

# BOOK of heroic RACES Seedlings



Marie Small

**PATHFINDER**  
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

**JON BRAZER  
ENTERPRISES**

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Luis Salas

# Book of heroic Races Seedlings



**JON BRAZER  
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## **CREDITS**

### **Author**

Marie Small

### **Editor**

Kevin Morris

### **Chief Programmer**

E. Steev Ramsdell

### **Cover Artist**

Luis Antonio Salas Lastra

### **Interior Art**

Joyce Maureira, Cheuk Po, Phillip Simpson

## **Listing of Open Content**

**Open Content:** All game mechanics. The name “seedling”, the names of all archetypes, prestige classes, spells, and magic items.

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## INTRODUCTION

As a publisher, there are a number of different events and publications I follow religiously. First and foremost, Wayfinder always catches my attention. This excellent publication is produced by some real hardcore fans of the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game and features upcoming authors. The quality of their work constantly surprises me, and it is always an enjoyable read.

Another that I pay close attention to is the RPG Superstar contest. Some of the best and brightest roleplaying game designers received their start during this yearly contest. There are always a few designers that catch my eye. Seldom do these designers win, but I always take special note of them and their future work. So, when Marie Small pitched me the idea of a tree-like people as a playable race, I said, "Yes!" pretty much on the spot. I remembered her writing about a plant-based magic item during the contest and thinking that it was really cool. If she wanted to take the plant idea and turn it into a full race with deities, spells, magic items, and archetypes, it did not need any convincing.

What she turned in was a fun and flavorful race that possess a strong connection to nature. Like a plant, they can grow a frequently used weapon from their own hair. As with many forest creatures of legend, they can seemingly disappear by turning into a tree. It was a really cool race that I enjoyed very much.

And now we present it to you for your game. We hope that that you have as much fun with this race in your game as we had bringing this to you.

Dale C. McCoy, Jr  
President, Jon Brazer Enterprises  
October 2012

## How To Use This Book

This book presents a number of options you can use to create seedling characters for your game. However, your game master may choose to alter or disregard portions of this book, so it is best to ask him or her first before utilizing the options presented herein.

This supplement references a number of books other than the Pathfinder Core Rulebook. The notation for these books is as follows:

APG – Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Advanced Player's Guide

UM – Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Ultimate Magic

UC – Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Ultimate Combat

ARG – Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Advanced Race Guide



## Reading Her Forgotten Journal

Golden gently drew her fingers along the spine of her old journal. She had forgotten that it was in the bottom of her chest, where it had lain since that awful night fifteen years ago. Picking it up with a gloomy sense of inevitability, she opened it and began to read...

Journal, 4<sup>th</sup> day of Spring, 1475<sup>th</sup> year of Clan Mossbranch.

*Today is my first day as an adult member of the clan. I have recovered from my successful trial and received my name at the ceremony this morning – Mossbranch Whisperleaf Goldenlight. I have a beautiful whorl pattern over my right cheek. My family and Elder Meadowvale colored it with blackberry paste so that it healed a rich purple. I've finished my defense training, an act our elven friends consider "war" – such a foreign concept. We do not seek to conquer, only to defend that which is ours. I now begin my training as a switcher. I've dreamt of this my entire life! I shall protect my family and my clan, giving my life if necessary. Lifeseed, creator and keeper, promises a quick rebirth for those who die in this worthy duty.*

Journal, 25<sup>th</sup> day of Summer, 1475<sup>th</sup> year of Clan Mossbranch.

*I just returned from my first patrol of our borders, and all is quiet. There are some rumors at home, sorrowful rumors. Some are speaking of leaving the leadership of Elder Meadowvale because of the lack of rain and the potential for famine to strike this winter. Others are willing to wait out the summer before seeking new territory. Only a very few are supporting the Elder with no conditions. I don't worry myself with it too much. Clan Mossbranch's territory borders the lands of the Crookedbough and Windleaf clans. We would have to walk far to find a new territory. Better to wait until after the snow melts next Spring.*

Journal, 57<sup>th</sup> day of Autumn, 1475<sup>th</sup> year of Clan Mossbranch.

*We didn't meet any patrols from either Crookedbough or Windleaf this circuit. Some creatures that normally go to ground are still out and about. I worry what this winter holds for us. Darker things seem to hunt the night. I gave my report to the Elder Council. I don't know what good it will do. I should not be leading patrols yet, let alone giving reports to the Council, but too many have disappeared on watch or during a patrol. The Council simply accepted the report and moved on with planning the Mid-Winter Festival that celebrates the new year. Usually this is a time of Clans coming together. Newly recognized adults are celebrated, mates are chosen, and tales of the past are told. Only Mossbranch is left, and we are dwindling.*

Journal 2<sup>nd</sup> day of Winter, ~~1476<sup>th</sup> year of Clan Mossbranch~~  
1<sup>st</sup> year of Orphans.

*A pall of smoke covers the Clans' territories; we are no more. Our celebrations for the new year ended in sightless eyes and stilled breaths. Elder Meadowvale would have been stripped of her rank and had the colored markings burned from her face, but she's dead. I don't even know who among us would hold that rank now.*

*Where to start? Most were eagerly enjoying the stories and revelries. Clans Crookedbough and Windleaf had not answered our invitations, so no mates could be chosen. Unbeknownst to most, the four messengers we sent ten days before hadn't returned. I was very uneasy. The attack*

*came when all but those few on duty were fully involved with the festivities.*

*Our attackers – I don't know what they were, but they walked on two legs – knew of our ability to take tree form. They set our forest on fire. Only those of us on duty made it through relatively unharmed. Half of us aided those few who managed to escape the flames. Half of us harried the enemy's flanks to protect the survivors. Many died during the confusion. My switch bit into the flesh of a sentient being for the first time last night, and I rejoiced in the middle of the horror. Now, walking through the ash of my home, I can't find the tears to mourn.*

*Most of the survivors are adolescents and young adults like me. We are now orphaned, without home or succor. The few switchers that remain will take the youngest to the elves. Perhaps they can offer refuge and healing. Some say they will seek revenge. The blood spilled last night seems to have seeped into their minds and spoiled them.*

*Me...I will do my duty and escort the most vulnerable of us to the elves. Then, I shall seek the outside world for places where the sun is bright and the wind is strong. Perhaps, if we had exposed ourselves to outsiders, we would have been better able to anticipate what happened last night. Perhaps, if they have understanding and respect for us, last night will be the last nightmare we must endure.*

The tears Golden could not find when she wrote that last entry finally flowed down her cheeks. "Goodbye," she whispered. Picking up a pen from Talathel's desk, she wrote a final entry.

Journal, 1<sup>st</sup> day of Summer, 15<sup>th</sup> year of Orphans.

*Hello, journal. I have not written in years. It hurt too much. Many things have changed; some good, some not. Such is life. I had the good fortune of meeting a young elf named Talathel – an aspiring magus – when I and the other survivors finally reached Althalyn, the nearest elven village. Talathel has been my constant companion. He was the impetus for our wanderings and adventures. I greatly appreciate those distractions, as they gave me time to grieve. Our clan has grown to include Anafa – a halfling more suited to the stage than the road, Fijit – a gnome whose name perfectly fits him and his illusions, and Ausk – a half-orc druid, believe it or not. Ausk's orc tribe and its allies were responsible for the destruction of my clan. We met while the big lug was trying to coax new seedling growth in another clan's devastated territory. I forgave him on the spot!*

*We have amassed quite a bit of wealth and purchased a home...well, an estate really. Imagine that! Land of our own. I have plenty of room to roam and plant, although my favorite place is Ausk's small grove. I have completed my journey on the switcher path, having never abandoned it. I have found that I have the ability to defend my Clan, as I could not all those years ago. Yes, these four are my Clan. I defend them with honor; I'm sure Lifeseed and Knotwood approve of my choice.*

*This is my last entry. May it stand as a testimony to the resilience of seedlings, the truth of Clan Mossbranch's demise, and the power of life and forgiveness.*

## **RACIAL TRAITS**

**General Info/History:** Some say seedlings are the young of treants. Others say they are wood spirits given physical form. Not even the seedlings know for certain.

Seedling communities are most commonly found in primordial forests that have seen little disturbance from outside forces. Born in a time immemorial to them now, they are one with their forests. Few ever leave the forest in which they were born. A quiet people, they prefer diplomacy to combat. Their ability to go undetected when necessary is usually enough to keep their communities safe. When threatened, they are a force to be reckoned with, as the forest itself rises up to defend them. They are fierce defenders of those who gain their trust and those they consider allies.

**Physical Description:** Seedlings stand about 5-5 ½ feet tall. Though slender, they are heavier than they appear, weighing an average of 130-160 lbs. Switches, slender and supple twig-like structures with leaves or nettles attached, pass for seedling hair. During spring, small flowers, cones, or berries appear among the switches, adding texture and color to an otherwise grey-green mane. These fade away by winter, although the leaves and nettles remain green year round. Their skin is thick and bark-like, varying in color and texture based on the dominant tree in their home wood. Adult seedlings' appearance is further enhanced by the ritual scarification received during their rite of passage, which designates clan membership. These scars are always on the face and neck and are dyed using a serum prepared specifically for this purpose. Seedling eye colors are normally a shade of the individual's skin color, with lighter-skinned seedlings having darker eyes, and darker-skinned seedlings having lighter ones. Seedlings appear androgynous to untrained non-seedlings, but they can recognize gender among themselves through the flowers and berries in their switches. All other such gender-defining characteristics are internal.

**Society:** Seedlings are communal by nature. They organize themselves in pairs, families, and clans. Families

are based on a likeness of type, such as oak or spruce. Clans are based on territorial areas, but may extend to whole geographic regions. A strict hierarchy of elders exists in seedling society. Elders are looked to for their wisdom and guidance when decisions need to be made by consensus.

**Relations:** Seedlings get along well with fey and other sylvan races. They have a passing acquaintance with elves, often allying with those elves who share their wood. Because seedling communities are remote, they rarely interact with other races. Out of self-defense, they avoid those other races that are nearby, reaching out to them only for necessities, such as trade.

**Alignment and Religion:** More so than most other races, seedlings are tied to nature and the cycle of birth and death. These ties influence their alignment, with most seedlings being neutral. They venerate gods and goddesses related to natural phenomenon in addition to their own small pantheon: Lifeseed is the seedlings' creator and keeper; Silverleaf, sometimes called Peacekeeper, preserves family and clan; Knotwood is their defender; and Eldest Elder is the seer who led them to the forests' refuge in a time long ago lost to myth.

**Adventurers:** Most seedlings found outside their forests are either members of a clan or family seeking new territory or orphans. These clanless orphans are most likely to take up the adventuring path, either to avenge their lost kin or to find a new clan. Wanderlust is rare among seedlings but not entirely unprecedented. Many seedlings find the druid's path a good fit to their natural abilities, although there are many rangers among them, and also specialized fighters known as switchers.

**Names:** Seedling names are composed of a given name, a family name, and a clan name. If a seedling formally introduces herself to another seedling unknown to her, she gives her clan name first, followed by her family name, and then her given name. With non-seedlings, she shares only her given name to protect her family and clan. Seedlings who spend a large amount of time with non-seedlings often shorten their given name or choose a new name from the

## **Seedling Racial Traits**

**+2 Constitution, +2 Wisdom, -2 Dexterity:** Seedlings are shrewd and hardy, but they are physically less flexible than humans due to their bark-like skin.

**Medium:** Seedlings are Medium creatures and have no bonuses or penalties due to their size.

**Normal Speed:** Seedlings have a base speed of 30 feet.

**Low-Light Vision:** Seedlings can see twice as far as humans in conditions of dim light. Seedlings make their home in the twilight beneath the thick, intertwined canopy of primordial forests, and they are used to seeing with limited sunlight.

**Natural Armor Bonus:** Their plant-like nature has gifted seedlings with a fibrous, stiff skin much like bark. This grants them a +1 natural armor bonus.

**Photosynthesis:** While seedlings need to eat and breathe, their leaves and nettles can photosynthesize their own food and oxygen, allowing seedlings to go longer without sustenance. They receive a +2 racial bonus on Constitution checks to resist suffocation, drowning, and starvation.

**Planting:** As a standard action, seedlings can extend their feet into the earth below them, rooting themselves to a single point. This spell-like ability functions similar to a *tree shape* spell with the following changes: the size of the tree is Medium instead of Large, and the seedling can only assume the shape of a tree sapling resembling her own appearance. For example, an oak seedling can assume the shape of an oak sapling but not a pine or maple sapling. While in this form, the seedling gains tremorsense out to 30 feet. A seedling may maintain a *planting* for up to 24 hours.

**Plant-Resistance:** Seedlings receive a +2 bonus on saving throws versus mind-affecting effects and paralysis.

**Plantkin:** Seedlings have the following spell-like ability: 1/day—*speak with plants*. The caster level for this effect is equal to the seedling's level.

**Languages:** Seedlings begin play speaking Common, Seedling and Sylvan. Those with high intelligence can choose the following as bonus languages: Draconic, Elven, Gnome, Goblin, Orc, and Treant.

culture or race with which they associate. Given names do not differentiate between male and female seedlings.

