

AWAKENED BIRTH TREES OF CORWYL

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INTRODUCTION

This web enhancement for *Corwyl: Village of the Wood Elves*, part of Green Ronin's Races of Renown series, presents expanded information on Awakened Birth Trees, including two sample Awakened Birth Tree NPCs.

AWAKENED BIRTH TREES

At any one time before the Dark War, a dozen or more of Corwyl's oldest birth trees were awakened treants, companions, allies, and homes to the wood elves linked to them from birth. During the war, the awakened trees were some of the village's most valiant defenders, and their deaths (only three awakened trees survived the war, and one sickened and died soon afterwards because of its owner's death in the fighting) were as strongly felt as those of the ancestral memory trees the treants had tried to protect.

Since the Dark War, awakening birth trees to sentience has been less popular in the village; although the trees make mighty warriors, the idea of bringing a tree to awareness with the near surety that its linked elf will die before it, risking plunging it into suicidal depression, is too painful for many to countenance following the horrors of the Dark War. At no point since the end of the war has there been more than a half dozen awakened birth trees in Corwyl, and currently there are only three.

TRATAKEH

The 120-ft.-tall Tratakeh is a handsome white oak with four house levels. Two of the levels house Sylari Norel's unwed children whose own birth trees are too small. Sylari devoted much attention to him over the centuries, and he has expanded to become the second largest (only the much older House of Ancestors is bigger) in the Corwyl, a fact of which he is proud.

Tratakeh knows Sylari is ambitious and self-involved, but he loves her just the same. She often comes to talk to him of her displeasure over the Council and the new ancestral speaker. As her friend, he mostly listens; he has no interest in village politics.

The grandfatherly Tratakeh's biggest interest is the village children, whom love him as much as he loves them. Most

afternoons, they can be found climbing and playing in his lower branches or holding hands and dancing around his vast trunk. They happily sing to him and bring him pretty flowers to adorn his branches.

With the wisdom of centuries of contemplation, Tratakeh thinks of himself as the village's tree, and he will go to great lengths to protect all the villagers (Sylari's powerful enough to protect herself in most situations) should something like the Dark War happen again. The then-young Tratakeh had not yet been awakened during the Dark War, so he has no conscious memories of the event, but he became sentient only a century later, and spent many decades listening to the stories of both Sylari and those few village treants who did survive the war. There are none alive who know more of the details of how the war was fought in the village proper.

As part of Corwyl's defense, Tratakeh performs drills with the Terellian knights, animating the trees around him to aid them in their training exercises. If their own tree homes don't have rooms of refuge, the village children have been told to run to Tratakeh should enemies attack, for they should be safe in the various chambers within his mighty trunk.

TRATAKEH

558-year-old male treant (birth tree of Sylari Norel); CR 14; Colossal plant; HD32d10+192; hp 352; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.*; AC 23 (-1 Dex, -8 size, +22 natural), touch 1, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +24; Grp +50; Atk +26 melee (6d6+10, slam); Full Atk +26 melee (6d6+10, 2 slams); SA Animate trees (4 trees, 270-ft. range), double damage against objects, trample 4d6+15 (DC 36 Reflex for half); SQ Damage reduction 10/slashing, low-light vision, plant traits, vulnerability to fire; AL N; SV Fort +24, Ref +7, Will +13; Str 31, Dex 8, Con 23, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 12.

AWAKENED VS. NATURAL TREANTS

There are many differences between naturally occurring treants (as described in the *MM*) and those created through the Awaken ability of the Tree-Linked feat.

AGE

The earliest age at which a Tree-Linked elf can gain the Awaken ability is 250 years old, which means an awakened birth tree is already old and large when it achieves sentience, and is thus physically more powerful than most natural treants. An average tree has 24d10 hp at 250 years of age, and that can rise to 32d10 hp by age 400. And while a natural treant is a Huge creature, awakened birth-trees are typically Gargantuan or even Colossal at the moment of awakening.

