

DYSON'S DODECAHEDRON

Volume 1, Issue

2



ROLLED A 1!

Getting issue two of the Dodecahedron out the door proved to be more of a challenge than expected. A “glitch” resulted in the loss of all data for this issue (as well as a lot of other stuff) right in the middle of a major backup. And of course it took out the backup also.

So here I am at the end of laying out issue 2 for a second time. Fortunately, with only 10 pages of content per issue, the task wasn’t overwhelming - merely annoying.

In issue 1 I was planning to make these available in print - however that will be delayed until the first year of the zine is done (if it lasts that long). The minimum page count for digest pubs at LuLu is 80 pages, so I’ll put together an annual compilation in that format for a nominal charge.

Again, everything appearing in this issue of the Dodecahedron originally appeared on A Character For Every Game (although some items were specifically written for the zine, but were published on the blog first).

<http://rpgcharacters.wordpress.com>

If you have suggestions for articles you would like to see in future issues of the Dodecahedron (favourite articles from the blog, or material that hasn’t been covered yet), please drop me a line!

Dyson Logos

dyson.logos@gmail.com

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The Elemental Lore article was originally inspired by Fred Saberhagen’s Empire of the East, where a variety of elementals such as the plains elemental are summoned, each with unique powers.

I pulled out one of my older favourite mini-dungeons for this issue, the Lair of the Spider Players which was posted over a year ago.

The Merchant Prince character class was inspired by a player in one of my recent campaigns who made a thief / magic-user who retired as a local merchant prince (as well as working for the assassin’s guild on the side - his primary business is the import and export of assassins using his goods as a cover).



ELEMENTAL LORE

SUMMONING ELEMENTAL SUBTYPES

Not all elementals map directly to the understood four or five elemental types. Various cultures and peoples have researched and recorded many other types and even dispute what the major classifications of elementals should be.

When summoning elementals there is a chance of summoning a specific form of elemental suited to the environment in question. The DM determines what the most likely subtype to appear will be. There is a 50% chance that the appropriate subtype appears instead of a standard elemental of the appropriate power.

A spellcaster can learn (typically via a quest or magical tome) how to summon a particular subtype of elemental. In this case, if the proper environment is present, the summoning will always bring forth the desired subtype. A spellcaster can learn how to summon a number of subtypes equal to 1/2 his level.

There are 4 basic sizes of Elementals, typically determined by their summoning source.

Lesser Elemental (Summoned by Staff) – 8 HD, AC 2, 1d8 damage
Greater Elemental (Summoned by Devices) – 12 HD, AC 0, 2d8 damage
True Elemental (Summoned by Spells) – 16 HD, AC -2, 3d8 damage
Legendary Elemental (Summoned by Ritual) – 20 HD, AC -4, 4d8 damage

Elemental subtypes are treated identically to standard elementals, but have one additional power as indicated below. Unless otherwise indicated, any spell-like abilities are treated as being cast by a spellcaster with a level equal to the elemental's Hit Dice. Some spell effects are from the Advanced Edition Companion.

AIR ELEMENTAL SUBTYPES

Standard air elementals take the form of a whirlwind 2' tall per and 2' diameter per hit die. They fly at a movement rate of 360'(120'). Creatures of (1/4 elemental's hit dice) or fewer hit dice are carried away if they are within the area of the elemental if they fail a save versus death. Damage from air elementals is increased by 1d8 points against aerial targets.

- Blizzard - 1d6 cold damage / round in a 2' radius / HD
- Zephyr - doubles or halves flight speeds in a 20' radiums / HD
- Storm - call lightning once per day

- South Wind - ends all hostile air effects (storms, *cloudkill*, *wall of fog*, etc) within 5' / HD
- Pestilence - *cause disease* to all touched
- Fog - *fog cloud* 1 / turn
- Howling - temporarily deafens all within 2' / HD, fear to those under 4 HD
- Gust - gust of wind 1 / turn

EARTH ELEMENTAL SUBTYPES

Standard earth elementals take the form of a humanoid, 1' tall per hit die. They move at a rate of 60' (20'), cannot cross water wider than 1' / HD, but can move through earth or stone unimpeded. Damage from earth elementals is increased by 1d8 points against targets standing on the ground.

