

# Folk of the Non-Pines

## Tales and lore about Lorwyn's oldest inhabitants.

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The treefolk are Lorwyn's most ancient race, having put down roots on the plane long before there were kithkin living in rustic clachans or elves setting up palaces and claiming to own the place. Treefolk are also the plane's longest-lived race, unless you believe what some giants say. The rings of a treefolk are its woody shrine of memories, and today we take a look at Lorwyn from the perspective of some of that seriously wise xylem and phloem.

### Species and Role

The character and role of an individual treefolk on Lorwyn is mostly determined by its species. Most treefolk are ash, black poplar, rowan, oak, and elder trees, although there are a few individuals of other species, including yew, birch, and blackthorn.



*Ash.* Good-natured and wise, ash treefolk are the nurturers and protectors among the treefolk. Often huge specimens of planthood, they take care of smaller species to ensure their survival until the Rising (see below). However, ash treefolk aren't just caregivers—they're willing to go to battle when Lorwyn's forest groves are threatened.



*Black Poplar.* Black poplars grow fast and regenerate even faster. They can spring back to life from a variety of injuries, and owe much of their regenerative power to the fertile mud of swampy areas. Black poplars are opportunistic and tricky when fighting, and can prove frustrating adversaries. One of the most famous black poplar treefolk is the wanderer Doran, a hulk of a tree renowned for his unusual fighting skill. Doran uses obscure shamanic magic to turn the natural durability of treefolk into their greatest advantage. Doran seems to feel at home in many different settings; it's thought that his wayfaring ways have led to the collection of diverse magics that he has combined into his own unique magical style.

*Rowan.* The rowans thrive on the study of esoteric magics, sometimes even the curses and hexes of witchcraft. Rowans are mysterious and reticent, but are also experts at summoning magic. Kindly rowans have been known to wander Lorwyn doing quiet favors for downtrodden members of other tribes.



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*Oak.* The thunderous footfalls of the roots of oaks always signal an impressive woodland encounter. Oaks are the hugest treefolk of their tribe, and among the most formidable warriors on Lorwyn. When territorial giants squabble, oaks are usually the ones who go and break things up.



Oak treefolk can have a philosophical outlook; they are so big and durable that the small details of life simply don't bother them much. Sometimes oaks take risks that other treefolk see as foolish, relying on their sturdy bark to carry them through the trouble. Oaks are less territorial than other treefolk; they grow so much bigger than any potential adversaries that they don't have to worry about maintaining their own private spaces.



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*Yew.* There were once many yew treefolk on Lorwyn, but there is thought to be only one left, an ancient yew named Colfenor. The leaves and seeds of yew treefolk are quite poisonous, and Colfenor has a personality to match. He's taciturn, crafty, and replete with access to dark magic. Despite his toxicity and mystery, he's the source of an incredible amount of information about Lorwyn's history, and he's plotting something big for the future.



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*Elder.* Treefolk of the elder species can themselves be elders of treefolk society, but aren't always in a leadership role. In fact, many elder treefolk are youthful and playful creatures, some of whom command powerful healing abilities. (Many kithkin treat coughs with elder-flower tea.) The elder treefolk who *do* serve as leaders are true pillars of their community, causing treefolk society to flourish under their wise guidance.



## The Rising

Treefolk are born from seeds like any other tree of their species, but at a certain stage in their development—the triggering conditions of which are mysterious to all but the most learned ash seedguides—the trees gain sentience and motility. This event is known as the Rising. Some treefolk religious theories hold that a treefolk Rising is the result of being seen through the forest by the sun, but many trees grow and flourish under the sunlight for centuries and never Rise.

Treefolk do have two distinct genders, though the difference is subtle and largely academic to the other races. Until a treefolk undergoes the Rising, it is indistinguishable from any other sapling, and thus gets no more attention than any other sapling. That's why orchard wardens and seedguides nurture all young trees equally.

Once a treefolk Rises it becomes a full, participating member of its grove community. Other treefolk will nurture the newly Risen tree and instruct it in the ways of the world. Most treefolk then choose to pull up their roots, shake off the earth of their birth grove, and leave to wander the plane.

## Often Protective, Occasionally Aggressive

Treefolk don't have individual, unique offspring like elf or kithkin parents do; their seeds generate hundreds or even thousands of saplings during their long lives. In turn, the treefolk emotion of love is more diffuse than that of humanoids, which leads to their more communal approach to rearing the young. The treefolk caretaking attitude spills over onto all the creatures that live in or around the forests, as well; even in places completely inhospitable to treefolk, some trees can be found serving as protectors and teachers for any sentient being they encounter.

### Deciduous Decisions



One of the decisions the creative team made during Lorwyn world-building was that the plane has very few, if any, evergreen trees. To keep the look of Lorwyn's forests consistent, and to distinguish their look from that of other planes, artists were asked to stick to deciduous forests exclusively. A few pines or firs may have slipped through in card art here and there, but you'll be hard-pressed to find them; consequently, Lorwyn treefolk all have the characteristic leaf shapes of deciduous trees.

