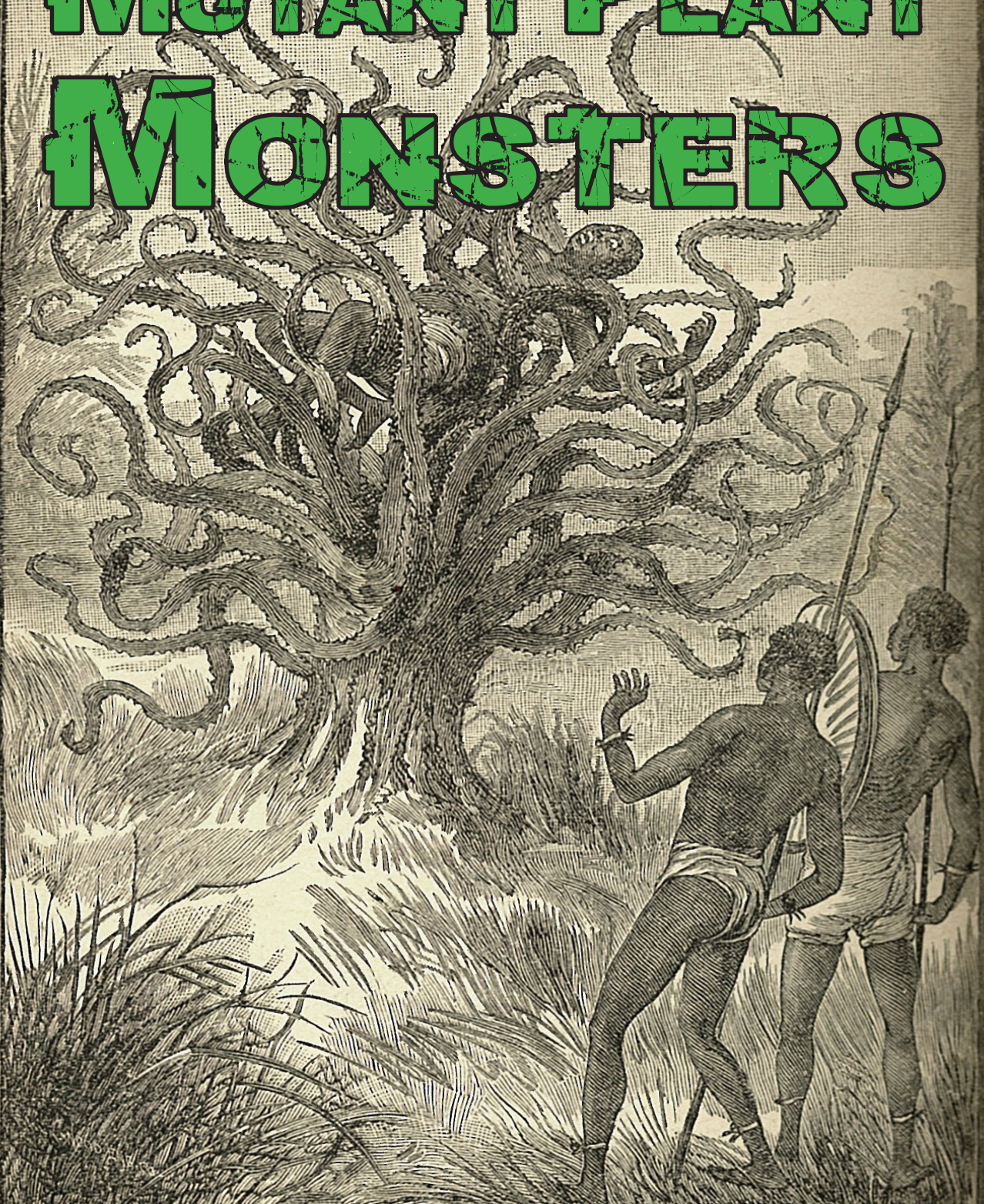


MUTANT PLANT MONSTERS



BY DEREK HOLLAND & THE SKIRMISHER GAME DEVELOPMENT GROUP

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Skirmisher Publishing LLC


499 Mystic Parkway
Spring Branch, TX 78070

<http://skirmisher.com>

<http://d-Infinity.net>

Editor and Designer: Michael O. Varhola

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First Self-Standing Publication: September 2018.



It is possible to use plant creatures much more effectively than usual by using some real plant biology in conjunction with new mutations, and the following article shows how to effectively do this. All the mutations mentioned that are not in the *Mutant Future* core rulebook are provided below, along with many other new ones.

PLANT STRENGTHS

Plant strengths include being able to hide in plain sight, usually being difficult to kill, often being very long-lived, having access to all mutations, sometimes having allies, having seeds or spores that may live for decades, sometimes reproducing quickly and without seeds, sometimes having endosperm mutants, in most cases being living chemical factories, sometimes being ecosystem engineers, and in some cases being able to react to other life forms and develop defensive mutations.

The great majority of plants can hide in plain sight. Travelers, to include adventurers, will have to be constantly on the look out as almost any vegetation they encounter might be hazardous. Doing this negates the plants' ability to surprise easily (so still 1-2 on 1d6) unless the plant has mutations such as *chameleon metamorph*, *control light waves* or *chameleon epidermis*. In such cases they may surprise as much as 1-5 on 1d6.

Those of you who have looked at vegetation in the wild or parks may have noticed some living trees that have branches or parts of their trunks that are dead. Plants can be very hard to kill and two easy ways to replicate this are to treat plants that have been reduced to zero hit points as objects (no attacks or movement) or to allow them to survive to a negative number of hit points equal to their hit dice. In the former case, the plant is permanently an object unless it has a healing mutation. As an object, it can still grow and produce seeds or spores but can not take any other action.