- Plains - reduce enemy ground-based movement to 1/3 within 20' / HD
- Dirt - *lesser move earth* at will
- Desert - 1d6 heat and abrasion damage / round in a 2' radius / HD
- Mud - *transmute rock to mud* 1 / turn
- Graveyard - *animate dead* 1 / turn
- Dungeon - melee targets must save versus paralysis or be chained to the elemental and must move with it
- Sand - *blur* 1 / turn
- Mountain - can attack (without the normal damage bonus for target type) at a range of 5' / HD by hurling boulders
- Crystal - *mirror image* 1 / turn, *colour spray* 1 / turn
- Metal - attacks are wounding, dealing 1 point of damage per round until bound.

FIRE ELEMENTAL SUBTYPES

Standard fire elementals take the form of a pillar of flames 1' tall and 1' diameter per hit die. They move at a movement rate of 120' (40') and cannot cross water wider than 1' / HD. Damage from fire elementals is increased by 1d8 points against targets with cold attacks.

- Cinder - *incendiary cloud* 1 / turn
- Lava - 1d6 heat damage / round to all within 1' radius / HD, form is that of an earth elemental instead of a fire elemental.
- Forge - *heat metal* on all weapons that strike it and all armour struck by it.
- Pyre - +1d8 damage versus undead and magic users
- Tinder - *flashfire* 1 / round
- Hearth - *resist cold* 10' radius / HD
- Flare - Hits cause blindness unless a save vs death is made; casts *pyrotechnics* 1 / turn



WATER ELEMENTAL SUBTYPES

Standard water elementals take the form of a mass of waves 1/2' tall per and 2' diameter per hit die. They move at a rate of 60' (20') and swim at a rate of 180' (60'), although they cannot travel more than 60 feet from a source of water. Targets standing in or submerged in water suffer an additional 1d8 damage from the attacks of a water elemental.

- Ice – *ice storm* 1 / turn
- Bog – attacks *warp wood* on target and possessions
- River – *part water* or *lower water* 1 / turn
- Sweetwater – *purify food and water* 2' radius / HD
- Blood – *bane* (reverse of *bless*) on all living opponents in 2' radius / HD
- Whirlpool – struck opponents must save versus paralysis or be stuck to the elemental
- Sewer – creatures within 2' / HD must save versus poison or suffer -2 to hit in combat from nausea
- Geyser – 8d6 damage blast of boiling water 5' wide by 5' / HD long 1 / turn
- Bile – attack destroys leather and cloth if save versus magic is failed

WOOD ELEMENTAL SUBTYPES

Standard wood elementals take the form of a treant-shaped humanoid 1 1/2' tall per hit die. They move at a rate of 90' (30') and are never slowed by vegetation. Targets standing on grass, plants or wood suffer +1d8 damage from wood elemental attacks.

- Thorn – can attack at a range of 5' / HD (base damage only)
- Forest – *entangle* 1 / turn
- Fungal – *stinking cloud* 1 / turn
- Rose – *allure* (towards the controller) all within 5' radius / HD
- Gallows – +1d8 damage to any creature with less than 1/2 hit points remaining
- Moss – attack as a rust monster 1 / turn
- Vine – ranged attack (2'/HD) draws target into contact with the elemental, further attacks don't roll to hit.
- Rot – attacks *warp wood* on target and possessions

MERCHANT PRINCES

TRADERS WITH CLASS

Requirements: Cha 9, Int 9

Prime Requisite: Cha

Hit Dice: 1d6

Maximum Level: None

Merchant princes may wear armour up to chain mail and can use shields. They can use any weapon. They attack and make saving throws as a thief of their level.

Merchant princes, upon reaching level 3, can cast spells as a magic user, and always cast spells as a caster two levels lower than their actual level. They keep spells in a spellbook and prepare them each morning just like a magic user, but have their own spell lists to choose from. (All spells are described in the Labyrinth Lord core rules.)

