

DESDE LAS PROFUNDIDADES DEL KERNEL: CÓMO CREAR UN ROOTKIT INVISIBLE EN WINDOWS

Descifrando el desarrollo de un Rootkit para Windows 11

[in/vazquez-vazquez-alejandro]

Rooted 2025, Madrid





WHOAMI

- FRIKI (Fanático de Revolucionar Internamente Kernels e Inicios del sistema)
- Pastor de ovejas desde los 8 años
- Me gusta el pulpo, de ahí los Rootkits
- Ciberseguridad Ofensiva, AMTEGA
- Docente en Máster de Análisis de Malware



[in/vazquez-vazquez-alejandro]

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SENSITIVE CONTENT

Age Verification

This presentation contains age-restricted materials including malware and explicit techniques. By entering, you affirm that you are at least 18 years of age and you consent to viewing "hacker" stuff.

Let me In
This is real stuff

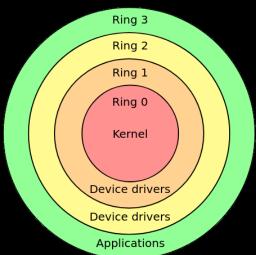
No I prefer OSINT



KERNEL (RING 0)

The kernel (Ring 0) of an operating system implements the core functionality that everything else in the operating system depends upon. The Microsoft Windows kernel provides basic low-level operations such as scheduling threads or routing hardware interrupts. It is the heart of the operating system and all tasks it performs must be fast and simple.

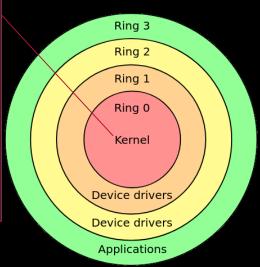
~ Microsoft



KERNEL (RING 0)

```
//0x150 bytes (sizeof)
struct DRIVER OBJECT
                                                                            //0x0
   SHORT Type;
   SHORT Size;
   struct DEVICE OBJECT* DeviceObject;
                                                                            //0x8
   ULONG Flags;
                                                                            //0x10
                                                                            //0x18
    VOID* DriverStart;
                                                                            //0x20
   ULONG DriverSize;
   VOID* DriverSection;
                                                                            //0x28
   struct _DRIVER_EXTENSION* DriverExtension;
    struct UNICODE STRING DriverName;
    struct _UNICODE_STRING* HardwareDatabase;
                                                                            //0x48
    struct _FAST_IO_DISPATCH* FastIoDispatch;
                                                                            //0x50
    LONG (*DriverInit)(struct _DRIVER_OBJECT* arg1, struct _UNICODE_STRING* arg2); //0x58
    VOID (*DriverStartIo)(struct _DEVICE_OBJECT* arg1, struct _IRP* arg2);
                                                                           //0x60
    VOID (*DriverUnload)(struct DRIVER OBJECT* arg1);
                                                                            //0x68
    LONG (*MajorFunction[28])(struct DEVICE OBJECT* arg1, struct IRP* arg2); //0x70
};
```

ents the core functionality ends upon. The Microsoft ons such as scheduling t of the operating system



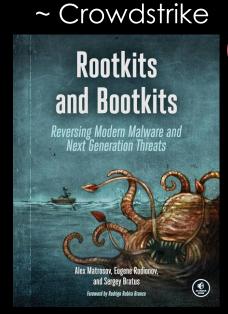
ROOTKIT

Rootkit: Sophisticated piece of malware that can add new code to the operating system or delete and edit operating system code. Rootkits may remain in place for years because they are hard to detect, due in part to their ability to block some antivirus software and malware scanner software.

~ Crowdstrike

ROOTKIT

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Kernel-Mode Driver

C/C++ - driver.sys



[Anti-Rootkit Installation]

Driver Signature Enforcement (DSE)
 Windows won't run drivers not certified by Microsoft

[Anti-Rootkit Deep Funcionalities]

Kernel Patch Protection (PatchGuard)
 Feature of 64-bit editions of Microsoft Windows
 Prevents patching the kernel

[Anti-Rootkit Installation]

[Anti-Rootkit Deep Funcionalities]

 Kernel Patch Protection (Pa Feature of 64-bit editions (ctly or damaged, or that might be malicious software from an unknown sour Prevents patching the ker

Administrator: Command Prompt • Driver Signature Enforceme (c) Microsoft Windows [Version 10.0.22631.3007] Windows won't run drivers c:\Windows\System32>.\sc.exe create POC type=kernel start=demand binpath= "C:\Users\user1\Documents\Rootkit\Driver.sys" [SC] CreateService SUCCESS C:\Windows\System32>.\sc.exe start POC [SC] StartService FAILED 577: Windows cannot verify the digital signature for this file. A recent hardw are or software change might have installed a file that is signed incorre

