

The Complete Guide to

WERERATS

Pindar and Redtooth Broods

By Keith Baker

The Complete Guide to Wererats describes a number of wererat broods – hidden nations of shapeshifters bound together by blood and tradition. Two broods that are mentioned in passing are the Pindar and the Redteeth. This article looks into each one in more detail.

THE PINDAR BROOD

Masters of Monetary Manipulation

The gnome Percival Pindar was a talented alchemist, but his greatest gift was a flair for managing gold. Pindar was the treasurer of the Council of Flesh; he managed the finances of the magi, and also obtained any goods or services that the Council required, from food to guards to mystical supplies.

The wererats of the Pindar brood are the descendants of Percival's family and his assistants. Largely gnomes and halflings, the Pindar have continued to develop the skills of their ancestor. They believe in the goals of the Council, and Pindar Weavers continue to experiment with wererat potential. But they also believe in the power of gold. The Pindar have a mercantile empire that stretches across the known world, and they are constantly working to increase their influence through subversion and infection. When the Pindar discover a guild or tradesman that would be a valuable addition, they will begin by approaching the target openly and attempting to arrange an above-board merger. If this fails, they will turn to blackmail; wererat and half-rat spies excel at sniffing out dirty laundry. As

a final recourse, the Pindar will seek to infect critical personnel with lycanthropy, bringing them fully into the brood. If the targets are gnomes or halflings, the Pindar will start with infection as opposed to offers of gold. It is important to the Pindar to maintain their racial heritage, and they dislike infecting members of other races unless there is no other alternative.

The Pindar empire is a shadow corporation – it is a conglomeration of dozens of smaller guilds and companies, most of which have no idea that they are part of a larger entity (except, of course, for the wererats running the operation). So it is no simple matter to identify a Pindar operation; any successful trade guild could be a secret arm of the Pindar.

While the wererat broods are engaged in a constantly shifting series of feuds and vendettas, the Pindar often stay above these conflicts. Many of the broods exchange favors for Pindar mercantile services; in particular, the Pindar have a close relation with the Oath of Flesh, who help the Pindar kidnap victims they wish to infect in exchange for supplies and economic assistance. The Pindar also maintain economic ties to other subterranean races, like the dark elves and deep gnomes. The one implacable enemy of the Pindar is the Graykin brood. The Graykin also seek to influence the human world; they focus on political power as opposed to economic influence, but they view the Pindar as their most dangerous opponents. As a result, the Pindar and the Graykin are constantly engaged in secret struggles, each one attempting to disrupt the operations of the other without revealing their power to the world at large.



Pindar warrens will have slightly fewer warriors than those of other clans, with a higher number of mole rats scattered throughout the urban area. The Pindar respect Weavers and shifters, and a Pindar Exemplar will have some shifter levels; but he will also be a skilled diplomat with a strong understanding of economics.

Here are a few suggestions for encounters involving the Pindar:

- Like the Graykin, the Pindar make excellent patrons for groups of adventurers. The Pindar have access to vast wealth and recognize the value of human tools; as a result, a Pindar merchant lord could certainly hire a group of adventurers to deal with a rival or disrupt the activities of another wererat brood.
- If the adventurers have any friends or allies involved in trade or mercantile business, these friends could be placed under pressure to join the Pindar “family.”
- The wealth of the Pindar is spread between a number of heavily secured vault warrens. A Graykin agent could provide the party with the location of a Pindar vault. If the adventurers managed to loot the vault it will be a significant blow to the Pindar – but they will certainly seek revenge.
- The party discovers that someone is smuggling dark elf goods into a city. Can they track down the Pindar source?
- A friend of the party is tricked into selling an heirloom artifact. After the sale, she realizes the true value of the artifact – but by then, it is on its way to a Pindar undercity. Can the heroes track it down before it’s too late?

THE REDTOOTH BROOD

Orcs and Goblins and Wererats, oh my!

The origin of the Redtooth brood is a matter of some mystery. It is said that the Weavers of the Asyra brood captured an entire tribe of orcs to use as fodder in what they expected to be a particularly lethal series of experiments. According to this tale, the orcs overpowered and slaughtered their captors, fleeing to the mountains and taking the taint of lycanthropy with them. The Asyra vehemently deny these tales – but many of the mutations manifested by Redtooth shifters are traditional Asyra abilities.

