

Pestkiller

Class Information

Class Requirements	Thief
Racial Requirements	Dwarf (shield), gnome (rock), halfling (hairfeet, stout)
Ability Requirements	Constitution 13, Dexterity 13, Strength 9
Prime Requisite	Dexterity
Alignments	Any
Social Rank	Lower class
Hit Die Type	d6
Attack as	Rogue
Save as	Rogue
Advance as	Thief
Spell Ability?	No
Exceptional Strength?	No
Exceptional Constitution?	No
Starting Cash (×10 gp)	2d6

Proficiencies

Weapons Slots	2
Initial Weapons	Standard thief, plus hand axe, blowgun, short bow, warhammer
Additional WP Slot	4
Additional Weapons	As above
Nonproficiency Penalty	−3
Nonweapon Slots	3
Additional NWP Slot	4
Available Categories	General, Rogue
Bonus Proficiencies:	Animal lore, blacksmithing, herbalism (CTH), pest control (CBDw)
Recommended Proficiencies:	Alertness (CRH), animal noise (CTH), blind-fighting, fire-building, fungi recognition (CBDw), gaming, hunting (CTH), observation (CTH), set snares, slow respiration (CBDw), survival (CTH), tracking (CTH)
Secondary Skills:	Hunter, trapper/furrier

Overview

Pestkillers have been employed in large cities across Faerûn for centuries, though they rarely attract any attention until they are needed to deal with a huge outbreak of rats or other vermin. Pestkillers are usually well employed, if under rough conditions, and have no interest in adventuring. However, some get caught up in the excitement of the adventuring life and moonlight as helpers with adventuring groups heading into vermin-filled dungeons, or else act as guides for groups heading into subterranean areas under the city in which they live. Few people are aware of (or have any respect for) the vast knowledge that pestkillers have of the myriad passages beneath their cities, or their detailed knowledge of the habits of their foes and how those foes can be ultimately destroyed.

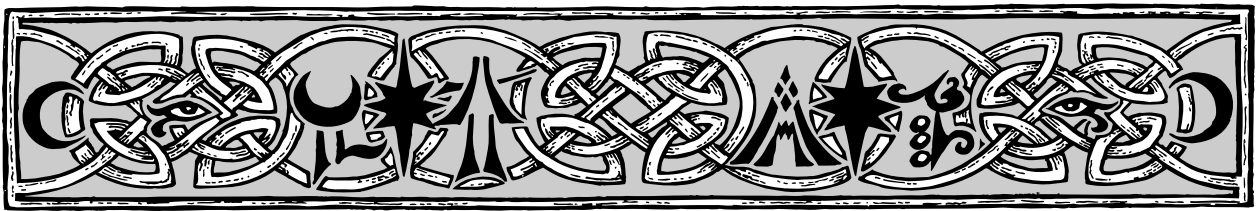
Pestkillers are employed from Neverwinter to Calimport and beyond, and in cities along the Sea of Fallen Stars, as such cities pick up thousands of vermin from ships. Dwarf and gnome strongholds get vermin from the Underdark or in their food stores or trade goods. Pestkilling is not a seasonal job; it continues throughout the year.

Description

A pestkiller wears light armor to retain freedom of movement. He has a filthy, smelly, ragged appearance, but he is careful to tuck in all straps or loose objects that could get caught on projections while crawling through narrow passages. (This is the reason that pestkillers do not wear belts with weapons and pouches on the outside of their clothing.) Shield dwarf pestkillers often trim their beards very short, giving them very low status in the eyes of their own kind. Clothing is dirty but made of durable material, with extra padding in the elbows and knees (for crawling). Gloves or hand wrappings are common; boots are required. If armor is worn, a loose tunic is often worn over it to prevent snagging and muffle noise. A thick leather helmet is tied down over the head, sometimes with a metal plate in it to protect the head from attacks in a crawlspace.

Roleplaying

The pestkiller is an interesting character: a little-known, dirty, and gritty explorer of urban dungeons and destroyer of unwanted vermin. He has quite likely seen astonishing and horrifying sights no one else would even dream of (especially not taking place right below the city streets). His normal priorities on any mission are to



identify a pest, then eliminate it. He can develop a peculiar empathy and understanding of a particular pest after studying it, but this does not keep him from destroying it. Most pestkillers are loners, but they welcome companions for a short time. (Given the foul body odor and diseases most pestkillers have, few people ever want to be close to them for long.)

Special Advantages

Typical vermin that pestkillers face include rats (all), bats (all), snakes and small lizards (all), spiders and scorpions (all), insects (all, from ants to wasps), centipedes and millipedes (all), weasels and giant weasels, rot grubs, carrion crawlers, jermlaine, mites, kobolds, and every sort of fungus, slime, mold, ooze, jelly, pudding, or other amoeboid monster imaginable to the DM.

The four bonus proficiencies a pestkiller has combine to give him several special abilities.

