

# CARAPACE CODEX

## INSECTOID PLAYER OPTIONS

### WHAT'S INCLUDED

This document comes with 5 pieces of homebrew; 2 species, 2 subclasses and 1 magic item. In order of appearance in this document these include.

- **The Volodni**, a spin on an old classic, a group of plant-based humanoids that originate from the Great Dream.
- **The Arthropin**, a modular insectoid species with similar origins to the Volodni, allowing you to build your own insect folk so that no Ant, Flea or Ladybug person isn't possible.
- **The Hive Domain Cleric**, dedicated worshippers of a collective, shirking the confines of the divine in favour of a more...unified belief system.
- **The School of Myrmecology Wizard**, a practice for those who understand the advanced micro-society beneath our feet. Using the magnificent and unique skills of ants to gain a greater perception of the world around them.
- **Mantle of Morphosis**, is a beautifully intricate device designed by studiers of the Arthropin to mimic their unique and wonderful traits.

As with all my releases, the following lore is just a recommendation! Based upon the lore of my setting Surya. Feel free to adapt these concepts to fit your own needs.

#### CREDITS:

The Volodni are very much property of WoTC and the species I have written in this document including the lore, is inspired by the Tales of the Lost Races, by /u/ Necrowabbit, i've adapted the Volodni he wrote to my setting and re-worked it fairly heavily, thought it's not the focus of this release (Bugs), it is included to ensure that the Arthropins distant cousins aren't left out!

## THE ARTHROPIN

The Arthropin are an extraordinarily diverse species of insectoid humanoids encompassing an array of variations. From ladybugs to mosquitoes to spider-folk, each Arthropin possesses a unique set of abilities and physiological traits. Despite their diversity, Arthropins are exceedingly rare, and encounters with two of the same kind are uncommon.

## ORIGIN

The Arthropin diverged from the Volodni, their plant-based cousins. While Volodni emerged from the World Tree in their plant-like forms, Arthropins took shape from the beehives and termite mounds surrounding the same forests. Both species share origins in a mystical dream realm but diverged along the way to physical existence.

## THE GREAT DREAM

The World Trees of Surya are monumental druidic landmarks, created by powerful mages who infused the earth with magical essence. These trees, with roots spanning hundreds of thousands of miles, are the source of all Druidic magic. An unexpected side effect of the World Trees' creation was the manifestation of an alternate plane within the trees, known to its inhabitants as "The Great Dream."

After a few centuries of the World Trees' existence, Volodni and Arthropins began emerging from the tree bark and nearby insect nests. These beings claimed to have originated from "The Great Dream," only venturing into the physical world upon reaching maturity and seeking a purpose beyond their dreamlike existence.

## THE BIRDS AND THE BEES

In modern times, becoming an Arthropin is a rare genetic occurrence linked to ancestral connections to the World Tree. Some Volodni even give birth to Arthropin children. Most Arthropins who engage in romantic relationships usually do so with other humanoid species. Due to their rarity, encountering an Arthropin is a novel experience for most humanoids, but the generally accepting culture of West Negresh makes it a conducive environment for them to live.

## EARLY HISTORY

Initially, The Arthropin coexisted peacefully with the Volodni in the northwestern forests of Negresh. However, differing philosophies about interaction with the wider world led to their eventual separation. While the Arthropins advocated for sharing the World Tree's abundant resources, the Volodni viewed external civilizations as threats to their natural habitat.

Rather than engage in a futile conflict, the Arthropin left their ancestral forests to make contact with human civilization. Their first encounter occurred in Cherryvale, a struggling village a few days' journey southwest of the World Tree. The Arthropins discovered that the overwhelming druidic magic emanating from the World Tree's roots inhibited the village's agriculture.

To win the villagers' favor, the Arthropins introduced them to Lip Seed, a mildly hallucinogenic plant that could thrive in the magic-saturated soil. Since this initial interaction, The Arthropin have dispersed, leading disparate lives yet bound by their singular, mysterious origins.