The oldest living macroscopic organisms on Earth are plants. Some are root suckers of trees or shrubs that are more than 10,000-years old. To be able to survive that long with constant insect and disease attacks means those species have to be unusually tough. Ancient plants should gain some additional hit dice or a healing mutation.

Plants can have all the cards in their favor. Whereas a mutant human is limited to physical and mental mutations, plants have access to those and their own mutation list. Using the physical and mental charts can be helpful in making mutant plants

with unexpected abilities.

Plant allies are of at least three different types. There are those that eat and thus protect the plants (which includes farmers), those the plant has allied with chemically or socially, and those that are not so much allies as predators of those who would harm the plants. In the last case, it is more happenstance that the plant is protected, but the results are nonetheless the same.

Seed bank is the term used for viable seeds found in the soil. Some species of weeds have seeds that can last for decades and a recent Russian team germinated a seed that was 30,000 years old and just because a plant is functionally extinct does not mean it is gone forever. Farmers or monsters tilling the ground can allow many monstrous species of plants to germinate. Spores — for GMs who want to use primitive plants such as ferns or those that are not really plants, such as fungus — can hide in plain sight in underground vaults or in skyscrapers, just waiting for access to soil or a host. The player characters may bring back all kinds of horrors on their clothing after ruin raiding.

Vegetative reproduction is a handy method of cloning oneself quickly and possibly in great numbers. Spiderplants, a common household plant, usually have several "spiderlings" or young hanging off of them on stems. Those plants that use vegetative reproduction in *Mutant Future* can also have an advantage of a bit of plant genetic weirdness called somaclonal variation. What that means is that some plants can produce mutants by going through a wood chipper. Seriously. In this process, the plants are shredded and some of the resulting parts have the possibility of growing into new adults with features that the original plant did not have. Of course, the fragments have to be able to grow on their own, but this is actually possible by some species and for others with basic biotechnology. When the author read of this, he was a bit shocked to say the least, and it can really made plants tedious with all the mutation rolls needed after a party hacks up a grove of tree monsters.

Most seeds have two different organisms within

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them. There is the embryo, which will turn into the plant, and the endosperm, the guardian of the embryo. Mutating the endosperm allows a seed to produce two monsters or a monster that protects a normal plant. This idea can also be used for flowering plants and conifers, in that parts of the flower or cone are separate organisms (the “sporophyte” for those who want to read up on this). So a flowering plant can actually be separated into three monsters — the endosperm, the gametophyte, and the sporophyte. Freaky, but potentially very useful in monster design.

All organisms are chemical factories but plants and fungi are unusually good at it and for good reason: they cannot run away. The wide array of defense chemicals in plants are used in industry and medicine. With Ancients’ manipulation and mutation after the cataclysm, the sky is the limit for what a plant might hold. Mutant Lords might even consider adding the *chemical gland* and/or *toxic weapon* mutations to all of their plant creatures.

Ecosystem engineers are those creatures that are especially good at altering the environment around them. Most plants are ecosystem engineers by their very nature. They produce shade and habitat for allied species. Their roots leak nutrients that encourage the growth of mutualistic fungus (in fact, some trees and flowers can not survive at all without it). Many produce poisons in the soil to keep competing species from germinating or surviving. Plants move water into the air in great quantities and encourage rainfall (though usually far away). And with mutations, they can have a much larger impact. Herbs could alter the soil so much that they kill not only other plants, but animals burrowing through it. With the *light to mass* mutation they can make soil and water and thus colonize places where most plants cannot thrive, such as mountain tops, deserts, or floating mats in the middle of the ocean.

Cyclomorphosis is the technical term for when an organism reacts physiologically to a threat in its environment. One textbook example is water fleas that grow spines when detecting the chemical signature of a predatory species. For plants, this could be replicated with the *modify mutation*, *self mutation*. Or it could be that the species affecting the plant has the *induce mutation* mutation. In either case, the plant adds one or more defensive mutations after being touched or bitten or being near enough to the other creature to detect it visually or chemically.

PLANT WEAKNESSES

Plant weaknesses include their dependency on soil, water and sunlight; sometimes being short-lived; their vulnerability to herbicides; the lack of mobility in many species; and a social stigma.

Plants obviously need sunlight unless they are parasites or mutants. Lack of soil keeps all but lichens and a few lava specialists at bay. And an excess of water or a lack of it kills them by either drowning or desiccating them. Some mutants have adapted to other energy sources by using variants of *light to mass* such as *heat to mass*, *sound to mass*, and even *radiation to mass* but, overall, most plants are limited to where they can grow. And that does not include a lack of vital micronutrients in the soil (which can stunt or warp rather than kill), temperature, and direct sun versus shade. For being such tough critters, sometimes plants look like wimps.

Many weed species are very short-lived, even down to a matter of weeks, which limits their ability to dominate an ecosystem full of longer-lived mutant plants and animals. For intelligent plants, this can be really bad, as they can come back year-after-year but have adults that cannot pass on learned knowledge to their offspring. This means the seedlings have to learn anew or be taught by another species.

The Ancients created herbicides that are harmless to animals. Spraying these can kill all plants, monstrous and normal alike, and leave humans and other creatures safe and sound. But that is only the beginning. To keep plants 2.0 and higher (see below) from turning into weeds and invading cities, the Ancients built herbicides into the infrastructure (and fungicides for those who consider fungus plants). The reason some ruins are still so undamaged for settings centuries after the cataclysm is that plants can not touch them and live. For plant PCs, this poses a deadly threat, as each hour or day is considered exposure to a class 2 poison. It may not seem like much, but over time that damage will kill anything, even the most powerful plants. Clothing and rootware, of course, will prevent this damage.