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However, as individuals, treefolk can display just the opposite attitudes. There are as many belligerent recluses among the tribe as community-minded nurturers. Many an unwary traveler has approached a treefolk for advice, expecting a nugget of wisdom, but instead receiving a clobbering with knobby branches.



## Wood Is Wood, Not Flesh

Treefolk are talented woodworkers, and use tools themselves crafted from wood. While treefolk consider it wrong to kill a living tree, they have no qualms about crafting and using wood made from trees that have died. Furthermore, many species of trees are perfectly capable of regenerating from careful harvesting of branches, and treefolk use such wood extensively. Even their own bodies can be sources of material. Warrior treefolk are particularly likely to have weapons and armor crafted from tough wood. It can be a point of personal honor for an oak warrior to craft his staff or cudgel from part of his or her own body.

## Notable Treefolk

Doran and Colfenor aren't the only famous treefolk of Lorwyn. Whispers can be heard of these other legends of the treefolk



Twisted and Unique



community.

*Flann and Fionnsutha, the Wanderer.* While most ashes tend to stay in one place for long periods, Flann wandered the world for her entire life, almost never returning to her grove. Flann was a wielder of powerful magics, and many sought her for advice. Flann was killed in a forest fire recently, and a young ash named Fionnsutha found her as she lay dying. Flann passed the mantle of Wanderer to Fionnsutha, as well as her bag of magical tools, but little knowledge. Pilgrims still seek the Wanderer in search of answers, but Fionnsutha gives them much more cryptic advice than Flann did, lacking the worldly wisdom of her predecessor.

The creative team made sure that each treefolk had its own unique growth pattern and personality. "A treefolk is more than just a face on a tree" was a common mantra during the art development cycles of the *Lorwyn* set, indicating their commitment to unusual body shapes and facial structures in the set's treefolk.

*Adair River Span.* Eschewing weapons, Adair River Span is a mighty oak monk who wanders the forests seeking out opportunities for proving his prowess in combat. Stories are told of how he once fought two giants at once, reducing both to tears, one with his fists, the other with his insults. It's said that on a bet he once dipped his roots into the Honeystone River and drank it dry. Adair is a good friend of Flann and is currently seeking her. He doesn't know that Fionnsutha has take over the mantle of The Wanderer.

*The Sunrise Brake.* An organization of mostly rowan treefolk, the Sunrise Brake is devoted sniffing out and destroying the unnatural or artificial. They are nearly fanatics in their opposition to metal, and their larger goal is discover the location of the Faerie Queen, Oona.



## Notable Treefolk Places

All forests on Lorwyn are the province of treefolk, but some groves are especially important to them.

*The Stand of Tulimeer.* Alone on a rocky outcropping, the Stand of Tulimeer is an outpost of treefolk and other trees that are attempting to establish a new forest near flamekin lands. Thanks to their cultivation efforts, the soil is starting to turn rich, and species such as birch and elder have begun to grow there. It is hoped that when the saplings undergo their Rising, the Stand of Tulimeer will come into its own as a true forest.

*The Murmuring Bosk.* Deep in the heart of Lorwyn's vastest forest is a truly ancient grove of trees. Even relatively short-lived species have representatives here. While the trees cannot think, treefolk can empathically understand them as though they could speak. The Bosk is a repository of untold thousands of years of forest life, and the treefolk archdruids who tend the Bosk are able to retrieve bits of that wisdom as needed.

*Porringer Valley.* The largest single community of ash treefolk live in Porringer, a broad valley cut at its base by the Wanderwine River. It is pleasant and safe because the sheer number of ashes mean that virtually no large threat can exist unopposed. The boggarts love to sneak into the Valley and play tricks, because the ashes often fail to even notice them.

## Long Memories

Treefolk are Lorwyn's living repository of experience and lore. Treefolk treasure the experiences embedded in their rings as much as boggarts treasure their hoarded trinkets or elves treasure their own beauty. While their secrets are usually freely given, treefolk aphorisms are rarely understood by the footed folk; it takes the lifespan of a treefolk to understand the sweeping perspective of a treefolk. At its heart, a treefolk's life is based around simple needs: sun, soil, companionship, and water, all of which Lorwyn has in abundance.

### Green, Black, and White



Treefolk have never been as colorful as they are in the *Lorwyn* set. Although a lot of the Treefolk tribe's mechanical identity has to do with the creatures' interaction with forests, the tribe spreads across three colors. This was done partly to distinguish Lorwyn treefolk from past treefolk, partly to encourage a wider array of treefolk art, and partly to help cover the need for large creatures in white and black. There's a land card in *Morningtide* that reflects this unusual "multicolor but forest-intensive" nature of the Treefolk tribe.