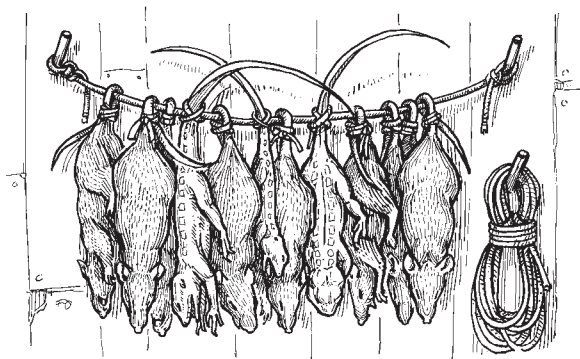
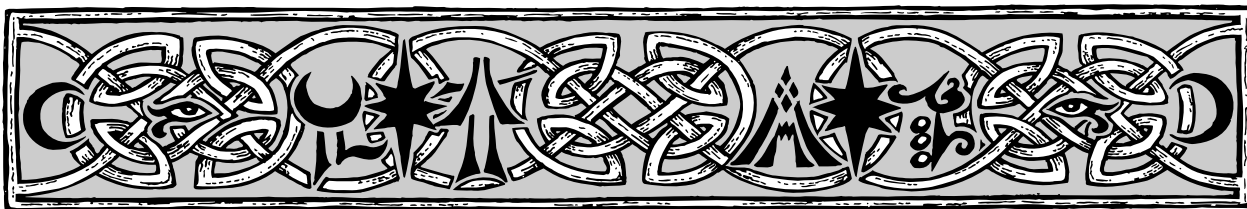
First, he can manufacture pest traps, each designed to capture or kill a particular pest of size S or smaller, and with an Intelligence of 4 or less. It takes one day and costs 1d4 gp to make a special trap and bait it with substances

attractive to the specific pest for which it was designed. Only the pestkiller can properly place and arm the trap. Once set, a trap can catch up to two creatures of size S, or eight creatures of size T (tiny), either holding them securely, doing damage to them on capture (in hopes of killing them), or poisoning them. Damage done on capture equals 1 point per level of the trap maker. A successful herbalism check, followed by a successful pest control check, allows a poison to be made that causes its targeted creature to save vs. poison on contact, or die. Other beings handling the poison take only 1 point of damage per round for 1d4 rounds or until the poison is washed off.

A pestkiller must first be able to study live specimens of the creature he is building traps against. If only dead specimens are available, his traps have a 50% chance of not working when used. Any pestkiller using this ability in a city or stronghold slowly causes the decline and extinction of the species he is attacking. The DM must determine how the encounter tables shift over time, but change surely occurs.

Second, the pestkiller makes himself resistant to the poisons and venoms used by vermin. Over time, his





studies of vermin grant him bonuses to saving throws vs. any monster or animal venom; he gets a +1 bonus at levels 4–6, a +2 at 7–9, a +3 at 10–12, etc. He is not more resistant to manufactured poisons, such as those used by assassins but would gain the bonus against poisonous snakes, insects, spiders, reptiles, monsters, etc.

Third, the pestkiller can manufacture traps like wire snares and bear traps that catch prey of size S or M, doing damage while holding the prey in one spot. It takes 1d3 days and costs 10 gp to make such a trap. The trap is concealed and chained or spiked to the floor. A detect/remove traps roll by a thief locates and disarms it. Any human, demihuman, or humanoid caught in such a trap can free himself only by making a bend bars/lift gates Strength check; monsters have a percentage chance equal to their Hit Dice of freeing themselves. Only one such check can be made for a victim. A victim takes 1d4 points of damage per two levels of the pestkiller when the trap is sprung.

Fourth, the pestkiller can make a poison powder good against a particular type of vermin if he can study a live specimen, then make an herbalism check and pest control check at a +2 modifier (toward failure) on the roll. The process of making this poison takes 3d4 days and costs 10d10 gp in supplies, easily gathered in any large city. This poison powder is good against non-manlike “cleanup crew” monsters the DM allows, from rot grubs to green slime. The powder made covers an area 10 feet by 10 feet if used all at once (killing any appropriate monster if it fails a saving throw vs. poison or death), or it can be used against 10 creatures of the appropriate type.

Because of long exposure to filthy environments and their acquisition of resistance to many common infections, pestkillers have a +4 bonus to all saving throws against nonmagical diseases or parasites. No special resistance to magical diseases is so gained.

Special Disadvantages

A pestkiller has no ability to pick pockets, open locks, or read languages, though all other thieving abilities function normally. No points are lost for distribution each level, however, so the remaining skills may increase more rapidly than usual.

Though pestkillers are resistant to diseases and parasites, they are also carriers of the same, and their companions should use great caution around them. (A *cure disease* spell, fresh clothing, and a bath before adventuring are highly recommended.) Unless a pestkiller is magically cured of all diseases, anyone coming within 5 feet of him has a 10% noncumulative chance per day of catching a normal but highly infectious disease or parasite; this chance jumps to 50% if the pestkiller is physically touched, the chance rolled per touch, and jumps to 99% if the person has an open wound. (Obviously, anyone fighting the pestkiller is in serious trouble.) If the DM has no infectious disease statistics handy with which to plague the characters, the example of the debilitating illness produced by the *cause disease* spell (in the *Player's Handbook*, with the description of the spell *cure disease*) should prove enlightening.

A pestkiller has no ability to pick pockets or read languages, as noted earlier. He gains no followers upon reaching 10th level, and he cannot use magical or clerical scrolls at that time. He can use the damage multiplier for backstabbing, though, from fighting small humanoids.

Because he spends so much time fighting little creatures, the pestkiller is not very good at fighting giants. Dwarf and gnome pestkillers place only a –2 penalty to the attack rolls of giant-class foes.

A pestkiller—not to put too fine a point on it—looks bad and smells far worse. He knows it, but his job is like that, and he doesn't care much about cleanliness. Apply a +2 modifier to NPC reaction rolls, to exclude anyone attacking him just because he smells bad. (If he transmits disease and everyone knows this, no one wants to touch him anyway.) Shield dwarves with short beards take a +3 modifier to reactions from all other surface dwarves.