



# Herbs of Athas

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## **Amber Leaf: by Mike Mitchell**

(Expanded by Dave Coleman)

This rare plant is found in the sandy desert, where it clings to life tenaciously. Obviously a mutant plant, it actually uses photosynthesis to create a silicon life form. Basically it changes silicon into an organic amber compound. The leaves have a more crystalline form and orange coloration to them, and the plant actually glitters in the light. Occasionally lumps of amber can be found which some merchants polish into gemstones. Additionally the berries are like rock candy, and are a growing delicacy amongst all nobles. The amber leaf's only real predator are rasclinn which adore its leaves and berries.

## **Arian: by Mike Mitchell**

(Expanded by Dave Coleman)

A dumpy little mudflat plant which thrives in the Estuary of the Forked Tongue. It is a small grayish-green plant, which is camouflaged in the mudflat. Its powdered root is an anti-allergen and decongestant, which is used by silt tribes to avoid choking in the dust. If a user falls into the Silt Sea, they actually have an extra couple of rounds to avoid drowning, as Arian enhances the nasal passages, and repels dust. The plant is also used by the skimmersman of the Silt Sea, but is only broken out by Captains during the most violent of silt storms as it is often difficult to harvest. For some reason some power-hungry silt priests destroy the plant as they believe that some of their secrets could be brought to the surface.

## **Blue Sagebrush: by Shawn Kasprick**

This small bush is one of the few plants that grow along the Salt Flats. It is a 1 foot tall, light blue bush with a woody texture to it, and it has no leaves. (as leaves tend not to keep the moisture as well as stems) Its root is about 6 feet long allowing the plant to be able to tap into an underground water source, which is how it can live near the salt flats. Since it grows so close to the Salt Flats it tends to have a salty taste to it; so it is harvested, dried and ground, and used in preserving meat and adding flavor to any meal. When harvested it can

grow back if at least a 1 inch stub is left above ground.

## **Boulderweed: by Dave Coleman**

Across the sandy desert rolls the boulderweed, relentlessly driven by the winds. The boulderweed is a rare plant, which features, heavily in the elvish culture, at least when they're not thinking about themselves. It is a small spindly bush with no roots, and it rolls like tumbleweed. When it hits water, tendrils quickly form to root the plant to the spot, and the plant draws up as much water as it can into its spongy interior. More often than not, the water source is temporary, and the plant removes its tendrils from the ground and moves on. A feature of the leaves is that they also absorb moisture from the dry air, and only release a small amount over time. Some elves, more patient than their brethren, have learnt to weave the leaves of this bush into armbands, sweatbands, or even tunics. The fabric has the ability to absorb moisture from the air and sweat. At the end of the day, some tribes will squeeze this moisture into barrels for re-use. This use of boulderweed has spread amongst the human duar tribes which scatter over the landscape, and half-elves have been known to weave whole garments to preserve their water supply. (Most duar tribes collect the moisture in gourds, and ask a friendly priest to cast clear water on their behalf. Most water priest wandering the desert doesn't mind this at all, and rarely request payment for their services, except for a meal). Full body suits are occasionally found for sale in the market, but they tend to be very expensive, as the patience required to weave such an item is generally lacking in the average elf. Game Statistics: Characters purchasing such a boon only need to drink 1/3 their normal water supply) Acknowledgements to Frank Herberts "Dune" for Desert Suit Ideas)

## **Candle cactus: by Mike Mitchell**

(Expanded by Dave Coleman)

This uncommon cactus is primarily found in the rocky badlands. A tall yellow- green cactus with many "arms", it has long been used by nobles and merchants of the Wastes. Its long, waxy needles have a built in wick (actually a very burnable fiber), which allows it to burn long and cleanly. Many nobles use it in lieu of the more fatty tallow candles, as it gives off a lemony scent, which sweetens the air as it burns. It is also lighter than normal candles, making it the choice of travelers everywhere.

## **Centaur Plant: by Mike Mitchell**

(Expanded by Dave Coleman)

One of the more fabled Athasian plants. It is only found in the northern hinterlands, upon the ragged edges north of the Jagged Cliffs. A green leafed medium sized tree, its existence is usually the stuff of fables, because with it, one can live forever. It blooms once a century, and its thick pulpy leaves provide useable fibers, which the feral halflings use to make ropes as strong as giant hair. Its sap at leaf junctures is a valuable insect repellent, (which the



occasional Rhul-thaun trader has obtained through very adventurous windriders). This insect repellent is very effective against the kreen, and occasionally balls of it are used as weapons against the Kreen, as it incapacitates victims for a few rounds due to intense nausea. The mere smell is usually enough to drive off less motivated Kreen. When it blooms the nectar within the gourd is an effective Elixir of Youth potion, but the tree only blooms once a century, with 2-8 true gourds produced. If made into a tree of life the century plant blooms once a month.

