

d12 Monthly

THE RUSTIC ISSUE

Issue 35
May, 2024

FREE VERSION

ALTERNATE SKILLS

FOR THE RANGER &
BARBARIAN

RUSTIC KITS

FOR BARBARIANS, BARDS,
AND RANGERS

MORE MULTICLASSING

NEW COMBOS FOR RANGERS &
BARBARIANS

DESIGNED FOR USE WITH

**OLD-SCHOOL
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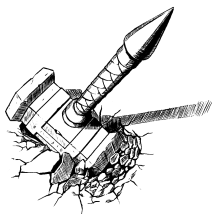
Inside: The Spell-Less Ranger

***d12 Monthly* is a helpful resource for fantasy roleplayers.**

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TALES OF THE WOLFGUARD

Andrea Tupac Mollica



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Unless otherwise mentioned, all articles are written by Russ at YUMDM.

The Rustic Classes Issue

Again we find ourselves back in the wilderness (one of my favourite places to be), but this time the characters dominate with the three “rustic” classes of OSE: the barbarian, the bard, and the ranger.

From a new class, to kits, to alternate abilities, to safe havens, to creating traps, there is something for everyone who loves their rural characters.

I’m really happy with this issue as it allows players to better define their characters, and GMs the spark needed to create better, more engaging, campaign worlds.

I will leave you to wander the wilderness, but be careful of that moss-covered log!

And, as always, happy gaming!

- Russ from YUMDM

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About Me

I have been roleplaying for over 30 years and DMing for most of those. I have played over 50 different roleplaying games, but my first love is fantasy - it’s like coming home.

Other TTRPGs I like: WEG D6 Star Wars, Feng Shui RPG, & Warhammer FRP.



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... for making this zine as good as it is.

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The Great Unknown

New Class: The Explorer

Requirements: WIS 9; CON 9
Prime requisite: CON
Hit Dice: 1d6
Maximum level: 14
Armour: Leather only
Weapons: Any
Languages: Alignment, Common

Exploration is often dangerous and costly. Having someone who is experienced can mean the difference between life and death.

The Explorer class embodies the spirit of adventure and discovery, venturing into uncharted territories and uncovering the secrets they hold.

Explorers are driven by economic, political, or personal ambitions, or a mix of all three.

Usually they have a sponsor of some sort, but those who have been exploring for a long time can afford to go out on their own - for knowledge, for gold, or just for the sheer adventure of it.

Sense of Direction

An explorer always knows which way they are headed while above ground.

At 2nd level, they know which way they are travelling underground.



Keen Observation

Explorers have keen senses and can only be surprised on a 1-in-6.

In addition, they also have a knack for noticing hidden traps, and secret doors. When an explorer passes within 5 feet of a secret or concealed door they are entitled to a check to notice it as if she were actively looking for it.



Survival Instincts

An explorer can survive in the harshest conditions. Any time the explorer and their companions sleep in a dungeon environment, any random encounter chances are reduced by 1 (1-in-6 would reduce to 1-in-8). See article *Is It Safe* in this issue for more information.

Table: Explorer Progression

Level	XP	HD	THAC0	D	W	P	B	S
1	0	1D8	19 [0]	12	13	14	15	16
2	2,000	2D8	19 [0]	12	13	14	15	16
3	4,000	3D8	19 [0]	12	13	14	15	16
4	8,000	4D8	17 [+2]	10	11	12	13	14
5	16,000	5D8	17 [+2]	10	11	12	13	14
6	32,000	6D8	17 [+2]	10	11	12	13	14
7	64,000	7D8	14 [+5]	8	9	10	10	12
8	120,000	8D8	14 [+5]	8	9	10	10	12
9	240,000	9D8	14 [+5]	8	9	10	10	12
10	360,000	+2	12 [+7]	6	7	8	8	10
11	480,000	+4	12 [+7]	6	7	8	8	10
12	600,000	+6	12 [+7]	6	7	8	8	10
13	720,000	+8	10 [+9]	4	5	6	5	8
14	840,000	+10	10 [+9]	4	5	6	5	8

Bonus Languages

An explorer gains two additional languages at 1st level, plus one at 4th, 7th, and 10th.

Negotiations

At 3rd level, the explorer has plenty of experience negotiating the best price for plundered loot. He gains a +1 bonus to all reaction checks involving negotiations.

Surprise Attack

Before an encounter starts, the explorer can attempt a surprise attack against an unaware enemy.