Most plants, even mutants, are stuck in the soil. Because of this, GMs should consider adding the *natural armor (plant)* and possibly *toxic weapon* mutations to such plants so that they can better resist the onslaught of herbivores and woodsmen.

Social stigma may seem a bit odd, but consider that intelligent plants are part of *Mutant Future’s* society of sapient species. Racism is not going to just go away and plants can have more trouble than most because of their lack of mobility, ability to com-

municate, and limited environment. If a plant needs full sun for the whole day, it will not be found indoors even in the worst weather. Many people, however, like being indoors, as monster attacks tend to happen less often there.

OTHER

There are also things that can be both a strength and a weakness or neither.

Polyploids are plants with more than the normal number of chromosomes, usually two, four, or more times those of the base plant. So, if the original species has 10 chromosomes, the polyploid might have 20, 40, 60, or more. This provides a lot more genetic material for evolution and mutation. In mechanical terms, the plant will have more hit dice and 2d4 more rolls on the plant mutation chart. Drawbacks are just as possible with these new chromosomes as the old and there is thus the possibility of this being a weakness. Polyploids also allow for asymmetrical plants — those with more than one kind of leaf, stem, flower, fruit, wood, or root. In fact, this might be expected in the wastelands where mutation is rampant.

Hybridization is much more common in nature than most ecology textbooks admit. Some hybrids are sterile, some are fertile, and the rest are sterile but get around that by vegetative reproduction. New mutations and drawbacks can be introduced into a plant species via hybrids and this is probably the worst nightmare of a farmer. When an entire crop goes bad because of pollen from a nearby forest, for example, what can the farmer do other than leave or starve to death?

Some real plants require fire to reproduce and their cones will only open or their seeds will only germinate after they have been burned. In *Mutant Future*, that can easily be expanded to include radiation or some other energy source. Weird, alien-like growths could be the result of physics labs opening portals to other planes of existence, letting in energies that do not belong on Earth.

PLANTS 2.0-5.0

Some plants were engineered by the Ancients to have a more effective form of photosynthesis and produce useful new materials. There are several ways this was accomplished and the results were called Plants 2.0, Plants 3.0 and so on.

Plants 2.0 are those that convert sunlight more effectively and grow much faster than the original species. They have the *gigantism* mutation and a variant of the *increased caloric needs* drawback —



mobile species need to root much more often than other plants and immobile need to add fertilizer every few rounds of activity.

Plants 3.0 were those with the *animal limbs or organs* mutation and were the result of much genetic splicing. Intelligent plants are the result of an attempt at making landscape computers (which also included nanite infested stone and soil) and have since become sapient and free-willed (for the most part).

Plants 4.0 are those with *altered chemistry* or *xenochemistry* and are actually a very broad group of life forms that were created by many corporations and nations. Some were created to make explosives or other chemicals from air and soil, some to turn seawater or desert sand into useful products (glass plants), and others to make new materials (initially plastics and then the stuff that replaced plastics). A few even grow artifacts within their wood, a result of engineering and nanite infestation. As long as the tree lives, and can heal, it produces the artifacts year after year. Two other versions of plants 4.0 are those with the *epidermal photosynthesis* and *electric charge generation* mutations. They both gain *chemi-*

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cal gland or *chemical gland*, *adaptive* through photochemistry (using light to drive reactions) or electrochemistry (using electricity to drive reactions). In the latter case, the mutant's damage usually decreases after using it to create the chemical in question.

Plants 5.0 are special, derived from plants 3.0. They produce fuel and energy fields that can be used to extend the lifespan of a power source or, in the case of large patches of individual plants, replace them entirely. Some robot societies farm or garden plants 5.0 to act as backups in case their power plants or other energy sources fail. Unlike most of the previous types of plants, plants 5.0 do not breed true and thus need protection from foreign pollen if the seeds are to produce more fuel plants.

EXAMPLE PLANT CREATURES

BUBBLEWORT

No. Enc.: 0 (2d8)
Alignment: Neutral
Movement: 0'
Armor Class: 8
Hit Dice: 7
Attacks: 5 (steam jets)
Damage: 1d4 each
Save: L4
Morale: 10
Hoard Class: VII

Bubbleworts are plants 3.0. They are 12-18 foot-tall shrubs covered in blubber, fish scales, and tiny red-dish leaves. Even though they cannot move, bubbleworts are among the most aggressive predatory plants. They are chemical warriors that use odors to lure prey and bubbles filled with poisonous gas and steam jets to make the kill. The jets come from dozens of randomly-spaced holes in the creature's epidermis. They have a range of 15' and those saving versus energy attacks take no damage. The bubbles are produced only when something warmblooded comes within 50' of the plant. The bubbles form a cloud of class 4 poison to 30' from the bubblewort. When all motion stops, then the plant stops producing the poison and starts absorbing the bubbles that have fallen to the ground through its roots.

Mutations: *animal limb or organ, fragrance development, full senses, toxic weapon, special.*

OIL NUT

No. Enc.: 3d6 (d4)
Alignment: Neutral
Movement: 90' (30')
Armor Class: 3
Hit Dice: 1
Attacks: 2 (vines)
Damage: 1d2/1d2
Save: L1
Morale: 12
Hoard Class: None

One plant immune to the poison of the bubblewort is the oil nut. This tiny creature germinates from a walnut and then spends the rest of its life within the shell. It has two 3' long lashing vines it can use to drive off predators and grab onto larger creatures and ride them. The oil nut can collect and refine the poison of the bubblewort and turn it into a greasy goo that is easily absorbed through the skin. Animals and humans that touch this goo (including those attacked by the nut) are exposed to a class 7 poison. Because this can kill almost anything after a few hits, the most successful oil nuts are those that stick around bubbleworts for their entire lives.