## SPECIES

### VOLODNI

**Appearance.** Volodni are plant-based humanoids with bark-like skin, foliage for hair, and eyes that resemble vibrant flower petals or glossy seeds. Their bodies are often entwined with vines, leaves, and even small fruits or flowers, depending on the season and their individual variations. Within the Volodni race, you'll find fascinating variants that mirror the diversity of the plant kingdom. Oak variants, for example, boast broad, heavy leaves and acorn-like eyes set in dark brown, rough bark. In contrast, the willow variants are tall and slender, their drooping, vine-like foliage giving them a mournful, weeping appearance. Adding a splash of color are the cherry blossom Volodni, their smooth bark adorned with pink or white petals, especially during their blooming seasons. For those adapted to harsh, arid climates, cactus variants exist with their green, waxy skin studded with spiky protrusions.

**Ability Scores.** Choose one of: (a) Choose any +2; choose any other +1 (b) Choose three different +1  
**Size.** Volodni are slightly smaller than humans, averaging at around 5 feet tall. Your size is Medium.  
**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Age:** Volodni emerge fully grown from the Great Dream, but their maximum age has not been established. The first generation of Volodni were never known to have died, merely re-entering the Great Dream and vanishing after a few hundred years.

**Plant Physiology.** Your body is made up of plant-like materials. You have resistance to piercing damage but vulnerability to fire damage. Additionally, you can shape and grow your bark and foliage into forms that resemble clothing or armor in just 10 minutes.

**Natural Camouflage.** When you make a Stealth check in forested terrain or in areas with abundant plant life, you are considered proficient in the Stealth skill and add double your proficiency bonus to the check, instead of your normal proficiency bonus.

**Seasonal Adaptation.** Depending on the current season, you gain one of the following traits:

- **Spring:** When you are hit by an attack, you can use your reaction to release calming spores at the attacker. The attacker must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw (DC equals 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus) or be charmed by you until the end of their next turn. After you use this trait, you can't use it again until you complete a long rest.
- **Summer:** You gain a +1 bonus to damage rolls with melee weapon attacks.
- **Autumn:** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks.
- **Winter:** You gain resistance to cold damage.

**Photosynthesis.** You don't need to eat or drink in the traditional sense. Instead, you absorb sunlight and nutrients from the soil during spring, summer, and autumn. You must spend at least 4 hours in direct sunlight during these seasons to gain this benefit. During winter, your body adapts and requires a more substantial source of nutrition to sustain itself due to the low levels of sunlight present, during this time you can only sustain yourself on a carnivorous diet.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write Common and Sylvan.



## ARTHROPIN

Arthropins are a highly customizable species of insectoid humanoids. When creating an Arthropin character, consider the following guidelines:

**1. Point System:** You start with 8 points to spend on various traits. Each trait costs a certain number of points as indicated. Some traits cost zero points, representing common or neutral options. You can only choose one option from each sub-category (Legs, Wings, Eyes, Antennae). If you spend 5 or fewer points, increase one additional ability score of your choice by 1.

**2. Shared Cooldown:** If you have multiple traits that recharge after a long rest, these traits share their total amount of uses, meaning only one of them can be used until you complete the rests required.

### Arthropin Traits

**Ability Scores.** Choose one of: (a) Choose any +2 (b) Choose two different +1

**Age:** Arthropin mature quickly, reaching adulthood within a year, and can live up to 10 years.

**Size.** Medium or Small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

### 1. LOCOMOTION

#### Legs

- **6 Legs (0 points):** You have six legs. Two function as arms capable of grasping and manipulating objects.
- **8 Legs (1 point):** You have eight legs. Four function as arms capable of grasping and manipulating objects.

#### Wings

- **No Wings (0 points)**
- **Wings (3 points):** You have wings that allow you to fly. Your fly speed is 30 feet. You cannot fly if you are wearing medium or heavy armor.
- **Glider (2 points):** You can glide down from heights. For every foot you descend vertically, you can travel 2 feet horizontally. You can't gain altitude, but you don't take damage from falling.

