

## Wood Elf Race Package (Nationa-Wood Elf Race Package)

- I. Overview
- II. History
- III. Society
- IV. Culture
- V. Known Communities

### I. Overview

Wood Elves are the most sociable and intermixed of the Elven sub-races. To the general non-Elven populace, any Elf, or tribe of Elves, not associated with one of the other Elven cultures (Stone, Wild, Quentari, etc.) is considered a Wood Elf. Despite this misconception, there is a genuine Wood Elf culture that distinguishes between the true Wood Elf and other, "generic" Elves.

A Wood Elf is typically optimistic and cheerful, easy to befriend, and very loyal. They are usually pacifistic, and often deemed rustic, tending towards less adventurous professions. Still and all, they can be fierce defenders when angered or betrayed. Exceptions can, and do exist on a common basis, but this is the view of the Wood Elven race in general.

Compared to other Elven sub-cultures, they are open and friendly, eschewing from their inception the isolationist practices of others. This has given them a less arrogant racial characteristic, and are far more common and approachable than the rest of their kin.

A sign of their openness is the willingness to accept and dispossessed Elves as Wood Elves, regardless of whether they were raised as one. Only proven and unrepentant criminals (of any race) are refused a home in their communities. But a Quentari, or Wild Elf, for example, who cares not for associating with his/her native culture, are always accepted as a "Wood Elf." Thus, the misconception of Wood Elves is adventurous perpetuated.

### II. History

The true Wood Elven race is an off-shoot of the Quentari nation. Many small groups, ranging between 30-100 Elves, broke off from the nation following the second Dagorim Gurthrauko (Dark Wars) to escape the growing formality and rigidity they perceived in the Quentari life-style. Tired of the politics and disgusted with war, several of these splinter groups set out for various parts of Avalon to establish their own homelands between the years 63-66 Y.R. (Evandarr calendar). While the total number of these groups is unknown, and their subsequent fates uncertain in Quentari or Wood Elf records, two bands established themselves to the east of Quentari, in forests that would come to be encompassed by the Kingdom of Evandarr.

The first clan settled in the Ash Foest, establishing friendly relations with the native Amani culture, and settling outside of the Wold. The second tribe settled in the Dryad Woods in Kitheria. From these two locations, the Wood Elves explored the surrounding lands, attempting to establish themselves over a wide area, during the 65-70 E.R. This was done in the belief that they were too few in number to resist a concentrated attack. If one group was destroyed, it was reasoned, then a group farther away might avoid the attack and survive. Due to this expansionism, the Wood Elves became the most commonly met Elven sub-race for a long time, and learned to acclimate themselves with Humans and other races. Thus when offered a chance to join the Kingdom in exchange for protection, they accepted.

Although not required to send troops to the Royal Army because of their small numbers, many of the younger Elves do enlist out of a communal sense of balance and equality.

### III. Society

Despite their pacifism and love of life, the Wood Elves are actually close to being a militocracy. Each community has a small armed town guard to protect it, and the leader of this force generally acts as the leader for the rest of the village. She/he is guided by a Council of elders, who do have the power to remove the commander if necessary.

The reason for this is simple and obvious. A Wood Elven village is composed of people who are typically unconcerned for the responsibilities of maintaining a community, and do not often possess the requisite skills or discipline. Those who make a career of the military, however, are trained to do just that sort of job. Already skilled in running a group of people efficiently, by the time she/he attains the level of Force Commander, the villagers see the person as ideally suited for leadership. It is the non-military who organizes the elders as a Council to counter the Commander and provide a non-military voice for the people. So far, this system has worked amazingly well.

#### IV. Culture

The true Wood Elven culture (at least, of the Evendarr Wood Elves) is a simplified version of the Quentari culture. Schooling and discipline are the foundations of upbringing amongst Wood Elves: schooling to give the youngsters a solid grounding in the dynamics of Tyrra, and discipline to help them deal properly with the extended life-spans the younger Elves will face.