The Redteeth have only been in existence for about fifteen years, but the brood is spreading rapidly. Under the influence of lycanthropy the orcs became considerably more organized; the lawful instincts of the wererat caused them to form a more structured society. At the same time, they maintained their original aggressive nature – and the Redtooth orcs were using their lycanthropic gifts to conquer and assimilate the surrounding goblin tribes. Left unchecked, the power of the brood could rapidly spread out of control. Unlike most of the natural wererats, the Redteeth wererats have no compunctions about spreading

the disease. And with the wererat instincts overriding the chaotic nature that keeps orcs and their kin from organizing in large bands, the Redteeth could soon be able to field armies of hundreds of wererat hybrids – creatures all but immune to damage from normal weapons. The natural broods despise the Redteeth, but most wererats dislike direct combat and few are willing to challenge the vicious orcs. The Oath of Flesh will eliminate Redtooth outposts when an opportunity presents itself, but they are better prepared to conduct commando strikes than full-scale military campaigns.

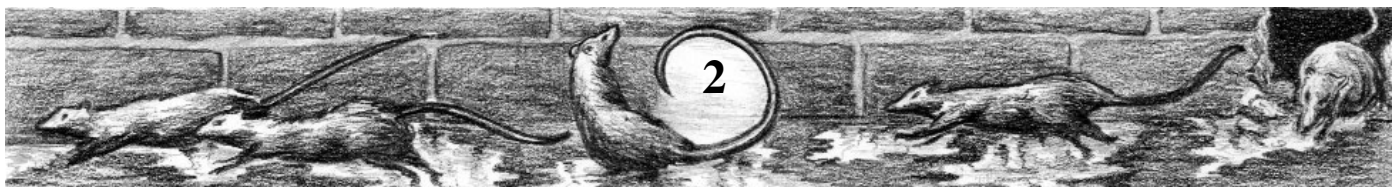
The Redtooth brood shares few traditions with the natural broods. There are no Weavers among the Redteeth; instead, there are a few scattered adepts. Redtooth adepts occasionally explore the powers of lycanthropy, but these are random experiments, typically involving attempts to infect other humanoids (such as trolls and ogres). Redtooth priests continue to worship the traditional goblinoid gods as opposed to the Rat.

Redtooth warrens have twice the number of warriors as a normal warren, but the Redteeth do not bother with mole rats. Shifters are rare among the brood; they appear only when latent gifts spontaneously emerge. Redtooth leaders are typically the strongest warriors.

Physically, Redtooth wererats in hybrid form tend to be more muscular than those of human descent. They tend to be scruffy and slightly sickly-looking; many have patches where fur has fallen out, revealing warty gray-green skin.

Here are ideas for stories involving the Redtooth brood:

- The Redteeth can make a good long-term threat in a campaign. First adventurers may hear about conflict among the local goblin and orc tribes. Next they may encounter a few unusually aggressive, scruffy wererats. As rumors abound about massive numbers of goblinoids uniting under a single banner, heroes may encounter wererats hidden among goblin or orc populations. What do they do when an army of a hundred hybrids begins marching on the surrounding human villages? Can they find enough silver to fight the Redtooth wererats?
- A unit of the Oath of Flesh approaches the party and offers to help eliminate a local Redtooth nest. The members of the oath may or may not reveal that they themselves are wererats...
- A goblin child seeks out the heroes and beg for help. Redtooth orcs have taken over his village and are infecting the inhabitants; his parents have been affected, and he wants the adventurers to rescue them. This is a good way to reveal the existence and nature of the Redtooth brood. But will the party help the goblin?
- A berserk wererat-troll – the result of Redtooth experiments – can be an interesting challenge. Combining the speed and damage reduction of the wererat with the raw strength and regenerative abilities of the troll, such a creature can be an extremely dangerous opponent.



The Work of the Weavers

By Keith Baker

Dorian Plagues

The Dorian brood is one of the most dangerous of the wererat clans. For centuries they have studied mystical diseases in a quest to perfect lycanthropy itself. In the process they have developed terrible biological weapons. These mystical afflictions have many advantages over their mundane counterparts:

- A magical plague is extremely difficult to treat through mundane methods. When a character attempts to treat a magical plague using the Healing skill, his skill check has a -4 circumstance penalty. However, most magical plagues do have underlying flaws. A character who succeeds at a Fleshweaving check (DC 20) can come up with a specialized treatment plan that negates the -4 penalty. Knowledge (arcana) can be used in place of Fleshweaving, but the DC is increased to 26 and the character must possess at least 5 ranks of Healing in order to attempt the check.
- Magical plagues can be cured by remove disease or break enchantment. Dispel magic alone is not effective.
- Magical plagues can be targeted to only affect certain types of individuals. A magical plague can be keyed to affect people of a certain race, gender, or age, or even stranger traits – like the possession of sorcerer abilities. So an airborne infection could be set to only affect female elves over 100 year of age. A character who doesn't meet the requirements of a plague can still carry it; he simply won't show any symptoms. If an individual is a carrier, the gamemaster should make saving throws for him as usual, just to see if he manages to fight off the infection (even though he doesn't know that he has it!).
- Magical plagues can also be given unusual vectors of infection. In addition to the standard methods (ingestion, inhalation, injury, and contact), the Dorians have created sexually transmitted diseases, emotionally transmitted diseases (a psychic vector that transmits the disease to individuals whom the victim feels a particular emotion towards), and plagues that are transferred to anyone the victim casts a spell on – a particularly cruel trick to play upon a priest, who will infect people as he heals them. If you can think of a strange method of transmission, the Dorians have probably thought of it too.
- Many magical plagues can be transmitted during the incubation period, before a victim has shown any symptoms of the disease. This can make it extremely difficult to track the source of a particular plague.