YOUTH

Conversely, while an awakened birth tree has the same physical attributes a centuries-old natural treant would have, mentally it's closer in many ways to a newborn child. It spends its first 250 or more years of life as a simple tree, and when awakened it has few memories of its pre-awakened life, mostly consisting of generalized emotions (love for its linked elf, a feeling of community with the trees around it) with only a few specific events (such as surviving a forest fire or a period when its partner was away from it for an extended period of time) remembered in detail. It quickly makes up for this, though, because a treant never truly sleeps, and so it learns 24 hours a day from what it sees and hears after awakening.

SKILLS

As an awakened birth tree receives much of its early learning from watching and listening to those living within it, most gain skills related to (although not identical to) the activities of their bond-mates; *e.g.*, while the birth tree of a wizard may never learn to cast spells, it's likely to gain high levels of Spellcraft.

ALIGNMENT

After hundreds of years of being tended by its Tree-Linked partner, an awakened birth tree's alignment is usually close to that of its bond-mate, although often more moderate than that of its partner. An awakened treant's alignment is usually either the same as its partner's or within one step in a neutral direction (*e.g.*, a lawful good elf might be linked to an awakened treant that is lawful neutral, lawful good, or neutral good, but probably neither chaotic nor evil.)

continued on page 3

*moving faster than 10 ft. risks damage to the house built into Tratakeh's branches and to any occupants

Skills and Feats: Balance +9, Diplomacy +13, Hide -8 (+8 in forested areas), Intimidate +16, Knowledge (local) +12, Knowledge (nature) +17, Listen +9, Sense Motive +13, Spellcraft +8, Spot +8, Survival +18 (+20 aboveground); Blind-Fight, Crushing Vines*, Extended Animate Trees*, Fearless*, Giant's Throw*, Greater Animate Trees*, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Improved Sunder, Nature's Grasp*, Poison Tolerance*, Power Attack.

* These feats are detailed in Corwyl: Village of the Wood Elves

Languages: Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Sylvan

WINSSELL

Winsell is a very solemn, pious 60-ft.-tall sugar maple. She feels the power of nature coursing through her, and is grateful that she was given life and consciousness a century ago. The Grove Guardians perform their daily rituals at her base, and treat her as almost divine, although she doesn't let it go to her head.

As the druids dote on her, especially Brother Partol and Freylan Norel, Within Corwyl, Winsell's beauty is second only to that of Freylan's birth tree. In the autumn, her beauty becomes more pronounced, as her green leaves become fiery red and orange, falling to the ground like normal trees (and unlike most treants).

Winsell resides in the heart of the sacred grove, where she keeps an eye on the memory trees for her druid companions.

WINSSELL

350-year-old female treant (birth tree of Brother Partol); CR 13; Colossal plant; HD28d10+168; hp 322; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.*; AC 23 (-1 Dex, -8 size, +22 natural), touch 1, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +21; Grp +47; Atk +23 melee (4d6+10, slam); Full Atk +23 melee (4d6+10, 2 slams); SA Animate trees (2 trees, 180-ft. range), double damage against objects, trample 4d6+15 (DC 34 Reflex for half); SQ Damage reduction 10/slashing, low-light vision, plant traits, vulnerability to fire; AL NG; SV Fort +22, Ref +8, Will +15; Str 30, Dex 8, Con 22, Int 12, Wis 18, Cha 14

*moving faster than 10 ft. risks damage to the house built into Winsell's branches and to any occupants

Skills and Feats: Balance +5, Diplomacy +4, Handle Animal +7, Hide -9 (+7 in forested areas), Intimidate +7, Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge (local) +6, Knowledge (nature) +16, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +6, Listen +9, Sense Motive +9, Spot +9, Survival +10 (+12 aboveground); Animal Speaker*, Fearless*, Giant's Throw*, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Nature's Grasp*, Plant Talker*, Power Attack, Sense Spirits*.

* These feats are detailed in Corwyl: Village of the Wood Elves

Languages: Common, Elven

LINDELLEN

Lindellen is a 75-ft.-tall sweet gum with a 40-ft. limb spread. Although his bond-mate, Samron Dulaek, has been dead for almost 50 years, this awakened tree has continued to live, although not all those years have been happy.