## **Crysava: by Brax**

BALICAN CRYSAVA: a mildly venomous berry-plant whose unripe berries, upon ingestion or prolonged skin contact, cause anemia, nausea, muscle weakness, confusion, blindness or coma. Flowers briefly in mid High-Sun season, unripe translucent berries blacken as they ripen or dry. Dried or ripe berries are actually edible--only the fresh unripe translucent berry is poisonous.

Only a genius like Wheelock the Poisoner could devise such a compound--first of all, no one else on Athas has realized that lead is a poison (most places on Earth still don't seem to have realized this!) Wheelock figured it out when he tried to plant Balican Crysava in his personal greenhouse:

To the then young Wheelock's surprise, he found that unripe Balican Crysava berries grown in his greenhouse were no more poisonous than the non-Balican varieties that merely caused indigestion. While Wheelock grew in knowledge and reputation as "the poisoner", he never accepted the title in his heart until he solved the riddle of Crysava.

Here it was: "Balican Crysava" was no more than Crysava grown in lead-rich soil. Wheelock wasted weeks of research and nearly humiliated himself on a deal based on the assumption that lead unlocked the poison in the Crysava . . . he finally came to the realization that it was the other way around . . . but how to make use of the poison, then? The only people that generally ate and drank from lead-lined cups and plates were the Balican Nobility . . . who of all nobility engaged in the fewest intrigues and poisonings.

Decades later, the slave uprisings of Balican civil war gave Wheelock the first chance to field-test his one favorite project: Crystalline distilled Crysava. Wheelock sent Toth to Sortar with a cryptic message, which upon reflection seemed too good to be true. Wheelock's price? I never learned that, but whatever it was, it fit into a tiny leather sachet, and lit up Wheelock's face like a torch as he opened the sachet drawstrings.

## **Crystal lotus: by Dark Knight**

The crystal lotus is extremely rare and may be found only on the peaks of the Ringing

Mountains above the snow line. The plant in itself is never higher then 2-3 inches and has a diameter of one foot, if not damaged has exactly 5 white leaves. Once a year a single flower blooms in the center of the plant. It's 5 petals are almost transparent bending to blue near the stamens and the pistil which are deep blue. The flower has a diameter of 4 inches. The only interesting parts of the plant are its petals if picked just before they wither. Each petal when ingested has several nearly magical effects on the metabolism of the user, that's why this plant is considered to be a life-shaped species or a magically enchanted one by the few scholars who have studied it.

In game terms: upon ingesting a petal make a system shock roll, in case of failure the recipient passes out for 24 hours and has a lot of dreams which he vividly remembers after the effect of the lotus are over. Seers living in the Ringing Mountains often use the lotus to have powerful visions. However this is not the only use for the lotus. Someone has noticed a couple of "side effects" which in the end proved more interesting then the traditional use hermits made of the herb. In fact if the system shock roll is passed the recipient's body temperature drops significantly below zero degrees Celsius. For two hours the recipient will be immune to natural heat and will tolerate contact with burning coal or oil for a couple of rounds without suffering any ill effects. Also the recipient has a -2 to Str, Dex and Con and a +2 to Int and Wis. While under the effects of the Crystal Lotus all damage from natural fire is reduced to zero while magical fire does only half damage (a saving throw may halve again). Getting a single petal may be a problem in the tablelands for it needs a cold container to retain its properties (a bag of holding is a suitable container). Only house Inika has succeeded (and then only once) in getting a petal for king Nibenay. Inika won't accept further requests unless they come from a sorcerer-king, a rich noble or a high ranking templar because the costs for the delivery are so high that the house is not willing to risk not being paid.

## **Glinflur: by Dave Coleman**

The Glinflur is very important plant to the nomads of Athas. To the nomadic peoples that wander the wastes, such as the Duar tribes, water is a very precious commodity. The Glinflur tree is believed to be a gift from the ancients and the powers, to help the nomadic peoples prosper.

Glinflur is a large spindly tree (up to 50 feet tall) found in the rocky badlands, canyons, small forests and scrublands. It's roots reach deep underground in a frantic search for water. More often than not, the young saplings don't find a source, and die, but large fruit bearing glinflurs are good indicators that accessible water is nearby. It has a large red flower fully of honeysuckle which attract insects, and small mammals. Even some traders concoct a tasty beverage from using the nectar of many flowers. Glinflur juice is often used as a sweetener in cooking for the affluent. Following pollination the ensuing fruit reaches 10 inches in diameter. Accordingly each tree usually only bears a few



fruit.

