

DEADWOOD TREE

This creature looks like an animated dead tree. Its dark and angular branches bear no leaves, and its limbs are knotted and twisted into a sinister shape. A malevolent face stares out of the upper part of its trunk.

Deadwood trees are hateful, unliving monstrosities created in the fall of Valossa that seek to destroy all life that they encounter.

TACTICS

Deadwood trees hate all living things. They revel in slaughtering the creatures of the woods and transforming both beasts and men into zombies. While driven by hatred, a deadwood tree is an intelligent and careful strategist. It makes full use of its zombies as cannon fodder, often using the weaker undead to form a wall of flesh over which it can strike at its enemies. Using *blight* and the touch of corruption, it can recover from a great deal of damage. Fire poses the greatest threat to a deadwood, and if at any point an enemy readies to inflict fire damage, the deadwood turns its full attention to destroying that particular foe.

ENCOUNTERS

Deadwood trees are solitary entities that patrol their island homes, seeking to purge all vestiges of life from them. Occasionally they pick a position that allows them to observe the maximum range of their territory and simply wait for new victims. They frequently are accompanied by packs of shambling zombies, previous victims of their touch of corruption.

ECOLOGY

Centuries ago, the islands known today as the Serpent's Teeth were part of the great continent of Valossa. A mighty Valossan Empire of serpent folk ruled the land, but it fell when certain of the serpent people turned to the worship of a chaotic evil entity known only as the Unspeakable One. A great cataclysm shattered Valossa, leaving only a few scattered islands behind. Nearly every living thing died—many of them in horrible ways as the essence of the Unspeakable One shot through their beings, warping them into insane forms.

DEADWOOD TREE

CR 12 • XP 19,200

NE Huge undead

Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 7, flat-footed 22 (-1 Dex, +14 natural, -2 size)**hp** 127 (17d8+51)**Fort** +8, **Ref** +4, **Will** +13**Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +4, deadwood; **DR** 10/slashing and magic; **Immune** cold, electricity, polymorph, and mind-affecting effects, undead traits
Vulnerability fire

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.**Melee** 2 slams +23 (2d6+10/19-20 plus touch of corruption)**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.**Special Attacks** touch of corruption, trample (2d6+15, DC 28)**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 15; concentration +18)At will—*cause fear* (DC 14), *detect animals or plants*, *diminish plants*, *entangle* (DC 14)5/day—*blight* (DC 17), *command undead* (DC 15), *fear* (DC 17)1/day—*antilife shell*, *antiplant shell*, *mass inflict light wounds* (DC 18).

STATISTICS

Str 30, **Dex** 8, **Con** --, **Int** 18, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 16**Base Atk** +12; **CMB** +24 (+26 bull rush, grapple, and sunder); **CMD** 31 (33 versus bull rush, grapple, and sunder)**Feats** Awesome Blow, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Grapple, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*cause fear*), Weapon Focus (slam)**Skills** Intimidate +23, Knowledge (arcana) +24, Knowledge (nature) +21, Knowledge (religion) +24, Perception +23, Sense Motive +23, Stealth +11 (+19 in forests), Survival +20; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Stealth in forests**Languages** Common, Sylvan, three more languages

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Deadwood (Su): A deadwood tree is a bizarre blending of undead, plant, and fey, and has qualities of each species. Most notably, it is unaffected by *control plant*, *command plant*, or *antiplant shell*. A *blight* spell will actually heal the deadwood tree for half the amount of damage that would normally be inflicted. The deadwood can use its own *blight* ability to heal itself. However, *plant growth* will inflict 1d6 points of damage for every two caster levels (Will save half).**Touch of Corruption (Su):** Living creatures struck by a deadwood tree's slam attack gain one negative level (DC 20). The save is Charisma-based. For each negative level bestowed the deadwood tree gains 5 temporary hit points. Plants suffer an additional 1d6 damage from the slam attack. Living creatures killed by a deadwood tree will rise in 1d6 rounds as zombies. At any given moment, a deadwood tree can support a number of zombies whose combined Hit Dice is equal to or less than twice that of the tree. A deadwood tree can telepathically communicate with the zombies it has created; this communication has a maximum range of 1,000 feet.

