

Exotic Encounters:

Treants



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Introduction

The *Pathfinder Bestiary*, and the long line of monstrous encyclopedia that came before it, do a great job of attacking the problem of providing game statistics and mechanical information for a very wide variety of creatures. There are a lot of strange creatures from fantasy novels and movies, from ancient mythology, and, as time went on, from the twisted minds of game designers and even GMs, for that matter. Anyone today who tried to go about creating an extensive bestiary of all the different cool and interesting fantasy monsters could fill three or four volumes with three hundred monsters each, and still have a long way left to go, with fans crying out for various “forgotten” monsters to get some attention. That kind of breadth doesn’t leave a whole lot of room for depth, and that’s where *Exotic Encounters* comes in.

There are all kinds of reasons why you might not want to use a monster stat-block straight from the core rules. For one thing, if your players have a habit of browsing through such books, or are long-time veterans who know the basic ins and outs of most fantasy staples, you may need an unusual stat-block just to throw them a curve ball and teach them that they can’t count on their out of character knowledge to take all the mystery out of the game. Alternatively, many GMs can recall a time when they wanted to make use of a certain monster in their game, only to find that it was a few CRs too high or low for what they had in mind.

Exotic Encounters takes a single, iconic monster, and creates three new variants on that theme. These variants aren’t simple tweaks, and are more than simply advancing or removing Hit Dice, though that occurs as well. Each of these three variations on the monster’s theme has a specific, flavorful goal in mind, and a role to play, and their statistics entries are gently massaged in order to make them fit those roles. Further, each of these variants comes with brand new specially-crafted special abilities, which are unique to *Exotic Encounters* and not found anywhere else.

This particular installment of *Exotic Encounters* focuses on the iconic treant. These paragons of nature may be fairly obvious homages to *The Lord of the Ring’s* ents, but that doesn’t make them any less of a staple of fantasy media, and tree-beings of all sorts are a fun and resonant part of fantasy. The first treant in this book, the **jungle treant (CR 10)**, is more than just an ill-mannered treant from a more tropical clime: its long vines animate and lash out to trip or entangle foes, and its body serves as a host to several swarms of angry wasps. Even more terrifying, however, is the **bonfire treant (CR 14)**, an evil, twisted treant that burns with a constant and hellish supernatural fire. Everything this creature touches bursts into flames, and such flames are all but impossible to extinguish as long as the creature still lives. The last treant in the book is the **old growth treant (CR 16)**, a massive, towering treant from ancient times that can release a hail of deadly pine needles, and which daring adventurers can climb upon in order to better fight it.

Jungle Treant

This massive jungle tree is covered in long, snaking vines and a web of large, green leaves which turn its crown into an impenetrable mass of green. Dangling and crisscrossing vines surround it like a wall of rosy green flesh. The bark at the base of the tree forms the image of a face, which snarls at you as the tree shakes into liveliness.

TREANT, JUNGLE CR 10

XP 9,600

CN Huge plant

Init -1; Senses low-light vision; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 7, flat-footed 23 (-1 Dex, +16 natural, -2 size)

hp 142 (15d8+75)

Fort +14, Ref +6, Will +10

Defensive Abilities plant traits; DR 10/slashing

Weaknesses vulnerability to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 slams +19 (2d8+9/19-20)

Ranged rock +9 (2d8+13)

Space 15 ft.; Reach 15 ft.

Special Attacks animate vines, rock throwing (180 ft.), trample (2d8+13, DC 26)

STATISTICS

Str 29, Dex 8, Con 21, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 13

Base Atk +11; CMB +22; CMD 31

Feats Alertness, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Natural Attack (slam), Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills Diplomacy +10, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (nature) +10, Perception +13, Sense Motive +10, Stealth -9 (+7 in jungles); Racial Modifiers +16 Stealth in jungles

Languages Common, Sylvan, Treant

SQ creeping destruction, swarmhost, treespeech

ECOLOGY

Environment any jungle

Organization solitary

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Animate Vines (Sp): A jungle treant is covered in various vines and creepers, which it can animate to defend it. Each round, as a swift action, the jungle treant can direct up to two of these vines to entangle or trip nearby foes. In either case, the vines make a combat maneuver check, using the jungle treant's CMB. If the combat maneuver check is successful, the target is either knocked prone or gains the entangled condition. Characters that become entangled in this way can free themselves as a move action, without needing to make a check. The vines have a reach of 30 ft.