Business: Upon reaching level 4, a merchant prince may construct a **place of business**. A merchant who has constructed a **place of business** will attract 2d4 employees (merchants, security and so on), each a level 1 or level 0 character (20% that each employee is a level 1 character, usually a fighter, but possibly even a level 1 merchant prince, elf, halfling, or other character class). They will be generally loyal, but will not be replaced if killed. The business will turn a small profit (1d6 x 10 gp x Merchant Prince level) every month. Money earned this way does not give XP to the merchant prince.

Trade Network: Upon reaching level 9, a merchant prince with a successful **place of business** can invest in a **trade network** (typically buying and equipping a small fleet of boats or wagons). Such a network not only brings in a good revenue stream (3d6-5 x 20 x Merchant Prince level) but also provides for information from distant lands and access to said places. Note that a trade network may actually have a negative income some months.

Spot Thievery: Thievery is the bane of the merchants, and all merchant princes are skilled in spotting those who would pilfer from them. Whenever someone uses a thief skill (move silently, hide in shadows, pick pockets and so on) in the presence of the merchant prince, the merchant prince rolls 2d6 and checks the table above to determine if he notices the attempt. If the thief is higher level than the merchant prince, then the merchant prince gets -1 on this roll. If the merchant prince is 4 or more levels higher than the thief, then he gets +1 on this roll. *Optionally, a Merchant Prince with a Wisdom of 13 or greater can receive +1 on this check.*



Spot Magic: Merely by handling an item for one minute, a merchant prince can attempt to determine if the item is magical. The DM rolls 2d6 for the merchant prince, using the table above. If the item is magical, and the 2d6 roll is successful, then the merchant prince notes that the item is magical. If the roll succeeds by 3 or more points, then the DM can provide some basic information about the magic involved. If the roll succeeds by 6 or more points, then more detailed information is available (potentially including command words, number of charges, or exact bonuses). *Optionally, a Merchant Prince with an Intelligence of 13 or greater can receive +1 on this check.*

Table 2-2: The Merchant Prince Class Advancement											
Lvl	XP	Title	HD	Spellcasting					Spot	Spot	
				1	2	3	4	5	Thief	Magic	
1	0	Gopher	1d6	-	-	-	-	-	11+	12+	
2	1,826	Haggler	2d6	-	-	-	-	-	10+	12+	
3	2,651	Trader	3d6	1	-	-	-	-	10+	11+	
4	5,301	Merchant	4d6	2	-	-	-	-	9+	11+	
5	10,601	Appraiser	5d6	2	1	-	-	-	9+	10+	
6	21,201	Fixer	6d6	2	2	-	-	-	8+	10+	
7	42,401	Financier	7d6	3	2	1	-	-	8+	9+	
8	85,001	Merchant Prince	8d6	3	3	1	-	-	7+	9+	
9	170,001	Merchant Lord	9d6	4	3	2	-	-	7+	8+	
10	280,001	Merchant Lord	+1	4	3	2	1	-	7+	8+	
11	390,001	Merchant Lord	+2	4	3	3	1	-	6+	7+	
12	500,001	Merchant Lord	+3	4	4	3	2	-	6+	7+	
13	610,001	Merchant Lord	+4	4	4	3	2	1	6+	6+	
14	720,001	Merchant Lord	+5	5	4	4	2	1	5+	6+	
15	830,001	Merchant Lord	+6	5	4	4	3	2	5+	5+	
16	940,001	Merchant Lord	+7	5	5	4	3	2	5+	5+	
17	1,050,001	Merchant Lord	+8	5	5	4	4	3	4+	4+	
18	1,160,001	Merchant Lord	+9	5	5	5	4	3	4+	4+	
19	1,270,001	Merchant Lord	+10	6	5	5	5	3	4+	3+	
20	1,380,001	Merchant Lord	+11	6	6	6	5	4	3+	3+	



Level 1 Spells

Charm Person
Detect Invisible
Detect Magic
Floating Disc
Hold Portal
Light
Read Languages
Read Magic
Sleep
Ventriloquism