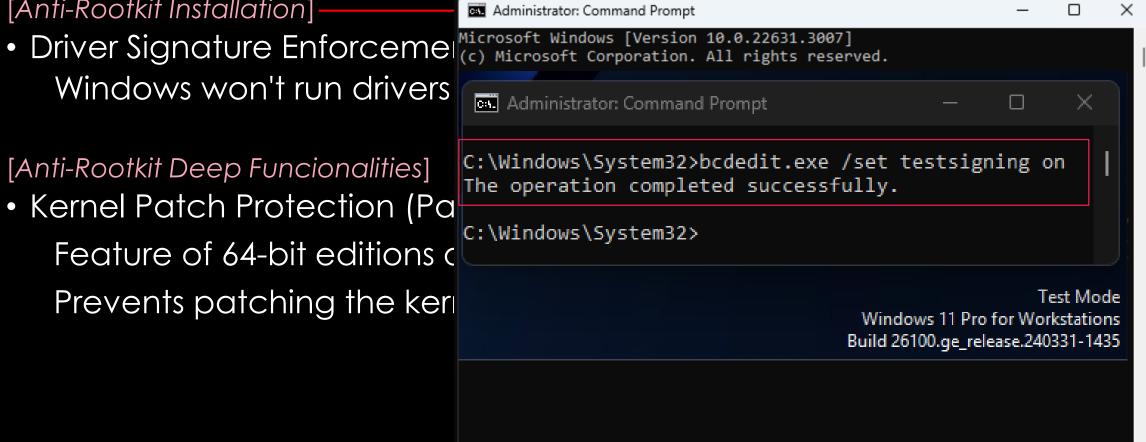
C:\Windows\System32>

[Anti-Rootkit Installation]

Windows won't run drivers

[Anti-Rootkit Deep Funcionalities]

 Kernel Patch Protection (Pa Feature of 64-bit editions (Prevents patching the ker

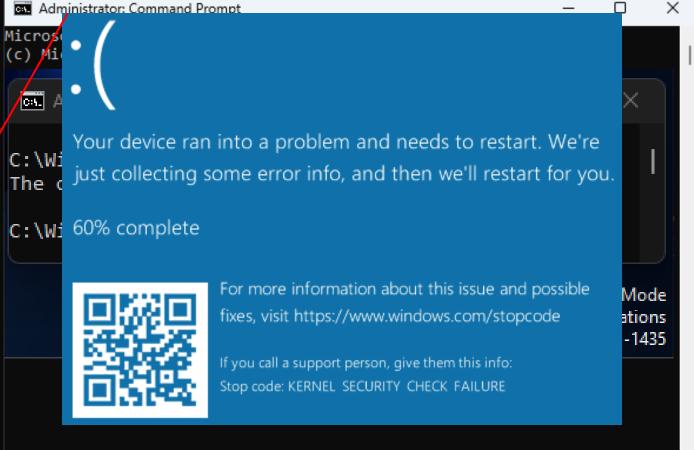


[Anti-Rootkit Installation]

Driver Signature Enforcement
 Windows won't run drivers

[Anti-Rootkit Deep Funcionalities]

 Kernel Patch Protection (Pa Feature of 64-bit editions of Prevents patching the kern



CHECKPOINT

Rootkit Development

- 1. Windows Kernel
- 2. Rootkit = Kernel Mode Driver
- 3. DSE, PatchGuard, ...

LET ME THINK ...



DEVELOPMENT ENVIRONMENT



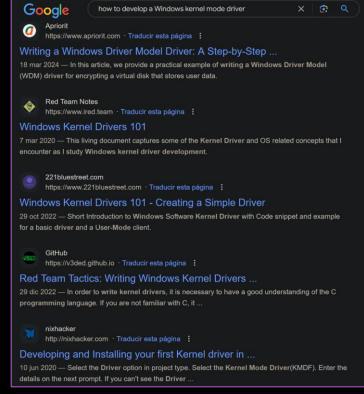
how to develop a Windows kernel mode driver



