

HUMBLEWOOD™

Humblewood 2 Playtest

MUSTELS AND BACKGROUNDS

SEPTEMBER 2024



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<https://forms.gle/WUnBcrNfHqqrF7gZ7>

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This month, we're sharing the last of the playable races for Humblewood 2. The mustels resemble the various members of the mustelid family, including wolverines, weasels, badgers, stoats.

We're also testing three new backgrounds, the Stonesinger, the Warrenborn, and the Wonderstruck.

Let us know what you think of these new options here: <https://forms.gle/WUnBcrNfHqqrF7gZ7>

Part 1: Mustel

Mustel

The independent and determined mustel are some of the least common folk in Wesden. They have a reputation for being stubborn as once a mustel has set their mind to a course of action, it is almost impossible to convince them to give up. All mustels have powerful jaws, no matter their size.

WILDERNESS WANDERERS

Mustels typically prefer the close company of a few good friends over the bustle of cities. Many choose a life in the wilderness, living off the land and forming a deep connection with nature. Their fur, which spans a wide range of shades including greys, blacks, browns, and whites, allows them to blend in well in natural environments.

Brightfang

based on Wolverine



Hands



Christina Kraus

OATHMAKERS

Oaths are an important part of mustel culture. Once a mustel has sworn an oath to do something, they cannot break their promise without inviting unbearable shame upon themselves. True oaths are usually sworn to Ranzang, the patron Amaranthine of the mustels. Mustel tradition holds that traitors and oathbreakers can be identified by their smell, though this is more folklore than fact.

ROAMING RARIETIES

Many folks can go their whole lives without ever meeting a mustel as they are relatively rare. This has led to many tales, half-truths, and lies being spread about mustels. They can attract curiosity from other folk who are eager to get to know them. Depending on the mustel's personality, they might revel in this attention or recoil from it.

MUSTEL NAMES

Most mustel names have a positive meaning in the Mustel language or are drawn from plants. They aren't divided by gender. Longdance mustels tend to use longer names than brightfangs do.

Traditionally, mustel don't have family names. Instead, they gain an epithet from how their acquaintances describe them. These nicknames might come from a major event in a mustel's life, a personality trait, or a physical feature. Epithets are not always flattering, but most mustels still use them in place of a family name when needed. It is exceptionally rare for a mustel to go their entire life without gaining at least one epithet.

EXAMPLE MUSTEL NAMES

Names: Artak, Birch, Braw, Coorie, Dewberry, Fennel, Fir, Gen, Grawl, Haff, Honeysuckle, Jemmer, Maple, Prowsen, Rose, Sususra, Thistle, Thrang, Twill, Verang

Epithets: the Bloody, the Brave, the Builder, the Dreamless, the Fool, the Birdfriend, the High Tail, the Stoneheart, the Talker, the Unreliable, the Unseen, the Waveweaver, the Wildpaw

MUSTEL TRAITS

Ability Score Increases. An ability score of your choice increases by 2, and another ability score of your choice increases by 1. To play a typical brightfang mustel, choose Strength and Charisma. To play a typical longdance mustel, choose Dexterity and Charisma.

Age. Mustels age at an average pace and are considered adults around the age of 20. They are relatively long-lived, with many reaching ages of around 85.

Alignment. Mustel typically follow their own moral code rather than rules set by others. They have a strong independent streak and tend toward chaotic alignments.

Bite. You have sharp fangs that enable you to make natural bite attacks. You can choose to bite as an unarmed strike that deals 1d6 piercing damage, which can be calculated using either your Strength or Dexterity modifier for both the attack roll and damage bonus.

Scenting. You have a powerful nose. As a bonus action, you can attempt to sniff out invisible or hidden creatures. When you successfully pick up the scent of an invisible or hidden creature, you learn its location as if it were not invisible or hidden from you.