This could involve setting an ambush using the environment or utilising their knowledge of the terrain to gain an advantage.

A successful Dexterity check allows them to strike first in the initiative order, plus gaining +2 to the first attack.



By Wits And Skill

Alternative Class: The Spell-less Ranger



Running low-fantasy campaigns can be difficult when almost every class has access to spells.

As a fix for this, I present a spell-less ranger variant.

They are the same as the ranger in the Advanced Player's book, but with the following changes:

No Spells

The ranger no longer receives any spells when reaching 8th level.

Fast Movement

At 2nd level, a ranger gains an extra 10-ft to their base movement. At 10th level, this increases to 20-ft.

Healing Touch

At 8th level, a ranger can heal and bind wounds, restoring D6+WIS damage. A ranger can also cure disease and neutralise poisons.

Spot Trap

At 12th level, in wilderness conditions (that is, not in most dungeons), trapped objects or areas within a 30-ft range of the ranger are automatically detected. This does not extend to magical traps.

Spell-Less Ranger Behind-the-Scenes

While designing the spell-less Ranger, I realised how late they actually get any spells. It's not until 8th level that they get their first spell.

Given this, most of their abilities to offset this loss don't kick-in until 8th level.

The one exception to this is Fast Movement, but they do get an additional boost for this at 10th.

Out of the spells they get access to, healing and trap detection seemed the most in keeping with the Ranger class, which is why they were chosen to replicate as abilities.



Mixed Messages

Multi-Classing Madness

As in the last few issues of *d12 Monthly*, I want to cover some interesting combinations when multiclassing, this time for the rustic classes.

Barbarian

Below are some roles that could be developed for your campaign world for barbarians.

Nature's Healer

Barbarian/Cleric

A Nature's Healer repairs what has been damaged by interlopers and destroyers of the natural world.

While Nature's Avengers* seek those who enacted the foul destruction, Nature's Healers find ways to heal and repair the damage done.

They also tend to groves and other sacred places and help animals who are in distress. They save their rage for those who damage Nature in their presence.

* See *Issue 34 of d12 Monthly* for more on this role.

Nature's Children

Barbarian/Druid

Nature's Children have given themselves completely over to Nature. They live exclusively in a certain area and terrain, and are at one with the flora and fauna there.

They are difficult to deal with as they act more on instinct than any human-based rationale. Their rage comes up when hunting for their next meal, or defending their territory from interlopers.

Nature Knight

Barbarian/Knight

Knights serve a lord, and in this case, that lord is Nature. This could be in the form of Nature itself, or it could take the form of a high-level druid, or even a Dryad or other fey.

Ranger

Just like the barbarian above, here are some roles you could develop for your campaign world for rangers.

Wilderness Mage

Ranger/M-U

Wilderness Mages are those magic-users who decide that Nature's way is the right way and use their magic to defend and honour Nature. They live either fully or mostly on the fringes of society, making sure never to stray too far away from Nature for any length of time.

Their spell selection is one forged in the natural world and focuses on elemental magics.

Nature's Defender

Ranger/Fighter

When loggers use their axes to cut down trees against the wishes of the forest's inhabitants, Nature's Defender starts using their axes on the perpetrators.

With exceptional warrior and survival cunning, a Nature's Defender is one tough adversary.

Tree-Top Guardian

Ranger/Acrobat

Excelling at climbing and jumping high in the tree-tops, these guardians of the forests and woodlands of the world strike with surprise from above.

Examples

Let's have a look at two of these roles a little more closely.

Nature's Healer

Barbarian/Cleric

Barbarian's Traits

All the traits for a barbarian remain the same except for the following:

Combat

Barbarians could be restricted in weapon selection to blunt weapons and/or weapons of their deity.

Cleric's Traits

A Nature's Healer cannot turn undead. Instead they receive Call of the Wild.

Call of the Wild

Nature's Healers can summon natural allies to aid them in combat or other situations. Creatures like wolves, bears, or birds of prey, depending on the environment.

The number of animals' total hit dice cannot exceed the Nature's Healers level. Normal, small animals (e.g. mice, sparrows, squirrels, etc.) are treated as one tenth of a HD, for this purpose.

The animals will arrive (assuming the Nature's Healer is within natural surroundings that support the animal called) in D4 rounds.

The animals understand and aid the Nature's Healer in any way they can, including combat. However, if they are abused, they will flee and the GM can dole out an appropriate punishment.

Heal Flora

A Nature's Healer cure spells also work on plants and other vegetation, as well as people and animals.