Its main importance to the nomads of Athas is as a signal/source of water, and gourd used as storage vessels. The Duar tribes, which are lucky enough to have Clairsentients in their midst, can usually locate the water easily. In times of desperation, the tree itself can be used as a source of water (in the main trunk line), but this is rarely done for two reasons; the trees are rare to begin with, and in the trackless wastes they are saviors to the Duar tribes.

The fruit itself contains a low-level toxin which causes nausea and vomiting (sometimes even worse can occur). The source of the toxin is the large seed contained within the fruit itself. The fruit is brownish-yellow, and has a tough leathery skin, which is very hard to penetrate. The nomads hollow the fruit out, including the seed (which they plant out of reverence), and then dry the insides by using flaming torches. This process is tedious, as the duar must avoid burning the skin. The pulp is usually boiled for about 10 rounds and is able to be drunk after this time. People drinking this pulp still will feel mildly nauseous, but no further effects will occur. The gourd itself is used as a water storage vessel by the duar tribes. There is still some toxin inherent in the skin, which leach into the water, but the nomads are not effected by it. Instead, this toxin kills a few bugs, which may be contained in the water. This quality last for about a year or so, after the gourd is still used. After this time the gourds are usually used as food storage vessels instead. The frequency of the tree is very rare, but nomads have been known to spend hours clearing the trees of parasites to ensure the trees survival.

### **Gold Lichen: by Mike Mitchell** ***(Expanded by Dave Coleman)***

This lichen is found in the stony barrens upon the weathered rocks to the west of Tyr and Urik. The lichen is gathered by the local Duar tribes and traded to the local merchant houses. The traders then crush up the lichen into a paste, which is then added to water. The mixture is then fermented over six months and then strained. When the process is completed, the mix provides a potent alcohol, with a sharp taste, and a mellow glow. "Jicheni" is then traded over the Tablelands. For some reason the Pterrans from the hinterlands have taken a shine to the drink, and many traders from the scaled villages are trying to obtain as much as possible of the drink. Unfortunately Jicheni affects Pterrans quite strongly, and a social problem is beginning in the villages. Currently the Elders of the Three-fold Path are debated its use amongst the youth.

## **Greenshade: by Dave Coleman**

The Greenshade is a very rare tree found within the Crescent forest on the lower slopes of the Windbreak Mountains. It is a small green tree about 10 feet tall, and doesn't actually provide good shade, owing to its spindly nature. A fairly recent discovery by bards of Gulg, it is used very rarely, because its effect are subtle. The leaves are picked from the top of the tree (for potency), and boiled in water, until a green liquid with a slightly bitter taste occurs. This substance is then added to the victims drink, but there is a small chance that the victim can taste the poison. In the first dosage the victim's eyes become watery, and for some reason the colors around him become "fuzzy" in nature, with the actual color deepening or lightening in color. The effects of this dosage occur for about a day.

If the victim receives a second dosage within the day, the toxin's effects are magnified. The victims color vision is severely hampered, and he/she can only see the world in black, white or grays (physically not metaphorically). This actually translates into a small -1 penalty to thaco and saving throws, as the victim can be unnerved by the experience. (this penalty only lasts for 3 months). This effect is permanent as the increased level of toxin damages the eyes, and the eyes will flicker with shadow. The victim also suffers a -1 reaction penalty as his/her eyes are unnerving at best. Yellows become dark whites, and blues become dark grays, depending upon colors original shade. As a side effect, someone under the influence of greenshade can easily see the aura of shadowmancers. The aura transcends even the shadow wizards clothing. The shadowmancer can also recognize the victim if he look into the victims eyes, because of the swirling shadows. A Cure Blindness or equivalent spell can cure the effect.

## **Grey Lichen: by Mike Mitchell**

*(Expanded by Dave Coleman)*

A popular spice used by the Drajjians to flavor an otherwise bland meal, the gray lichen is found in the salt flats in the Ivory Triangle. It provides a pungent earthy flavor (with a hint of sweetness and nuts) to bland meals. It lives on salt compounds and small amounts of water, and is very resistant to both defiling and water loss. A defiler in the salt flats can try to utilize its energy, but the lichen can save vs. spell +4 to avoid giving up its energy.

## **Groundberry: by Shawn Kasprick**

These plants grow all around in the crescent forest where there is a lot of



shade from Athas's Sun (i.e. around buildings, large rocks, etc.). This plant grows close to the ground and never gets above 1 inch tall, but grows about 1 foot in diameter, and bears a small blue fruit once a year. It is nothing more than a weed everywhere else, except for Gulg. In Gulg the plant happens to bears fruit the same time as the starflower so it is used as blue body paint for the nobles-to-be. (Those who are already nobles do not use this body paint.)