*Clan Names:* Autumn Leaf, Short Nettle, Broken Cone

*Family Names:* Knottwist, Shimmerbark, Goldenbough

*Given Names:* Moonshade, Sunnyleaf, Lightripple

## Traits<sup>APG</sup>

The following race traits are available for seedlings.

**Fast Striker:** Your family or clan has been in a constant state of combat since before you were born. Whether attempting to resist the encroachment of civilization or settling in a new territory, you can quickly uproot yourself in response to necessity. You can end your planting as a move action instead of a full-round action.

**Off-Shoot:** Your parents instilled in you the strength of will to champion the things you in which you believe, just as they did when they formed a new clan years ago. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Will saves.

**Orphan:** Due to an unfortunate event or chain of events, you found yourself alone without family or clan to support and aid you. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Survival checks, and Survival is always a class skill for you.

**Scarred:** Your coming of age scarification ritual went horribly awry, leaving you disfigured. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Intimidate checks, and Intimidate is always a class skill for you.

**Trader:** You grew up on the outskirts of your clan's territory. Interacting with outsiders is easy for you since you grew up listening to your elders barter for goods and negotiate trade prices. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Appraise checks, and you can use your Appraise modifier in place of your Diplomacy modifier when negotiating, as long as money or items of monetary value are part of the negotiations.

## Alternate Racial Traits<sup>APG/ARG</sup>

The following racial traits may be selected instead of existing seedling racial traits. Consult your GM before selecting any of these new options.

**Burned One:** You survived a forest fire or being struck by lightning. You gain your choice of fire or electricity resistance 5. Once chosen, this choice cannot be changed. This racial trait replaces plant resistance.

**Dark Root:** Your lineage is more closely related to tubers and other root plants than to soaring sequoia or grand oaks. You gain darkvision 60 feet and a burrow speed of 15 feet. This racial trait replaces low-light vision and plantkin.

**Desert Kin:** Your clan's ancestors were desert-dwelling plants. The whole of your body is covered with small spines. When you are struck with a natural weapon or unarmed strike, your opponent suffers 1d3 points of piercing damage. You also deal this damage to your opponent each round while grappling. This racial trait replaces planting.

**Pestilent:** Your lineage began in a stagnant swamp. You gain +2 on Fortitude saves against poison and disease. This racial trait replaces plant resistance.

## Favored Class Options<sup>APG/ARG</sup>

Instead of receiving an additional skill rank or hit point whenever he gains a level in a favored class, a seedling has the option of choosing from a number of other bonuses, depending upon his favored class. The following options are available to all seedlings who have the listed favored class, and unless otherwise stated, the bonus applies each time you select the listed favored class reward.

**Bard:** Add one spell known from the Plant domain spell list. This spell must be at least one level below the highest spell level the bard can cast.

**Cleric:** The cleric gains the *wooden fist* ability from the Plant domain. If the cleric already has this power, add 1/2 to its number of uses per day.

**Druid:** Add +1/2 to the bonus you gain from your nature sense ability.

**Fighter:** Add +1/4 to the fighter's natural armor bonus (maximum +5).

**Magus:** Add +1/4 to the magus' arcane pool.

**Oracle:** Add one spell known from the Plant domain spell list. This spell must be at least one level below the highest spell level the oracle can cast.

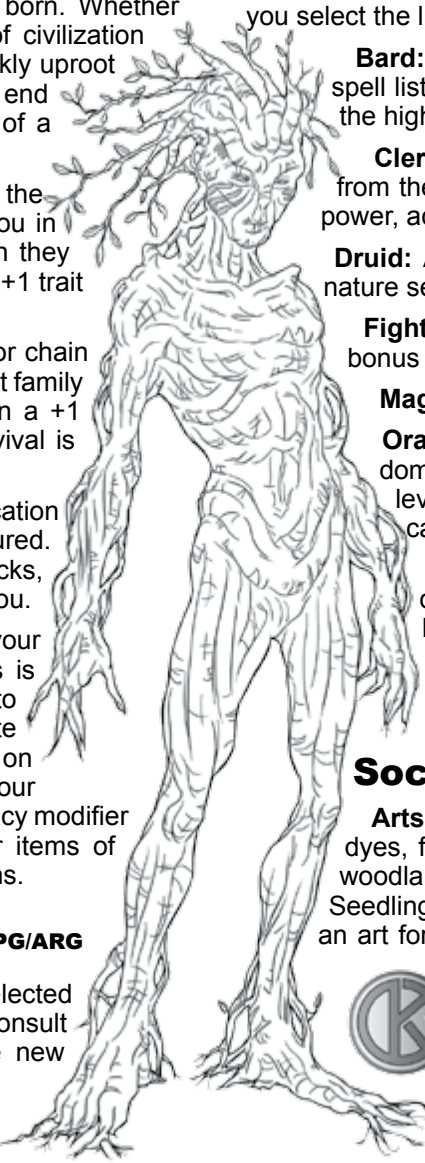
**Ranger:** Add +1/6 to the ranger's effective druid level when determining the abilities of his animal companion (maximum +3).

**Summoner:** Add +1/4 to the eidolon's evolution pool.

## Society & Lands

**Arts and Crafts:** Seedlings often use natural dyes, fibers, and other resources common to their woodland homes to create homemade handicrafts. Seedlings also long ago developed scarification into an art form. Beginning on the first anniversary of his birth, a seedling's family and Elder begin to regularly mark him with small scars that resemble bark patterns once they have healed. This scarring is minor relative to the seedling's overall body size, being limited to his torso and limbs. This ritual scarification continues throughout the seedling's life and ultimately serves to align the seedling's physical appearance with his arboreal heritage and to denote his membership within seedling society. Once a seedling has reached maturity, which normally occurs around his 100th year, he receives additional scarring as a mark of his adulthood. This mark is first made on the face in stylized whorls and other patterns and then dyed with natural substances such as ash, ochre, and various berry pastes. The seedling's marking typically starts around the cheeks and eyes, but may broaden to other facial areas including the ears and jaw.

**Magic:** Seedlings have a healthy respect of magic that borders on fear, and they prefer to avoid it. They treat even god-given divine magic with care, fearing that it could be



taken from them or manipulated as punishment for their transgressions. The only spellcasters welcomed in seedling society with little open concern are bards, druids, magi, rangers, and summoners. Bards are seen as storytellers and harmless illusionists, though seedlings have little experience with powerful bardic enchantments. Druids and rangers have a comfortable place in seedling society, which views their magic as an extension of their own knowledge of the natural world. Seedlings accept magi readily, valuing their martial skill for its use in defending the community. Seedling communities welcome summoners and their eidolons, whose bond reminds them of their own relationship with the animals that share their home. Clerics and oracles, though respected, are thought to be slightly unpredictable, for their magic could be taken away at the whims of their divine patrons. The spontaneous character of a sorcerer's magic and the dark powers in which witches seem to traffic worry seedlings greatly. Alchemists and wizards fare only slightly better, for their magic is shackled by the need for preparation, making them far more predictable. Inquisitors and paladins are considered outsiders with no ties to the seedling community.

**Technology:** Seedling-made technology, including things such as leather backpacks, pottery, and quarterstaves, is composed of natural substances. More refined products, such as the scarring serum, have specific cultural purposes. Seedlings prefer phosphorescent sources for lighting, avoiding regular torches and oil lanterns for obvious reasons. Seedlings trade with outsiders in enclaves to obtain manufactured goods, such as metal weapons and armor, silver and gold jewelry, and distilled and purified alchemical substances.

**Love and Mating:** Seedlings imbue their pure lineages with a great deal of social and religious value. Typically, family Elders and parents have open discussions of mating at major festivals, most especially the Mid-Winter Festival that marks the new year of the seedling calendar. Only after the many possible pairings are evaluated for personality and social compatibility does an individual's choice enter the process. Over the next two seasons, the young seedling pairs spend time together to become better acquainted. During this time, it is not unheard of for a young seedling to have four to six suitors, some of which she proposed and others who would like to choose her. In autumn, the seedlings' choices for the final pairing are revealed. Should a single seedling be the final choice of two or more others, that seedling chooses between those that desire her. A seedling not chosen in such a situation must wait a year before mating to regain emotional stability. If a seedling cannot make a choice between mates, she is deemed too immature to enter into a mating. At this point, the process ends for her and she can try to find a mate again in a year. During the Mid-Winter Festival one year after the initial negotiations, all final pairings are formalized and recognized. This relationship is considered inviolate; divorce or separation is unprecedented in seedling society.

**War:** Seedlings do not understand war, though they do understand the concept of armed defense. War for conquest or resources is a perversion of what Peacekeeper and Knotwood have taught. As such, offensive war is not an act in which seedlings engage. The Mossbranch Clan's near annihilation fifteen years ago and the opening of some Clans' borders to outsiders may have set the seedlings on a path to changing their understanding of war. In recent times, some individuals have begun to plan confrontations with

anyone aggressive with their community, though such plans are unofficial.

**Aging and Death:** As seedlings age, most grow taller or wider, and their skin is marked with a more gnarled, bark-like appearance, like the trees of their lineage. Age affects the appearance of a seedling most notably in the last year of his life. At that time, the seedling's leaves or nettles (as appropriate) change in color. Leaves become yellow, red, orange, or brown. Nettles slowly turn brown. During the last month of life, both nettles and leaves fall out. For this final year, the community celebrates the seedling's life with song, dance, and story. After death, the deceased is laid to rest beneath the shade of the oldest tree within the community's territory that he resembled in life. All community members cut a switch from their manes during the ceremony, donating it in the departed seedling's honor. Over the next week, the elders weave a wreath from the donated switches. This week is one of silence and contemplation for the community allowing everyone to come to terms with their loss. One week to the day after the seedling's death, the community comes together to place the wreath at the feet of the deceased. This is the signal for mourning to cease and community activities to resume normally.

**Culture:** Seedlings are communal by nature. Every decision, every judgment, and every action is viewed through a communal prism, framed by the question, "How will this affect the group?" If the answer to this question is negative, the action is often abandoned outright or debated further. Most seedlings are mistrustful of outsiders and feel community isolation is best for maintaining cohesion. Some, such as Darkmoon, the Eldest of Whisper Wood Clan in Lakeview Ridge, are actively working to change this separatist tendency.

**Government and Leaders:** Most seedling communities are overseen by an Elders' Council. The leaders of these councils are called the Eldest, and all other council members are called Elders. As these titles imply, the representatives on the councils are usually of old or venerable age and still active in the community. These elders are selected from the elders of family councils, which themselves are formed of elders representing each branch of the family's lineage. In times of need, neighboring clans may form a council for their greater area from representatives of their respective councils. Though there are stories of an overarching seedling Elder Council consisting of representatives from area councils, these stories date from millennia ago and have no modern correlation.

Council offices are not absolute. An elder can be removed from a council if the community wishes it. If the elder is removed for dereliction of duty, breach of trust, or another egregious wrongdoing, the scar earned when the elder was first named to the post is burned away. The scar that remains is a mark of shame. No seedling removed in this way has ever earned a scar denoting him as a communal contributor again. Such disgraceful removals from council are rare, however.

Each council, whether a family council or a greater one, cares for communal business, so that other members of the community can see to their daily work. However, every seedling has a say should he wish to exercise it. Seedlings often make use of this privilege in situations that warrant special concern.

**Communities and Settlements:** Seedling communities



and settlements vary depending on their environment and purpose. Most seedling trading enclave possess simpler trappings of human or elven society with bark and willow lodges, paths clear enough for cargo to pass through easily and shallow shores for river landings. An isolated community consisting of a single family or clan keeps multiple caches of goods and materials that the community members share, but their settlement remains otherwise well hidden. More integrated clans made of many seedling families are more easily detected. In the center of such a community sits the Speaker's Stump, where public dialogue takes place. Under woven tarps throughout the community's territory, crafters and traders bring their wares. Few outsiders encounter communities with seedling children. These communities stay hidden deep within a clan's territory. More often, outsiders come in contact with adult seedlings in trading enclaves, scattered along the edges of their territories or sometimes found in the settlements of friendly races.

**Clans and Families:** Seedling pairs form the basic building blocks of seedling family life. These pairings last their whole lives. Families themselves consist of seedlings of the same lineage (oak, fir, maple, or spruce, for instance) related through heredity or mating. The community as a whole raises the seedling children.

A seedling clan is an extended community that consists of all the families living within a territory. The types of seedlings in one clan might be determined by climate or region, while another clan might be made of families that trace their lineage to similar kinds of trees (such as deciduous or evergreen). For example, the Autumn Beauty clan consists of oak, maple, and elder (all deciduous trees) seedlings occupying

one territory, but the Brown Root clan of pine, oak, and ivy (all trees from temperate zones) lives in another.

New clans or family segmentations remain extensions of their parent communities.

**History and Lore:** Seedlings preserve their history orally. They eschew written history to keep the treasured story of their people closely guarded. Many of their greatest triumphs and worst tragedies remain so shrouded in myth and changed from retellings that particulars sometimes lose accuracy with passing generations. Interesting tidbits, however, can be gleaned from their stories with careful attention to detail and a great deal of patience.