Wilderness Mage

Ranger/M-U

Wilderness Magi use their magic to help the natural order.

Alternate Ranger: You can use the spell-less ranger from this issue.

Ranger & Magic-User

Both classes remain the same, except the magic-user focuses on elemental and nature-based magic. Instead of aiming to cast *Magic Missile* or *Shield*, they would take the more fey-like *Sleep* and *Charm Person* as first level spells. Especially, given they would be unlikely to reach a level to gain ranger spells.

Surprise!

Alternate Skills & Abilities for the Rustics



Creating variations in character in OSE isn't always achievable. Yes, they can have a different appearance or personality, but sometimes you want the rules to reflect the lore you have created.

Perhaps the rangers from the Wildwood all have animal or beast companions. Maybe barbarians of the Drakkar Mountains are intimidating foes, able to make the strongest of opponents think twice.

In this article I look at ways we can swap out some of those in-built class skills and abilities to create variations on the rustic classes.

Rangers

Current Skills & Abilities for Rangers

Rangers have a fairly decent range of skills, all focused on their primary domain: the wilderness.

List of Ranger Skills & Abilities

Awareness
Foraging
Hunting
Pursuit
Wilderness Hiding
Wilderness Stealth
Tracking

Substituting Skills & Abilities for Rangers

By switching out some of these skills or abilities you could create a variation of ranger that better suits your campaign world. Or just creates some variation between rangers.

Skills at Higher Levels

Some skills below are more powerful than others, so I have used the level they are obtained as a way to offset this.

Players need to choose all skills they wish to swap at character creation.

If any GMs feel these new skills are too powerful or unbalanced for their campaign, they are free to tweak them.

New Ranger Skills & Abilities

Animal Companion

At 4th level, a ranger gains an animal companion.

Defensive Fall Back

A ranger can add a bonus of +4 to their AC when using their action with withdrawal from combat.

Endurance

A ranger may ignore the first fatigue they gain, and gains a +2 to any fatigue-inducing saving throws.

Evasion

At 2nd level, a ranger is adept at using their reflexes to dodge incoming breath weapons and fireballs. If they make their save, they take no damage from the attack.

Fast Movement

A ranger's base movement rate increases by 10-ft.

Favoured Enemy

For rangers with particular enemies or hated foes, they can choose one monster type (such as undead, demons, humanoids, etc) and gain the following benefits against them:

- ➔ +1 damage equal to half the ranger's level.
- ➔ +10% bonus to any tracking-related check

Find & Remove Treasure Traps

A ranger can make a check to find a treasure trap and then another to remove it. This may be attempted only once per trap.

Hit & Run

If a ranger moves at least 10-ft before and a minimum of 10-ft after an attack, they can add +1D6 to any damage done with that attack.

Lowlight Vision

A ranger is so used to looking into the gloom they gain lowlight vision (see sidebar).

Skulk Attack

A ranger can add +1D6 damage to their attack when they successfully attack a target from total cover, or after a successful wilderness stealth check.

Trackless Stride

At 5th level, a ranger can no longer be tracked in wilderness terrain.

Wild Empathy

A ranger can calm wild animals by using their body language and demeanour. They gain +2 to any reaction rolls for natural animals.

Woodland Stride

At 3rd level, a ranger can move through any type of naturally occurring undergrowth without slowing down or taking damage. They ignore all terrain overland movement penalties.

Lowlight Vision

A character with lowlight vision gains the ability to see twice as far in low-light, such as at dusk or when there is a full moon.

Examples

Below are some examples of alternative rangers with distinct flavour.

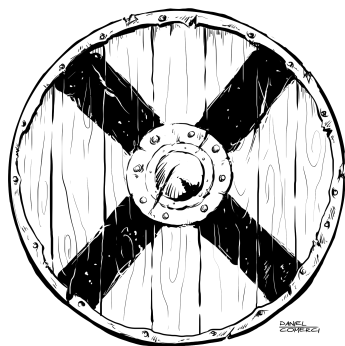
Protector

If you didn't want to play an Explorer (see article *The Great Unknown* in this issue), but wanted a ranger who explored or protected ancient ruins or tombs, you could swap out some of their skills for new ones.

You could swap out Foraging and Wilderness Hiding for Endurance and Favoured Enemy (Undead).

Beastmaster

For a ranger who is more of a beast master, you could swap out Hunting and Pursuit for Animal Companion and Wild Empathy.