Level 2 Spells

Arcane Lock
Continual Light
ESP
Find Traps
Invisibility
Knock
Know Alignment
Levitate
Locate Object
Mirror Image

Level 3 Spells

Clairvoyance
Detect Lie
Dispel Magic

Level 3 Spells (cont)

Hold Person
Infravision
Lower Water
Remove Curse
Water Breathing

Level 4 Spells

Arcane Eye
Dimension Door
Hold Monster
Neutralize Poison
Polymorph Self
Quest
Wall of Fire
True Seeing

Level 5 Spells

Contact Other Plane
Control Weather
Grasping Hand
Move Earth
Polymorph Other
Stone Tell
Teleport
Wall of Stone

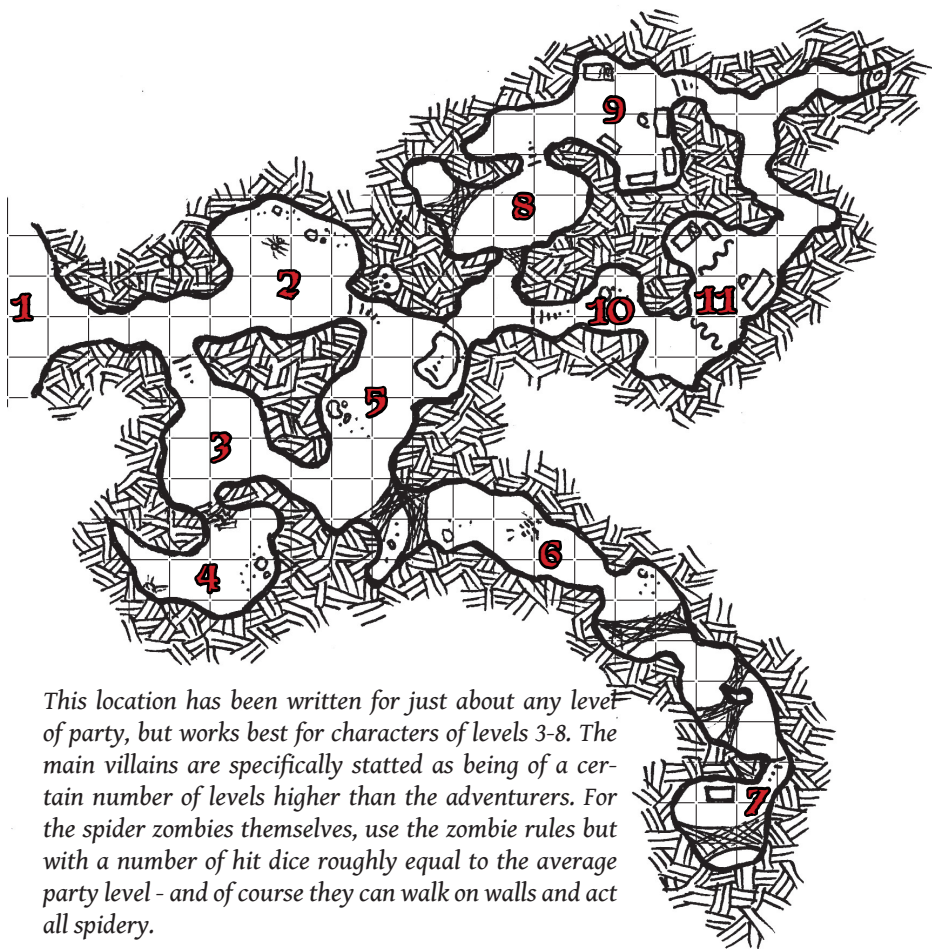
D12 BANDITS

1. Brigands (*typical bandits*)
2. Deserters (*ex-military force trying to be self-sufficient – easiest to do if you take stuff from other people who do it better than you*)
3. Desperados (*on a run of criminal activity, why not hit the party too?*)
4. Fugitives (*on the run from the authorities, hungry and desperate*)
5. Highwaymen (*on horseback, looking for easy looting*)
6. Outlaws (*turned to banditry because they have been exiled / outlawed – possibly with good reason*)
7. Poachers (*not out to get you, but defensive, criminal and probably hungry*)
8. Raiders (*pillage first, then burn!*)
9. Robbers (*up the loot, folks, and no one gets hurt*)
10. Slavers (*your goods are gravy, they want you!*)
11. Thieves (*might try to pretend to be friendly... at first*)
12. Thugs (*local toughs here to show you how tough they really are*)



