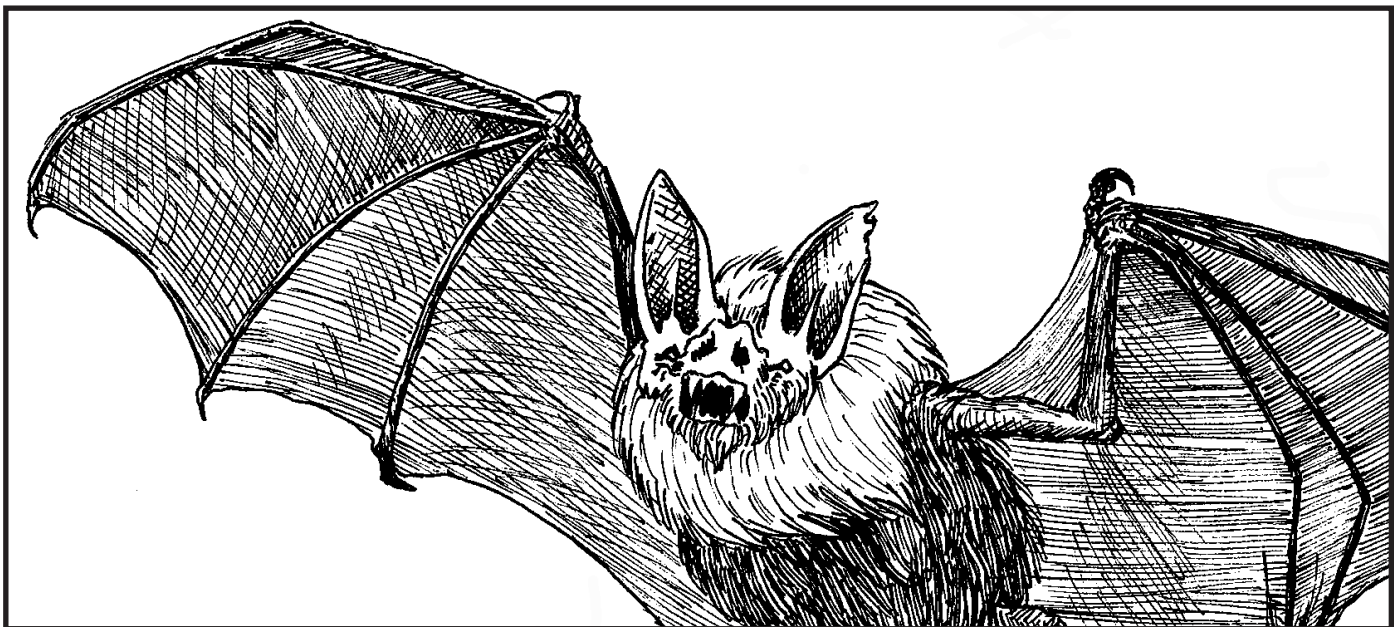
XP: 9+1

These large bats have a wingspan of nearly 7 feet. The golden fur around their heads sharply contrasts with the dark brown fur of their bodies. These bats hide high in jungle trees, waiting until sunset to begin hunting for insects and foraging for fruit.

Amber dwarves often train these giant bats as sentries of sorts, for the bats emit a certain high-pitch squeal when something enters their lair. Using them as an alert system is not foolproof, however, because they screech whether a giant or another animal enters their space.

Some bats have even been trained to deliver messages to other encampments, providing the amber dwarves with a quick and fairly reliable means to communicate with other communities.

COMBAT: An amber-crowned bat flees from anything larger than it. If forced to fight, it defends itself with its sharp teeth and its wing-ending claws. With smaller intruders, the bats circle their prey and attack to kill.



CREATURES OF NOTE

GIANT, JUNGLE

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 1-6

SIZE: Huge

HD: 11 (d8)

MOVE: 40 ft.

AC: 17

ATTACKS: 2 Fist (2d8), Longbow (3d6)

SPECIAL: Camouflage, Resistance to Heat, Rock Throwing, Twilight Vision, Vulnerable to Cold

SAVES: P

INT: High

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic Neutral

TYPE: Giant

TREASURE: 8

XP: 3000 + 11

Jungle giants if found in a larger group than 5 will be a small faction, very loyal to each other and will have some females and younger jungle giants present. Female jungle giants are larger than their male counterparts and may use trees as giant clubs.

A jungle giant appears to look like a giant, thick tree trunk with broken branches (their arms and legs) dangling from it. Thick, long unkempt hair in shades of brown covers this green-and-brown-hued giant. Jungle giants often have animals living on them and other plants growing on their moss-covered bodies. The giants appear to be slow and encumbered, but when they are alerted to danger, they exhibit catlike grace. They can even climb giant trees, and they are excellent jumpers. Because they do not clean themselves—except when rain showers upon them—they smell badly. They wear hide armor and use poison-tipped arrows shot from their longbows as a primary weapon.

Jungle giants tend to hunt in small groups of 3-5. The larger females use tree trunks as giant clubs, and they tend to be more comfortable in melee combat than the males.

COMBAT: Quiet and stealthy, the male giants prefer to use their oversized longbows (or throw stones) and camouflage during a fight, while the tree-wielding females jump directly into the fray. The males only enter melee if they are cornered or bereft of projectiles. Although the males are reticent to fight hand to hand, they are still very formidable opponents once they join the battle. When they've successfully downed their foes (whether through poison or damage), the giants gather up their quarry for eating.

CAMOUFLAGE: A jungle giant's skin and hair color allow them to blend into the jungles, providing a +5 bonus to all hide checks.

LONGBOW: Jungle giants apply sleep poison to their longbows (see page 5).