**Language and Script:** Hearing a seedling speak in her native language reminds the listener of wind passing through branches, leaves fluttering against each other, and the crackling of autumn leaves beneath one's feet. The seedling language is tonal but relies on subtle limb movements to convey nuance and meaning. Seedlings use a variant of Elven script when they need to document important dealings with outsiders, such as trade agreements, bills of lading, and arcane writings, such as scrolls and spellbooks. More recent generations of seedling youth find writing down personal thoughts during their coming of age both enjoyable and self-enlightening. Some seedlings even continue this writing until mated.

**Economy:** Within their own communities, seedlings share their resources and use their talents to the benefit of all, both during ordinary times and during crisis. Clans and families that trade with outsiders barter crafts and renewable resources, such as glow moss bags, berries prized by spellcasters, feathers, flowers, as well as animals, birds and insects of





all kinds (and their fecal matter), forest plants, reptiles, and even rare ironwood. Seedlings are very reluctant to trade in finite natural resources, such as coal, gemstones, gold, and sulphur, for they fear giving outsiders reason to venture into their territory and seek out these resources for themselves. Seedlings will not trade in arbor, fruit, or nuts.

Some trading communities keep small amounts of coin in reserve, for occasions when need arises and bartering fails. The amount in reserve depends on the size of the community as well as its location and proximity to trade routes.

**Relations:** Seedlings have interacted with many races over the generations and possess different relations with each.

**Dwarves:** Called the Children of Stone by seedlings, dwarves are viewed as necessary oddities, much like boulders that resist the creep of forests. Seedlings keep their dealings with dwarves limited to trade and occasional passage through each other's lands.

**Elves:** Seedlings find kindred spirits in the elves. They live in the same environments and share a strong connection to nature. Many orphan seedlings seek a place among the elves so that they can feel at home in at least some way.

**Gnomes:** The elders of seedling society look askance at the gnomes, despite their racial ties to the fey. Seedlings find little to trust in the gnomes' propensity for practical jokes or their mercurial natures. A strange gnome is welcomed with a quick meal, a faster exchange of news, and chivied along on the next leg of her journey. Occasionally, however, a gnome might become a welcome traveling companion to a younger seedling setting off to see the lands beyond the forest.

**Half-Elves:** Seedlings value their lineages and cross-pollination is not known among them, and so most seedlings find the mixing of human and elven blood incomprehensible. They are just as perplexed by the offspring of such unions.

**Half-Orcs:** Seedlings fear half-orcs. In addition to their discomfort with mixed bloodlines, seedlings have suffered from orc incursions in the past, and they expect the same or worse from half-blooded orcs.

**Halflings:** Welcomed in most seedling communities for the information they carry from the outside, halflings are usually the first non-elf outsider young seedlings see. Halfling stories of metal and stone cities under the sky are laughed at by seedling adults, while the younger generations whisper amongst themselves of how strange such places must be.

**Humans:** Seedlings treat humans with caution, for they are unpredictable: some humans come with a light heart while others come with dark intentions. Seedlings deal with humans only in outer trading communities, much as they do with the dwarves.

**Monstrous:** At best, seedlings are wary of the various monstrous races and, at worst, openly hostile toward them.

**Fey:** Dryads share an arboreal connection with the seedlings, and the two races consider each other allies. Seedlings view nymphs as friends also, though they are wary of trickster fey races, such as pixies and satyrs.

**Others:** Because the habits and motives of those living outside the deep forests are unknown to the seedlings, they always approach such outsiders with caution. Races that live within the forests are better understood, and seedlings associate them with various stereotypes. Beyond these

general trends, seedlings generally welcome Good-aligned races, who are often allies or friends. Neutral-aligned races are viewed with caution or suspicion, evil-aligned races are unwelcome, and any who come too close to seedling lands meet with hostility and resistance.

**Adventurers:** By their nature, seedlings are less inclined than many races to take up the mantle of adventurer. Those who do so usually find this path by accident. Once the adventurous path is found, however, seedlings embrace it whole-heartedly. Seedling adventurers usually have levels in martial or nature-focused classes.

**Alchemists<sup>APG</sup>:** Seedlings do not often work with the potentially deadly concoctions of the alchemist. Those who do are looked at warily, until they show how useful the alchemist's skills are in a pinch.

**Barbarians:** Seedlings resembling temperate and tropical broadleaf trees such as maple or oak are less likely to be barbarians than those resembling the boreal conifers such as fir or spruce. The rage that fuels a barbarian's strength makes many seedlings uncomfortable. Seedling barbarians usually wander in search of new vistas to explore.

**Bards:** Because seedling territories are large, and individual settlements within them are often isolated, bards are a welcome addition to any community. News from other clans and the stories told and re-told across the generations will always be welcome, and a seedling bard is an excellent source for both.

**Cavaliers<sup>APG</sup>:** Seedling cavaliers are few and far between, for many seedlings find riding uncomfortable. Those few who choose the cavalier's path follow it faithfully, no matter where the mount and seedling may roam.

**Clerics:** Most seedlings venerate all their gods, in addition to any other nature gods from surrounding communities that catch their fancy. Clerics typically observe small daily rituals in addition to the larger festivities and responsibilities associated with their chosen deities.

**Druids:** All seedlings feel a deep connection to the earth from which, according to legend, they were born. Those drawn to the druid path feel a deeper connection to nature than most. Druid adventurers are often those who are seeking to experience the interconnectedness of all things.

**Fighters:** Fierce defenders of their communities, most seedling fighters wield their signature weapon—the switch whip. Fighters found outside their home territory are usually in search of a rampaging monster or seeking information about newcomers to their territory. Those who choose the adventurer's path do so because they seek new knowledge and skills with which to improve their home's defenses.

**Gunslingers<sup>UC</sup>:** Gunslingers are only rumors to most seedlings, said to wield weapons dangerous to the individual holding them as well as those they are pointed at. Elders whisper quietly among themselves of rare seedlings mad enough to wield these weapons themselves. Those seedlings who become gunslingers are few and far between, and most of them are found outside seedling communities.

**Inquisitors<sup>APG</sup>:** Though they are generally gentle and forgiving, some seedlings become inquisitors after losing their loved ones and seek to punish those responsible. Others see certain races or non-seedling deities as a threat to everything all seedlings cherish. Inquisitors are seen as an uncomfortably necessary defense in what is sometimes

a lethally hostile world.

**Magi<sup>UM</sup>:** Some see magic in a weapon; others see a weapon in magic. All seedling magi combine these two views, firmly believing that a robust offense is the best defense. Relatively new to seedling society, magi are quickly earning their place next to the elite fighters known as switchers.

**Monks:** Most seedlings find the stringent inner focus that monks actively pursue to be at odds with their own outward focus. Those seedlings who do find the inner balance required to follow the monk's path become very formidable.

**Oracles<sup>APG</sup>:** Seedling oracles are valued as the literal mouthpieces of the gods and the hands and feet of nature in all its tempestuous glory. All oracles are respected, though whether they are liked depends on the recent events connected to them. Eldest Elder is said to have been the first seedling oracle.

**Paladins:** Few seedlings feel the call of the gods very strongly. Of those who do, most usually become clerics. The very few who become paladins serve fervently and go wherever the need is greatest with no regard to borders between seedling and non-seedling lands.

**Rangers:** Rangers are the backbone of any clan or family seeking new territory. They often guide outsiders to a trading enclave if they come too close to a family settlement. While fighters are the first line of defense against an active assailant, rangers are the deterrent to invasion of seedling communities.

**Rogues:** Few seedlings fit the rascalion stereotype other races apply to rogues. Seedling rogues take great delight in physical and diplomatic pursuits, often filling diplomatic and mercantile positions. They are typically found in outlying settlements where contact with outsiders is more frequent.

**Sorcerers:** If a fledgling seedling sorcerer begins to manifest divination or illusion magic, most will simply smile and shrug off any "mishaps." If, on the other hand, the hapless seedling begins to manifest fire or other debilitating magic, that individual will immediately be encouraged to seek shelter and training with the nearest friendly non-seedling community.

**Summoners<sup>APG</sup>:** Seedlings invariably consider a summoner a boon to the community. Eidolons belonging to seedlings typically take on animalistic or plant-like qualities as they evolve. Some of the best known seedling summoners

bonded with eidolons that became an amalgam of both fauna and flora.

**Witches<sup>APG</sup>:** Most seedlings will fear a witch, unless she goes above and beyond to prove that she means the community no harm, which requires more effort for the witch than it would for another spellcaster. Many seedling witches are reluctant to work so hard only to be treated so poorly. Consequently, most of them wander, looking for a place to call their own. During their wanderings, they seek whatever knowledge they can glean from the outside world.

**Wizards:** While a sorcerer cannot believably promise not to burn down a section of forest, a wizard can. As such, they are more welcome among seedlings than sorcerers, though many find the sheer power they wield unsettling. Seedling wizards tend to be elementalists, particularly favoring the earth and water schools.

## RACIAL OPTIONS

### Racial Archetypes

The following racial archetypes are available to seedlings.

#### SWITCHER

**Associated Class:** Fighter.

**Associated Race:** Seedling

**Replaced Abilities:** bonus feat (1st level only), bravery, weapon training

Seedlings don't need to wield dead wood or metal to be efficient at protecting their lands or repelling their enemies. They instead utilize their thickest hair switches as whips to brutal effect. Their personal connection to their switch whip grants them the ability to improve the effectiveness of their attacks.

**Switch Focus:** The switcher gains the Switch racial feat and Weapon Finesse as bonus feats at 1st level.

**Switch Poison (Ex):** At 2nd level, a switcher can squeeze her switch whip as a free action to make it ooze a viscous sap that causes an itching and burning sensation on contact. On a successful attack, the target must succeed a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 the switcher's level + his Con modifier) or become flat-footed. The duration of this poison is 1 round and increases by 1 round for every four levels

**Table 1: Height/Weight Table**

Seedling Type	Height	Height Modifier	Weight	Weight Modifier
Deciduous	4'0"	+2d10	75 lb	x5
Conifer	4'6"	+2d10	105 lb	x5

**Table 2: Random Starting Age**

Adulthood	Barbarian, Rogue, Sorcerer, Alchemist, Oracle, Witch	Bard, Fighter, Paladin, Ranger, Cavalier, Inquisitor, Magus, Gunslinger	Cleric, Druid, Monk, Wizard, Summoner
100 years	+3d6	+6d6	+9d6

**Table 3: Aging Effects**

Middle Age	Old Age	Venerable Age	Maximum Age
250 years	375 years	500 years	500+3d% years

beyond 2nd. The poisoned creature can spend a standard action scratching the affected area, ending the effect. Switch poison is considered a poison effect. A switcher is immune to his own switch poison. A switcher's switch whip does not ooze this contact poison when wielded by another creature.

**Bloodied Thorns (Ex):** At 5th level, a switcher's switch whip grows long, hooked thorns, causing it to deal an additional 1d6 points of piercing damage, and 2 points of bleed damage per hit. This bleed damage increases by 2 for every four levels beyond 5th.

**Razor Leaves (Ex):** At 13th level, the switch whip grows new leaves or nettles similar to those it held while attached to the switcher's head. The edges of this new growth are razor sharp, causing the switch whip to deal an additional 1d6 points of slashing damage. This damage increases by 1d6 every four levels beyond 13th. These razor leaves only function for the switcher himself.

**Venomous Essence (Ex):** At 17th level, the switcher's switch poison becomes more deadly, inflicting 1d3 points of Constitution damage each round on a failed Fortitude save in addition to the poison rendering the target flat-footed. Two consecutive saves cures this poison.

**Weapon Mastery (Ex):** The switcher must choose his switch whip as the focus of this ability.

## TREE SPIRIT DRUID

**Associated Class:** Druid.

**Associated Race:** Seedling

**Replaced Abilities:** wild shape (18th level only), venom immunity, timeless body

Druids among the seedlings feel their connection to the forests keenly. This connection grants them a greater perceptiveness of who means harm within their home and the ability to do something about it.

**Trees Have Eyes and Ears (Su):** At 1st level, as a full round action, a tree spirit druid can focus her attention on any tree within 1 mile of her current location. Once she does so, she can hear and see everything occurring within 20 feet of the tree, whether a full battle or the wind in the leaves. The tree spirit druid can maintain this ability through concentration for up to one round per level, though she is considered blinded and deafened while she does so. These

rounds do not need to be consecutive, but they must be used in one round increments. At 9th level, the tree spirit druid can see everything occurring within 60 feet of the chosen tree. She must be familiar with the targeted tree to use this ability.

**Forest's Vengeance (Su):** At 18th level, while using her trees have eyes and ears ability, the tree spirit druid can cast a druid spell through the chosen tree. She must first concentrate for one round, and on any subsequent round in which she concentrates, she can cast a spell, using the tree as the spell's point of origin. Only spells with a casting time of 1 round or less, a duration equal to or less than 1 round per class level, and a range other than personal or touch can be cast in this way.

## Prestige Class

The following racial prestige class is available to seedlings.