Oil nuts reproduce by infecting larger plants and making them grow galls (save versus poison negates the effect). Each plant can produce 3d6 galls over one season, each of which will erupt and release a oil nut in the late summer. The host plant takes no damage but does have its dexterity reduced by one for every six galls. After the galls burst, which does no damage to it, the plant regains its lost dexterity over one day per gall.

Mutations: *free movement, full senses, natural vegetal weapon, quickness, riding vines, toxic weapon.*

HYDRA SYCAMORE

No. Enc.: 0 (1)
Alignment: Chaotic
Movement: 0'
Armor Class: 5
Hit Dice: 24-40 (8 per trunk)
Attacks: 3-5 (slams)
Damage: 3d4+4 each
Save: L21
Morale: 11
Hoard Class: XII

Hydra sycamores are large trees, reaching 120' tall, that have three to five trunks. Each of these has a different appearance and 1d3 plant mutations that may or may not be duplicated by the other trunks.

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These trees are found in temperate forests and dominate the plant life around them. They are intelligent and each trunk has its own mind and personality and, while these will argue with each other, they work well together when under attack. They will crush, bite, blast, or poison any creature that stands up to their bullying, depending on their trunks' natural weaponry. Even those without damaging mutations can whip around and crush enemies. As each trunk is 50' to 80' long, depending on where the base splits, they have much longer reach than most creatures.

Mutations: *bud sport (xenomorphism), bizarre appearance, natural armor (plant), natural vegetal weapon, special.*

DUST PALM

No. Enc.: 1d6 (0)
Alignment: Neutral
Movement: 150' (50')
Armor Class: 6
Hit Dice: 6
Attacks: 1 or 1 (slash or dust)
Damage: 1d8 or special
Save: L3
Morale: 5
Hoard Class: None

Found in tropical forests, these plants were vine palms, trees that were so thin they could only grow up by climbing on others. The species was used as pharm plants by the Ancients and has since mutated several times. Now they scuttle on a variety of legs — human, crustacean, reptile, and rodent are all possible and mixtures are the norm. The dust they drop is a strong narcotic (save at -6 or be addicted and take 2d6 points of damage) and many creatures are found in their wake. Anything threatening the palms is likely to be slain by this retinue of monsters.

Mutations: *animal limbs or organs, bizarre appearance, natural armor (plant), natural vegetal weapon, toxic weapon (narcotic).*

TIGER SPEAR

No. Enc.: 0 (5d100)
Alignment: Neutral
Movement: 0'
Armor Class: 6
Hit Dice: 5 (-15 hit points)
Attacks: 3 or contact (thorns or thorns)
Damage: 1d4/1d4/1d4 or 1d6
Save: L1



Morale: 12
Hoard Class: VI (per grove)

Mutations: *animate seed, bizarre appearance, bud sport (xenomorphism), hollow, projectile thorns, unique sense.*

BLACK BAND

No. Enc.: 0 (1)
Alignment: Neutral
Movement: 0'
Armor Class: 9
Hit Dice: 1/4
Attacks: Special
Damage: Special
Save: L0
Morale: 12
Hoard Class: None

Mutations: *epidermal photosynthesis (chemical gland), sonic disruption, valuable.*

Tiger spears are mutant bamboo plants covered with leafy twigs and 2" long thorns. Anything with an armor class worse than 3 coming into contact with

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the plants takes d6 points of damage per round (rather than per plant). Warm blooded and hot machines that come within 25' are attacked with projectile thorns. Despite all this, tiger spears are grown in huge fields and cultivated for their tiny symbionts.

Tiger spears have two types of leaves, large, thin outer leaves and small, thick inner ones. The inner leaves are the only place known where the black band lichen grows. It is incredibly valuable for two very different reasons. When exposed to bright light, its algal component produces a drug that cures most diseases. Each spear produces one dose per eight hours of light. In darkness, the algae stops growing but the fungus starts producing a sonic pulse that liquifies iron at a rate of 10 pounds per hour. When the liquid is removed from the bamboo grove, it reverts to a solid. This allows people to reclaim iron in rust and alloys such as steel. This liquification has no effect on red blood cells and has a range of up to 25'.

NEW MUTATIONS

Note that *bud sport* is meant to be a plant version of *aberrant form*. Some of these mutations were previously published in Skirmisher Publishing LLC's *Creatures of the Wastelands* and various issues of its *Wisdom from the Wastelands*.

Acclimate

The plant is totally immune to environmental hazards after spending three days in a certain environment.

Adhesive Sap

The mutant can spray "blood" that acts as superglue. The range is 10' and only affects one target. Anything attacked must save versus energy attacks or be covered in this sap. To forcibly remove an object like a weapon, the victim must make a save versus poison and, if successful, takes 2d4 points of damage. Helmets and armor are special cases that inflict more damage and possible scarring.

Aging Touch

The plant can activate a field once per day for five minutes. Anyone that comes in contact with the plant ages five years for every round and must save versus poison or be stunned for 2d4 rounds.

Alter Soil Consistency

The plant produces chemicals that can alter the density and strength of soil, from mud to sandstone. It can produce enough of the chemicals to affect 50 pounds of material per day.