Barbarian

Current Skills & Abilities for Barbarians

Barbarians are another class that prefers to spend life in the great outdoors.

List of Barbarian Skills & Abilities

Climb Sheer Surfaces (Natural Surfaces)
Hide in Undergrowth
Move Silently
Cure Poison
Foraging
Hunting

New Barbarian Skills

Fast Movement

A barbarian's base movement rate increases by 10-ft.

Intimidating Strike

When a barbarian makes a successful attack against an enemy, that enemy can be intimidated.

Make a reaction roll (adding any CHA adjustment the barbarian may have) and if the result is "Friendly" (usually 10-12 on 2D6) then they have been successfully intimidated.

Intimidated opponents suffer a -2 penalty to attacks, and ability check against the barbarian. Opponents who are immune to fear or are not affected by mental attacks (eg. undead) are immune.

Resistance

The barbarian receives a bonus to diseases and poisons dependent on their Constitution ability.

- 6 or lower: No bonus
- 7–10: +2
- 11–14: +3
- 15–17: +4
- 18: +5

Trap Awareness

Barbarians gain a preternatural awareness of traps. They detect Wilderness Traps (see Traps sidebar) on a 2-in-6 chance.

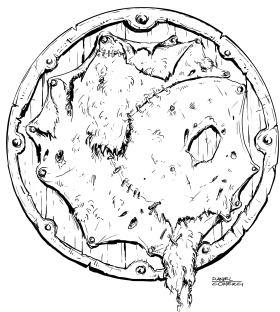
Trap Making

A barbarian can make simple natural traps such as covered pits, tripwires, nets, and similar traps using natural materials.

See article *It's a Trap!* in this issue for more information on creating traps.

Wild Empathy

A barbarian can calm wild animals by using their body language and demeanour. They gain +2 to any reaction rolls with natural animals.



Traps

In the current rules for OSE, there are two types of traps: Room Traps, and Treasure Traps. This article introduces a third one (for wilderness settings): Wilderness Trap.

These follow very similar rules to Room Traps, but obviously “the wilderness” covers a larger area.

If someone wanders in the general area of a Wilderness Trap, following the below rules:

- There is a 2-in-6 chance of the trap being sprung.
- When searching an area for wilderness traps, there is a 1-in-6 chance of being successful (some classes will have a better chance).
- A person searches 100' x 100' area each time they search, which takes 1 turn.

Wild Ones

Kits for Barbarians, Bards, and Rangers



These kits showcase how these three core classes can differ in temperament, roles, and abilities.

See *Issue 32 of d12 Monthly* for more information on using kits in OSE.

Barbarian

Berserker

Berserkers are warriors driven to a frenzy in combat, wielding immense strength but lacking control. They expend a lot of energy in a short amount of time, but hit hard during these frenzies.

Requirements

A Berserker requires a Strength of 9 or greater.

Role

Berserkers are front-line troops who take on any enemy in a brutal display of melee combat.

Secondary Skills

A berserker usually has one of the following secondary skills: Animal Trainer, Blacksmith, Butcher, Huntsman, or Woodcutter.

Equipment

None.

Special Benefit

A Berserker can enter a rage, gaining a bonus of +4 to all damage rolls. During these rages, they also gain part-immunity to pain. Each time they are hit, reduce the damage by 2 points (minimum 1). The rage lasts D4+hit point bonus in rounds.

The rage ends at the end of the time, or when the barbarian has no enemies left to fight.

Special Hindrance

A berserker suffers exhaustion after a berserker rage, becoming fatigued. They are -2 to all attack and damage rolls, and cannot run or charge. This lasts until the barbarian has one turn of complete rest.

Nomad

Nomads are skilled trackers and survivors, living a nomadic lifestyle on the fringes of civilization. They have very little to do with

civilised folk and are rarely seen in settlements.

Requirements

None.

Role

Nomads are barbarians that are always on the move. And they know their land well and can survive in harsh conditions. They can also track someone in most environments.

Secondary Skills

Nomads generally choose between the following: Bowyer/Fletcher, Furrier, Huntsman, and Weaponsmith.

Equipment

Nomads receive a waterskin and 1 weeks worth of standard rations.

Special Benefit

Nomads are always alert to danger and so are surprised only on a 1-in-6.

They can also track creatures as a ranger of two levels lower (they don't gain any tracking ability until 3rd level).

Special Hindrance

Due to a Nomad's solitary lifestyle, they lack the formal education most others receive. As such, they have a -2 penalty to Intelligence checks.