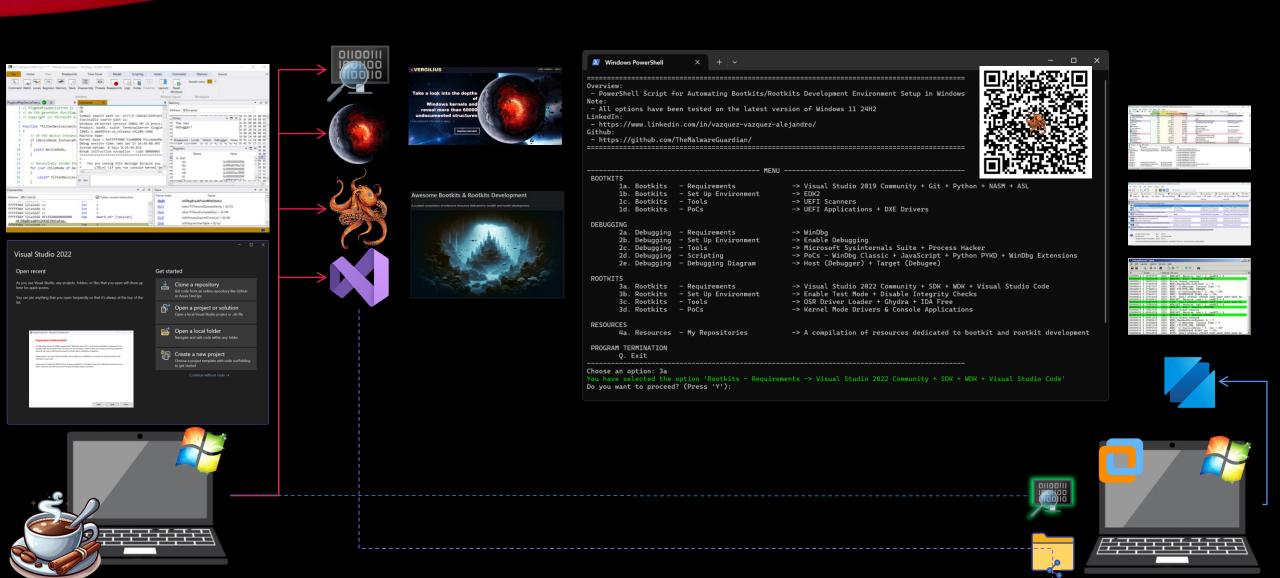


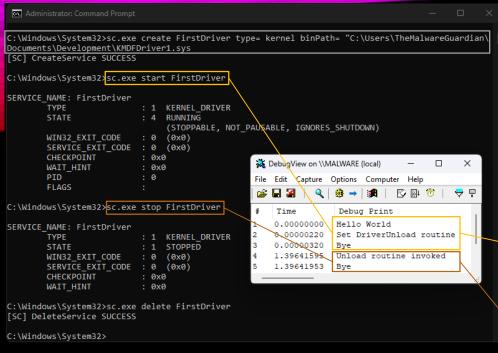


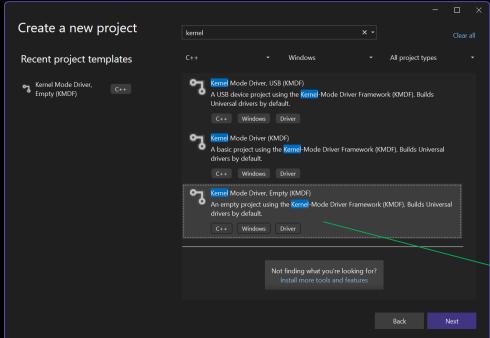




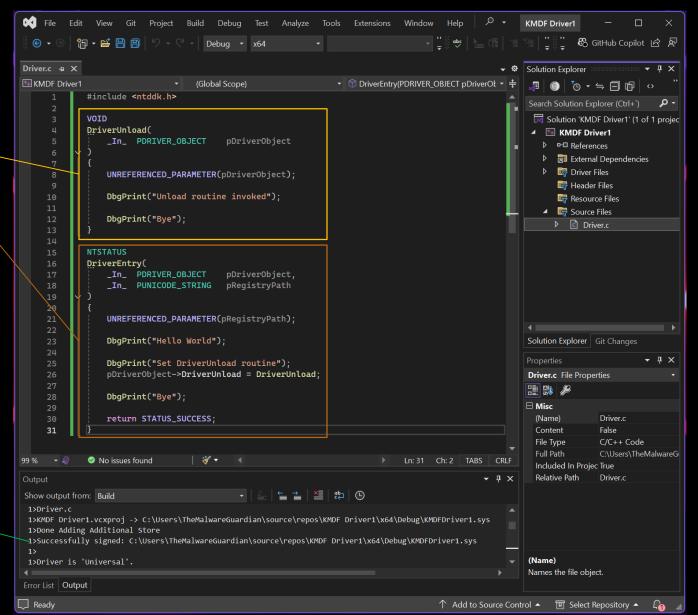
DEVELOPMENT ENVIRONMENT







KERNEL MODE DRIVER



OUR MALICIOUS DRIVER

Rootkit Development

- 1. User Mode Kernel Mode Communication ntddk.h
- 2. Direct Kernel Object Modification ntddk.h
- 3. Keyboard and Mouse Filter
- 4. File System Minifilter Driver fltKernel.h
- 5. Windows Filtering Platform fwpmk.h, fwpsk.h, fwpmu.h
- 6. Windows Kernel Sockets wsk.h

Toolkit