Altered Chemistry

There is a 25% chance that a mutant with more than six mutations will have this. It represents a significant change to the mutant's metabolism and some chemical now has a very different effect on the mutant. This can include normally inert elements like atmospheric nitrogen or xenon or common substances like water. In any case, the substance may act as a medication, narcotic, hallucinogen, or food or have some other effect. The ML and player should work together to develop the exact chemical and effect.

Alternate Vision (D)

The plant cannot see visible light and has either the *thermal vision* or *ultraviolet vision* mutations (75%/25%) instead.

Animal Form

The plant can take the form of one specific animal-based creature. It must be around the same mass as the plant. The plant does not gain any of the creature's mutations.

Antimicrobial Slime

The plant is immune to disease because of the sap that covers its body.

Arthropod Deformity

The plant's body is segmented like an insect or centipede. This doubles the movement rate of the plant. A variant for monstrous plants allows different kinds of branches, vines, and roots (i.e., add 1d4 mutations that affect such parts).

Bioluminescent Leaves

The plant can produce light from its leaves. The plant can not turn off the effect once started and it lasts 8 hours. Unfortunately if used too much, it can cause the plant to starve to death- more than 2 days of use inflicts 3d6 points of damage per day until the plant spends 3 days without light production.

Bud Sport (Flattened Roots)

The mutant plant can swim twice as fast as its ground rate due to modified roots.

Bud Sport (Spongy Bark)

Plants with spongy bark can "breathe" underwater. A variant allows for water storage instead and a plant with that form of spongy bark can go twice as long without drinking.

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Bud Sport (Toxin Storing Burr)

The plant has an obvious burr that collects poisons that the plant ingests in one way or another. Poison damage inflicted on the plant is reduced by one half and if the burr is broken open (which takes 10 hit points of damage), the plant can spray a class 12 poison to a range of 5' on to one target. The burr will heal in one day and until then the plant suffers normal poison damage.

Bud Sport (Xenocolor)

The plant has flowers, bark, or leaves of a color not seen in nature. People, including other plants, that view this become confused (25%), stand in awe until they starve to death (25%), go into a coma (25%), or become addicted to viewing the color (25%). In all cases a save versus death negates.

Carbon Dioxide Bladder

The plant stores carbon dioxide to defend itself from fire. It takes half damage from fire-based attacks (not heat) and cannot catch fire.

Chemical Gland

The mutant plant has an organ that allows it to replicate one substance. It could be industrial, like glue, or medicinal, like stim-shot A, and the Mutant Lord and player must work together to decide what substance is created. Three doses can be manufactured each day.

Chemical Gland, Adaptive

The substance produced by this chemical gland can be changed once per week. It requires that the mutant be exposed to the substance in question. Otherwise treat is as a normal chemical gland.

Cnidarian Deformity

The plant is shaped like a jellyfish. Its movement rate is doubled and innate armor class, if any, is halved.

Dazzling Display

The mutant plant has cells within its bark and leaves that can make complex color changes. This can be used for communication but mostly is a visual version of *fragrance development (plants)*.

Death Hibernation

The mutant can die of hunger, thirst, or exposure and then later be revived. This does not function if death is due to physical or mental damage and the mutant can not revive if his body is damaged while



he is dead (minor wounds excepted). The mutant must have the *aberrant form (xenochemistry)* or *xenochemistry* mutation for death hibernation to function properly.

Dormancy (D)

The plant is “asleep” for two months out of the year. Most plants do this in the winter or dry season but a few “hibernate” in summer.

Fan Leaves

The plant can use its leaves to act as a fan and create wind. The area affected is 50' by the width of the plant. Everything in it must save versus energy attack or be blown prone. The plant can only produce wind one round per hour.

Flying Leaves

The plant has 2d6 leaves that can detach and fly up to a mile away. The plant hears and sees everything that the leaves do. If the leaves are slain, it takes one week to regrow each (e.g., if the plant has lost six leaves then it takes six weeks to regrow all of them).

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Glass Leaves (D)

The plant's leaves are covered with a clear substance that concentrates light. This provides a small boost for feeding in the dark and the mutant takes double damage from lasers and other light-based weapons.

Grounded

If the mutant plant is in contact with the ground, it is not only immune to electrical attacks, it can redirect some of the energy. This attack has a 10' range and does 1/2 the original attack's damage.

Gummy Mucus

The plant is covered with a gooey form of sap. It takes no damage from swarms made up of creatures less than 4" long and half damage from all other swarms.

Gummy Sap

The plant's sap is unusually thick. If it is struck with a piercing weapon, the plant can decide not to allow the wielder to withdraw it. The result is decided by a Strength versus Strength roll.

High Energy Nectar

The plant produces nectar that can be used as food by humans and other animals. Each day it produces enough to feed two adult humans.

Hollow (D)

The mutant is hollow and suffers because of this. Reduce the plant's hit points by 15.

Hybrid Vigor

The plant is the result of a mating between different strains or even species. It has a +2 bonus to all saving throws and -1 to armor class.

Induce Mutation

The mutant can cause a mutation or drawback in others. The range is touch, duration is one day, and the mutation is rolled or selected at the time of character creation.

Inedible Fruit (D)

The plant's fruit is nontoxic but completely inedible (e.g., it may be wooden or taste horrible). The plant must break open the fruit to release its seeds or else they will rot along with the fruit.

Iron Core (D)

The plant has a heavy iron center. This reduces the plant's speed by 30' (10') and compasses point to it

rather than magnetic north when they are within 10'.

Glow in the Dark (D)

The plant glows brightly enough that it can be detected 20' away. It is not bright enough to allow the mutant to read in the dark.

