

Vanguard of Ildurath: Order of the Grove (Prestige Class)

The Vanguard of Ildurath are dedicated to the defense and preservation of Ildurath, and to the enhancement of the Academy of Ildurath in all forms. The Vanguard are divided into three distinct orders: The Order of the Sword, The Order of the Mantle, and The Order of the Grove. These factions were created to compliment the Magi of Ildurath, to work in concert with them for the betterment of the land.

The Order of the Grove represents the druidic faction in Ildurath, and its members are tied directly to the Forest of Ildurath and to the Grove of th'Lanthalas. The Order of the Grove are the protectors of the Forest and the guardians of the Great Tree. They attune themselves to the Mythal of Ildurath by embracing the land around them, eventually becoming one with the land they strive to protect.

Requirements:

In order to take the Vanguard of Ildurath: Order of the Grove prestige class, the following requirements must be met:

- *Alignment:* Any nonevil.
- *Spellcasting:* Ability to cast Druid Grove.
- *Feats:* Any Wild Feat.
- *Skills:* Profession (Herbalist) 4 ranks; Wilderness Lore 8 ranks; Knowledge (nature) 8 ranks.
- *Special:* Must be in good standing with the Academy, have shown a dedication to the preservation of Ildurath, and be recommended by a member of the Academy.

Class Skills:

The Vanguard of Ildurath: Order of the Grove class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (any) (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Intuit Direction (Wis), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Scry (Int), Spellcraft (Int), Swim (Str), Wilderness Lore (Wis).

Level	Title	BaB	F/R/W	Special	Spells per day
1	Youngling	+1	+2/+0/+2	Create Infusion, Cooperative Combat	+1 level of existing class
2	Vernal	+2	+3/+0/+3	Expert Infusion, Sun Sustenance	+1 level of existing class
3	Curate	+3	+3/+1/+3	Spontaneity	+1 level of existing class
4	Consul	+4	+4/+1/+4	Sun Healing	+1 level of existing class
5	Ovate	+5	+4/+1/+4	Ley Lines +1 (forest)	+1 level of existing class
6	Guardian	+6	+5/+2/+5	Treant Wild Shape	+1 level of existing class
7	Elder	+7	+5/+2/+5	Ley Lines +2 (forest)	+1 level of existing class
8	High Elder	+8	+6/+2/+6	Animate Tree	+1 level of existing class
9	Grand Elder	+9	+6/+3/+6	Ley Lines +3 (forest)	+1 level of existing class
10	Scion	+10	+7/+3/+7	Rite of Attunement (embrace)	+1 level of existing class

Hit Die: d8 -- **Skill Points at each level:** 4 + Intelligence modifier.

Class Features:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency

The Vanguard gains no weapon or armor proficiencies.

Spells per day

At each Vanguard level, the character gains new spells per day as if she had also gained a level in a spellcasting class to which she belonged before adding the prestige class. She does not, however, gain any other benefits a character would have gained. If the character had more than one spellcasting class before becoming a Vanguard, the player must decide which class to add each Vanguard level for determining spells per day.

Cooperative Combat

The Vanguard of Ildurath are meant to compliment each other in defense of the land. They are trained how to make best use of the abilities of one another, and how to fight most effectively given the unique skills of the various orders. When in combat with other Vanguard of Ildurath, the character gains use of the Expertise feat and the Improved Initiative feat.

Create Infusion

At 1st level, the Vanguard gains Create Infusion as a bonus feat.

Expert Infusion

At 2nd level, the character can automatically identify the spell contained in an infusion and the caster level of that spell. She also gains a bonus equal to her Vanguard level on both Profession (herbalist) and Wilderness Lore checks related to plants, including the use of the skill to forage for herbs.

Sun Sustenance (Ex)

At 2nd level, the character gains the ability to draw energy from the sun. As long as she spends at least 4 hours a day outdoors, she can draw sustenance from the sun itself, and thus requires no food that day. She still thirsts, however, and needs the standard amount of water to survive.

Spontaneity

Beginning at 3rd level, the Vanguard can channel stored spell energy into certain healing spells that she has not prepared ahead of time. This works like the cleric's spontaneous casting ability, with the following exceptions. She can "lose" a prepared spell to cast any regenerate spell of the same level or lower (a regenerate spell is any spell with "regenerate" in its name). Domain spells, if the character has access to them, cannot be converted into regenerate spells.

Sun Healing

At 4th level, the Vanguard gains Fast Healing (as per the feat) whenever she is outdoors.

Ley Lines (forest)

At 5th level, the Vanguard learns to create magical connections with the forest. In a forest terrain, the Vanguard's effective caster level for all spells increases by the bonus listed in the progression table.

Treant Wild Shape (Sp)

Beginning at 6th level, the Vanguard can use wild shape to take the form of a treant and back again once per day. This ability otherwise works like wild shape. Since a treant has a voice and manipulative appendages, the Vanguard can cast spells normally while in treant wild shape.

Animate Tree (Sp)

At 8th level, the Vanguard can animate a tree within 180 feet of her once per day. It takes a full round for

a tree to uproot itself; thereafter it has a speed of 30 feet and fights as a treant with respect to attacks and damage. The animated tree gains a number of bonus Hit Dice equal to the number of Vanguard levels the character possesses. Though its intelligence score is only 2 while animated, the tree automatically understands the Vanguard's commands. The character can return the animated tree to its normal state at will, and it automatically returns to its normal state if it dies or if the Vanguard who animated it is incapacitated or moves out of range. Once the tree returns to its normal state by any means, the Vanguard cannot animate another tree for 24 hours.

Rite of Attunement (The Embrace)

The title of Scion cannot be taken until the Rite is performed. When a character reaches the level where she is approaching undergoing the Rite, a series of conclaves are convened (by other members of the Order of the Grove) whereby the deeds of the character are reviewed and a determination is made as to whether or not she is worthy of the title of Scion.

If the conclave deems the character worthy, and if all of the requirements have been met, the Rite of Attunement is performed. In the end, it is believed that the Mythal itself has the final say as to whether or not the character is worthy of this honor.

Once the Rite of Attunement has been successfully undertaken, the Scion becomes permanently bonded to the Mythal of Ildurath. For the Order of the Grove, this attunement manifests as what is referred to as the Embrace. The Forest of Ildurath reaches out and embraces the Scion permanently, creating an ever-vigilant defender for the land.

The Scion permanently becomes a plant creature, though all forms of wild shape that the character could previously use remain available to her. Her type changes to plant, and as a result she gains low-light vision, is immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and polymorphing, and is not subject to critical hits or mind-influencing effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, or morale effects). She no longer suffers the penalties for aging and cannot be magically aged. Any aging penalties she may already have suffered, remain in place. Bonuses still accrue, and the Scion still dies of old age when her time is up.

In addition, in defense of Ildurath (usable at will only while within the borders of the Mythal, and treated as command-word activated spell-like abilities) the Scion gains the following powers:

- True seeing
- Know Protections (CL: 20)
- Know Vulnerabilities (CL: 20)
- Tongues
- Discern Lies (CL: 20)
- See Invisibility
- Dispel Evil (CL: 20)
- Aura of Vitality
- Neutralize Poison
- Silence (CL: 20)
- Cure Moderate Wounds
- Wind Walk
- Stoneskin