Communication

Hide Processes DKOM

Keylogger Keyboard Filter

Hide Folders Minifilter

Network Control

Network Requests WSK





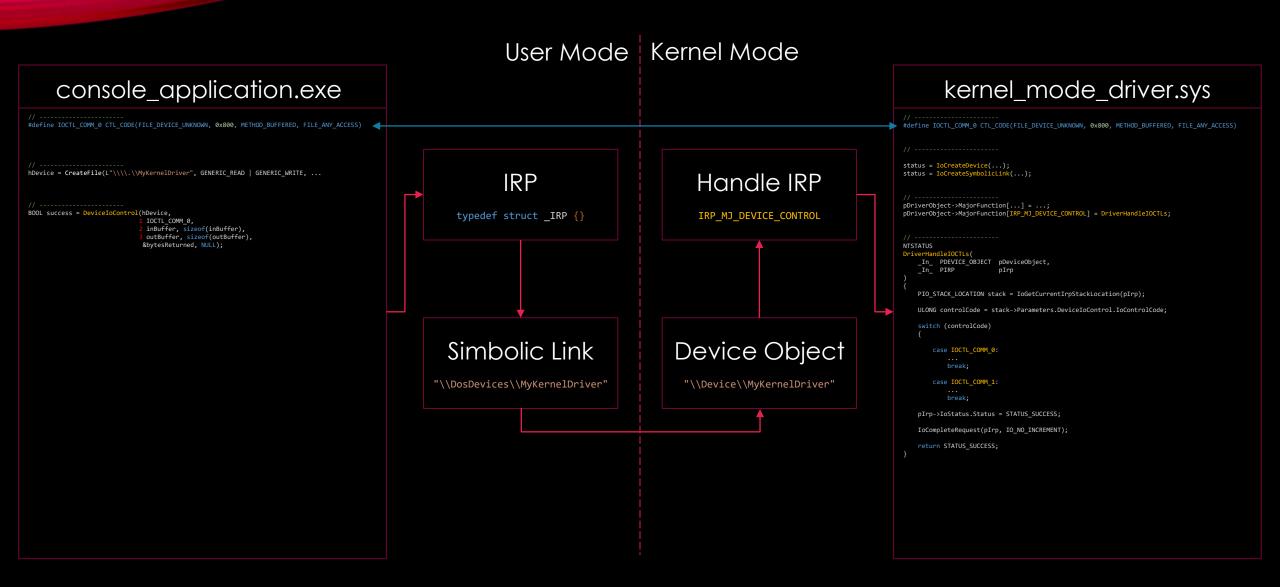
COMMUNICATION

"The bridge between user mode and kernel mode: IOCTL requests initiate communication, while IRPs manage data exchange and driver actions."

- ✓Via Input/Output Control Codes and Input/Output Request Packets
- ✓ Via Filter Communication Ports
- ✓ Via Network Requests
- ★Via Shared Memory
- ★Via Registry Keys

 The state of the st
- ✓ Via Files
- XVia ...