## **Harelossi: by Dave Coleman**

Harelossi is a flowering ground plant, which used to be all the rage amongst the nobles of Nibenay. The pale blue flower had a sickly sweet lemony smell, which used to attract multi colored butterflies. But with the coming of the Cerulean Storm, the flowers are not in vogue any more. The Tyr-storms sometimes carry eggs of the silt-moths from the sea itself. The Silt-moths lay their eggs in the dust, which cover the tablelands. Because of the lack of water, many people are often dusty, and sometimes the silt moths will lay eggs in people's hair, and act as a parasite. Even the nobles (who don't always wash that well) have decided not to grow anything, which attracts the moths.

In Gulg, which is somewhat sheltered from the Tyr-storms and the silt-moths, the plant can still be found. The Bards of the dagada have discovered the plant's toxin has a very strange effect, loss of hair. They boil the flowers in wine, which creates a sweet tonic.

When the toxin is first administered the hair stops growing. If this carries on over time, eventually the hair starts to fall out. This includes all bodily hairs.

In the heat of Athas this can be a boon, but most victims often seem to be more susceptible to sunburn and sunstroke. The bards usually use this toxin as a "curse" effect on their victims. Muls and Dwarves who have the unwanted condition of bodily hair, and want to be perfect also use the toxin. Their natural innate toughness allows them to avoid the sunburn susceptibility.

## **Ivory Tree: by Mike Mitchell** ***(Expanded by Dave Coleman)***

Found mainly in the Ivory Triangle, the Ivory Tree is an evergreen with the purest white bark. Artisans in Nibenay use the bark and tree limbs for intricate woodcarvings of the beasts, which live in the wastes. Popular amongst all the classes of Nibenay, the Ivory Tree has become a very rare evergreen in

recent memory. This of course drives the prices of the statues up, making it more worthwhile to find the remaining trees. Additionally the leaves of the tree provide some healing qualities. A quart of tea made from the desert evergreen will restore one point of constitution (lost to dehydration) or one extra hit point daily if used by a healer.

## **Keso Sculptures of Nibenay: by Dave Coleman**

The more commercially minded psionicists of Nibenay have searched for creative uses of their talents over the millennia. One such item is the craft known as Keso. Keso involves the growing of shrub called Sede into more creative shapes, such as waves, or animal shapes. Some use telekinesis to forcibly grow the shrub into the form desired (Kesoi), whilst others gently use their powers of persuasion to convince the plant to grow into the shape (Kesoe). Sede is an uncommon shrub found in the Verdant Belts of most Cities. It is of a dark green color with tiny leaves and grows to about a meter tall in the wild. When they are grown for commercial use they rarely reach to more than a half a meter.

The second Keso sculptures are the more popular and expensive of the two forms, as the plants seem to radiate harmony, which can be useful to the more spiritual residents of Nibenay. Before the collapse of the Raam government, a thriving trade to that city's wealthier members was occurring. A few still find their way into Raam, and are often snapped up by the followers of the Peaceful One.

Kesoi plants give off a pleasant lemon smell, whilst Kesoe sculptures give off a apple-type of smell, both of which are popular to get rid of unwanted odors. Both types are sometimes used to flavor water into a slightly bitter tasting concoction, which is otherwise quite pleasant.

The most interesting thing is that Kesoe sculptures are popular amongst the preservers that dot the face of Athas, because any life energy leeches of them enables a spell to last a little longer than normal. On the other hand, a sculpture leeches by a defiler somehow shortens the spells duration (+1(preserver)/-1(defiler) level for the purpose of spell duration only) A few preservers have thought that it has something to do with the plants harmonious nature.

## **Kleracia: by Shawn Kasprick:**

This is a small plant found on the southern edge of the Ringing Mountains.



The Pterrans first introduced it to the people of Athas. The plant grows about 2 feet tall with a magnificent red flower (similar to a daisy, but with many more petals). The flower itself has brought up to 5 cp per flower to those who are able to bring one back to the cities. It's biggest role however is in its root. When the root is ground up and allowed to ferment, it can be applied to wounds to help stop the bleeding. It is a local anesthetic and clots the blood coming from the wound, within a minute or two it dries forming a barrier over the wound, similar to a bandage. (in other words it can be bumped and the wound will start to bleed again) Since this plant has only been brought by the Pterrans, it is very hard to come by unless you know one.

### **Matchberries: by Dave Coleman**

Ever wondered how some caravan leaders get their fires lit so quickly. The secret is Little Lucifers or, on Athas, Matchberries. When a fire-builder throws one of these little berries onto a fire, they catch alight almost instantaneously, and burn with explosive heat.

Matchberry plants are small green shrubs which could not of arisen normally in the wilds of Athas, but its method of scattering seeds certainly suits the savage tone of Athas. Matchberries are little yellow/orange berries with a hardened waxy rind (to prevent desiccation), and hard black seeds. The fruit has a tendency to be very flammable, possibly because of the fermented alcohol within it.