BRIGHTFANG

Brightfang mustel resemble wolverines, badgers, and mink. Their imposing physique and resilience allow them to explore rugged landscapes such as the Crystal Expanse and the Frostcaps. They are the most solitary of the mustels and have a reputation for being able to tackle any challenge.

Size. Brightfangs are the tallest and heaviest of the mustel, typically standing over 6 and half feet tall. Your size is Medium.

Speed. Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

Bigger Bite. Your natural bite attack is crushingly strong and deals 1d8 damage instead of 1d6. When you reach level 9, this increases to 1d10.

Scrappy. When you take damage due to failing a saving throw or being hit by an attack, you can reduce the damage you take by half. Once you have used this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

Strong Claws. You gain proficiency in the Athletics skill and have advantage on skill checks made to climb or dig.



Brightfang

Christina Kraus

LONGDANCE

Longdance mustels are inspired by weasels and their winter form, the ermine. They also draw on the traits of martens, polecats, and stoats. While all mustel are a rare sight in Wesden, the longdances are the most mysterious. Rumors say that they have the power to hypnotize other folk with their dancing. This is untrue, but some longdances use the stories about them to their advantage, while others resent being seen as magical.

Size. Longdance mustel have long, slender bodies that vary in height from 2 feet to over 6 feet tall. Your size is Medium or Small.

Speed. Your base walking speed is 35 feet.

Fleet Feet. You have proficiency in the Performance skill.

As a bonus action, you can make a Charisma (Performance) check against a creature within 5 feet of you to perform a bewildering dance, contested by the target's Wisdom (Insight) check. If you succeed, the target has disadvantage on the next attack or check it makes against you before the end of your next turn. Once you have used this trait, you can't use it again until you have completed a short or long rest.

Shifting Camouflage. Your fur gradually changes color to better hide you in the environment you find yourself in. You have advantage on Stealth checks made to hide or move undetected through natural terrain as long as you have been in that terrain for at least 10 days.

Slippery Dancer. You have advantage on Dexterity saving throws against magic.

Part 2: New Backgrounds



STONESINGER

You are a practitioner of the ancient arma hedge art of stonesinging. This musical tradition has been passed down from generation to generation, combining chants with the natural resonant tones of rocks. It is said that long ago, the stones sang back to skilled stone singers. The question of why the stones have fallen silent haunts the stonesingers of today, and anyone who found a way to reawaken the stones would be hailed as the greatest of all stonesingers.

Skill Proficiencies: Insight, Performance

Tool Proficiencies: one type of musical instrument

Languages: Terran

Equipment: a musical instrument (one of your choice), a rock hammer, a songbook, a set of traditional robes, and a pouch containing 15 gp

FEATURE: STONewise

You are attuned to the sounds of the earth. You can easily identify rocks and gems by tapping on them as an Action to learn their properties and value in gp. Additionally, while moving through rocky landscapes you can find the safest paths to avoid landslips, crevasses, and other natural hazards.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

d8	Personality Trait
1	I am solemn and slow to anger.
2	I am fascinated by history and geography.
3	I pick up pebbles at each place I perform as a memento.
4	I feel most comfortable in a group of like-minded individuals.
5	I love adorning myself with stones, whether they are precious gems or not.
6	I jump at any chance I have to perform.
7	I get flustered by swift changes.
8	I talk to rocks when I'm trying to make a big decision.

d6	Ideal
1	Obstinacy. The stone does not yield to others, and neither do I. (Evil)
2	Loyalty. Be the steady rock that others can depend on. (Lawful)
3	Attentiveness. To learn to sing, we must first listen. (Neutral)
4	Innovation. Tradition is stifling; we need new songs to make the stones sing again. (Chaotic)
5	Empathy. Something does not need to be like me to deserve my sympathy. (Good)
6	Tradition. I carry the teachings of the stonesingers who came before me and must pass them on to those who come after me. (Lawful)

d6 Bond

- 1 I am the first stonesinger in my family, but my choir embraced me as one of their own.
- 2 I have a favorite rock that I carry everywhere with me.
- 3 My teacher was harsh and demanding, but they polished me into the skilled stonesinger I am today.
- 4 I meet many folk on my travels and have the privilege of sharing my stonesongs with them.
- 5 I have a skilled apprentice to who I'm teaching the ancient art of stonesinging.
- 6 I am determined to be the one who discovers why the stones fell silent.