They also suffer a -2 penalty to saving throws vs. illusions, as they can be easily fooled by such magics.

Bards

Lorekeeper

A lorekeeper travels the wilderness looking for knowledge. This includes ancient barrows, ruins, and other lost places as well as forests, mountains, and swamps.

Requirements

A Lorekeeper requires a Charisma and Intelligence of 9 or more.

Role

Ever the explorers, lorekeepers, are good at seeking out and finding lost places. Treasure to them is finding new pieces of lore and information they can add to their already extensive knowledge.

Secondary Skills

Lorekeepers often have the following secondary skills: Apothecary, Bookbinder, Outrider, or Mapmaker.

Table: New Secondary Skills

Outrider	Outriders patrol the outskirts of an area. They can determine their orientation and can survive in the wilderness*
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* Requires a Wisdom check

Equipment

Lorekeepers gain writing equipment.

Special Benefit

Lorekeepers gain the Lore ability at 1st level. Although it starts at 1-in-6 chance. Each even level it increases by 1, until 8th level where it remains at 5-in-6 chance.

Special Hindrance

Due to all the study and exploring, the Lorekeeper neglects their ability to charm. They never gain the ability to charm monsters.



Wanderer

A nomadic storyteller, collecting tales from across the land and sharing them with others.

Requirements

A Wanderer requires a Charisma of 9.

Role

Wanderers are always on the move, never settling in one place for too long.

Secondary Skills

Wanderers usually choose from the following list: Animal Trainer, Fisher, Huntsman, Mapmaker, or Seafarer.

Equipment

Wanderers gain a staff, which doubles as a walking stick.

Special Benefit

Due to always being on the move and wandering over rough terrain that would leave most exhausted, Wanderers seem to cope better than most. They receive a +1 bonus to their Constitution.

They also visit many varied places, learning their language and etiquette. They receive the Diplomat secondary skill for free, as well as an additional two languages.

Special Hindrance

As they are always on the move, Wanderers can never build a manor and attract followers. Additionally, they tend to move lightly and so are proficient in only leather armour.

Rangers

Beastmaster

A Beastmaster is a ranger who forms a special bond with a wild animal companion, which accompanies the ranger almost everywhere.

Requirements

None.

Role

The Beastmaster can make a skilled combatant with the help of his animal companion, but they rarely put their best friend against overwhelming odds.

Secondary Skills

The Beastmaster usually chooses from the following: Animal Trainer, Bowyer/Fletcher, or Weaponsmith.

Equipment

The Beastmaster starts with a short bow.

Special Benefit

A Beastmaster can befriend and train a loyal animal companion of animal intelligence of up to 2 HD. This increases 1HD for every 2 levels the Beastmaster gains. But they can only have one animal companion at any time.

Special Hindrance

The bond with their companion can be a vulnerability as the Beastmaster feels compelled to protect them when they are in danger.



Warden

A Warden is a protector of a specific region, dedicated to defending it from monstrous threats. They will lay down their life in defence of this natural place.

Requirements

The Warden needs a Strength of 9 or greater.

Role

They are the ultimate protectors of the wilderness, choosing a region to protect. How large the region is up to the GM.

Secondary Skills

Wardens generally choose from the following: Animal Trainer, Apothecary, Bowyer/Fletcher, or Outrider.

Equipment

None.

Special Benefit

Wardens receive a +1 bonus to Armor Class (AC) and attack rolls when fighting within their protected region. Within their chosen region, Wardens have a network of contacts among local people who can provide information or aid. This is up to the GM's discretion.

Special Hindrance

They are so dedicated to protecting a particular region, they know little of other areas in the world. They receive -2 penalty to all Intelligence checks. The Warden feels a strong sense of duty to their region, potentially putting them at odds with many others, perhaps even the party's goals if their missions conflict.

Beware Of Monsters

Two New Monsters



Whispering Cairns

These ancient burial mounds come alive at night, their stones whispering unsettling messages that drive travellers mad.

It is said when magical energies are abundant near a cairn, they can awaken and start their nocturnal activities of whispering the secrets and knowledge they have gained over time.

Bards and other knowledge seekers have been known to seek these out to learn secret knowledge, but most have been driven insane or driven away.

Creation of a Carin

If a powerful spell (level 4 or greater), or a ritual is performed near a cairn, and the spell or ritual goes awry, then there is a 1-in-6 chance of a Whispering Cairn being created.