Creeping Destruction (Su): A jungle treant can extend various creepers and vines from its body into a structure or object, pulling it apart from the inside. This inflicts 2d10 points of damage to the structure or object each round, which ignores hardness. Activating this ability is a full-round action, and maintaining the effect each round is a swift action. The jungle treant can affect up to a 10-ft. cube of structure at any given time with this ability, and must be adjacent to the structure or object to use this ability.

Swarmhost (Ex): A jungle treant's upper branches are packed with large numbers of insects, which have a symbiotic relationship with the treant. At any one time, a given jungle treant has 1d6+3 wasp swarms in its branches. For the most part, they remain where they are, but certain things can cause them to emerge and defend their treant home. Any time that the jungle treant suffers 15 or more points of damage from a single hit, a wasp swarm will emerge from its branches and begin attacking the jungle treant's enemies. Additionally, any time that the jungle treant is subject to a spell with an area of effect that deals hit point damage (such as a *fireball* spell), all remaining swarms in the jungle treant emerge and begin attacking the jungle treant's enemies. The jungle treant's boughs protect swarms that have not yet emerged, and they do not suffer damage from area of effect spells, and cannot be targeted while they are within the treant. Finally, if the jungle treant dies, all remaining wasp swarms emerge in 1d4 rounds and begin attacking all nearby creatures. The jungle treant does not directly control the wasps, but it does have an empathic connection with them, and they know which creatures are its enemies and which are its allies.

Treespeech (Ex): A treant has the ability to converse with plants as if subject to a continual *speak with plants* spell, and most plants greet them with an attitude of friendly or helpful.

Ecology

It is uncertain whether jungle treants are so hostile because they were raised in the much more dangerous and dog-eat-dog world of the jungle, or because they are in some way linked with the jungles that they come from, in the same way that normal treants are linked to quiet and peaceful old growth forests, but either way, jungle treants are well known for having a violent reaction to humans and other humanoids, and typically attack first, and don't bother to ask questions. That said, they are not actually evil, and a jungle treant that is beaten in combat and allowed to surrender can prove to be a valuable ally. In general, jungle treants respect personal and individual strength, and respect those who are able to look after themselves in hostile environments. Of course, at the end of the day, most jungle treants prefer simply to be left alone.

Bonfire Treant

The creature before you resembles the charred and blackened remains of a tree, though its shape is vaguely humanoid, with long, spindly arms ending in raking claw-like branches, and a face formed of knotholes and other patterns in its bark, which appears to be screaming in agony and rage. The tree-creature's most noticeable feature, however, is the fact that it is on fire, and burns with a blazing intensity.

TREANT, BONFIRE

CR 14

XP 38,400

NE Huge plant

Init -1; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +15

Aura heat aura (30 ft., DC 27)

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 7, flat-footed 27 (-1 Dex, +20 natural, -2 size)

hp 210 (20d8+120)

Fort +17, **Ref** +7, **Will** +11

Defensive Abilities plant traits; **DR** 15/slashing

Immune fire; **Resist** cold 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 slams +23 (2d8+9 plus burn/19-20)

Ranged rock +13 (2d8+13)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Special Attacks burn (2d8, DC 25), rock throwing (180 ft.), trample (2d8+13 plus burn, DC 29)

STATISTICS

Str 29, **Dex** 8, **Con** 21, **Int** 12, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +15; **CMB** +26; **CMD** 35

Feats Ability Focus (heat aura), Alertness, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Natural Attack (slam), Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills Diplomacy +15, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (nature) +15, Perception +15, Sense Motive +12, Stealth -19; **Racial Modifiers** -10 Stealth

Languages Common, Sylvan, Treant

SQ bonfire's light

ECOLOGY

Environment any forest

Organization solitary

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Blazing Trail (Su): A bonfire treant causes the very ground that it walks on to catch fire. If the bonfire treant enters a square that contains flammable objects (such as grass or other undergrowth, a wooden floor, etc.), those squares immediately catch on fire, inflicting 1d6 points of fire damage to any creature or object that enters or begins its turn in that square. These flames are not affected by the bonfire treant's undying flames ability, and such fires last for only 5 rounds before fading.