d6 Flaw

- 1 I doubt my skills and ability to continue the tradition.
- 2 When I perform with others, I can't help but show off so all eyes are on me.
- 3 I only became a stonesinger to please my parents; my heart isn't in it.
- 4 I charge money for my performances, scamming those who don't know better.
- 5 I lack a sense of rhythm.
- 6 While I might be good at listening to the rocks, I am bad at listening to people.

WARRENBORN

You grew up in the winding tunnels of one of Wesden's mountain warrens, embraced by a tight-knit community. Your neighbors were as close as family—dozens of aunts, uncles, and cousins. Beyond the warren door, you were taught how to survive in the difficult landscape, but you always knew a warm welcome awaited at home. While your home was cozy, it could also be stifling for someone who longed for adventure.

Skill Proficiencies: Persuasion, Survival

Tool Proficiencies: One type of artisan's tools and one type of musical instrument

Equipment: a farewell letter from a friend, a necklace bearing the sign of your warren, a herbalism kit, a set of common clothes, and a pouch containing 15 gp

BACKGROUND FEATURE: WARRENBORN

From your earliest days in the tight quarters of the warren, you learned the importance of getting along with others. Outside of combat, you are skilled at calming inflamed tempers and helping people understand each other's points of view. You also have ties to a specific warren and can always find a warm welcome, healing, supplies, and shelter when you visit. Other warrens will likely extend the same hospitality to you if your warren has connections to them.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

d8 Personality Trait

- 1 I can make friends with anyone I meet.
- 2 I miss the embrace of the warren walls and fear the open sky.
- 3 I talk fast and make jokes faster.
- 4 I thrive on being helpful to others.
- 5 With so many folk poking their whiskers into my business, I learned to be sneaky.
- 6 I know who I am and where I come from. Nothing can shake my self-esteem.
- 7 I am eager to see the world beyond my warren.
- 8 I hate to be alone, even for a moment.

d6 Ideal

- 1 **Harmony.** Our survival depends on agreement. (Neutral)
- 2 **Tact.** Saying the right thing at the right time is more important than honesty. (Neutral)
- 3 **Organization.** When everything is in its place, everyone can find their peace. (Lawful)
- 4 **Freedom.** I've finally left my warren, and I'll make the most of it! (Chaotic)
- 5 **Hospitality.** Guests should be cared for like family (Good)
- 6 **Deceit.** Have two faces, but only show one to those around you. (Evil)

d6 Bond

- 1 I love my warren with all my heart and would do anything to keep it safe.
- 2 I grew up alongside a group of rambunctious kids. We always said we'd explore the world together, but I'm the only one who has left.
- 3 The mountains around the warren always felt more like home to me despite their dangers.
- 4 My warren was destroyed in a disaster. Though the residents have scattered, I still think of them as family.
- 5 I fell in love with a visitor to the warren and left to find them.
- 6 I have younger siblings back home in the warren; I want to be a good example to them.

d6	Flaw
1	I'm afraid city folk will judge me as a rural bumpkin, so I judge them first.
2	I am very gullible, thanks to my sheltered upbringing.
3	I become overwhelmed when faced with new experiences.
4	I don't trust folk from outside my warren.
5	I struggle to make decisions for myself or form my own opinions.
6	While I can navigate my labyrinthine warren expertly, I have no sense of direction anywhere else.

WONDERSTRUCK

At some point in your life, you felt the brush of an Amaranthine's wing or paw. The experience changed you forever as they gave you a glimpse into the immensity of the Great Rhythm. You can select the form of this experience from the **Amaranthine Experiences** table, roll randomly, or devise your own.