Matchberries are special because they absorb heat from their surroundings, creating a chilling effect. The scent of the berry is very sweet, and attracts small rodents, insects and the occasional larger creature. Individually they are relatively harmless, and cause a chilling effect initially then a warm burning sensation in the stomach. Over time the heat absorbed reaches a certain level, and the matchberries will warm up. However in large numbers they are become more volatile. Ingested berries can clog the stomach. If several are grouped together, and begin to heat up, there is a small chance that combustion will occur (5%). If it does, each berry does 1-2 point damage in explosive heat. Sometimes this kills the host. The seeds located within the berry are flame resistant, and begin growing following ignition. If the host dies, the plant grows from the carcass, using it as a source of nutrients (Blood and Bone). However the carcass is often eaten by scavengers, whose immune system easily dispatches the matchberry plant.

A particularly gruesome thing is when an undead creature eats the remains of a victim. Because it has no immune system, the plant actually grows freely, but a gray twisted version of the plant occurs. This can

add extra horror to the undead. Cunning undead have been seen with plants growing freely causing a grotesque camouflage effect.

Matchberries are also made into a wine by Duar tribes, and a pale amber liquid ensues. Amongst the Duar only a small amount of this wine is generally drunk, but particularly annoying guests are offered larger quantities of this alcohol.

## **Memory Pools: by Mike Mitchell**

***(Expanded by Dave Coleman)***

Strangely tainted water, which generates hallucinations, and visions, which enhance memory recall, and future visions. These pools of water are often found in the hinterlands and scrub plains. It usually consists of a small metallic smelling pool in which a collection of lichens and fungus grows around. Some druids say that the pool is a fragment of the memory of a Spirit of the Land, but sometimes the Duar herder's use it to seek visions. One vision per session; acts in the following way (d6):

- 1) Precognition (as per the Psionic science)
- 2) Predestination (as per the Psionic devotion)
- 3) Sensitivity to Psychic Impressions (as per the Psionic science)
- 4) Danger Sense (as per the Psionic devotion)
- 5) Spirit Lore (as per the Psionic science)
- 6) Vision (as per the spell)

## **Milkywort: by Dave Coleman**

Not all poisons created by the entertainment industry of Athas are designed to kill. Occasionally a patron has other reasons and ways to humiliate, scare, and change rivals attitudes. Among the storytellers of Gulgs Dagada there is 3 poisons used which occasionally find their way into the wider tablelands; Milkywort, Greenshade, and Harelossi.

Milkywort is a small low ground-growing succulent, which is primarily found in the verdant belt south of Gulg. It is very rare at best, and the local farmers who feared to step on its spines used to destroy it whenever they could, to avoid milksblindness. That was until several farmers who accidentally drowned in a drum of water were later found, their hands clasping a spine of milkywort. The bards of that city carefully make notes of the succulent's location for future harvesting. Milkywort is harvested by making a small knife slit down one of the leaves, and the milky white sap, which oozes out of the wound, is carefully collected in a bowl. This sap is carefully stored out of the light for later use. Milkywort sap is a tasteless, gummy (although a slightly sugary



taste has been reported) liquid which dissolves into alcohol. When the victim imbibes it, the poison impedes one's ability to see. The eyes get glazed over into a milky white color, which causes temporary blindness. The amount of time of blindness is dependent upon the dosage used. Usually the dose will only last about a turn, in which the victim can be robbed, threatened, or even taken to a secret location. If sufficient dosages are used, permanent blindness can also be inflicted, but rarely is this carried out.

### **Mindnumb Weed: by Mike Mitchell**

*(Expanded by Dave Coleman)*

A very rare bitter, ugly herb which survives in odd corners of every desert in the tablelands. Its existence has been known to the Templars of most cities since time immemorial, as they seek to control psionics in their cities. Its extinction has been debated by the Order for many years, but they find it useful in destroying rogue psionics. Additionally the Order uses the weed in its trials of Rogue Psionics, instead of continually using their own psionics. If someone drinks a brewed concoction, all psionic ability is numbed for  $d6 + 3$  days if they fail their save against poison. However its has a very foul taste and smell, and most people will not willingly drink it. Mixing it with Eau de Silt Lily can alleviate the taste.

### **Miranna Berry: by Mike Mitchell**

*(Expanded by Dave Coleman)*

A rare plant with a green-silver berry found in mountain regions, especially in the Mekillot Mountains. The leaves are reddish in color and the branches are orange. The plant lives close to salts, giving it a strong salty taste. It can be distilled into a strong (60-proof) liquor, and if the berries are properly prepared, it acts as a purgative, curing  $2d6$  points of internal damage (not burn, frost or acid).