### NEGOTIATOR

The negotiator is gifted with words. An individual many find likable despite any flaws, she excels at getting what she wants, while leaving the impression that the giver received something in return. She may be a sincere mediator trying to hammer out the best agreement for all parties involved, or a fast talker looking for the greatest benefit for her and her benefactors while conceding as little ground as possible. Negotiators are found among tradesmen, craftsmen, courts, and formal foreign delegations. Whenever terms of agreement need to be decided and enforced, a negotiator is the person to go to.

**Role:** Negotiators do well as the "face" of a group. Their ability to facilitate agreement, distract from disagreement, and make a contract binding is useful to adventuring parties. Whether it's a reduced price on magic items or a payment agreement for clearing out the nearby monster lair, the negotiator gets the best terms and can make those terms stick.

Negotiators work well with members of all classes as they are able to see the benefits each one brings to the group as a whole. Rogues and bards most often find their way into this prestige class, with some sorcerers also often becoming negotiators. Any class can qualify, however, so there are negotiators from all backgrounds.

**Table 4: Negotiator Prestige Class**

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+0	+1	Seal the deal -2, sincere presentation, trapfinding
2nd	+1	+1	+1	+1	Deal gone wrong +1, discerning ear 1/day
3rd	+2	+1	+1	+2	Bonus feat, gifted manipulator
4th	+3	+1	+1	+2	Seal the deal -4, third party treaty
5th	+3	+2	+2	+3	Deal gone wrong +2
6th	+4	+2	+2	+3	Bonus feat, discerning ear 2/day
7th	+5	+2	+2	+4	Seal the deal -6, treaty by proxy
8th	+6	+3	+3	+4	Deal gone wrong +3
9th	+6	+3	+3	+5	Bonus feat
10th	+7	+3	+3	+5	Binding treaty, discerning ear 3/day, seal the deal -8,



**Hit Dice:** d8.

### Requirements

To qualify to become a negotiator, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

**Alignment:** Any non-chaotic.

**Skills:** Bluff 5 ranks, Diplomacy 5 ranks, Linguistics 2 ranks, Sense Motive 5 ranks.

**Feats:** Persuasive, Skill Focus (Diplomacy).

### Class Skills

The negotiator's class skills are Acrobatics (Dex), Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Dex), Disguise (Cha), Heal (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (local) (Int), Knowledge (nobility) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Perception (Wis), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), and Use Magic Device (Cha).

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

### Class Features

All of the following are class features of the negotiator prestige class.

#### Weapon and Armor Proficiency:

Negotiators are proficient in all simple weapons and all light martial weapons. They are also proficient in light armor.

**Seal the Deal (Su):** Agreements entered into with the negotiator are supernaturally binding. When making an agreement, she may choose to passively enforce it. Anyone breaking an agreement made with a negotiator suffers a -2 penalty to all ability scores, though no ability score can be reduced to less than 1 by this effect. This penalty increases to -4 at 4th level, -6 at 7th level and -8 at 10th level. This penalty does not stack with the penalty from a *lesser geas* spell. This effect is neutralized once the affected creature abides by the agreement for 24 hours. Agreements can be verbal or written. An agreement (and all ability score penalties) can be ended by a *break enchantment*, *limited wish*, *remove curse*, *miracle*, or *wish* spell. The caster level for this effect is equal to the negotiator's level. A negotiator can bind up to one intelligent creature in this way per negotiator level per day.

An agreement must be between the negotiator and at least one other creature. Only creatures that make an agreement with the negotiator suffer any penalties from this ability. For example, if a bandit leader agrees that neither he nor his followers will raid a certain town any longer, but the agreement was only made with the leader, the bandit leader takes the penalty if any of his followers raid that town, even if they act on their own. If the agreement is made with the bandit leader and all of his followers, each of them takes the penalty if any of them raid the town.

If the negotiator breaks her part of an agreement, she is subject to the same penalty. Both the negotiator and the creature making the agreement are instantly aware of the binding and the repercussions for failing to live up to the agreement, though there is no visible or audible sign of this.

**Sincere Presentation (Ex):** The negotiator gains a bonus on Diplomacy and Sense Motive checks equal to her negotiator level.

**Trapfinding (Ex):** A negotiator is used to carefully navigating difficult situations, from negotiations to disarming traps. She adds 1/2 her level to Perception skill checks made to locate traps and on Disable Device skill checks (minimum +1). A negotiator can use Disable Device to disarm magic traps. If a negotiator already possesses the trapfinding ability from another class, her levels in that class stack with her negotiator levels to determine her trapfinding bonus.

**Deal Gone Wrong (Ex):** At 2nd level, the negotiator has been in situations where no amount of talking will help. She gains a +1 bonus on initiative checks, attack, and damage rolls when she and her allies begin combat outnumbered by intelligent creatures. This bonus increases to +2 at 5th level and +3 at 8th level.

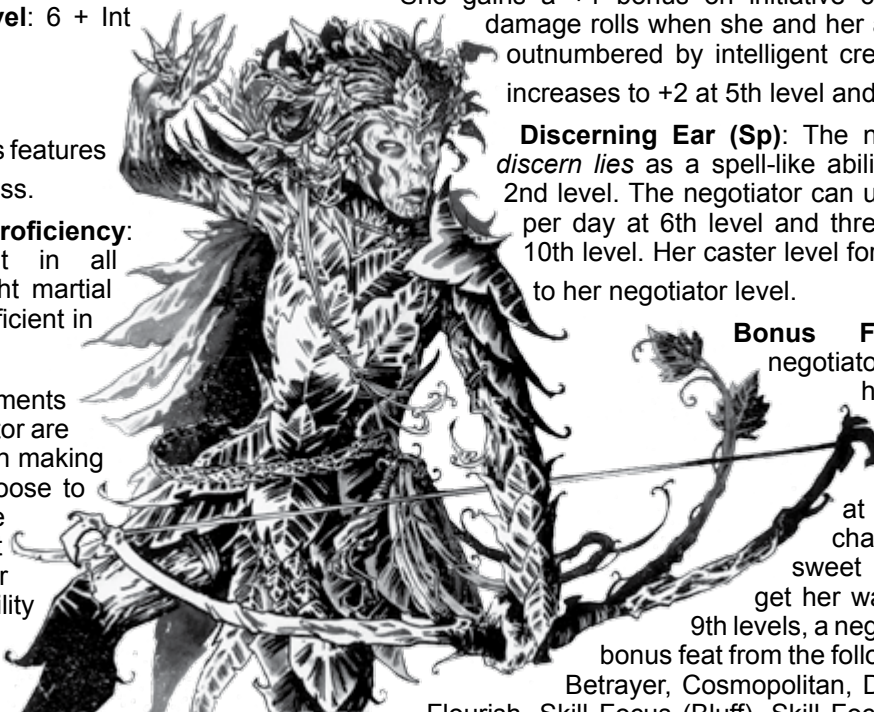
**Discerning Ear (Sp):** The negotiator may use *discern lies* as a spell-like ability once per day at 2nd level. The negotiator can use this ability twice per day at 6th level and three times per day at 10th level. Her caster level for this ability is equal to her negotiator level.

**Bonus Feat (Ex):** The negotiator has refined her awareness and vocabulary such that she is better than most at noticing subtle changes in attitude or sweet talking another to get her way. At 3rd, 6th, and 9th levels, a negotiator may select a bonus feat from the following list: Alertness, Betrayer, Cosmopolitan, Deceitful, Rhetorical Flourish, Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Sense Motive), Uncanny Alertness, and Voice of the Sibyl. She must meet any prerequisite requirements before she can take the feat.

**Gifted Manipulator (Ex):** At 3rd level, the negotiator has honed her ability to coerce an agreement. She gains a +2 bonus on all Bluff and Intimidate checks.

**Third Party Treaty (Su):** At 4th level, anyone entering into an agreement with the negotiator may do so on behalf of a third party such as an employer, king, or liege. The third party must be willing to enter into such an agreement. If an agreement made on behalf of the third party is breached, the effects of seal the deal affect that party instead. Each creature bound by this agreement counts against the number of creatures the negotiator can bind per day through the seal the deal ability.

**Treaty by Proxy (Su):** Once she reaches 7th level, the negotiator is now able to mediate an agreement between two or more parties while remaining a disinterested party not subject to the agreement. The effects of seal the deal,



if applicable, only apply to those involved directly in the agreement breached. Each creature in this agreement counts as 1 creature affected by the seal the deal ability.

**Binding Treaty (Su):** Upon reaching 10th level, a negotiator can now make agreements using the seal the deal ability with any number of creatures per day. In addition, such an agreement can no longer be removed by a *break enchantment* or *remove curse* spell.

## Racial Feats

Seedlings have a number of fighting styles and specialized abilities that use their unique biology. The following are a number of options you can choose to customize your seedling character.

### COLLECTIVE MEMORY

Your recall of seedling history is strong.

**Prerequisites:** Int 13, Root Memory, seedling.

**Benefit:** Once per day you may reroll a Knowledge (history) or Knowledge (nature) check and take the better result. You must decide to use this ability before the results of the roll are declared.

### EVERGREEN

Your nettles or leaves are more vibrant than most.

**Prerequisites:** Seedling, photosynthesis racial ability.

**Benefit:** Your photosynthesis ability is particularly strong. Your racial bonus against drowning, starvation and suffocation increases to +4.

### GROW ROOTS (COMBAT)

Your planting form is an integral part of your defensive technique.

**Prerequisites:** Con 13, seedling, planting racial ability.

**Benefit:** As a move action, you partially transform your body into your planting form, growing roots into the ground to stabilize your body. You gain a +4 racial bonus to your CMD when resisting bullrush, overrun and trip attempts made against you. Because your maneuverability is compromised, you suffer a -4 penalty to Dexterity as long as you retain this partial form. You can dismiss this effect as a free action.

**Normal:** The planting ability is a complete transformation that takes a standard action to complete.

### HEALING ROOTS

You heal faster when resting in planting form even if your rest is interrupted.

**Prerequisites:** Con 13, seedling, planting racial ability.

**Benefit:** You heal 2 hit points of damage per character level and 2 points of ability damage when you rest for 8 hours in your planting form. Your rest can be briefly interrupted, such as for combat, so long as you resume your planting form for the remainder of the 8 hours of rest. This bonus stacks with the Fast Healer<sup>APG</sup> feat.

**Normal:** You naturally heal 1 hit point of damage per character level and 1 point of ability damage during 8 hours of uninterrupted rest.

### IMPROVED GROW ROOTS (COMBAT)

You can partially transform into your planting form faster than you could before. You also retain more of your maneuverability when partially transformed this way.

**Prerequisites:** Con 15, Grow Roots, seedling, planting racial ability, base attack bonus +6.

**Benefit:** You can use the Grow Roots feat as a swift action. You gain a +4 racial bonus to your CMD when resisting drag and reposition attempts made against you. While using Grow Roots, you only suffer a -2 penalty to your Dexterity. This effect may be dismissed as a free action.

### RIGID FORM

You have a strong affinity for your plant nature.

**Prerequisites:** Con 13, seedling.

**Benefit:** You gain a +3 bonus on saving throws against polymorph effects.

### ROOT MEMORY

Your spiritual connection to your people's history lends itself to recalling bits of esoteric knowledge most have forgotten.

**Prerequisites:** Int 13, seedling.

**Benefit:** You gain a +2 bonus on all Knowledge (history) and Knowledge (nature) checks. If you have 10 or more ranks in one of these skills, the bonus increases to +4 for that skill.

### SUPPLE SWITCH (COMBAT)

Your switch whip has a life of its own, avoiding damaging attacks from your foes while inflicting damage on them.

**Prerequisites:** Dex 13, Switch, seedling, base attack bonus +3.

**Benefit:** You gain a +2 racial bonus to your CMD against disarm and sunder attempts that target your switch whip.

### SWITCH (COMBAT)

You can utilize one of your hair switches as a whip.

**Prerequisites:** Seedling, base attack bonus +1.

**Benefit:** Once per day, you can cut off a single hair switch to use as a whip. You are proficient with your switch even if you are not proficient with normal whips.

## Equipment

The following options are available for seedlings to create and all races to use, should a non-seedling gain such an item. At the GM's discretion, other appropriate races may also create or use some of these items.

**Glow Moss Bag:** Once this specially treated moss is soaked in water, it glows as bright as a torch for 12 hours. When wet, this moss becomes sticky and clings to a wooden object for its glowing duration. A single bag contains enough glow moss for 10 uses.

**Rosined Leaf Armor:** Created from overlapping leaves from broadleaf plants, this armor is specific to seedlings. The leaves are coated in resin, a type of tree sap, and allowed to dry. Once cured in this manner, the leaves are attached to supple backing. Rosined leaf armor is light armor and is

**Table 5: Weapon Table**

Weapon	Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range	Weight	Type	Special
Switch whip	--	1d3	1d4	X2	--	1 lb.	S	see text

**Table 6: Armor Table**

Armor	Cost	Armor Bonus	Max Dex Bonus	Armor Check Penalty	% Arcane Spell Failure	Speed 30 ft. / 20 ft.	Weight
Rosined leaf	270 gp	+5	+4	-2	15%	30 ft./20 ft.	50 lbs.

**Table 7: Equipment Table**

Special Substances and Items	Cost	Weight	Craft DC
Glow Moss Bag	25 gp	1 lb.	15
Scarring serum	10 gp	1 lb.	15

always considered masterwork.