One of the central facets of Wood Elven culture is their life-spans in relation to the Humans they live with and under. The Wood Elf way is dedicated towards peace and life, to the gentle arts and to adjustment. Unlike other racial types, who normally remain separate from Human society, the Wood Elves constantly face political and personal ties with the shorter lived races, and so must remain flexible and optimistic in the face of fleeting generations of companions. To have a less cheerful outlook would surely mean isolation or madness, so the calm and cheer of a Wood Elf is not a mere affection, but a desperately needed defense mechanism.

Wood Elves are dedicated to life and peace due to the horror of the Dagorim Gurthrauko inflicted on their racial psyche. To avoid the fate of the Quentari and the beautiful Taursiloriel, aggressive activity needs to be avoided if unnecessary. Because of this, most Wood Elves tend towards the social arts, or simple occupations such as fishing or agriculture. Most types are scholars, usually of Earth Magics, although there are Celestial casters as well. Indeed, many Elves pursue both schools of magic. Warriors are less frequent, but are a present and welcome force in the communities, as heroes prepared to lay down their lives to preserve the peace of others.

All wood elves are free to study any subject they desire (save Necromancy) in their youths, but are directed towards the development of a social art, such as singing, writing, painting, etc., to teach them to appreciate the beauty in life, and the diversity in nature. Indeed, a ceremony is held each year to celebrate the Coming of Maturity amongst youths, and each attendee is required to present a piece of work in the art they have chosen, a piece meant to represent that which they see in themselves. This work is called the "Heart-Crafting", and is used by the elders of the community to determine the potential future of each new adult Elf.

The most important aspect of the Wood Elf society is the concept of family, of which there are three classifications. The first is the Communal Family. Since all children are important to Wood Elves, they share the responsibility of raising the children. This instills a strong sense of communal ties that aid in maintaining harmony within a village.

The second concept is the Intimate Family. This is the typical concept of family with parents, children, grandparents, etc. It is formed when two who wish to become an Intimate Family chooses to undergo the Ceremony of Life-Bonding. This public ceremony takes the couple, removes them from the Intimate Families they

came from, and forms a new Intimate about them. It lasts for life, and only one Life-Bonding may take place until one or another dies. If a survivor wishes, a second Life-Bonding is permitted, and the new mate is added to the existing Intimate Family, or if two survivors Bond, the Intimates are united into one large family. Lif-Bonding is not as ritualized, formal, or spirit-affecting as Quentari Life-Mating, but it is more permanent, for it cannot be sundered. The third concept is the Extended Family. This is formed by the Blood-Bond or the Love-Bond. The Blood-Bond ceremony is usually held in private, and involves two Elves who have pledged eternal friendship and loyalty to each other. The ceremony involves combining small amounts of their blood (usually pricking the finger) in a cup of water, and drinking from it, become Extended Siblings, as close as two intimate siblings in the eyes of all, but their two families are not linked.

Unlike other Elven races, Wood Elves will accept Human (and other races in uncommon circumstances) as members of their vilages, and will even Blood, Love, or Life Bond with a Human with no stigma, and half-Elves are fully accepted. But they never forget that Humans, and other races are not the same as them, and prepare themselves for the time when that individual is gone, and only the Elves are left to them.

#### V. Known Communities

Individual communities rarely have names (each Wood Elf knows where she/he comes from) and Wood Elves identify themselves with the Forest that houses his/her home community. Four such communities live in the Ash Forest, along the edges at each compass point. Two communities live in the Dryad Woods of Kitheria, another in the Whitemane Forest of Blackstone, and two in the Lost River Forest of Therendry. One community lives outside the Falconrest Forest, tending to the lands that surround it, and leaving the Forest to the Ardynnites. Other communities are unknown at this time.

Wood Elves are extremely sociable, and can be found in any location in the Kingdom of Evendarr, although most tend to dislike Niman.