#### Other

- **Jump (1 point):** Your powerful legs allow you to leap great distances. Your jump distance is doubled.
- **Burrow (2 points):** You can burrow through loose earth and stone. Your burrow speed is 15 feet.
- **Swimmer (1 point):** Your limbs are adapted for swimming. You gain a swim speed equal to your walking speed.

- **Climber (2 points):** Your limbs are adapted for climbing. You gain a climbing speed equal to your walking speed.

### 2. SENSORY ORGANS

#### Eyes

- **Compound Eyes (2 points):** You have advantage on Perception checks that rely on sight.
- **Simple Eyes (0 points):** Your vision is similar to that of most humanoids.
- **Tapetum (1 point):** You have darkvision up to a range of 30 feet.

#### Antennae

- **Long (1 point):** Your elongated antennae enhance your olfactory senses. You have advantage on Perception checks that rely on smell.
- **Short (0 points):** Your sense of smell is on par with most humanoids.

#### Other

- **Thermosensation (1 point):** You can detect subtle changes in temperature, granting you advantage on Survival checks in extreme temperatures and when predicting the weather.
- **Tympanal Hearing (1 point):** You have advantage on Perception checks that rely on hearing.

### 3. OFFENSIVE TRAITS

#### Mandibles

- **Strong (2 points):** Your mandibles are powerful and can inflict serious wounds. You have a bite attack that you can use to make unarmed strikes. When you hit with it, the attack deals 1d6 + your Strength modifier piercing damage.
- **Normal (0 points):** Your mandibles are average in strength. You have a bite attack that you can use to make unarmed strikes. When you hit with it, the attack deals 1d4 + your Dexterity modifier piercing damage.

#### Stingers

- **Venomous (2 points):** Your venomous stinger can cause significant harm. When you hit with an unarmed strike using your stinger, it deals 1 piercing damage. The target must then make a Constitution saving throw (DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier) or take an additional 2d4 poison damage.
- **Numbing (1 point):** Your numbing stinger delivers a toxin that slows foes. When you hit with an unarmed strike using your stinger, it deals 1d4 piercing damage, and the target's speed is halved until the end of their next turn.

## Other

- **Spitting Acid (2 points):** As an action, you can spit acid at a single target within 30 feet. The target must make a Dexterity saving throw (DC = 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus). On a failed save, the target takes 1d12 + your constitution modifier acid damage. You can use this trait a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus. You regain all expended uses of this ability when you complete a long rest.

## 4. DEFENSIVE TRAITS

### Exoskeleton

- **Hard (2 points):** Your exoskeleton provides superior protection. Without armor, your AC is 13 + your Dexterity modifier. You can utilize this natural armor if the armor you wear would give you a lower AC. Shields function normally alongside this natural armor.
- **Soft (1 points):** Your exoskeleton is less tough but offers greater flexibility. Without armor, your AC is 11 + your Dexterity modifier.

### Camouflage

- **Mimicry (1 point):** You can blend seamlessly into specific environments, giving you advantage on Stealth checks in two chosen terrains (e.g. forest, swamp).
- **Basic Camouflage (2 points):** Your ability to merge with the surroundings grants you proficiency in the Stealth skill.

## Other

- **Sticky Substance (2 points):** You can exude a sticky substance to restrain foes. As an action, you cause up to 3 creatures within 15 feet to make a Strength saving throw 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier or be restrained. Creatures affected by this ability can use their action to try breaking free with a Strength (Athletics) check. You can use this trait once and regain this use once you have completed a long rest.
- **Unpalatable (1 point):** You secrete a repulsive substance. Creatures that bite or swallow you must succeed on a Constitution saving throw equal to 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier or become poisoned for 1 minute.
- **Limb Release (1 points):** As a reaction to being grappled, you can detach a limb to automatically escape. The limb regrows after a long rest.