**Scarring Serum:** Dyed with berries, ochre, or some other natural dye, this serum is used in the scarification ritual every seedling goes through when they come of age or obtain a new social rank. It has healing properties, although using it causes a colored scar. Using this to treat a wound gives a +2 circumstance bonus on any Heal checks made as part of treatment. This bonus does not stack with the bonus from a healer's kit. A single jar of scarring serum has 5 uses.

**Switch Whip:** Literally the "hair" on a seedling's head, a switch whip behaves like a regular whip, though it does not have reach and does not have the trip quality. A switch whip deals lethal damage and making an attack with one does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

## Dreamleaf Retelling the Tale

*"This is a story told since before Time was shrouded in fog. It is a story of our beginning and the lessons we've learned along the way and a story celebrating the greatest of us. Come. Sit. Listen. Learn. Remember."* Dreamleaf's bass voice boomed out as he walked toward the meeting circle. Predictably, the children followed first. Dreamleaf had been a welcome sight and voice every season for decades now. Rumor had it he was looking for a place to retire. Perhaps he would settle here after the crisis revolving around Clan Mossbranch was resolved.

*"Quickly, now. This tale requires time to tell properly, and I don't wish to do less than my best."* He winked at the children gathered. Adults left their work; even the elders came out of their latest meeting.

*"Ah, good. We're all here."* He smiled; his one facial scar caused the outer corner of his left eye to crinkle more than the right. *"Sit, sit. Just there. All right."* He settled himself on the Speaker's Stump.

*"This is our story. It belongs to every one of us. But it is also the story of Lifeseed, the lifebringer, the story of Silverleaf, our peacekeeper, and the story of Knotwood, our defender. And it is the tale of Eldest Elder, seer and traveler. Each guides us on our life's journey. Each has given our people a great gift. Each is deserving of our respect."* Dreamleaf's stern gaze touched each in turn. *"And so, we gather and remember."*

*"Once, when our world was a barren wasteland, Lifeseed wandered. He wasn't certain what he sought; he simply felt he'd know it when he saw it. Throughout the wastes, animals and plants were small and misshapen. The intelligent races were as vicious as monsters. Monsters were as brutal as the unforgiving sun and sands of this desolate world. For centuries he looked, and he could not find what he sought."*

*"Tired and nearly bereft of hope, Lifeseed rested in a craggy rift seeking relief from the harsh sun. There, in that little piece of shade, he found a small, gnarled tree. But not just any tree...it was an elder tree. Yes, elder trees grow to be quite tall, but this one could not do so—not with the world as it was. Lifeseed remembered a time when this was not true, and he knew that this tree was the solution to the drought. This tree, twisted and sickly as it was, gave Lifeseed hope that this bleakness would not encompass the world forever. He asked the tree to give a single seed. A small and wrinkled berry, faded in color, suddenly grew and fell from the tree. Lifeseed thanked the elder tree and tucked the fruit into his belt. He had to wait until the following spring to plant its seed, for the rains had already dried up and moved on. In the meantime, Lifeseed continued to wander."*

*"When the rains finally came, they were more plentiful than they had been in at least three generations of the elves. Lifeseed took the elder seed and planted it in a safe location with plenty of water and enough sun to encourage growth. He cultivated that seed for a year and a day. Finally, just as the rains receded for a second time, a sprout grew from the soil. Lifeseed was elated. He called his companions, Silverleaf and Knotwood, to come witness what he had wrought. They were not impressed. After all, they said, it was still a small sprout, no more than what one would expect of a seed from a small, twisted tree. Lifeseed scolded them for their lack of vision, saying, 'Just wait! This is what I've been searching for. This will bring fertility to the world!' Knotwood and Silverleaf shook their heads and left Lifeseed to his folly."*

*"Once more, a year and a day passed. Lifeseed nurtured the sapling as it grew straight and strong. Though it remained short, it was strong. The next morning, as Lifeseed gazed at the setting stars, something amazing happened."*

*At this point, an eager adolescent jumped up and down. "I know, I know! The first seedling had been born!" The elders tried to shush him. Dreamleaf would have none of it. Laughing, he said, "Indeed. The one we call Eldest Elder*



had been born. The first of us. Some say the greatest of us. But enough, let's continue the story, shall we?" Winking, the bard continued.

"Too excited to be diplomatic, Lifeseed demanded his companions come to meet his creation. Silverleaf and Knotwood were awed at the transformation Lifeseed had wrought in the little, wrinkled seed. As gifts, Silverleaf, before she was Peacekeeper, gave Elder the ability of foresight. Knotwood gave him strength of mind and of body. Lifeseed, delighted with his accomplishment, said Elder would always have the ability to change, and in that growth, remember his birth from that nearly lifeless seed. So are we all born, beneficiaries of these gifts from the gods."

"Centuries passed, and the forest grew. So did our people. With each successive generation, new families of seedlings joined the elder family, changed by the environment they found themselves in, enriched by the nurturing of Eldest Elder. First Clan were formed. We were one clan, not many, and we shared one territory. Many years passed and strife came to our world from the outside."

"Knotwood heard the pleas of our ancestors, who were dying at the hands of these aggressors. He took a piece of himself, the switch from his very own head, and beat back the tide arranged against us. He taught us how to defend ourselves and our brethren and how to create our signature weapon. With this knowledge, we protect ourselves to this very day."

"The external conflict led to internal conflict. Two foolish elders disagreed on whether to move into new territory or stay. Knotwood had taught us how to use the forest as a defense and our switches as weapons, but that was not enough to keep these invaders at bay, leading to continuing skirmishes along the forest's edge. The people had to choose. Should they leave for a new territory, giving up everything they'd worked for or stay and fight the invaders when they had already fought for many long years."

"Seedlings are a peaceful people, but Knotwood still stresses the need for defense and honorable duty in service to our people. The elders argued whether it was best to defend our home or find a new one. The debate went back and forth for days, escalating each day. Members on the council nearly came to blows. Of course, what happens in the council influences the community. Seedling shouted at seedling, and our clan nearly came undone."

"Seeing this, Silverleaf, diplomat and consort, came to resolve the conflict. She stated this universal truth: despite differences in opinion, we are still family and clan. She reminded the elder council and the members of the clan that each of us had the right to do what we believe to be in the best interests of ourselves and our people. And each of us has the right to disagree with another. She divided the community into two groups, those who would stay and fight and those who would leave. She gave each her blessing and charged them to come together once a year as a single people. Both new clans went their separate ways, and we prosper because of it. Once per year, at Mid-Winter, we come together with neighboring clans to celebrate a new year and a new beginning. Separation is better than hostility or resentment, Peacekeeper says."

Dreamleaf paused. Quietly, he finished the tale. "Others use the term elder to represent a difference in age. For us, it is a sign of rank and family." He looked to the Elder

Council. "We use the title with great humility and respect, understanding that it is a borrowing from the Eldest Elder. He, who in his wisdom, cultivated forests as our home. He brought us from the deserts that would scorch and wither us into a world of cool green and crystal waters. He is the only one of us worthy to sit among our gods." Taking a deep breath, Dreamleaf concluded, "It is his wisdom that says we must adapt and change while keeping to our traditions as best we can. He showed us the way, and we must follow."

"From birth to death, we live. In living, we remember. Lifeseed taught us the simple joy of being. Knotwood taught us the duty we have to one another. Peacekeeper showed us how to nurture the connections that make us who and what we are. Eldest Elder taught us the value of action and vision. So it has always been. So it must remain. How do we remember those who have gone before?" The answer to that question would become the legacy of Clan Mossbranch.

Dreamleaf's tale is common to all seedlings. It is called the "The First Triad", and it ties all the seedling deities together.

## Deities

### ELDEST ELDER

*Trailwalker*

**God of knowledge, history, and travel**

**Alignment:** N

**Domains:** Darkness, Knowledge, Luck, Rune, and Travel

**Subdomains**<sup>APG</sup>: Exploration, Language, Loss, Memory, Thought

**Mysteries**<sup>APG/UM</sup>: Lore, Nature, Wood

**Holy Symbol:** eleven-pointed leaf

**Favored Weapon:** Quarterstaff

Eldest Elder's true name is lost to time. Among seedlings, he is sometimes called First Seedling, First Oracle, First Elder, and First Eldest. When the land was barren, Lifeseed gave Eldest Elder the seed of his own birth and charged him with traveling the world to create more seedlings. Over the next century, Eldest Elder searched the sun-blasted wastes for any remnants of the forests that existed before. He found a shriveled vine of ivy, a desiccated remnant of oak, and a twisted husk of pine. In each of these instances, Eldest Elder planted his seed next to the plant and nurtured it. After one month, a new lineage of seedling rose from the seed.

As the seedling population began to grow, Eldest Elder wondered how to provide the forest home his people needed. Desperate, he planted the *eternal seed*, or so the seedlings call it today, next to a dry stream bed. The next morning, a large forest spread away from the *eternal seed* into the distance.

Eldest Elder is most concerned with knowledge, history, and travel. As he did in his time, he teaches that seedlings must be flexible and take the opportunities provided to them. Even if the trail leads into darkness, it is worth the effort to walk it. His most fervent followers are oracles and those who choose the road less traveled.

He shows his favor by providing a new bit of knowledge at a time when it does the most good. He shows his disfavor by impeding a seedling's ability to recall a memory when needed.



## KNOTWOOD

*Defender*

**God of strength, defense, honor, and duty**

**Alignment:** LN

**Domains:** Glory, Law, Nobility, Protection, Strength

**Subdomains**<sup>APG</sup>: Defense, Honor, Inevitable, Leadership, Resolve

**Mysteries**<sup>APG/UM</sup>: Battle, Wood

**Holy Symbol:** thorny vine

**Favored Weapon:** Switch whip

Knotwood is a quiet god. The second of Lifeseed's companions, he resembles a willow seedling, but stands head and shoulders taller than any other. He is known to the seedlings as the Defender. The epitome of what it means to be an honorable seedling, legend says he created the first switch whip from his own head and beat back an influx of fire creatures during the early days of the First Clan. He then passed that knowledge to those tasked with defending seedling communities and territories. When he is not defending or teaching, he spends his time testing his mental and physical strength. According to seedling legend, Knotwood reversed the oracle's curse that Eldest Elder suffered, fearing that blindness would impair his ability to lead. This made the First Seedling the only oracle known to be free of his curse.

Knotwood is most concerned with strong leadership, honor, and duty. He prefers strength of purpose to strength of arms. To Knotwood, the use of strength to exploit or oppress another is a grave transgression. He further teaches that a strong mind can solve any task and should decide when a physical solution is most appropriate. He is often said to set obstacles in a newly discovered territory, believing that a new family or clan truly desiring to strike out on its own will have the determination to make their new territory safe for the community.

Knotwood shows his favor by flooding a given seedling's body and mind with strength of purpose. This may manifest as a sudden surge of strength during a long battle or a strengthening of resolve when faced with a difficult choice. He is most often called upon by fighters, rangers, and magi since they are a community's first and last line of defense from hostile outside forces.

## LIFESEED

*Lifebringer*

**God of creation and rebirth**

**Alignment:** N

**Domains:** Healing, Plant, Repose, Sun, Weather

**Subdomains**<sup>APG</sup>: Ancestors, Day, Growth, Light, Seasons

**Mysteries**<sup>APG/UM</sup>: Ancestor, Bones, Life, Time

**Holy Symbol:** cluster of seeds

**Favored Weapon:** Scythe

Legend has it that Lifeseed was once a treant who wandered the world during a thousand year drought. The drought and its accompanying famine had reduced the world's people to a barbarism not seen since the birth of the intelligent races. Lifeseed sought a creature that could foster the return of the woodlands he remembered and that would stay to cultivate them. He found a stunted and nearly dead elder tree, leaning precariously in the shadow cast by a nearby cliff side. Lifeseed sorrowfully requested that the tree give him a seed. A desiccated and wrinkled berry fell

before his feet. He took the seed, planted it, cared for it, and nurtured it, despite the ridicule of his companions. He was finally rewarded when the seed sprang to life. It was not, as he expected, an elder tree, but a strange plantlike humanoid. The first seedling, now known as Eldest Elder, was born.

Lifeseed is the creator from which all seedling life springs, and in death, they return to him. He has charged the seedling people with caring for the forests and each other equally, in the hope that they maintain a refuge for life in the event of an environmental calamity. All seedlings venerate him as the creator of their people, with druids, clerics and oracles with ties to nature being his most devout followers.

Lifeseed takes a hands-off approach to his people. Territories with bountiful resources are said to have his favor, while his disfavor brings famine and other threats.