Lead Roots (D)

The plant has difficulty walking due to its lower limbs. Reduce movement by half for walking and swimming. Flight, if the plant has it, is unaffected.

Light to Mass

The mutant can convert light energy to matter of some sort. For every 16 hours of bright light, the mutant can create 1 pound of:

- 1) Wood
- 2) Bone or dead flesh
- 3) Metal (75% soft/25% hard)
- 4) Stone
- 5) Plastic
- 6) Ceramic
- 7) ML's pick
- 8) Player's pick

Limp (D)

The plant can not produce lignin and has trouble keeping erect. Every time it loses its concentration, it falls over. Every time the plant takes more than 10 hit points of damage in a round it must save versus stun attack or fall prone and thereafter it takes a round for the plant to pick itself back up.

Low-Light Tolerance

The mutant plant can survive in deeper water than most and, as long as there is some light, the plant will not starve.

Metallic Bark

The plant draws heavy metals from the soil and incorporates them into its bark. This reduces energy damage, including radiation, by half.

Metallic Parts

The plant takes metal from the soil and incorporates it into its leaves (25%), bark (50%), or core (25%). Leaves do damage as per *natural vegetal weapons* +3, bark is *natural armor (plant)* with a -2 bonus, and core is either +4 constitution (herbs and grasses) or +4 strength (trees and cacti).

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Mirror Leaves

The bottom edge of the plant's leaves have a mirror finish. This has two benefits. One, it grows 25% faster. Two, it can focus light to burn something within 30'. The damage is 2d6 points per round.

Misshapen Roots (D)

The plant has to spend twice as long feeding on the soil and its movement rate is reduced by 1/3. It can run at full speed but takes 1d4 points of damage per round while doing so.

Modify Mutation, Others

The mutant can make some changes to one of the mutations of another. This can alter a saving throw related to the mutation by plus or minus 2, make some cosmetic changes, or slightly mitigate a drawback. The target can make a save versus poison and the results last for an hour. This mutation can be used up to three times per day.

Modify Mutation, Self

The mutant can manipulate one of its other mutations, which has to be selected or rolled when this mutation is obtained. It can affect the save, if any, by plus or minus 2, increase or decrease damage by 3 points per die, increase or decrease a poison's level by 2 in either direction (or allow the mutant to have two different kinds of poisons), or slightly mitigate a drawback for eight hours per day.

Overgrowth (D)

The plant has an ancestor that was engineered to grow very fast. Unfortunately, the extra growth is a burden for mobile plants. For a human-sized plant, it adds an additional pound per day and, if this growth is not trimmed, it starts affecting the plant's movement rate and encumbrance in a few days. Also, the plant must either root 150% as long as normal or consume twice the normal amount of food.

Parasite (D)

The plant must feed on another organism to survive. This may be another plant or an animal.

Photovore

The mutant consumes light to increase its speed by 60' (20'). It needs bright sunlight to do this and anything weaker will provide no benefit.

Poisonous Spores (new variant)

The plant produces a toxin that takes d4 days before causing damage and spreads by contact. An indi-



vidual so poisoned can affect up to four others and they can each affect up to two others (but there is no tertiary poisoning). This is a method meant to kill off swarms and hive-dwelling creatures.

Poorly-Adapted Limbs (D)

The plant has trouble controlling its branches, vines, and/or roots. Every time it is under duress, it must save versus poison or be unable to act for 1d4 rounds. This save is made every minute in these conditions.

Rad Bladder

The mutant plant has 1d4+1 bladders that can hold items up to 1 pound and 1/4 gallon in size. They can hold radioactive material and shield the plant from its effects (but, of course, the plant has to collect the material somehow in the first place). The bladders are detachable and each bladder takes one week to regrow.

Rank (D)

The mutant has a bad odor. This has social implications even among plants and anything wanting to track the plant has an additional 12 hours before the trail turns cold.

Reactive Growth

Some plants react to damage, such as a lightning

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strike or being crushed, by growing more vigorously. With this mutation, a plant gains a single permanent hit point every time it completely heals after taking more than 90% of its hit points in damage. This growth is extremely painful and takes one week. During that time the plant has a +4 to AC, -4 to hit rolls, and -25% to technology rolls. If the plant gains more than 2 hit points from growth in a month it goes insane (see the behavior altering mutations in this thread).

Reduced Part (D)

The plant has a part that is unusually small. If a natural weapon, it does half damage. If a manipulating limb, reduce technology rolls by 20%, and if a movement limb reduce speed by 30' (10').

Retains Leaves (D)

Found only in deciduous plants in temperate regions, this drawback is devastating. Every winter, the plant keeps its leaves. This doubles damage from cold, increases the plant's need for liquid water to 150% normal, and makes it difficult for the plant to hide.

Riding Vines

The plant can climb onto another creature and has no chance of falling off. If the mount wants the plant off, it must make a Strength versus Strength roll and, if the plant is ripped off, both take 1d6 points of damage. The plant may not damage the host with this mutation alone.

Rotting Flesh (D)

Only plants with the *animal limbs or organs* mutation can gain this drawback. The part is weakened (ML decision on how this works) and draws insects, including monstrous ones.

Seed Cannon

The mutant can shoot its seeds long distances via water pressure. Using this mutation doubles the plant's water requirement and has the range and damage of a sling. The plant has 50 usable seeds per day, most of which are sterile.

Seeking Projectile

The mutant fires something, be it thorns, hard light, or razor-sharp leaves, that are attracted to something. Roll 1d8 to determine how often the attack can be used and the damage it inflicts: 1-3: 1d4 points of damage and once per round; 4-6: 1d8 points of damage and once per every other round; 7-8: 1d12 points of damage and once every three rounds. Roll 1d10

to determine what the projectiles seek: 1-5: fire/heat; 6-8: cold; 9: radiation, 10: to be determined by the ML with player input.