## 5. DIETARY AND BEHAVIOURAL TRAITS

### Diet

- **Herbivore (0 points):** You survive solely on plants.
- **Carnivore (1 point):** Meat sustains you, reducing your food requirements by half compared to humans.
- **Sanquivore (2 points):** You possess specialized mouthparts designed for blood extraction. As an action, you can bite a creature within 5 feet of you that isn't a construct or undead. Make an unarmed strike against the target. On a hit, the target takes 1d4 + your Constitution modifier piercing damage, and you gain temporary hit points equal to half of the damage dealt (rounded up).  
You can sustain yourself by feeding on blood. If you feed on a creature's blood at least once every 24 hours, you do not require other forms of sustenance.

### Social Structure

- **Eusocial (1 points):** You can communicate telepathically with any creature within 30 feet. If it does not share a language, you are still able to convey basic emotions and concepts.
- **Solitary (0 points):** By nature, you're more of a loner and gain no unique communication ability.
- **Warning Colors (2 points):** As a reaction, when you are targeted by an attack, you can cause the attack to be made with disadvantage. You can do so a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus. You regain all expended uses of this ability upon completing a long rest.



# SUBCLASSES

## HIVE DOMAIN CLERIC

In the vast tapestry of existence, where many seek power from divine beings, the Hive Domain stands distinct. Its clerics do not draw strength from individual deities, but from the collective whispers of an ancient hive mind entity, a consciousness that spans eons and resonates with the unified heartbeat of countless beings. This entity, often simply referred to as “The Hive,” embodies the principles of unity, cooperation, and the intricate dance of communal existence.

For clerics of the Hive Domain, power emerges from understanding the interconnectedness of all life. Every prayer, every ritual, is not a plea to a distant god, but a communion with The Hive. Their magic pulses with the memories of a thousand hives, each drone, and queen from history lending them wisdom.

### DOMAIN SPELLS

Cleric Level	Spells
1st	<i>faerie fire, goodberry</i>
3rd	<i>barskin, lesser restoration</i>
5th	<i>plant growth, conjure animals</i>
7th	<i>giant insect, conjure animals</i>
9th	<i>insect plague, geas</i>

### DILIGENT WORKER

At 1st level, Your dedication to the hive and the teachings of diligence grant you the ability to focus intently on tasks and see them through to completion. When you make an ability check using a skill in which you are proficient, you can add your Wisdom modifier to the roll in addition to the ability's modifier. You can use this feature a number of times equal to your Wisdom modifier (minimum of once). You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

Additionally, your diligent nature makes it hard for you to be deterred from your path. You have advantage on saving throws against being charmed.

### SWARMING DEFENSE

When you choose this domain at 1st level, your hive swarms to your aid when you are attacked. While you are not wearing any armour, your Armor Class equals 13 + your Wisdom modifier. You can use a shield and still gain this benefit.

### CHANNEL DIVINITY: COMPELLED EMPATHY

Starting at 2nd level, you can use your Channel Divinity to invoke the sacrificial nature of a bee's sting, causing enemies to harm themselves as they lash out.

As an action, you present your holy symbol and invoke the essence of the bee, targeting up to three creatures you can see within 30 feet of you. Each target must make a Constitution saving throw against your cleric spell save DC. On a failed save, for the next minute, every time the affected creature makes an attack roll, it takes 1d6 piercing damage. Affected creatures can repeat this saving throw at the end of each of their turns. This damage increases to 2d6 at 10th level and 3d6 at 18th level.

### GUARDIAN'S VIGILANCE

Starting at 6th level, your connection to the protective nature of bees sharpens your senses and reflexes. Drawing inspiration from the guardians of the hive, you become acutely aware of potential threats.

You cannot be surprised as long as you are conscious. Additionally, when you roll for initiative, you can add your Wisdom modifier to the roll.

Furthermore, when a creature you can see moves within 5 feet of you, you can use your reaction to cause attacks the creature makes to be made at disadvantage until the end of its next turn.

### DIVINE STRIKE

At 8th level, the cleric gains the ability to infuse his or her weapon strikes with necrotic energy. Once on each of the cleric's turns when he or she hits a creature with a weapon attack, the cleric can cause the attack to deal an extra 1d8 necrotic damage to the target. When the cleric reaches 14th level, the extra damage increases to 2d8.