## SILVERLEAF

*Peacekeeper*

**Goddess of community and new beginnings**

**Alignment:** CG

**Domains:** Air, Chaos, Charm, Community, Good

**Subdomains**<sup>APG</sup>: Azata, Cloud, Family, Home, Wind

**Mysteries**<sup>APG</sup>: Nature, Wind

**Holy Symbol:** aspen seed blown by wind

**Favored Weapon:** Quarterstaff

Silverleaf is commonly referred to as Peacekeeper. Appearing as a tall aspen seedling, she is Lifeseed's consort and was one of his two companions for his wanderings during the Great Drought. She gave Eldest Elder, the first seedling, the gift of foresight, cursing him with blindness. It is said that she took her current form after seeing the sunrise over a primarily aspen forest. Silverleaf's chief concern is seedling community and the continuation of their race. As such, she oversees relations between clans and families. Her most famous legend involves the First Schism, a time when an argument between two elders nearly caused a civil war. Silverleaf decided that the best way to keep the seedling people a cohesive unit was to split the First Clan into several smaller clans. She then earned the name Peacekeeper by mandating that all future disagreements must be resolved by consensus. Those who disagree with the majority may choose to be a "seed on the wind" and form a new clan elsewhere.

Silverleaf Peacekeeper showers her favored with glib tongues and easy resolutions to their problems. For this reason, she is a favorite among bards. For those unfortunate enough to earn her disfavor, she sets obstacles in their path and causes them to stumble over their words.

## SEEDLING MAGIC

### New Spells

The following spells are common among seedlings.

#### BLOSSOM

**School** illusion (phantasm) [mind-affecting]; **Level** druid 2, sorcerer/wizard 2, witch 2

**Casting Time** 1 standard action

**Components** V, S



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

**Target** one intelligent creature

**Duration** 1d4 rounds

**Saving Throw** Will partial, see text; **Spell Resistance** yes  
Flowers sprout under the target's feet and release a cloud of light pollen. On a failed save, the target becomes confused for 1d4 rounds. If save is successful, it is fascinated for 1d4 rounds instead.

### ICY SHEATH

**School** transmutation [cold]; **Level** cleric 1, druid 1, inquisitor 1, magus 1, paladin 1, ranger 1, sorcerer/wizard 1

**Casting Time** 1 standard action

**Components** V, S

**Range** touch

**Target** weapon touched

**Duration** 1 min./level

**Saving Throw** Fort negates (harmless, object); **Spell Resistance** yes (harmless, object)

The weapon crackles as it turns to ice. For the duration of this spell, treat all damage dealt by the weapon as cold damage. The weapon retains its normal hardness and hit points.

### SPORE

**School** conjuration (summoning); **Level** druid 2, sorcerer/wizard 2, witch 2

**Casting Time** 1 standard action

**Components** V, S

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

**Target** one living creature/2 caster levels, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart

**Duration** 1d6 rounds

**Saving Throw** Fortitude partial; **Spell Resistance** yes

A miasma of small, black spores wafts up from the ground, accompanied by a musty odor. On a failed saving throw, the targeted creatures become sickened for the spell's duration. A successful Fortitude save reduces the duration to one round. If this spell is empowered (using the Empower Spell feat), the targeted creatures instead become nauseated.

### WHIP WITH A SWITCH

**School** transmutation; **Level** druid 3, ranger 2

**Casting time:** 1 standard action

**Components:** V, S

**Range:** personal

**Target:** you

**Duration:** 1 round/level

The switches on your head begin to act with a mind of their own, whipping around you. Once per round for the duration of the spell, you may make a touch attack against all opponents within 5 ft. On a successful hit, you deal 2d6 points of slashing damage. Additionally, you threaten all squares within 5 ft. as long as the effect lasts. If you possess hair on your head instead of switches, the damage dealt is reduced to 1d6. If you are bald, the spell automatically fails.

## New Magic Items

The following magic items are made by seedling spellcasters.

### AURORA PENDANT

**Aura** strong abjuration; **CL** 17th

**Slot** neck; **Price** 137,700 gp; **Weight** –

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#### DESCRIPTION

Once per day, upon speaking the command word, this iridescent pendant briefly flashes with light. When the light dissipates, the wearer is encased in a sphere. This sphere acts in all ways as *prismatic sphere* except there is no blindness effect, and it remains centered on the wearer. This effect lasts for one hour.

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#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *prismatic sphere*; **Cost** 68,850 gp

### EXPLODING SEEDS

**Aura** strong conjuration; **CL** 13th

**Slot** –; **Price** 78,000 gp; **Weight** –

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#### DESCRIPTION

These four reddish-orange seeds hang from a section of vine. As a standard action, you can pull one of the seeds off the vine and throw it at a target within 30 ft. as a ranged touch attack. On a hit, the seed inflicts 7d6 points of fire damage on impact. Creatures within 5 ft. of the target take 7d4 points of fire damage; a Reflex save (DC 19) reduces this damage by half. Creatures that are within 10 ft. (but further than 5 ft.) of the target sustain 7 point of fire damage. A Reflex save (DC 19) reduces this damage to 3 point of fire damage. The seeds regrow at dawn.

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#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Bouncing Spell<sup>APG</sup>, Craft Wondrous Item, *fire seeds*; **Cost** 39,000 gp

### HEART WOOD

**Aura** moderate transmutation; **CL** 5th

**Slot** –; **Price** 36,000 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

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#### DESCRIPTION

This 1 ft.-long tree core wooden chip shows a long series of growth rings. Placing it on the ground and speaking the command word causes a wave of greenish gold light to ripple away from it in a 20-ft. radius. Any plants within the radius grow rapidly and entangle all creatures in the area that fail a DC 15 Reflex save. If a creature is within the area and not entangled at the start of its turn, it must succeed a Reflex save or become entangled. The plant growth lasts until the command word to end the effect is given. If no plants are in the area, grasses and small shrubs suddenly sprout from the ground, requiring 1 round to reach maturity. The following round, the plants begin entangling creatures.

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#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *entangle*, *plant growth*; **Cost** 18,000 gp

### UPROOTING TALISMAN

**Aura** strong transmutation; **CL** 13th

**Slot** –; **Price** 100,000 gp; **Weight** –

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#### DESCRIPTION

When this thin, gnarled twig is pointed at a cluster of plants and the wielder speaks the command word, the plants pull themselves up from the roots and sprout thorns. The *uprooting talisman* can be used 3 times per day. The plants form a barricade between the wielder and any creature he designates. If anyone attempts to breach the barricade, all plants adjacent to that individual attempt to grapple, disarm, or drag him away from the wielder. The plants have a base CMB of +8, a Strength of 10 and a speed of 10 ft. On a successful CMB check to complete one of the combat maneuvers above, the target of that maneuver takes 5d6 points of piercing and slashing damage from the thorns. A maximum of 13 plants may be affected by the talisman. All of the plants must be within a 100 ft.-radius of the wielder. Only small and medium plants can be affected in this manner. The talisman's effect lasts for 10 rounds.

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#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *animate plants*, *wall of thorns*; **Cost** 50,000 gp

### Artifacts

The following major artifacts are relics of a bygone age and contain powerful magic.

#### ELDEST ELDER'S WREATH

**Aura** strong conjuration (creation); **CL** 20th

**Slot** head; **Weight** 3 lbs.

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#### DESCRIPTION

This is the funerary wreath of Eldest Elder, the First Elder of the seedlings. The wreath is said to store the long, collective memory of the seedlings from the time when the first seedling drew breath to the present. According to legend, the wearer of *Eldest Elder's wreath* may walk the land of the dead to glean its secrets and recall great triumphs and tragedies long forgotten to this world.

The wearer of the wreath treats all Knowledge skills as class skills and gains a +10 competence bonus on all Knowledge skill checks. He also treats all Knowledge checks as trained. The wreath also grants the wearer the ability to walk the planes once per day. This works as a *plane shift* spell and grants the wearer the protection of a *planar adaptation* spell.

Three times per day, the wearer may use *speak with dead* as a spell-like ability.

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#### DESTRUCTION

The only way for this lost artifact to leave this world is to pull it apart leaf by leaf and twig by twig. Each piece must be burnt completely to ash in a fire set on the Eldest Elder's funeral site. The fire must be made with wood from every type of tree represented in every seedling clan and family that has ever existed. This ritual takes place over the course of 100 days.

#### ETERNAL SEED

**Aura** strong conjuration (creation), necromancy, transmutation; **CL** 20th

**Slot** —; **Weight** 1 lb.

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#### DESCRIPTION

Used by Lifeseed, the god of creation, to grow the first seedling, this palm-sized brown seed seems unremarkable.

The *eternal seed* can be used to grow a forest of any kind overnight by planting it in the soil. The grown forest covers 500,000 square miles. It destroys everything in its path from hamlets to cities and from plains to deltas. The forest is always made of trees that will thrive in the climate and at the altitude the *eternal seed* is used. Once the user retrieves the seed, normal erosion and other natural processes affect the forest. Alternatively, the *eternal seed* can be used to destroy any vegetation in a 500 mile area. This use affects domesticated plants, such as grain crops, in addition to the trees, shrubs, and other plant life found in forests. The holder of the *eternal seed* can command plant creatures of all types as the *command plants* spell once per day.

In the hands of a god, the *eternal seed* may also create new families of seedlings based on different plant species. Using the seed in this way, a seedling family with the appearance of kelp, for example, could be created in a lagoon.

Finally, the seed can be used to accelerate normal plant growth, such that a seed from the plant grows, matures, blossoms, bears fruit, and dies within 24 hours.

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#### DESTRUCTION

In order to destroy the *eternal seed*, it must be burned by fire from the Plane of Fire, frozen in ice from the Plane of Water, suspended in a bottle of air from the Plane of Air and finally pulverized by a hammer forged of steel from the Elemental Plane of Earth. Each of these steps takes a six month period to complete. The *eternal seed* must remain on the Material Plane for the entire two year time span.

## RACIAL DETAILS

### Communities

Seedling communities vary according to their composition and purpose. A trading settlement appears to outsiders as a more "standard" entity than a family territory or spin-off community would. Traditional seedling communities have three main areas: one for public speaking, another for crafting, and the last for living. Since most seedlings can transform into saplings, their communities have little need for beds, houses, or kitchens. Woven mats and hidden caches are enough to provide safety, privacy, and security in most circumstances.

Seedling children are raised in established territories. They are rarely kept in trading enclaves due to the seedlings' distrust of outsiders, but seedling children can occasionally be found in some of the oldest enclaves. Often, offshoot clans and families enlist the aid of a nearby established community to care for their children while the new territory is made safe for them. Usually, children are kept far away from the borders of any territory, since invaders are least likely to make it into the heart of a community. As a last resort, seedling communities may enlist the aid of allies such as elves or fey to provide a safe place for their children. Outsiders are most likely to see a young seedling among allies such as these.

**Lakeview Ridge:** This large settlement, the epicenter of Clan Whisper Wood's territory, grew up along the junction

of a lake (known as Giltwater Lake to the seedlings) and a river (which they call the Froth River) at the edge of the woodlands they have named Thornbriar Forest. The population of Lakeview Ridge varies from season to season. During the summer months, the settlement is a teeming trade city of 5,000. During the winter months when trade and travel dwindle, the population is reduced to some 500 seedlings. Goods and materials commonly traded for here include various woodland herbs and medicines, perfumes, some lumber, and also furs.

Long ago, the lands in which Lakeview Ridge now sits served as the focal point of the Mid-Winter festivities for the surrounding clans. Back then, the region was a primordial forest, and the only sentient inhabitants other than the seedlings were the elves, fey, and other sylvan races. Occasionally, the fey pushed back against the expanding seedlings, but such conflict was limited to territorial disputes when a new family or clan spun off from an established one, and the colonizing seedlings were quick to look farther for new territory in order to avoid trouble.

After Clan Mossbranch's destruction fifteen years ago, many seedling councils openly discussed the benefits of more welcoming relations with non-forest peoples. Several were against the idea, fearing that Mossbranch's fate would be their own. Darkmoon, Eldest of Clan Whisper Wood, volunteered to set up a permanent trade settlement in Lakeview Ridge a decade ago. The other four clans that lived around the lake were not pleased with the idea of foreigners invading their festival space, and so Darkmoon used unusually forceful tactics in creating the settlement. He reminded the other elders of Mossbranch's isolation, and linked that isolation to its demise. Those who still stood against the settlement faced intimidation. Several families and clans spun off from the area's established clans because of the change and Darkmoon's actions. Many still mumble that it is only a matter of time until Clan Whisperwood disappears. Some seedlings even whisper that Darkmoon betrayed the clan's trust as eldest and should be removed from that position. In the last 10 years, there have been no incidences to suggest that Lakeview Ridge is in danger, although none of the seedlings are sure of what the fey think of the new settlement.

Four families currently make up the Whisper Wood clan: Aspenleaf, Autumn Maple, Elderberry, and Oaken Knot. Each of these families lost members when Darkmoon lobbied for Lakeview Ridge's creation. Three other families left in their entirety, leaving Whisper Wood's membership depleted. Because all the younglings are sent further into the forest to be raised, and will not return to Clan Whisper Wood until their coming of age ceremonies, Whisper Wood's numbers have little hope of climbing in the years to come.

Three other clans surround the Giltwater Lake. Clan Torn Bark has settled west of the lake, while Clan Bramblethorn calls the region north of it home, and Clan Forked Trunk lives in the area south of it. All four clans bear some hard feelings toward Darkmoon over the settlement of Lakeview Ridge. The least hostile of these clans is Forked Trunk, since they benefit most from the river traffic. The councils of the clans are silent regarding their clans' future in the area. At least something of their plans is likely to be revealed at this year's Mid-Winter Festival.