It is also said that there are ancient rituals designed to create a Whispering Cairn, but these have long been lost - perhaps a Whisper Cairn itself knows that secret.

Campaign Note: Priests of Banoth (God of Knowledge) gain a +2 bonus to any saves versus a Whispering Cairn.

Whispering Cairn

Large Elemental

Climate/Terrain: Temperate or tropical plains and hills

Frequency: Very Rare

Organisation: Singular, cluster (D4+3)

Activity Cycle: Night

Diet: -

Alignment: Neutral

Advancement: By size (increase HD)

Languages: None

—

Armour Class: 16 (Natural armour)

Hit Dice (HP): 5 (26)

Move: 6"

Abilities: S 16 C 14 D 8 I 4 W 18 Ch 8

Attacks: 2 x Slams

Damage: D10+3 (Stoney Fists)

Morale: Very High

Special Abilities:

Whispers: These ancients fill the air with disturbing whispers of long lost knowledge. This extends out 180-ft from the Cairn and all who can hear it must make a Spell save with a -2 penalty or feel the need to move away from the creature. If the save fails by 5 or more, the creature is affected as per a *Confusion* spell, which lasts D6+1 rounds. After this time, the creature must make another Spell saving throw, and if failed, then they are driven insane permanently.

Absorb Magic: Any spell cast at a Whispering Cairn is automatically absorbed by the creature, and they gain a number of hit points equal to the level of the spell.

Mossling Ambushers

These plant-like creatures blend seamlessly with moss-covered rocks and trees. They attack with surprising speed and ferocity, using razor-sharp teeth to ensnare prey.

They grow on rocks and logs, just like regular moss would, and appear to be just that until a living creature comes within 10-ft of one, when it rears up and lunges towards its target.

Its first attack is to bite and inject a poison, which if it isn't saved again (Vs. Poison), it will slow the victim - as a *Slow* spell.

It then proceeds to wrap around the victim, devouring it, leaving behind a skeleton or a pile of bones (this usually takes up to 6 days for a medium-sized creature).

The Mossling Ambusher appears as regular moss clinging to a rock or dead tree stump, but underneath it has a single mouth full of small jagged teeth that eagerly consumes a victim.

The sap that it produces from the mouth when a victim comes near, is poisonous to any living thing.

Mossling Ambusher

Medium Plant

Climate/Terrain: Any Temperate or tropical area

Frequency: Rare

Organisation: Singular, clump (D3+1)

Activity Cycle: Day

Diet: Carnivores

Alignment: Neutral

Advancement: By size (increase HD)

Languages: None

Armour Class: 12 (Natural armour)

Hit Dice (HP): 3 (15)

Move: 6"

Abilities: S 8 C 12 D 6 I 1 W 6 Ch 4

Attacks: 1 x Bite or Wrap

Damage: D4 (Bite)

Morale: Very High

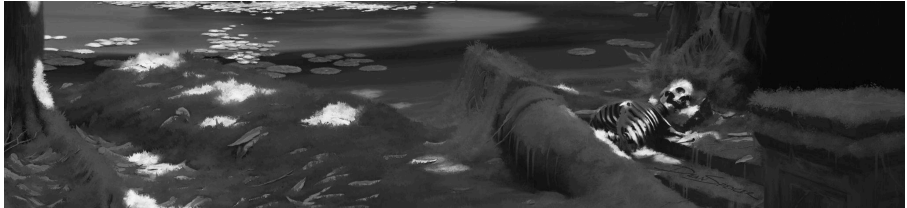
Special Abilities:

Camouflage: A Mossling Ambusher surprises on a 5-in-6.

Fire Vulnerability: Mossling Ambushers take double damage from fire-based attacks.

Poisonous Bite: The victim must save versus Poison or be slowed. This is the same effect as the *Slow* spell, and lasts for one turn.

Wrap: As a standard melee attack, a Mossling Ambusher can wrap around a medium- or smaller-sized target, enveloping it.



Want Even More?

Looking for more adventure? Back issues are available to download on [my website](#).

I'm also expanding this zine via new articles on the website. This will include web enhancements and other regular features.

Web Enhancements are articles that for whatever reason didn't make it into the zine. Usually 1-2 are posted on the website each month for each issue.

<https://yumdm.com/>

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Next Month

For June, we focus on the workhorses of the game: fighters and rogues. This covers fighters, knights, thieves, and assassins.



There will be articles on calling on multiclassing, new base classes, weapons, and much more!

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