## HIVE OF THE CELESTIAL SWARM

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At 17th level, you are granted a celestial beehive that you carry with you. This hive serves as a divine conduit between you and the celestial realms, and it is inhabited by celestial bees that produce a divine nectar. The hive is filled with Healing Honey, which can be consumed a number of times equal to 2 x your Wisdom modifier and refills when you finish a long rest.

Allies within 5 feet of you can use their action to consume the honey directly from the hive, regaining hit points equal to  $6d8 +$  your Wisdom modifier. Consuming the honey also has the effects of a *Greater Restoration* spell. If the consumer has lost any limbs, consuming the honey regenerates them over the course of 1 minute, restoring any lost functionality.

## SCHOOL OF MYRMECOLOGY

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Ants, though tiny, weave tales of astounding unity, strength, and adaptability. Wizards of the School of Myrmecology delve deep into the secrets of ants, drawing inspiration from their complex behaviors and biological marvels. By understanding and emulating these creatures, these wizards gain unique abilities that set them apart from their peers.

### SQUARE-CUBE LAW UNDERSTANDING

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Beginning at 2nd level, Your study of ants has taught you to infuse your body with runes that grant you their proportional strength. When determining your carrying capacity or the weight you can push, drag, or lift, you use your Intelligence in place of your Strength.

### ANTENNAE ASPECT

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Additionally, your studies of ants have imbued you with an acute sensitivity reminiscent of ant antennae.

As an action, you can activate your heightened senses to detect minute vibrations, pheromones, and residual trails. For the next minute:

- You gain advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell or touch.
- You can detect the presence of hidden or invisible creatures and objects within 10 feet of you.
- You can sense the paths taken by living creatures within the last 24 hours in a 30-foot radius around you, discerning the general size and type of creature (e.g., humanoid, beast) that passed through.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

## PEROMONE CODEX

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At 6th level, your deep understanding of myrmecology has led you to develop a unique method of recording your spells. Your spellbook is now inscribed with intricate pheromone patterns, allowing you to "read" it through touch and scent rather than sight.

- **Blind Reading:** You can read and prepare spells from your spellbook even if you are blinded or in complete darkness.
- **Rapid Preparation:** The tactile and olfactory nature of your pheromone inscriptions allows for quicker comprehension and preparation. During any short rest, you can choose a number of spells from your spellbook equal to your Intelligence modifier and replace an equal number of spells you have currently prepared with them.

## MYRMIC AGONY

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Starting at 10th level, you've harnessed the essence of the bullet ant, known for its excruciatingly painful sting. A swarm of ethereal bullet ants always surrounds you, ready to defend their master.

Whenever you or an ally within 10 feet of you is hit by a melee attack, you can use your reaction to release the swarm upon the attacker. The spectral ants rush toward the assailant, causing intense, searing pain. The attacker must make a Constitution saving throw against your spell save DC. On a failed save, they are incapacitated from the overwhelming pain until the end of their next turn.

You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

## COLONY'S UNITY

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At 14th level, your bond with the ant world has grown so deep that you can momentarily tap into the unified consciousness of a colony. As an action, you choose up to four willing allies within 30 feet to form a mental link with, allowing for enhanced coordination in battle. This link lasts for 1 minute and has the following effects:

- You and the chosen allies can communicate telepathically.

- When an ally within the telepathic network makes an attack roll or ability check, they can choose to use your Intelligence modifier in place of their own ability modifier for that roll. Doing so consumes their reaction.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

## ITEMS

### MANTLE OF MORPHOSIS

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*Wondrous item, varies (rare, very rare, legendary)*

This intricate mantle, when attuned, reshapes and adapts to its wearer, granting them traits reminiscent of a specific insect. The exact insect and its associated traits are predetermined by the DM, chosen from the Arthropin species list.

Upon attunement, the wearer gains the benefits of the selected insect traits. These manifest as magical adaptations that seamlessly integrate with the wearer's form, emerging directly from the Mantle of Morphosis.

The item's rarity is determined by the total points allocated to the chosen traits: 4 points for rare, 6 points for very rare, and 8 points for legendary.