Most visitors to Lakeview Ridge know only of the Whisper Wood clan. The clan's representative in Lakeview Ridge is

called Quiverbark by traders. A relatively young seedling of an aspen family, he enjoys interacting with foreigners, and he is a highly-skilled negotiator. He is responsible for negotiating trade and peace agreements with the humans, dwarves, and others who bring goods to Lakeview Ridge to trade. The terms of these agreements are enforced by the signatories, and anyone wishing to conduct business with the residents of the town must sign various agreements already in place with Quiverbark. His reputation is the only reason the other clans have not yet left the region.

A human named Shareen runs the Fisher's Net, the best inn in town. The inn is a gathering place where locals and traders safely unwind. Patrons trade gossip about the roads, the river, the day's catch, and other miscellaneous happenings as they consume food and drink. The dock areas along the lake are filled with the usual rabble, though even they behave themselves when entering Shareen's establishment. Her half-orc bouncer, Roguck, is a retired adventurer and quite capable of cracking some skulls before throwing their owners out of the Fisher's Net.

The Lakeview Ridge trade guild, known simply as Trader's Hall, is the place to be to sell or buy exotic goods, including anything from spices to poison and even clandestine information. While seedlings are not known to utilize black markets or goods typical to them, Darkmoon and Quiverbark turn a blind eye to Trader's Hall so long as nothing criminal occurs in Lakeview Ridge and no seedlings come to harm.

**Autumn Sun:** This typical clan settlement, made up entirely of temperate and tropical broadleaf seedlings, was founded 250 years ago. An offshoot of Clan Windleaf, Clan Autumn Sun came to this heavily wooded area to escape the dangers of winter wolves plaguing Clan Windleaf's territory. Autumn Sun's territory is composed of primeval forest with plains blending into desert far to the southwest. Mountains rise on its western horizon. The forest itself runs to the edge of the eastern cliffs that drop at least 300 feet into the ocean.

The current Elder Council of Autumn Sun, led by Snowbough, is considering spinning off a new family or smaller clan. The territory is becoming crowded, which makes it difficult to provide for everyone. The desert is moving north due to drought, and nomads from the plains are moving into the forests to escape it. Many among the seedlings fear another Great Drought. The elders have yet to reach any decisions on how to deal with the interlopers or the seedlings' own population concerns. The situation has recently become more complicated, as two smaller nearby clans, Glitterleaf and Split Root, insist that their concerns are also considered. They fear that any exodus of the larger clan could leave them vulnerable to the encroaching nomads from the south.

Clan Split Root, led by a darkroot seedling named Mistle Sprig, has been beset by raiders along their northern border for some time, keeping any clan offshoots from searching for a new home. Zythra, the leader of the fey enclave to the north, denies any connection to the raiders. Not knowing the source of the attacks, Mistle Sprig can do little to protect his people. He warns his clan to prepare for the raids, while questioning Snowbough's wisdom in regards to starting a new clan while territory borders are under siege. The tension has created an unusually strong response from both Clan Autumn and Clan Split Root. Both clans remember well the destruction of Clan Mossbranch, and neither wishes to ignore warning signs or meet the same fate.



Zythra, the leader of the fey to the north, is a cunning woman with no interest in seedling clans beyond occasional trade. Though she is aware of the drought in the south, it has yet to affect her people, so it does not worry her. She has sent a small contingent of soldiers to investigate the raids along her border with Clan Split Root, but she has done nothing else. Split Root blames her for the raids, but she is not responsible for them and wants to know what force is behind them. Her patrols have yet to report anything of interest. Because Zythra's primary concern is for her people, she has kept a close eye on the human nomads as well. She believes they may prove a necessary foil to the seedlings should Elder Mistle Sprig launch an attack on the fey in misguided retaliation for the raids at their border. She is patient, however, as reports from the fey lord Praluthan, who has quietly kept in contact with the elves, humans, and the other seedling clans, suggest that the problems with Clan Split Root may blow over.

Clan Glitterleaf, the youngest clan in the area, formed only within the last two decades. Even its elders, all in their fourth century of life, are young by seedling standards. Led by Eldest Amberspring, the clan has no intention of quietly disappearing in the face of a drought, raiders, or some other threat. Amberspring is reaching out to a nearby elven village for allies, in preparation for the coming drought and the troubles it will create. The other clans resent that Amberspring has acted without consensus and fear that she has not considered the risks of turning to outsiders, whether they are elves or not. To calm the populace, Amberspring sent Windsong, her bard and partner, to roam the clans, telling the tales of Lifeseed and Eldest Elder. Though this has worked until now, Windsong doubts that it will continue to do so, especially if a raid on one of the clans leads to a loss of life instead of only territory.

Eliaran, the elven village negotiating with Clan Glitterleaf for mutual protection, lies along the cliffs near the edge of the forest closest to the plains. In addition to the concerns of drought, Eliaran faces goblinoid and orc activity in the region. Several times, entire tribes of savages have attempted to move into elven or seedling territory. So far, they have all been pushed back, but Nahirion, the leader of the elves, believes that it is only a matter of time before this part of the forest erupts in battle. Both he and Amberspring wonder whether the oncoming drought has pushed the goblins and orcs into their territory as it did with the humans, though neither of them can be sure.

A woman named Mirnok leads the human tribe that has recently moved into the forest. In the woodlands, Mirnok and her people have found the food, shelter, and water that the plains now lack. Rampaging orcs raided their previous camp three months ago, and only Mirnok and the bedraggled group that she has now led north survived. The nomads have primarily focused on building shelters and stockpiling food. Mirnok has met with Praluthan, explaining why her people have come into the forest. Soon, she will send emissaries to the elves, but she and her people remain ignorant of the seedlings' presence. With tensions as they are in the region, that could change quickly.

Because of troubles with the goblins and orcs, outsiders to the area around Autumn Sun are met with hostility. Even the elves of Eliaran and human nomads are suspicious and wary of newcomers. However, if a newcomer were to perform a worthy deed, such as to bring some of the orc or goblin troublemakers to the clans of Autumn Sun and

act peacefully towards the seedling people, she would be viewed with a small measure of trust.

**Shadowed Wood:** A newly created family of rowan led by Eldest Starleaf, Shadowed Wood just recently arrived in the wooded valley they hope to call home for the foreseeable future. The valley, which might pass for more of a rift, is shallow, and instead of gentle slopes, it is filled with steep cliffs and sharp crags. The family currently occupies the northeast portion of the rift, where they settled just after entering the region. The pass remains snowbound nine months out of the year, and various conifers, elder, oak, and rowan are spread throughout the area.

Prior to the family's arrival, the valley was home to goblinoids, magical beasts, plant creatures, and various other monsters. The winter wolves of the northern forests view the valley as their hunting ground and are manipulating the two goblin tribes in the valley toward pushing the seedlings out. Owlbears and worgs are also common to the valley, as well as other creatures common to temperate forests.

Shadowed Wood's elder council has its hands full with the settling process. Several guard patrols are out from the settlement at any given time, dealing with dangerous beasts and locating potential allies. Currently, the clan is focusing on immediate threats, such as the owlbears and worgs, to make the region safe for their children, who were left with Family Cragleaf. The family has also faced some skirmishes with the goblin tribes, but they have yet to gather in mass for an assault on Shadowed Wood. However, the remains of a few patrols have been discovered, covered in wounds similar to those left by goblin weapons. None are certain if the goblins are responsible, but the clansmen generally agree that the goblins need to be dealt with. Unfortunately, Shadowed Wood seems to be on its own. Scouts have found no elves, fey, or sylvan villages with which to trade or share borders, and the lack of allies has complicated the settlement process.

Eldest Starleaf is currently debating settlement plans with the other council members. He believes that a settlement should be established at the other end of the valley, where a small mountain stream flows into a lake there. The settlement would provide a much-needed secure border, as well as a potential trade route. The other elders disagree, saying that the settlement would be too far from any potential aid brought through the mountain pass from their old lands. The rotting prophetess Blackbark also claims there is some dark magic at work in that area. So far, all they have agreed to do is send an advance party to investigate the area, but the group's membership is still in debate.

North of Shadowed Wood's settlement, the goblin bands are slowly massing at the encouragement of the winter wolves. Ice Shard, the winter wolf alpha, has sent some of the lesser worgs to aid the goblins in this effort. He seeks to drive out the seedlings before they can make a solid foundation in the valley. He sees the valley as his pack's territory, and his pack still remembers when they were able to wreak havoc on the other side of the southern pass, which was lost to Family Cragleaf. Ice Shard wants to reclaim the territory, and the goblins are the first step in his plan.

Two goblin tribes live in the northern end of the valley, Muckslush and Slimescum. For many goblin generations, they were content to scavenge and raid each other, but that all changed when Ice Shard approached the two chieftains. The wolf lord promised Chief Chuckspittle that Muckslush

could accompany him across the pass once it was retaken. To Chief Toadscrabble, Ice Shard promised that the valley would always belong to the Slimescum. Neither chieftain is aware that Ice Shard made promises with the other, and they both think they received the best end of their deals with the winter wolf.

**Cragleaf:** The Cragleaf family is an established stunted pine family that lives in the mountains bordering the southern portion of Shadowed Wood's newfound valley. The members are churlish and even more isolationist than is normal for seedlings. Led by Eldest Junipercone, an abrasive and blunt individual, Cragleaf is self-sufficient, rarely hosting anyone outside their family or Family Shadowed Wood. Though Cragleaf is currently sheltering the children of Shadowed Wood, Eldest Junipercone is overtly encouraging Starleaf to allow them into the valley, for the council is uncomfortable with the responsibility of so many who are not their own.

Cragleaf is the nearest aid Shadowed Wood has in its fight with the magical beasts and monsters in the valley, though Cragleaf has offered them little aid.

Eldest Junipercone and the rest of the Elder Council consider it Shadowed Wood's responsibility to clear the valley if they want to live there, believing that clearing the valley is a test from Knotwood of the new family's worth. They offer supplies and passive support to Shadowed Wood but nothing else.

This attitude reflects Family Cragleaf's own experience. They came to the region three generations ago and lost contact with their parent clan during their first winter. This left them to fight the winter wolves and other monsters on their own. By the time spring came, they were vastly outnumbered and thus unable to move into the valley. The harsh alpine environment that became their home has been the primary factor in shaping the community's personality ever since. However, some among the family membership speak of joining forces with Shadowed Wood and becoming a clan, though there is no widespread support for this, and no one of rank has spoken out for it in public or private. Regardless of what the majority want, joining forces with Shadowed Wood may not be up for debate for much longer.

Ice Shard has been particularly troublesome for Cragleaf. Despite previous discussions of truce and armistice, the winter wolves and seedlings have been in a sporadic, low-level guerrilla war since Cragleaf arrived. Junipercone has been busy enough this past summer trying to provide Starleaf with information on the valley and its inhabitants that he has not questioned the uneasy peace between his people and Ice Shard's. The recent alliance between goblins and the winter wolves will change this, as Ice Shard will soon seek to drive the seedlings from the valley and potentially gain new territory on the other side of the pass.

## In Your Campaign

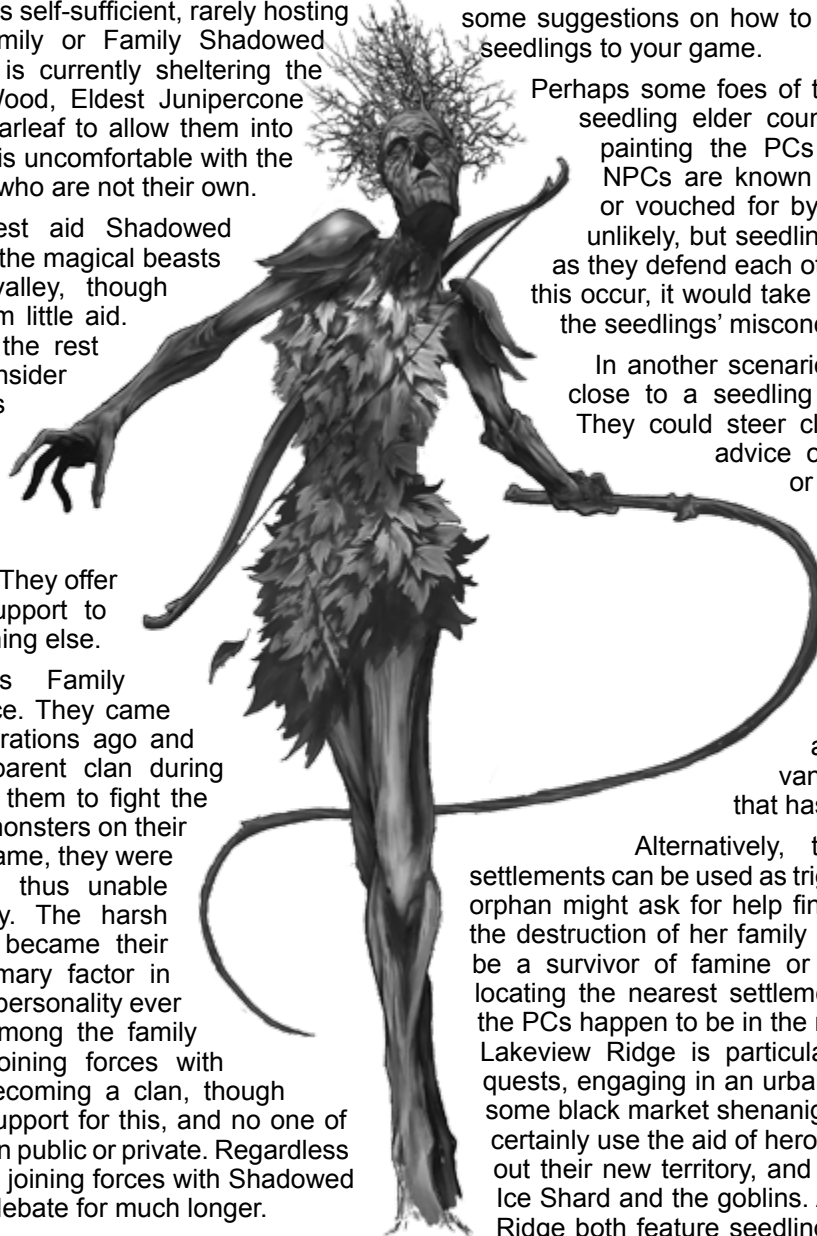
Seedlings are a xenophobic race and only superficially resemble the core races. This can make it difficult to fit them into an established campaign or to keep players excited about this racial option once the newness wears off. Seedling communities can serve as focal points for interesting adventures, blending both the urban and the wild, and presenting intrigue through the various conflicts within seedling clans. Many of the situations described above could support an entire campaign arc. Some of the adventure hooks discussed above are expanded upon below with some suggestions on how to use them to introduce the seedlings to your game.