Bonfire's Light (Su): A bonfire treant causes the light level within 60 feet of it to increase to bright light, and increases the light level by one step in the area between 60 and 120 feet away from it. Additionally, within 60 feet of a bonfire treant all invisible creatures become visible as translucent versions of themselves, as the intense and mystical light of the bonfire treant renders them visible.

Heat Aura (Su): The air around a bonfire treant is supernaturally hot. Any creature that enters or begins its turn within 30 feet of the bonfire treant must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 27) or suffer 1d6 points of nonlethal fire damage, and become fatigued. Characters wearing heavy clothing or armor of any kind suffer a -4 penalty on this saving throw. The saving throw DC is Constitution-based.

Undying Flames (Su): Fires lit by a bonfire treant's burn ability are extremely difficult to put out as long as it is still alive. Such fires last indefinitely as long as the creature or object being burned is not entirely destroyed. Non-magical means of putting out the fire (including immersing the creature or object entirely in water) have no effect on the flames. A *remove curse* spell, or more powerful magic, can allow the flames to be put out normally, and any spell of 7th level or higher with the water descriptor can also be expended in order to automatically put out such a fire, but otherwise the flames cannot be put out by any means until the bonfire treant is slain or the creature or object that is on fire is completely consumed by the flames.

Ecology

These horrific and vengeful denizens of the forest tend to be fairly short-lived, though they often wreak horrible destruction before they can be destroyed. The exact process by which a bonfire treant is created is unknown, but it is closely linked with forest fires, and most sages agree that there is a certain set of circumstances that, when combined, allow a forest fire to create a bonfire treant. It is widely believed that these circumstances include that the forest fire be of a certain size, and that it result in the death of a treant, whose charred corpse transforms into this hideous creature. Some scholars believe that the fire must have been set deliberately, by an intelligent creature, while others believe that its source must be fiendish in origin (ie., hell fire), while others still believe that the thing that provides the spark for the transformation is that the death of the treant must be particularly traumatic, painful, or terrifying.

Whatever the case, bonfire treants live for no purpose other than to spread death, destruction, and fire in their wake, and quickly go about doing precisely that. They are viewed by normal treants in much the same way that humanoid creatures view undead, and treants that learn of a nearby bonfire treant will band together to destroy it, no matter the cost.

Old Growth Treant

To your horror, the immense tree that towers before you suddenly groans and shifts, and you see now that the strange patterns in bark that looked almost like an old, wizened face blink, and a massive mouth opens, emitting a thunderous sound as the behemoth treefolk stirs to life.

TREANT, OLD GROWTH

CR 16

XP 76,800

NG Colossal plant

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +20

DEFENSE

AC 31, touch 1, flat-footed 31 (-1 Dex, +30 natural, -8 size)

hp 252 (24d8+144)

Fort +20, **Ref** +9, **Will** +16

Defensive Abilities plant traits; **DR** 20/adamantine and slashing; **SR** 27

Weaknesses vulnerability to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 slams +26 (4d8+17/19-20)

Space 30 ft. (60 ft. tall); **Reach** 30 ft.

Special Attacks needle spray (60 ft. cone, 12d10 piercing damage, Reflex DC 28 for half, usable every 1d4 rounds), trample (4d6+25, DC 28)

STATISTICS

Str 45, **Dex** 8, **Con** 23, **Int** 12, **Wis** 22, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +18; **CMB** +45; **CMD** 54

Feats Alertness, Awesome Blow, Blind-Fight, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Natural Attack (slam), Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills Diplomacy +18, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (nature) +18, Perception +20, Sense Motive +16, Stealth -17 (-1 in forests); **Racial Modifiers** +16 Stealth in forests

Languages Common, Sylvan, Treant

SQ animate trees, tree body, treespeech

ECOLOGY

Environment any forest

Organization solitary or escort (1 plus 2-12 standard treants)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Animate Trees (Sp): An old growth treant can animate any trees within 180 feet at will, controlling up to ten trees at a time. It takes 1 full round for a tree to uproot itself, after which it moves at a speed of 10 feet and fights as a standard treant (although it has only one slam attack and lacks the standard treant's animation and rock-throwing abilities), gaining the standard treant's vulnerability to fire. If the old growth treant that animated it terminates the animation, moves out of range, or is incapacitated, the

tree immediately takes root wherever it is and returns to its normal state.