### **Pinnacle: by Shawn Kasprick**

This plant grows about a  $1/4$  inch tall and consists of 5 small needle-like spikes. It has one center spike with 4 spikes surrounding it. It has a tendency, when dry, to break off very easily when bumped. This makes it a very suitable plant for bards. The bards can sprinkle a few seeds in the path they intend their victim to be traveling and water the seeds once every day. In 3 days they will sprout and set root. In five days the spikes are fully-grown and still very soft, although they retain their shape

if traveled upon at this time. At this time the watering stops and the spikes dry out and become hollow. The bard inserts the poison into the spikes. When the victim walks over the plant with no boots or thin boots then the spikes will embed themselves into the victims foot allowing the poison to enter the body. If the victim has thick leather boots on the spikes just break off and are useless. If the plant is grown for seed, it is watered continuously for 2 weeks, at which time the plant will have sent out a shoot from the center spike and bears ten viable seeds.

"The best use that I have found for these is when I am allowed to tend a noble's garden. The noble has certain paths that he likes to take, in the morning, so I have planted these pinnacles in his path and he has taken no notice of them. I have stopped watering them and they should dry out within this hot day. I will wait until tonight to install the poison into them and be gone."

### **Piyare: by Dave Coleman**

Sometimes the gladiators know that they're going to die. Sometimes they're slated to meet a foe that is much stronger, better and more sadistic than themselves in the arena, and they take steps to reduce the pain that is bound to come. Some gladiators have use a plant called piyare which is mainly found in the Ringing Mountains. Piyare is a large tree which is relatively common in the Forest Ridge, and sometime found in the lower ringing mountains scrublands. The part of piyare that is used is a small piece of bark from a new tree limb or shoot.

Piyare was first used by the halfling of the Forest Ridge to alleviate the pain associated with childbirth. Dependent on the amount consumed, one could make themselves completely numb for a period of time, and feel no pain. Some arena managers discovered the use of the herb when they were looking for a means to improve their stock. At first, piyare was believed to help the gladiator in battle by eliminating pain, but gladiators quickly they learnt that piyare also slows down reaction times. So piyares use quickly faded out.

But with the increasing popularity of Jaszts in the arena, and many sadistic brute which conquer, piyare was revived as a more humane way of helping losing gladiators. Piyare has no healing qualities, nor any blood clotting quality (thus wound continues to flow), and additionally slows down the user by reducing their dexterity by 2 points. Piyare is a very rapid acting herb. In fact it is absorbed by the blood in a matter of rounds.

Usually a gladiator will carry a piece of piyare in their mouth or on their person, and only begin chewing if the battle is going particularly



badly. Then they die in a more humane way.

### **Silt Lily: by Mike Mitchell**

***(Expanded by Dave Coleman)***

A rare plant, similar to water lily, which anchors itself deep in silt. It releases water into the air from the deep silt, which sometimes is enough to allow other plants to survive. It is strong smelling and tastes awful, so silt herbivore tend to eat the other plants first.

It provides beautiful perfume, but has never been successfully grown in controlled setting. The Rynthi League traders control most of the silt lily perfume trade, although they allow House Inika to control trade into Gulg. Each different colony of silt lilies produces a different scent (similar to wine) and the traders often try to blend a "normal" scent from the different lilies. Silt clerics loathe them, and take extra time out to destroy them when they can. Several skimmersmen of the League know of very secret locations where the lily grows in abundance, but House Tsalaxa are trying to locate these, by means fair or foul

### **Skin Oil Cactus: by Mike Mitchell**

***(Expanded by Dave Coleman)***

On Athas, a good sunscreen is very important, but very few are available to normal denizens. Usually only desert druids or skilled herbalists can create unguent to protect one from the sun. The sunscreens are very expensive to buy, but can be found in the markets of Athas.

One of the simpler sunscreens is a liquid obtained by tapping into a tough, barrel like cactus. Its inner fluid has a creamy rubbery texture, which can be smeared onto a creature's skin. It protects the skin from excessive burning and dehydration, and lessens the amount of water need by a ¼ of the normal daily needs. One dosage will actually last a given day, although strong winds may reduce the time substantially.

### **Spikegrass: by Shawn Kasprick**

As its name implies, this plant is spike-shaped. It is about 3 feet tall, with spikes that make it look like a clump of grass. It grows near the Smoking mountains in the rocky badlands. The only use that has ever been found for this plant is at the bottom of pits. It can survive long periods of time without moisture and can utilize any type of moisture that it is brought into contact with. (i.e. at the bottom of pits where it can feed off

of the blood of its victims) People who use it for their pits like using this plant because any spikes that are broken off immediately regrow, so this plant requires little maintenance.