LAIR OF THE SPIDER FLAYERS

A VARIABLE LEVEL DUNGEON



This location has been written for just about any level of party, but works best for characters of levels 3-8. The main villains are specifically statted as being of a certain number of levels higher than the adventurers. For the spider zombies themselves, use the zombie rules but with a number of hit dice roughly equal to the average party level - and of course they can walk on walls and act all spidery.

There is a cave in the spider woods that the rangers have known about for some time. Occasionally it is home to whatever creatures are trying to cohabitate with the giant arachnids that give the forest its name, other times the whole cave is just overrun with arachnids.

But this time it is home to creatures who are not friends with the local insect population. The locals don't know who lives here now, but the rangers have noticed a significant number of spiders split open and gutted in abandoned webs throughout the woods. And it looks like whoever has been doing it has moved into the cave.

So why on earth does this matter to the average party? Take your pick from the following (standard) adventure hooks:

- Someone from town has been taken in the night, time to mount a rescue operation.
- The local cleric, needed to cast some important spell on a party member was the person taken – now it's personal!
- Auguries have indicated that something powerful and evil is growing in the spider woods.
- Someone saw a young woman wander into the spider woods and head towards the cave – obviously the residents are charming or dominating innocent victims into their grasp. (the young woman is actually one of the spider flayers).
- After an ambush, the party traces the ambushers back to the cave.

Area 1 – Cave Entrance – The entrance to the lair is a wide but low-ceilinged (4') cave that quickly narrows but becomes taller (9 to 12 feet throughout the cave). It is made of natural stone and there are old cobwebs everywhere.

Area 2 – Raised Alcove – This alcove has natural stairs down to area 5. A massive spider lays here, gutted, dried and long-dead. It is actually animated as a zombie, but is under orders to not take any action (except defensive if attacked) except to attack anyone trying to leave the caverns by climbing here from area 5 (except for the spider flayers).

Area 3 – Low Chamber – This chamber's floor is covered in debris and old leaves, and there is a barricade between it and area 4. The barricade is made of old furniture and a broken door, although it looks to have been built some time ago as it is covered in old spider webs.

Area 4 – Dwarf's Last Stand – In the back corner of this cavern is the body of a dwarf who was overwhelmed by the spiders. Depending on the level of the adventurers, the dwarf may have suitable treasure.

Area 5 – Grand Chamber – The ceiling in this chamber is at least 30 feet above the floor. The passage to area 6 is completely webbed over with massive spider webs. In the floor on the North side of the chamber is a passage leading into the floor and to the North. This passage has had crude stairs cut into it, as well as a trap that drags a collection of metal pots down the stairs while wrapping the tripwire around the victim's ankle to pull him down also (save versus paralysis to avoid falling down the stairs if triggered – triggers 1-2 on a d6 for each person going down the stairs).



Area 6 – Spider Lair - Several zombie spiders are in this chamber, as well as the skeleton of an ogre. The ogre has level-appropriate treasure.

Area 7 – Spider Cave – This sunken chamber has never been explored by the Spider Flyers. It contains the corpse of a truly massive spider in its web (larger than any spider seen before by the adventurers – fortunately it really is dead) and a single stone altar to the chaotic god of spiders. The god is angered that the cave has become a lair of those who hate spiders, and will try to help adventurers to slay the spider flyers. Anyone of Neutral or Chaotic alignment touching the altar is treated as blessed when fighting the spider flyers. Persons of Lawful alignment gain the bonus to saving throws of being blessed, but not the attack bonus.

Area 8 – Guard Spiders – This alcove contains two undead spider guards protecting Alyann.