Awakened a mere 15 years before Samron's death, Lindellen was despondent at being so rudely deprived of his Tree-Linked companion. He grew quiet and sickly, continuing to exist only to support Samron's widow. When she died 10 years later, Lindellen almost died from grief and loneliness. Instead, Samron's son, Kirkolis (who had moved out of his parents' house before Lindellen was awakened), took it upon himself to befriend his father's tree. Kirkolis' friendship and kindness gave Lindellen the strength to live, and he slowly recovered, although the structures within his branches that once housed the Dulaek family have begun blending into Lindellen's living wood; after only 40 years of disuse most rooms are still recognizable and accessible, but in another 120 years all traces of them will have disappeared.

While he no longer needs to stay rooted in place in order to protect the Dulaek tree home, he has little enthusiasm for walking about; there's nothing Lindellen wants to see and no one he wants to visit in Corwyl or the surrounding valley. Kirkolis still visits Lindellen daily, sharing with him the interesting stories he hears, the village's daily gossip, and news from any travelers; stories Lindellen doesn't have any real interest in, although he enjoys Kirkolis' presence. Mirondella Ree and Freylan Norel also spend a great deal of time talking with him.

In times of danger, Lindellen will do his best to protect those he loves, although he doesn't have the warrior's spirit of the older Tratakeh.

LINDELLEN

367-year-old male treant (birth-tree of the deceased Samron Dulaek); CR 13; Colossal plant; HD28d10+196; hp 357; Init -1; Spd 30 ft. (6 squares); AC 23 (-1 Dex, -8 size, +22 natural), touch 1, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +21; Grp +49; Atk +25 melee (4d6+12, slam); Full Atk +25 melee (4d6+12, 2 slams); SA Animate trees (2 trees, 180-ft. range), double damage against objects, trample 4d6+24 (DC 36 Reflex for half); SQ Damage reduction 10/slashing, low-light vision, plant traits, vulnerability to fire; AL CG; SV Fort +23, Ref +8, Will +14; Str 35, Dex 8, Con 25, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 12

Skills and Feats: Balance +4, Concentration +12, Diplomacy +3, Heal (plants) +18, Hide -9 (+7 in forested areas), Intimidate +16, Knowledge (nature) +14, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +10, Perform (sing) +3, Sense Motive +8, Spot +8, Survival +13 (+15 aboveground); Fearless*, Giant's Throw*, Greater Trample*, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Nature's Grasp*, Poison Tolerance*, Power Attack.

* These feats are detailed in Corwyl: Village of the Wood Elves

Languages: Common, Elven, Sylvan

continued from page 2

LANGUAGES

Unlike naturally grown treants, those awakened through magic start off knowing one language (plus one per point of their Int bonus, if any) selected from those known to their awakeners. If an awakened birth tree later wants to learn Treant (something that can be helpful for long-range communication using the Wind Talker treant feat), he must buy the Speak Language skill.

COMMUNITY

Most natural treants consider themselves protectors of the forests they live in. Awakened birth trees, on the other hand, align themselves with the wood elf communities they grow up in; while they may feel a kinship to the birth and memory trees of their village, they don't tend to extend that out to nature as a whole. An awakened birth tree feels no more outrage at the death of a mundane oak tree than a human feels at the death of a wild monkey, despite the similarities between each creature type. Long exposure to the philosophy of natural treants (through discussions in person or over the wind) can sensitize an awakened birth tree to the needs of nature, but it's not an automatic reaction.

Wood elf communities treat awakened birth trees as social equals, allowing them to vote in elections and consulting them on decisions such as where to plant new birth and memory trees. No birth tree has ever run for a position on Corwyl's Council of Three, but if one did, its strength and knowledge could make it a serious contender.

MOBILITY

Natural treants often patrol a wide circuit through "their" woods, keeping the trees safe from harm. Awakened birth trees, on the other hand, are usually nearly immobile, because of the harm that could be done to the homes built into their bodies if they move too quickly. And if the birth tree is connected to other village trees (either by intertwined branches or artificially constructed bridges), the effects on the rest of the village have to be considered before a birth tree makes any major movements. This tendency toward immobility means that awakened birth trees often remain rooted to the spot during the first stages of attacks or disasters, until convinced (by the worsening situation or by the entreaties of friends) that movement is absolutely necessary.

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