### **Starflower: by Shawn Kasprick**

It is a small bush that grows about 2 feet tall. It grows in the southern region of the crescent forest around Gulg. Once a year it bears one-inch, red, star-shaped flowers about one month before the Red Moon Hunt. During this time some of the flowers are picked and dried by anyone who wishes to partake in the Red Moon Hunt. The dried flowers are given to a herbalist who creates incense pellets from the herbs. The pellets are used during the preparation for the Red Moon Hunt. They believe that the scent helps them become one with the forest, since it has a hallucinogenic effect. The flowers that are not picked for the incense go on to create a red berry that is used as a red body paint during the Red Moon Hunt. The nobles who have partaken in the Red Moon Hunt also grow this plant around their estates. It has become a crime to destroy this bush without authority from the templars, anyone caught doing so will partake in the Red Moon Hunt.....on the wrong side!!

### **Tari Fungus: by Dave Coleman**

Amongst the Tari who live beneath the city streets, fungus plays an important part of their culture. The Tari grow fungus for food, shape fungus for cooking utensils, and use it to light the darker spots in their warrens.

For the tari, there are many different sorts of fungus which are used to flavor their otherwise bland meals, but there are three main fungi which are used; Blanvert, Kee'l, and Sarshi. The first; blandvert is the main fungus used, and appears as a large flat looking fungus, and is the staple fungus of their diet. Quite common beneath the streets, it manages to survive over the face of the tableland. Blandvert is believed to be a gift from the Earth, and all healthy Tari eat it. Unfortunately it is as tasteless as the name suggests, but full of nutrition. Occasionally the poorer city dwellers will stoop to eating it, but otherwise it is fit for just the rats.

Kee'l is a small sweet tasting fungus, which has a yellow hue when exposed to the Athasian sun. It is regarded as a dessert by the Tari, and is grown by



the better Ghir'leers (fungus harvesters), but its use is also quite common, especially by the Tari beneath the City of Tyr, and Balic. It is occasionally traded with the merchants, as it is quite popular amongst the nobles (especially Raam), who use it to spice up their lives.

The final one, which is primarily used by the wilderness Tari, is believed to be a gift from Turghoz the Hidden. It is a more recent fungus, which has its origins in the fall of Ythri. The city dwellers rarely eat it, as their cultural memory associates it with the fall, but for the wilderness tari it is a gift from the gods. Sarshi is a fungus, which has similar qualities to that of Cactus. Its spores are carried by the desert winds where they sit, awaiting for moisture of any sort. If the rains come, the fungus grows very quickly to make use of the moisture, but then creates a shell which is resistant to evaporation, and can even lie in the open for a period of time. It is highly nutritious (but not as good as blanvert) and contains much of what the Tari need. It grows everywhere, but especially in the Southern Tablelands for an unknown reason. The wilderness tari have a tendency to live in places where sarshi is common.

Other fungus used by the Tari in food are Silorn (a peppery fungus), Velot (a bitter tasting fungi), Bheri (a fruity tasting fungus), and Belist (a fungi which is fermented into a drink which is unpalatable by human standards).

The Ghir'vhan (fungus shapers) are a special group amongst the tari. They work with a fungus called Viershak, which normally grows as a brown bowl-shaped fungus. If carefully grown by the ghir'vhan, and picked at the right moment, the fungus top is sealed by fungal sap (veirpak), and dried carefully. Over time the fungus becomes as hard as a light wood, and is used by the Tari as a bowl. At other times the viershak is "blown up" like a balloon, sealed with Vierpak, and then dried. It is then used as a storage vessel. In the hand of a very good ghir'vhan pottery urns can be created, and then traded amongst themselves or to merchants.

The final fungus of importance is the "suonba", which is an iridescent fungi. Even to the dark-dwellers such as the tari, there are shadows, which they fear. So they light certain areas to keep out the shadows. Suonba is tended by both the Ghir'vhan and the Ghir'leer.

## **Templar's Bindweed: by Shawn Kasprick**

This plant is a vine plant that grows along the ground, and whose vines can reach up to 5 feet long when fully grown. It likes to grow along pathways that are used quite often. No other plants grow in such compact soil, but

this way the plant has no competition. Since it is commonly trampled upon, its vines are very strong requiring a 13 strength to break the vines if you get tangled up in them. Normally this plant is a nasty weed that when it gets to be a problem, i.e. the wrong person gets tangled in them, the plant is quickly removed. It has one attribute that templars like. They braid the vines into a 3 foot rope and soak it in water. Like leather it becomes very flexible and can stretch slightly, and when it dries off it becomes very tight. So templars like to carry it with them in case they wish to jail someone. They fit the rope around the hands and within minutes the vines dry out, because of Athas's sun, and become very tight against the victims hands. The person is virtually helpless with their hands behind them and vines so tight that it cuts off circulation after a time. This plant is also used for its ability to become very tight in numerous ways and by numerous people, but is popularized by its use amongst the templars.