Area 9 – Alyann’s Chamber – This study and bedroom contains all of Alyann’s texts on thaumaturgy as well as her spellbooks. Alyann is one of the two spider flyers, a pair of chaotic and evil elves who have moved into the cave as they practice their magics and study the area. Alyann is an elf of 3 levels higher than the party, with an emphasis on spellcasting over combat.

Area 10 – Devraux’s Guard – This alcove is home to a living statue guard crafted to look identical to Devraux, the other spider flyer. (Select a type of living statue appropriate to the party level).

Area 11 – Devraux’s Chamber – Behind the tapestries is where Devraux practices and studies magic, although he is more of a military tactician. Devraux is an elf of 1 level higher than the party, with an emphasis on melee combat, but quite willing to also use spells. The passage connecting this chamber to area 9 also forks to the north, where fresh water can be found trickling down the wall, and a crude latrine has been built over the hole where the water runs off.

D12 SUBRACES

CELESTIAL HALFLINGS AND MOUNTAIN ELVES!

1. **Brutal** | +1 Str, +1 Con, -1 Int, -1 Cha, -1 Wis | *The brutal races are known for their cannibalism, pillaging, burning and generally antisocial habits. Most brutal races have been wiped out by their genteel cousins as a preemptive strike. They are much more hirsute than their fairer kin, and typically dress in animal skins and wield as big of weapons as they can get their hands on.*
2. **Celestial** | +1 Wis | *The celestial races are identified by their finer stature, fair hair and skin, and the often visible aura of otherworldiness about them. Some even glow. However, they lack infravision even if the original race had it, because they live in a world of light and beauty.*
3. **Deep** | +1 Con, -1 Cha | *The isolationist deep races live deep underground and are toughened by their hostile environment. They gain 30' infravision or double their existing infravision.*
4. **Dark** | +1 Int, +1 Cha | *The dark races are feared and hated by the more sensible races. They are xenophobic, hostile and evil. They gain 30' infravision or double their existing infravision. They suffer from light blindness as goblins do, suffering a -1 penalty on all hit rolls in daylight or in the effects of a continual light spell.*
5. **Desert** | *The desert races wage war against the lizards that claim the deserts as their own. They gain a +1 bonus on all attacks and damage rolls against lizards and dragons, and +2 on saving throws against fire. However they suffer a -2 penalty on saves versus cold and take +1 damage per die from cold attacks.*
6. **Eldritch** | +1 Int, -1 Str, -1 Con | *The eldritch races are tainted and marked by magic. They are even more pale than the celestial races, and many of their natural abilities have atrophied (reduce abilities that can be reduced by half, without eliminating any). However they can cast one level 1 magic-user or cleric spell per day, randomly determined at character creation (re-roll nearly useless spells like read magic and perhaps overly powerful spells such as sleep - DM has final say).*
7. **Fair** | +1 Cha, -1 Str | *The fair races are taller, prettier and more compassionate than their kin. Some can be mistaken for the celestial races, minus the glow. They are also known as the High races.*
8. **Forest** | +1 Dex, -1 Cha | *The forest races are like a quieter, less hostile version of the brutal races. They can be seen as surface-dwelling deep kin. Isolationists who are quite skilled in their natural environment.*
9. **Insectile** | +1 Dex, +1 Con, -1 Wis, -2 Cha | *The insectile races are a mystery - deeply changed from their kin, chitinous and frightening. They gain a +1 bonus to their armour class from their chitinous exoskeleton and natural 1d6 damage claw attacks.*
10. **Mountain** | +1 Str, -1 Dex | *The mountain clans are tough and hardy, if generally squat and prone to long bouts of alcohol abuse, not to mention nearly as hirsute as the brutal races.*
11. **Weird** | -1 Con | *Weird races are twisted mutants with different skin tones, odd-shaped eyes and often distended limbs, extraneous tentacles and other signs of an unnatural existence. Their twisted genetics do grant them a +1 bonus on all saving throws, however.*
12. **Very Strange Indeed** | Roll twice and combine the results!