DEADWOOD TREE LORE

DC	Result
22	This shambling tree is no benevolent treant, but instead an undead mockery of life known as a deadwood tree. Instead of protecting nature, it seeks the destruction of all life. This result reveals all undead traits.
27	Deadwood trees possess numerous spell-like abilities and an unnatural ability to steal the life-force from victims and reanimate the bodies of the slain as undead minions. This result reveals touch of corruption. Additionally, the character is prepared for the terrors that the deadwood tree can conjure up, and receives a +2 bonus to his saving throw against the <i>cause fear</i> and <i>fear</i> abilities of the tree. If he has the ability to turn undead, he receives a +2 bonus to the DC of his turn check against the deadwood tree. With an additional DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (religion) check, the character can use deadwood to enhance the power of either arcane or divine spells, as discussed in the following section.
32	A bizarre intermingling of undead, plant, and fey natures grants deadwood trees a number of immunities and vulnerabilities not common to undead. This result reveals deadwood. Additionally, they gain knowledge of a certain combination of roots and herbs that can help someone recover from the effects of the deadwood tree's corrupting touch. If the character makes a DC 20 Survival check, is in a warm or temperate forest, and is willing to take half an hour to search for supplies, he receives a +3 bonus when making his save to recover negative levels lost to a deadwood. The character can harvest enough supplies to assist 1d6 people, but the mixture only retains its potency for 1 hour.

Before the fall of the serpent people, the great trees of Valossa's jungles were inhabited by spirit lizards (see page 136). When the cataclysm struck, the trees were killed along with most other living things. However, a few spirit lizards were trapped inside their dead and dying trees, and fused with them by the warping influence of the Unspeakable One. These became the first of the deadwood trees. Driven by an insane, jealous hatred of living things, they attack without warning and fight until their victims are destroyed.

Characters with ranks in Knowledge (religion) and other skills can learn more about deadwood trees with successful skill checks.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

A deadwood tree appears at first glance much like a treant, but closer examination reveals the creature's undead nature through its leafless branches, darkened, knotted bark, and evil, twisted

HAZARAEEL BONEROOT

Hazael Boneroot was so unrelenting in its destruction of the living that it attracted the attention of a fiendish deity. Hazael made a pact with this sinister entity, gaining greater power in exchange for devotion and the continual sacrifice of the living. Hazael looks like an enormous old dead tree with a gnarled trunk and twisted branches. Just below its face, the symbol of its god is burned into its trunk, as if by a branding iron. Its bark is dark gray, with various scrapes and scars showing up in shades of brown.

HAZARAEEL BONEROOT CR 18 • XP 153,600

NE Gargantuan undead

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +31

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 7, flat-footed 25 (+1 insight, +18 natural, -4 size)

hp 187 (25d8+75)

Fort +11, **Ref** +10, **Will** +19

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, deadwood; **DR** 15/slashing and magic; **Immune** cold, electricity, polymorph, and mind-affecting effects, undead traits
Vulnerability fire

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee 2 slams +34 (3d6+14/19-20 plus touch of corruption)

Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.

Special Attacks touch of corruption, trample (3d6+21, DC 37)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 18; concentration +23)

At will—bane (DC 16), *cause fear* (DC 16), *detect animals or plants*, *diminish plants*, *doom* (DC 16), *entangle* (DC 18), *protection from good*

5/day—*blight* (DC 19), *command undead* (DC 17), *fear* (DC 19)

3/day—*death knell* (DC 18), *desecrate*, *hold person* (DC 18), *obscuring mist*, *resist energy* (fire)

1/day—*antilife shell*, *antiplant shell*, *mass inflict light wounds* (DC 18).