Skill Proficiencies: Investigation, Religion

Tool Proficiencies: one type of artisan's tools or musical instrument

Languages: One of your choice

Equipment: a journal, an amulet bearing the symbol of the Amaranthine, a map of local shrines, a set of common clothes, and a pouch containing 15 gp

AMARANTHINE EXPERIENCES

d10	Experience
1	As you gazed at a sunrise that stained the sky red, you saw Khaluz looking back at you. Her stare burned into you, and you knew you could no longer hide who you truly were.
2	In a moment of weakness, you felt the stomp of Arghan's mighty hoof urging you to find the strength he knew you had, but you had forgotten. The reverberations shook your entire being.
3	As you lay broken at your lowest moment, a silent vision of Ostelo appeared before you. Your pain vanished.
4	You had a near-death experience, but Tyton the Nightfather ushered you away from his lands and back to the world of the living.
5	In a moment of high emotion, you heard the rhythmic song of Gebbo's eternal revel. Your heart began to beat along in time.
6	You dreamt of Gesme, the Amaranthine of Invention, wreathed in flame. When you awoke, your mind buzzed with new ideas like a shaken hive.
7	You once became utterly lost. Alone and scared, you heard the whispers of Hath and saw a path of impossible stars guiding you home.
8	When you swore an oath, you felt the claws of Ranzang resting on your shoulders. You are certain he is watching to see whether you fulfill your promise.
9	You met a vulpin with dark eyes and a hungry smile. She listened to your desires and advised you how best to achieve them. Before she left, she said her name was Kren.
10	Walking in the dark, you felt the presence of something massive and invisible padding beside you. Eresutha led you to uncover something long hidden.

FEATURE: REVERBERATIONS

After encountering an Amarantine, you can still hear divine resonances that grow stronger the less attached you are to this world. Whenever you make a death saving throw, you experience another vision from the Amarantine that gives you some new insight should you survive.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

d8	Personality Trait
1	I am always a little distracted as if listening to music that others can't hear.
2	I approach everything with great energy.
3	I am constantly amazed by the beauty of the world.
4	I tell everyone I can about my experience, hoping to find someone who truly understands.
5	I am still grappling to make sense of what happened to me.
6	I speak in rhymes and riddles.
7	I am secretive, afraid of what others will think of me.
8	I strive to embody the Amarantine's teachings in this world.

d6	Ideal
1	Dread. Mortal folk should not see into the world of the Amarantine. (Neutral)
2	Gratitude. The Amarantines teach us the way to live with the Great Rythmn. (Good)
3	Discovery. Anything that leads me to a better understanding of my experience is worthwhile. (Chaotic)
4	Imitation. I model myself on the Amarantine who reached out to me. (Neutral)
5	Power. I have been uniquely blessed and should be respected and honored by all. (Evil)
6	Modesty. A simple life is something to be cherished. (Lawful)

d6	Bond
1	I seek others who have had experiences like me so I won't feel so alone.
2	I am devoted to my religious order that honors the Amarantine who blessed me.
3	Someone else experienced the appearance of the Amarantine alongside me. We interpreted it in radically different ways.
4	A kindly cleric helped me come to terms with what happened to me. I owe them so much.
5	I am estranged from my community after they refused to believe what I experienced.
6	I feel a deep and abiding connection with the Amarantine I met. I feel we will meet again.

d6	Flaw
1	I am reckless, believing that the Amarantine is looking out for me.
2	My belief that I have been chosen for something special makes me boastful.
3	I deny what I experienced, and the unresolved tension haunts me.
4	I would do anything to meet the Amarantine again, even at the cost of hurting others.
5	The weight of my experience lies heavy on me, and I often become mired in rumination.
6	I have become detached from this world and struggle to find meaning in everyday things.