

Book of heroic Races Seedlings



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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, 4th day of Spring, 1475th 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, 25th day of Summer, 1475th 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, 57th day of Autumn, 1475th 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 2nd day of Winter, 1476th year of Clan Mossbranch
1st 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, 1st day of Summer, 15th 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^{APG}

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^{APG/ARG}

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^{APG/ARG}

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.

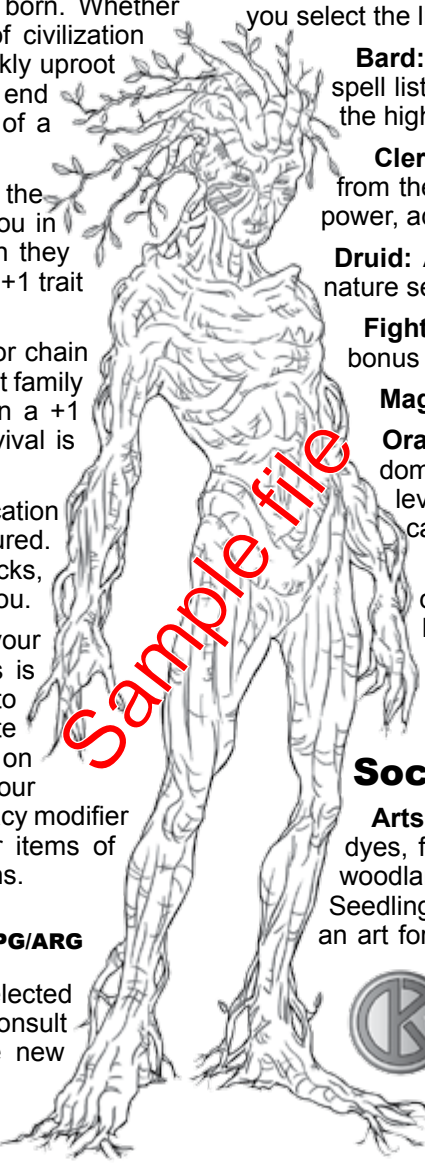
Ranger: Add +1/6 to the ranger's effective druid level when determining the abilities of his animal companion (maximum +3).

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, which 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