Shell

The plant has an advanced version of *natural armor (plant)*. If it takes 1 round to withdraw into its shell, the plant gains an armor class of -2. Within its shell, the plant can not take any actions other than moving 10' (3').

Smoke Eater

Smoke has certain chemicals that boost plant growth. The mutant has a refined ability to get the most out of these chemicals and can heal 1d4 points of damage per round if it is enveloped by smoke.

Sonic Disruption

The plant can, once per hour, emit a pulse of sound that liquifies a certain material. The range is 10' and affects 50 pounds. Roll 1d6 to determine the material affected.

- 1) Dead wood
- 2) Plastic
- 3) Mineral (specific), including concrete and natural stone
- 4) Metal (specific)
- 5) ML's pick
- 6) Player's pick

Sonic Lure

The plant can produce a sound that will draw a specific species or one related to it. Most draw carnivores that will eat the herbivores threatening the plant. The range of this noise is 1/2 mile and it is very loud. The plant may draw unwanted attention by using this mutation.

Splinter

The plant's wood is unusually brittle. For every 5 points of damage it takes in melee, the attacker takes 1 point of damage from the flying splinters.

Spongy Wood

This can only be applied to trees and shrubs and other plants must re-roll. The mutant's wooden core is full of holes and very flexible and, as a result, it takes half damage from falls and blunt melee weapons.

Steam Cloud

The plant can produce a superheated cloud of steam that is 20' in diameter and centered on the plant. It

Plant Monsters

does 1d8 points of heat damage per round. Plants that do not have an immunity to heat may be slain by their own steam clouds.

Stench Cloud

The plant can produce a cloud that induces vomiting. The size of the cloud is 10' in diameter and is always centered on the plant (i.e., it moves with the plant). Everything in it must save versus poison or be effectively paralyzed for 1d6 rounds.

Stone Hurler

The plant is a living catapult and can throw 20-pound rocks up to 40'. An attack roll is needed and the damage is 4d6.

Strangle Twigs

The mutant can produce a tiny swarm of leaves and twigs for a ranged attack. This requires an attack roll, has a range of 200', and does 1d12 points of damage.

Subsonic Communication

Plants with this mutation use the ground to talk with each other. The range is 50 miles for normal speech and 100 miles for warnings.

Toxic Cloud (D)

The mutant constantly emits a cloud of poisonous gas. The cloud is 10' in diameter and the class is determined by rolling 1d12.

Toxic Weapon, Activated

This version requires a poisoning victim to be exposed to some environmental stimulus before the mutant's poison causes damage. It could be light, darkness, heat, cold, radiation, electricity, impact damage, or anything else the ML might devise.

Toxic Weapon, Narcotic

The mutant produces an addictive substance. Anyone bitten must make a save versus poison or follow the mutant around requesting to be bitten at least once per day.

Toxic Weapon, Specific Target

The mutant's poison only affects a limited group of creatures but does double damage. The group is up to the ML and can be as broad as arthropods, mammals, or weeds or as narrow as ants, primates or conifers.

Uneven Growth (D)

This is a combination of *reduced part* and *bud sport*



(*enlarged part*). Even though the plant does benefit from the enlarged part, the lopsided nature of its body doubles the penalty from the reduced part.

Valuable (D)

The plant is desired by others for its flowers, coloration, or other attributes and bounty hunters will follow it in attempts to capture it alive for sale.

Vegetative Reproduction

The mutant produces clones without making seeds. This can be done with stolons (runners), root suckers, some new budding-like method, or something else altogether.