Needle Spray (Ex): As a standard action, an old growth treant can unleash a barrage of needles in a 60-ft. cone, inflicting 12d10 points of piercing damage to each creature in the affected area. A successful Reflex save (DC 28) halves this damage. The old growth treant can use this ability once every 1d4 rounds. The saving throw DC is Constitution-based.

Tree Body (Ex): An old growth treant's bark is particularly dense and thick at its base, but is less resilient higher up on its body. The bottom 20 ft. of the old growth treant has DR 20/adamantine and slashing, as indicated in its statistics entry, but 20 ft. or higher off the ground, its damage reduction is only 10/slashing. Characters that have climbed the old growth treant to this height and make melee attacks against it, or which make ranged attacks against it and specifically state that they are attacking this part of its body are only subject to this lesser damage reduction.

A character that is on the ground and adjacent to the old growth treant can attempt to climb onto it. Doing so is a move action that requires a successful Acrobatics check (DC 15) followed by a successful Climb check (DC 20). Attempting to climb onto the old growth treant in this way does not provoke attacks of opportunity. If the attempt is successful, the character moves into the old growth treant's space and can begin climbing up the old growth treant's body. Such characters can attack the old growth treant, using the normal rules for fighting while climbing. The old growth treant can attack creatures climbing on it, but suffers a -8 penalty on such attacks.

Reaching this section of an old growth treant by means other than climbing is difficult. Branches extend from its body and provide this area with both cover and concealment (20% miss chance) from ranged attacks. Further, any character attempting to reach this area of the old growth treant's body by flying must succeed on a DC 25 Fly check or be repelled by the old growth treant's needle-covered branches, being unable to move into the old growth treant's space and suffering 4d6 points of piercing damage.

Treespeech (Ex): An old growth treant has the ability to converse with plants as if subject to a continual *speak with plants* spell, and most plants greet them with an attitude of friendly or helpful.

Ecology

Old growth treants are truly ancient specimens of their race, which have existed since before the dawn of civilization. They are from a long-lost, primordial time, and to them humanity is merely a passing trend. They are revered and practically worshipped by most younger treants, who do everything in their power to protect these ancients, and the wisdom and experience that they possess, as well as the link to the past that they symbolize.

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Exotic Encounters: Treants

There are all kinds of reasons why you might not want to use a monster stat-block straight from the core rules. For one thing, if your players have a habit of browsing through such books, or are long-time veterans who know the basic ins and outs of most fantasy staples, you may need an unusual stat-block just to throw them a curve ball and teach them that they can't count on their out of character knowledge to take all the mystery out of the game. Alternatively, many GMs can recall a time when they wanted to make use of a certain monster in their game, only to find that it was a few CRs too high or low for what they had in mind.

Exotic Encounters takes a single, iconic monster, and creates three new variants on that theme. These variants aren't simple tweaks, and are more than simply advancing or removing Hit Dice, though that occurs as well. Each of these three variations on the monster's theme has a specific, flavorful goal in mind, and a role to play, and their statistics entries are gently massaged in order to make them fit those roles. Further, each of these variants comes with brand new specially-crafted special abilities, which are unique to *Exotic Encounters* and not found anywhere else.

This particular installment of *Exotic Encounters* focuses on the iconic treant. These paragons of nature may be fairly obvious homages to *The Lord of the Rings's* ents, but that doesn't make them any less of a staple of fantasy media, and tree-beings of all sorts are a fun and resonant part of fantasy. The first treant in this book, the jungle treant (CR 10), is more than just an ill-mannered treant from a more tropical clime: its long vines animate and lash out to trip or entangle foes, and its body serves as a host to several swarms of angry wasps. Even more terrifying, however, is the bonfire treant (CR 14), an evil, twisted treant that burns with a constant and hellish supernatural fire.

Everything this creature touches bursts into flames, and such flames are all but impossible to extinguish as long as the creature still lives. The last treant in the book is the old growth treant (CR 16), a massive, towering treant from ancient times that can release a hail of deadly pine needles, and which daring adventurers can climb upon in order to better fight it.