A few common Dorian plagues are outlined below:

Burning Plague

Infection Method: Injury or Contact. DC: 18. Incubation: 1d3 day. Damage: 1d6 Con.

The Burning Plague is traditional wererat weapon; the Dorian Weavers have created variants that target specific races, but most broods have a few plaguebearers holding the basic form of the plague. The disease is usually released through rats and fleas, but can also be spread through contact with a victim. It manifests as a vicious fever; red welts spread across the victim's body, occasionally bursting and releasing contaminated blood and pus.

Foulmouth Fever

Infection Method: Inhaled. DC: 14. Incubation: 1 day. Damage: 1d3 Con + 1d4 Cha

Foulmouth fever is an airborne disease that affects the victim's mind. The symptoms include a high fever and remarkably bad breath, but the most notable symptom is odd social behavior. A victim of foulmouth fever spews obscenities without noticing what he is doing; he also loses the ability to control the volume of his voice and tends to shout. Initially these problems only occur when the victim tries to speak; as the disease progresses, the victim will constantly rave, shouting filth at the top of his lungs.

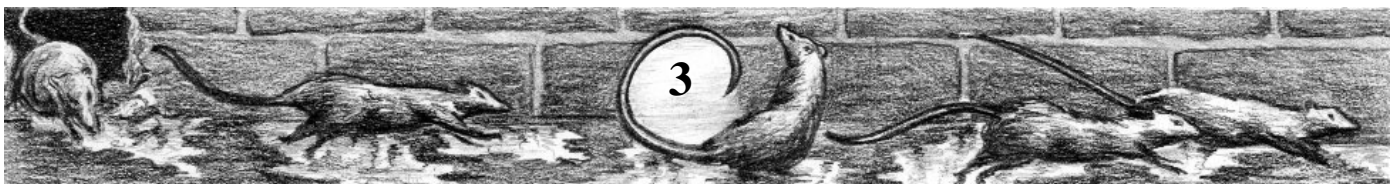
Once a victim has lost four points of Charisma to foulmouth fever, it becomes difficult for him to cast spells requiring verbal components; in order to cast the spell without swearing and breaking the incantation, he must succeed at a Concentration check (DC 12 + the number of points of Charisma he has lost to the disease).

Magebane

Infection Method: Spellcasting. DC: 16. Incubation: 1d6 days. Damage: 1d4 Int + 1d4 Wis.

Dorian Weavers created magebane to cripple communities that rely on priests and other spellcasters. Magebane has a slow incubation period, but it is viable and can be transmitted during this time. Whenever a victim casts a spell, the target of the spell must make a separate Fortitude check to see if he is infected with magebane. When the disease finally strikes, its effects are powerful and disturbing; victims are overcome with delirium and terrible hallucinations. Within days, a victim is stripped of his reason and becomes a virtual vegetable.

Magebane can be targeted to affect a certain group – for example, elves. However, it can still be carried and transmitted



by other creatures; the carriers just won't display any symptoms.

Magic Items

Most who know of the Weavers think of them as mystical geneticists; the monsters of the Asyra and the Dorian plagues are certainly their most spectacular creations. But Weavers can enchant wood and steel as well as flesh. This section looks at two magic items found among the wererats.

Ratbone Special Ability

One of the greatest problems for a wererat spy is the fact that shifting to rat form forces him to leave all of his human equipment behind. Graykin Weavers developed *ratbone* items as a solution to this problem, and the Pindar and Oath of Flesh were quick to steal this discovery.

A *ratbone* item is designed to shift forms with a lycanthrope. When a lycanthrope shifts from human or hybrid form into his animal form, any *ratbone* items that he is carrying are absorbed into his body and disappear. The size of the original object doesn't matter; a wererat carrying a *ratbone* greatsword can conceal the weapon in his dire rat form. When shifting form with *ratbone* items, an injured lycanthrope only recovers half the usual number of hit points; absorbing the items disrupts the healing process. If a lycanthrope is killed in animal form, he will return to his human form and any *ratbone* objects will reappear.

The *ratbone* ability can be applied to any object. If it is applied to a magical weapon, it has a +1 cost modifier. For any other magic item, it increases the cost by 20%. It can also be applied to any sort of mundane item, such as a piece of clothing; this adds 500 gp to the cost of the object and requires the Craft Wondrous Object feat. The *ratbone* ability must be applied when the object is created; it cannot be added to an existing object.