Perhaps some foes of the PCs have convinced a seedling elder council to grant them shelter, painting the PCs as enemies. Unless the NPCs are known to a particular community or vouched for by a member of one, this is unlikely, but seedlings defend their guests just as they defend each other. Should something like this occur, it would take time for the PCs to correct the seedlings' misconceptions.

In another scenario, the PCs might stray too close to a seedling community with children. They could steer clear of the territory at the advice of seedling ranger guides, or choose to press on and face the seedling druids, fighters, magi and other defenders in a fight deeper within the forest. Instead of a conflict between the PCs and the seedlings, allies of the seedlings might ask the PCs to seek out a vanished clan or avenge one that has been recently destroyed.

Alternatively, the seedlings and their settlements can be used as triggers for quests. A seedling orphan might ask for help finding those responsible for the destruction of her family or clan. She might instead be a survivor of famine or fire and need assistance locating the nearest settlement of seedling allies, and the PCs happen to be in the right place at the right time. Lakeview Ridge is particularly suited to finding new quests, engaging in an urban adventure, or dabbling in some black market shenanigans. Shadowed Wood can certainly use the aid of heroes in clearing the monsters out their new territory, and there is also the matter of Ice Shard and the goblins. Autumn Sun and Lakeview Ridge both feature seedling politics, which may be of interest to the PCs, but Cragleaf is antagonistic to even other seedlings who enter their territory.

Seedling allies and foes could also lead to seedling encounters. Perhaps the humans in Lakeview Ridge have decided to foreswear their agreement and enlist the aid of the PCs in clearing the forest of the "monsters" which are actually the surrounding seedling clans. The tension between Zythra and Clan Split Root might erupt before anyone can find the people responsible for the border raids, and the PCs are drawn in to either mediate the dispute or take sides. The goblins and orcs could invade Clan Autumn



Sun's territory in force, or perhaps, the force behind the drought and the troublesome migrations into the forest makes itself known. The PCs could field a request from the seedlings to deal with it before this corner of the world dies. Ice Shard's machinations could bear fruit and force Cragleaf and Shadowed Wood into forming a new clan from their numbers. If they were driven successfully back through the pass, they might seek aid from the PCs to recover their lost territory.

The PCs might also be approached with hostility by seedlings blaming all outsiders for the disappearance of lost clans, such as Clans Crookedbough and Windleaf. The seedling community at large is worried that whatever happened to these clans could happen to their own. The survivors of Clan Mossbranch have had fifteen years to recover from or harden themselves because of their experiences. Some of them are only too willing to paint all non-seedlings with the same broad brush. Darkmoon, Eldest of Clan Whisperwood, could scapegoat the PCs for anything that goes wrong in Lakeview Ridge, hoping to quiet calls for her to step down.

Seedlings NPCs work well as xenophobic antagonists. They generally do not leave their forests, but if the PCs need to travel near or through seedling territory, there is a chance of encountering seedlings and their communities. Such encounters can lead to misunderstandings or the PCs meddling in something they do not understand. Seedling communities do not take well to invasion or perceived threats, which are more likely because of the seedlings' ability to transform into saplings.

Seedling PCs work well with the druid and ranger classes. They also have a fighter archetype unique to their race and a Charisma-focused prestige class that explains why outsiders do not simply take over seedling communities. Seedlings are especially able to handle some of the hardships adventuring can impose, such as low food supplies, thanks to photosynthesis. Seedlings are also second to none at hiding in plain sight with their *planting* ability. Their high Constitution and natural armor allow seedlings to take hits and continue on better than many other races.

Some seedling character types are the dutiful defender, the lost orphan, the perpetually fascinated, and the bitter survivor. A seedling's personality is shaped by her family, clan, and environment, but it is rooted in whatever cause first drove her to adventure. Once she steps beyond her forest, a seedling character blends the wonder of a young person with the wisdom of tradition.

## **NPCs**

### **SEEDLING GUARD**

**CR 1/2**

**XP 200**

Seedling fighter (switcher) 1

N Medium humanoid (seedling)

**Init** +1; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +0

#### **DEFENSE**

**AC** 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16; (+5 armor, +1 Dex, +1 natural)

**hp** 13 (1d10+3)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +1, **Will** +0; +2 vs. mind-affecting and paralysis

#### **OFFENSE**

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** switch +2 (1d4+1)

**Ranged** shortbow +1 (1d6/x3)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 1st, concentration +1)

At will – *planting*

1/day – *speak with plants*

#### **STATISTICS**

**Str** 13 **Dex** 13, **Con** 16, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 13

**Feats** Grow Roots, Switch, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Climb +1, Intimidate +4, Survival +4

**Languages** Common, Elven, Seedling, Sylvan

**SQ** photosynthesis, plant resistance, plantkin

**Gear** scale mail armor, shortbow with 20 arrows, switch

#### **SPECIAL ABILITIES**

**Photosynthetic (Ex)** While seedlings need to eat and breathe, their leaves and nettles can photosynthesize their own food and oxygen, allowing seedlings to go longer without sustenance. They receive a +2 racial bonus on Constitution checks to resist suffocation, drowning, and starvation.

**Planting (Sp)** As a standard action, seedlings can extend their feet into the earth below them, rooting themselves to a single point. This spell-like ability functions similar to a *tree shape* spell with the following changes: the size of the tree is Medium instead of Large, and the seedling can only assume the shape of a tree sapling resembling her own appearance. For example, an oak seedling can assume the shape of an oak sapling but not a pine or maple sapling. While in this form, the seedling gains tremorsense out to 30 feet. A seedling may maintain a *planting* for up to 24 hours.

### **SEEDLING PROPHET**

**CR 5**

**XP 1,600**

Seedling oracle<sup>APG</sup> of Silverleaf 6

NG Medium humanoid

**Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +1

#### **DEFENSES**

**AC** 22, touch 13, flat-footed 21 (+7 armor, +2 deflection, +1 Dex, +1 natural, +1 shield)

**hp** 54 (6d8+24)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +4, **Will** +7; +2 vs mind-affecting, paralysis

#### **OFFENSE**

**Speed** 20 ft. (30 ft. without armor)

**Melee** +1 *club* +6 (1d6+2)

**Ranged** mwk light crossbow +6 (1d8/19-20)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 6th, concentration +9)

At will – *planting*

1/day – *speak with plants*

**Oracle Spells Known** (CL 6th, concentration +9)

3rd (4/day) – *cure serious wounds*, *prayer* (DC 17), *speak with plants*

2nd (6/day) – *barkskin*, *cure moderate wound*, *hold person*

(DC 16), *lesser restoration*  
1st (7/day) – *bless, charm animal* (DC 15), *command* (DC 15), *cure light wounds, doom* (DC 14), *shield of faith*  
0 (at will) – *create water, detect magic, guidance, light, read magic, stabilize, virtue*  
**Mystery** nature

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**STATISTICS**

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**Str** 12, **Dex** 12, **Con** 15, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 16  
**Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 16  
**Feats** Combat Casting, Spell Focus (enchantment), Toughness  
**Skills** Diplomacy +12, Heal +10, Spellcraft +8  
**Languages** Common, Seedling, Sylvan  
**SQ** oracle's curse (clouded vision), photosynthesis, plant resistance, plantkin, revelation (natural divination, transcendental bond)  
**Gear** 300 gp, +1 *red dragonhide breastplate*, +1 *club*, mwk light crossbow with bolts, light wooden shield, *cloak of resistance* +1

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**SEEDLING CRAFTSMAN****CR 7****XP 3,200**

Seedling adept of Eldest Elder 7/aristocrat 2  
LN Medium humanoid  
**Init** +0; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +3

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**DEFENSES**

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**AC** 19, touch 10, flat-footed 19 (+8 armor, +1 natural)  
**hp** 49 (7d6+2d8+16)  
**Fort** +3, **Ref** +2, **Will** +11; +2 vs mind-affecting, paralysis

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**OFFENSE**

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**Speed** 30 ft.  
**Melee** mwk greatclub +4 (1d10-1)  
**Ranged** +1 *longbow* +5 (1d8+1/x3)  
**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 9th, concentration +9)  
At will – *planting*  
1/day – *speak with plants*  
**Adept Spells Prepared** (CL 7th, concentration +10)  
2nd – *aid, cat's grace, resist energy*  
1st – *cause fear* (DC 14), *cure light wounds, endure elements, protection from evil*  
0 (at will) – *detect magic, stabilize, touch of fatigue* (DC 13)

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**STATISTICS**

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**Str** 8, **Dex** 10, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 10  
**Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 13  
**Feats** Brew Potion, Craft Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Skill Focus (Craft [carpentry]), Skill Focus (Craft [weapons])  
**Skills** Appraise +5, Craft (carpentry, weapons) +13 (+15 with tools), Diplomacy +5  
**Languages** Common, Seedling, Sylvan  
**SQ** photosynthesis, plant resistance, plantkin  
**Gear** 7 pp, +1 *longbow*, +1 *greatclub*, +1 *splint mail, pearl of power* (2nd level), crafter's tools, 700 gp worth of assorted magic item creation material

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**SEEDLING ELDER****CR 14****XP 38,400**

Seedling ranger 13/negotiator 2  
LG Medium humanoid  
**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +20

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**DEFENSES**

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**AC** 23, touch 13, flat-footed 21 (+8 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 natural, +1 shield)  
**hp** 130 (13d10+2d8+45)  
**Fort** +12, **Ref** +11, **Will** +7; +2 vs mind-affecting, paralysis  
**Defensive Abilities** evasion

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**OFFENSE**

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**Speed** 30 ft.  
**Melee** +1 *frost orc double axe* +20/+15/+10 (1d8+7/x3 plus 1d6 cold) or +1 *frost orc double axe* +18/+13/+8 (1d8+5/x3 plus 1d6 electricity), +1 *shocking orc double axe* +18/+13/+8 (1d8+2/x3 plus 1d6 electricity)  
**Ranged** mwk composite longbow +17 (1d8+4/x3)  
**Special Attacks** deal gone wrong +1, favored enemy (humanoid [goblinoid] +2, humanoid [orc] +4, magical beast +4), quarry  
**Negotiator Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 2th, concentration +1)  
1/day – *discern lies*  
**Seedling Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 15th, concentration +14)  
At will – *planting*  
1/day – *speak with plants*  
**Ranger Spells Prepared** (CL 10th, concentration +12)  
3rd – *cure moderate wounds*  
2nd – *barkskin, cat's grace, spike growth* (DC 14)  
1st – *detect snares and pits, entangle, longstrider, resist energy*

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**STATISTICS**

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**Str** 18, **Dex** 15, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8  
**Base Atk** +14; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 31  
**Feats** Endurance, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (orc double axe), Greater Two-Weapon Fighting, Grow Roots, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Persuasive, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (orc double axe)  
**Skills** Bluff +9, Climb +13, Diplomacy +16, Handle Animal +13, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (local) +5, Knowledge (nature) +14, Linguistics +5, Perception +20, Sense Motive +14, Stealth +18  
**Languages** Common, Goblin, Orc, Seedling, Sylvan  
**SQ** camouflage, combat style (two weapon combat), favored terrain (cold +2, forest +6, plains +2), hunter's bond (companion), photosynthesis, plant resistance, plantkin, seal the deal -2, sincere presentation, swift tracker, track +6, trapfinding +1, wild empathy +12, woodland stride  
**Gear** +1 *frost/+1 shocking orc double axe*, mwk composite (+4 Str) longbow, +3 *rosined leaf armor, belt of giant's strength* +4, *boots of speed, ring of protection* +1





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