STATISTICS

Str 38, **Dex** 10, **Con** --, **Int** 18, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +18; **CMB** +34 (+38 bull rush, grapple, and sunder); **CMD** 46 (48 versus bull rush, grapple, and sunder)

Feats Awesome Blow, Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Grapple, Improved Sunder, Greater Bull Rush, Greater Grapple, Greater Sunder, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*cause fear*), Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills Intimidate +31, Knowledge (arcana) +32, Knowledge (nature) +29, Knowledge (religion) +32, Perception +31, Sense Motive +31, Stealth +17 (+25 in forests), Survival +28; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Stealth in forests

Languages Abyssal, Common, Infernal, Sylvan, one more language

Combat Gear *pale lavender ioun stone*, *pearly white ioun stone*, *dusty rose ioun stone*.

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visage. A deadwood tree typically stands about 25 feet tall and weighs about 5200 pounds.

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Owing to the apocalyptic nature of the disastrous calamity that created them, the widely separated islands that they inhabit, and their own hateful nature, deadwood trees are solitary in nature. They have no interest in cooperation or community, either with their own kind or any other.

TREASURE

Deadwood trees do not normally collect treasure, but they are not averse to making use of those magical items that are suited to their forms and natures which they come across.

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SPELL COMPONENTS

Spell	Effect
Deadwood Shard	
<i>Animate dead</i>	Increase caster level by 4 (zombies only)
<i>Antilife shell</i>	Increase caster level by 2
<i>Antiplant shell</i>	Increase caster level by 2
<i>Blight</i>	Increase save DC by 1
<i>Cause Fear</i>	Increase save DC by 1
<i>Diminish plants</i>	Increase caster level by 2 (stunt growth only)
<i>Energy Drain</i>	Increase save DC by 2
<i>Enervation</i>	Increase caster level by 2
<i>Entangle</i>	Increase save DC by 1
<i>Fear</i>	Increase save DC by 1
<i>Scare</i>	Increase save DC by 1
<i>Shillelagh</i>	Enhancement bonus increased to +2

USES

The necromantic energies that animate deadwoods lingers on for years after its destruction, and can be accessed.

SPELL COMPONENTS

A spellcaster who understands how to tap into the power of deadwood can increase the power of certain spells by using a piece of deadwood as an additional material component. The spells and the associated effects are listed on the table at right.

With the exception of *shillelagh*—which requires a deadwood club—the deadwood shard is destroyed when the spell is cast.

MAGIC ITEMS

The following magic items are associated with the parts of a deadwood tree.

DEAD TREE'S BLOOD

The sap of a deadwood is hard to find, because their wood is dry and brittle. A DC 25 Alchemy check allows

a character to extract one ounce of sap from a slain deadwood tree. When used in the creation of a *potion of ghoul touch*, one ounce of the sap increases the duration of the potion's effect to 1d10+5 rounds; however, the victim does not exude a carrion stench. A *wand of ghoul touch* made from a deadwood twig has the same effects.

DEADWOOD BARK

Deadwood bark can be simmered in water for seven days to make a magical ink with a successful DC 25 Alchemy check; a typical deadwood tree can yield 75 pounds of bark when slain, and 10 pounds of bark yields enough ink to inscribe one spell on a scroll. Using this ink reduces the gold piece cost to scribe the scroll by 50%; however, it may only be used to scribe spells from the following schools and domains: Necromancy, Chaos, Death, and Evil. Because of its evil nature, deadwood bark is not traded openly but can fetch as much as 50 gp per pound on the black market.

DEADWOOD SLAYING ARROW

If a *slaying arrow* is crafted with a deadwood shaft, the enhancement bonus is increased to +2. The DC to avoid the death effect is 25 for a normal *slaying arrow* and 30 for a *greater slaying arrow*. Such an arrow can only be crafted to slay fey, humanoids (all sub-types), or animals. This increases the cost of the arrow by 50%.

DEADWOOD WEAPONS

A piece of deadwood may be enchanted to become *chaotic* or *unholy* without requiring the creator to know *chaos hammer* or *unholy blight*; all other requirements are unchanged. Depending on its size, the weapon counts as a club or a greatclub. A suitable sized piece of deadwood, when used as the shaft of a *cursed backbiter spear*, removes the need for the weapon's creator to know *bestow curse*; the malevolence of the tree lasts beyond its death, and substitutes perfectly for the spell.

ADVANCED VERSIONS

Deadwood trees advance by hit dice.