Despite the name, *ratbone* items will work for any sort of lycanthrope. As an additional bonus, *ratbone* weapons ignore lycanthropic Damage Reduction. This ability does not transfer to missiles fired from a *ratbone* bow, crossbow, or sling.

Caster Level: 8th; Weight: -; Prerequisites: 10 ranks in Fleshweaving, polymorph other; Market Price: See description

Prison of Flesh

This weapon is a creation of the Oath of Flesh, whose members dedicate their lives to the eradication of other lycanthropes. A *prison of flesh* is a battle dart with a black shaft and a silver head inscribed with mystical runes. For combat purposes, it is treated as a +1 *dart*. When it hits a lycanthrope in hybrid

or animal form, its true power is revealed. The victim is immediately forced into her human shape, and cannot shift form for 1d6 rounds. After this time has passed, she can take a standard action to attempt to shift form; this requires a successful Control Shape skill check (DC 25) or Will saving throw (DC 23). When she successfully makes the check, she regains full control of her abilities.

Every time a *prison of flesh* is used against a lycanthrope, there is a 50% chance that the dart will shatter after delivering its effect.

Caster Level: 7th; Weight: 1/2 lb; Prerequisites: Craft Magic Arms or Armor, 8 ranks in Fleshweaving, polymorph other; Market Price: 4,200 gp

Monsters

The Complete Guide to Wererats discusses the organic creations of the Asyra brood and other wererat Weavers. But the Weavers are not the only beings experimenting with lycanthropy. The Redtooth troll is the creation of the Redtooth brood, a clan of lycanthropic goblinoids.

REDTOOTH TROLL

The wererats of the Redtooth brood were created by the Asyra Weavers. Being orcs and goblins, the Redteeth managed to overpower their captors and escape from the research facility where they were being tortured. In recent years, a few Redtooth adepts have begun to replicate the experiments they observed during the Asyra captivity. These adepts lack the skill and sophistication of wererat Weavers, but they have had a few successes – the most notable of which is the Redtooth troll.

Giants are normally immune to lycanthropy. In the case of the Redtooth troll, the adepts successfully infected a regular troll with a modified strain of lycanthropy. The beast cannot infect others, nor can it shift shape; it is trapped in a permanent hybrid form. But it possesses the strength and regenerative powers of a normal troll combine with the speed and near-invulnerability of a wererat, making it a deadly opponent. Further, its ratlike nature makes it vulnerable to Rat Empathy – a critical factor that allows Redtooth handlers to keep these creatures under control.

A Redtooth troll is giant caricature of a normal wererat hybrid. In spite of its bent spine and hunched posture – even more stooped than that of a normal troll – it still stands almost nine feet in height. For the most part it is completely hairless, revealing rubbery gray skin; occasionally there are patches that appear to be covered by fur, but these are actually fleshy fibers that writhe and flex. It has the head of a dire rat, but its eyes are yellow and seem to bulge out of their sockets, and its snout is filled with oversized, jagged teeth. Like a regular troll, its arms are long and drag about on the ground, and its gangly form belies its immense strength and speed.



Redtooth Troll
Large Shapeshifter

Hit Dice: 6d8+42 (69 hp)
Initiative: +9 (+5 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 30 ft.
AC: 23 (-1 size, +5 Dex, +9 natural)
Attacks: 2 claws +9 melee, bite +7 melee
Damage: Claw 1d6+6 damage; bite 1d6+3
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Rend 2d6+9
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 15/silver, regeneration 5, scent
Saves: Fort +14, Ref +7, Will +5
Abilities: Str 23, Dex 20, Con 25, Int 6, Wis 9, Cha 6
Skills: Climb +15, Hide +7, Listen + 8, Move Silently +13, Spot +13
Feats: Alertness, Iron Will, Multiattack, Improved Initiative

Climate/Terrain: Any land or underground
Organization: Solitary or Patrol (1 Redtooth troll with 2-6 wererats)
Challenge Rating: 7
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always lawful evil
Advancement: By character class

Redtooth trolls possess the following special abilities and qualities:

Damage Reduction (Ex): The damage from any physical attack is reduced by 15 points (to a minimum of 0) unless the attack involves a silvered or magical weapon.

Regeneration (Ex): Fire and acid deal normal damage to a Redtooth troll. All other attacks are treated as subdual damage. The troll recovers five points of subdual damage at the start of each round. It can regrow severed limbs in 3d6 minutes or reattached a severed limb instantly by holding it to the stump.

Rend (Ex): If a Redtooth troll hits with both claw attacks, it tears at its opponent and inflicts an additional 2d6+9 points of damage.



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