Water Feeding

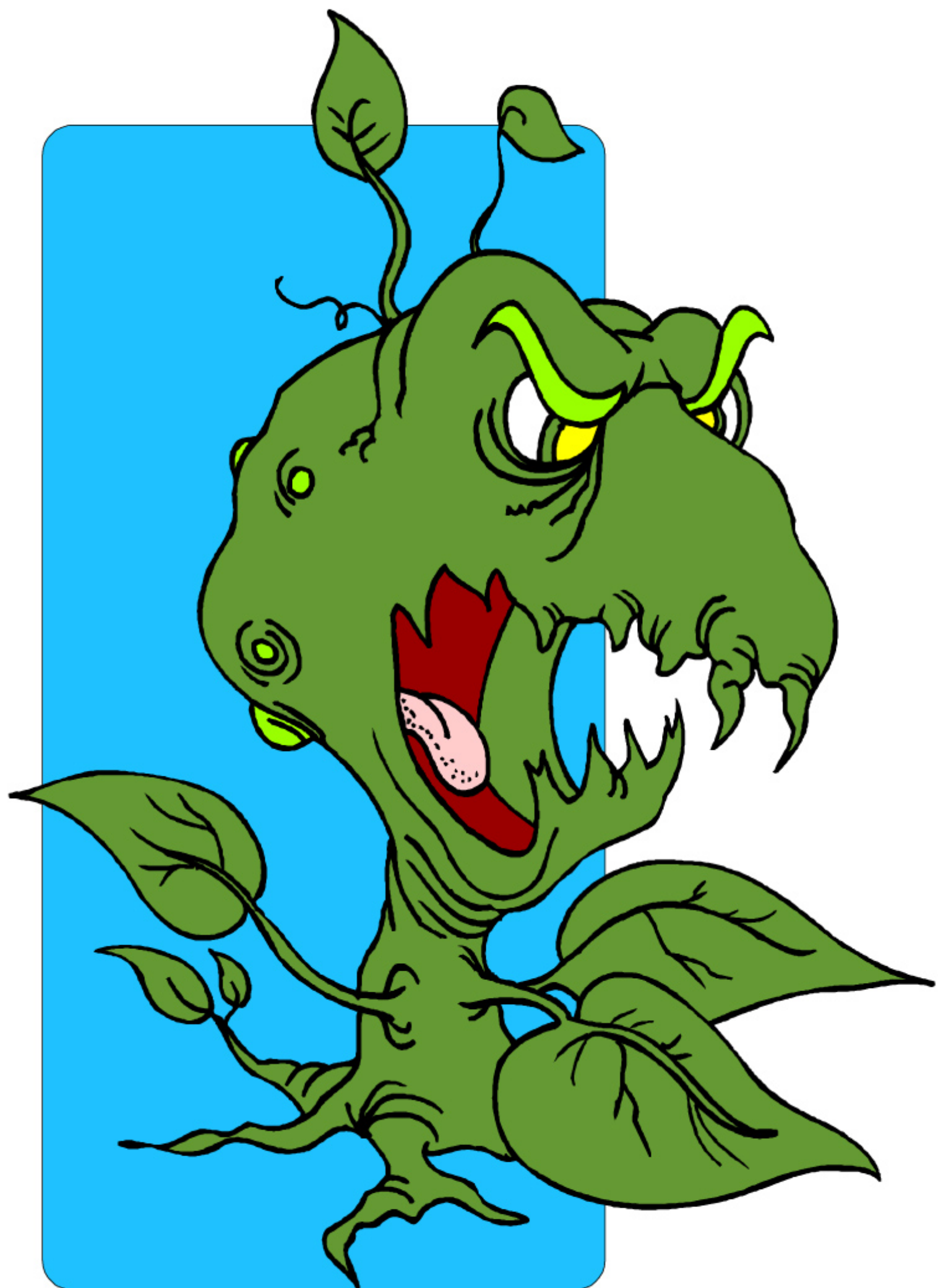
The plant has the ability to drink both fresh and salt water.

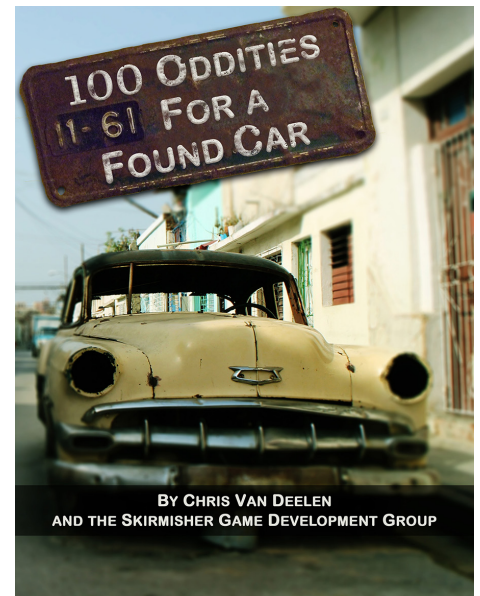
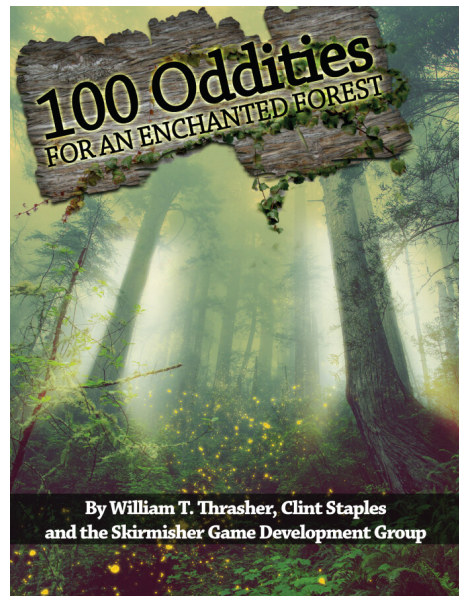
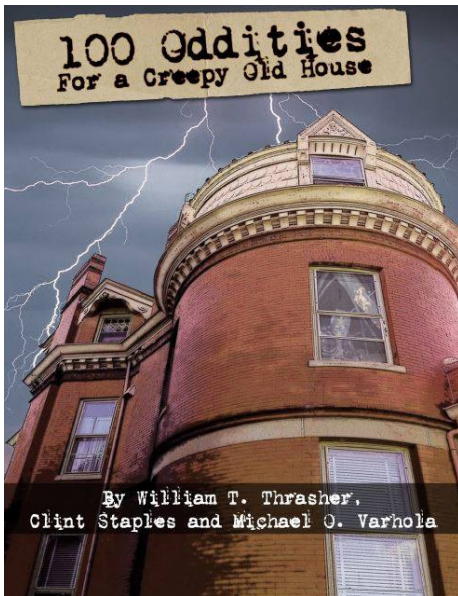
Water Resistant

The plant can survive a long time underwater. Unlike its base stock, it does not get root rot or root suffocation due to overwatering. In effect, it now has gills.

Xenochemistry (D)

The plant's chemical makeup is alien to the biosphere. Herbivores and omnivores treat the plant as either inedible or poisonous. The former means anyone eating the mutant takes 6d8 points of damage over 16 hours and the latter is equivalent to the *toxic weapon* mutation. The plant is also toxic to its pollinators unless they have the *aberrant form (xenochemistry)* mutation and the same chemistry. Because of this, plants gaining this mutation usually die out after one generation.





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