**Timiris: by Mike Mitchell**  
*(Expanded by Dave Coleman)*

A hedge-like thorn plant which lures victims into its reach with a small "tunnel" leading to the water pool at its center. Once halfway inside, hollow thorns reach down and puncture the victim, spilling blood and tearing flesh. Its strength is feeble, but its thorns are numerous. The thorns are rarely used by the folk of Gulg in the creation of tiny darts. However only one in every hundred is suitable as such. Some desperate slave tribes will sometime kill the plant to eat any earlier victims, but other tribes deliberately allow the plant to grow near their hideaways for extra protection.

**Veroc: [cleanser] by Mike Mitchell**  
*(Expanded by Dave Coleman)*

A short, bushy green plant; found mainly in the rocky badlands. Its leaves are broken off and brewed as a tea then the vapour inhaled; ingestion produces light-headedness and enhances initiative (+1) and general good feeling. Many duar tribes drink this tea socially when meeting men of other tribes, because the good feeling usually overcomes some of the mistrust that may occur in the wastes. Some bards of Balic use powdered veroc in hosts drinks, as it means that the hosts are more friendly and hopefully more generous.

**Waspweed: by Dave Coleman**



It is believed that the Kreen rarely use herbs amongst their healing tools, but instead they mainly use animal products. Occasionally the Kreen of the tablelands utilize plant materials in their healing: one such plant is Waspweed. The waspweed is primarily found as a scrubby bush found in the rocky barrens, where it lives on boulders close to canyon walls.

The plant is unusual in the fact that it has developed a defense mechanism similar to some animals, that of camouflage. The plant is primarily light yellow in color with dark streaks of black running down plant stems and leaves. This gives the effect of camouflaging the plant against the streak rocky canyon walls. It is unknown how such a strange coloration first began, but the plant leaves actually absorb heat from its surroundings. But if the waspweed is pulled from its rocky perch, an extensive root system can be found, a system, which is breaking down the rock. It is these roots which radiate the heat that the leaves absorbed during the daytime. Knowledgeable travelers in the Rockbarrens have occasionally found rocks in which the root system lies very close to the surface of the boulder, and they use them to ward off the chill of the Athasian night, as the boulders are warm to touch. Sometimes the same travelers will use waspweed roots in heating packs to ease the strains of the day. Apart from this, the waspweed has little other value for mammalian lifeforms.

For the Kreen however, the waspweed aids in the healing of chitin in a significant manner. The Waspweed roots emanate heat at a level, which is the optimum level for chitin healing. The Kreen cut the roots of the waspweed, and tie them onto the wound. (The basic effect of Waspweed is that one point of chitin healing can be achieved per day). In the hands of an experienced healer, the chitin can be healed faster (a rate of 2 points per day). Additionally sometimes the Kreen dry the roots for ingestion. When the Kreen is subject to the effect of chitin diseases the Kreen will ingest the root. This has the effect of heightening the Kreen's temperature, and the Kreen emanates a small amount of heat. The effect is very rapid, and has the effect of destroying diseases or ridding the body of poisons, but it also damages the Kreen internal organs (3 points of damage). However only a small portion of the root is useful for such effects. (A second saving throws vs. poison at a -2 penalty, and can rid the body of nonmagical disease)

Some Elvish Kreen Slayers have noted the healing properties of waspweed during their observations of Kreen packs, and thus destroy any waspweed that they locate. Some slayers have detailed this knowledge to their respective tribes, and thus it isn't uncommon to see Elvish Defilers casting spells in the direct vicinity of the waspweed plant. On the other hand Kreen packs have also been observed to protect small groves of waspweed in their

range, and "help" out any other waspweed plants they find during the hunt. Thus the plant is rare as opposed to very rare in the rocky barrens. Few in the merchant's trade are aware of the benefits of waspweed, but a couple of small houses with experienced herbalists locate waspweed in the barrens for trade in the wastes.

## **Zaganazar [Blind Wort]: by Mike Mitchell**

***(Expanded by Dave Coleman)***

A small, black, bulbous fungus grown by the Tari and some of the bards of Undertyr. When it is consumed it causes temporary blindness in its victims. Strangely enough, when the Tari fled Ythri, Zaganazar was used to prevent permanent blindness from the sun. Because the Tari had spent all their lives beneath the ground, the Athasian sun sometimes caused permanent blindness if suddenly the eyes were thrust into the light. So Zaganazar was used to help adjust the eyes before the retinas burnt out. Of course the bards of Athas quickly discovered other uses.

***Compiled by Dave***

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