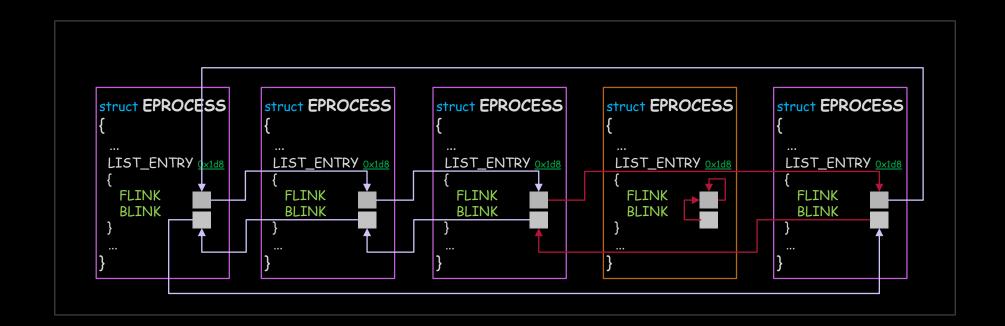
COMMUNICATION





HIDE PROCCESSES

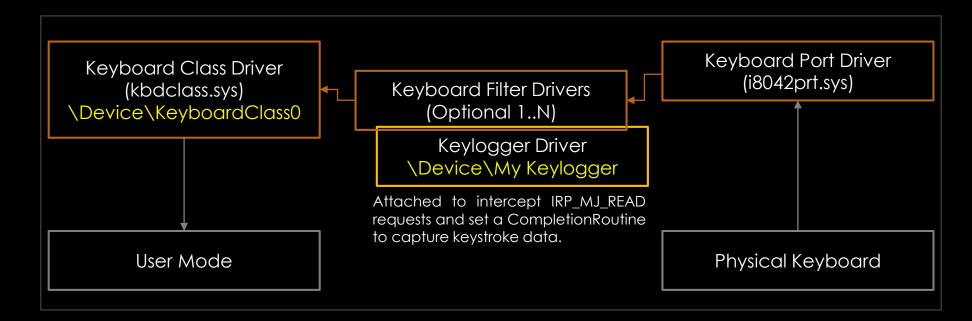
"Windows maintains a doubly linked list of active processes in (LIST_ENTRY) EPROCESS->ActiveProcessLinks. Unlink a process from the chain, and it disappears from user-mode enumeration."





KEYLOGGER

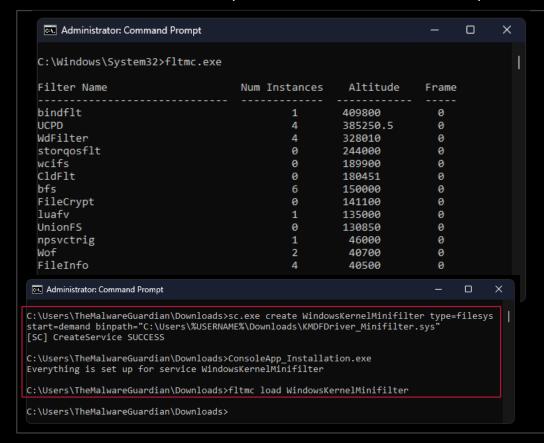
"Keystroke interception in kernel mode: The Windows keyboard driver stack routes all keystrokes through a device object called \Device\KeyboardClass0. By attaching a driver to this device and registering a CompletionRoutine (a callback executed after an IRP has been processed by lower drivers, allowing access to data before it reaches the next stage), we can capture raw keystroke data before it propagates to user-mode applications like text editors or browsers."

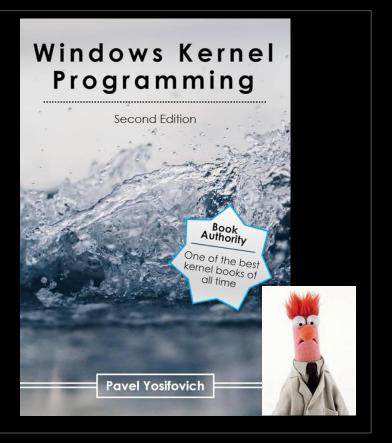




HIDE FOLDERS

"MiniFilters attach to the file system stack to filter I/O operations.

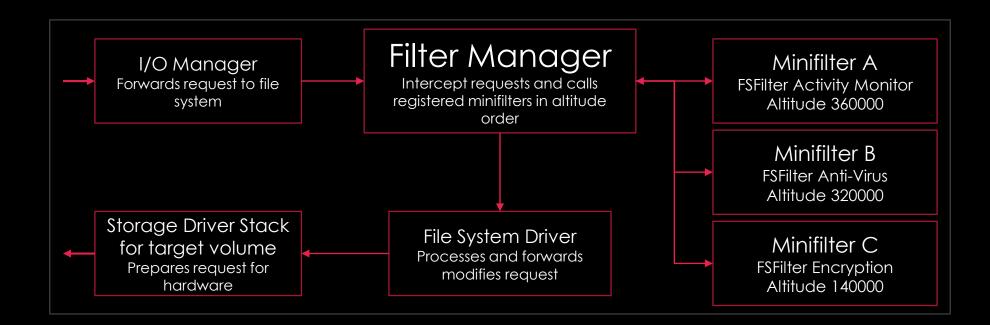






HIDE FOLDERS

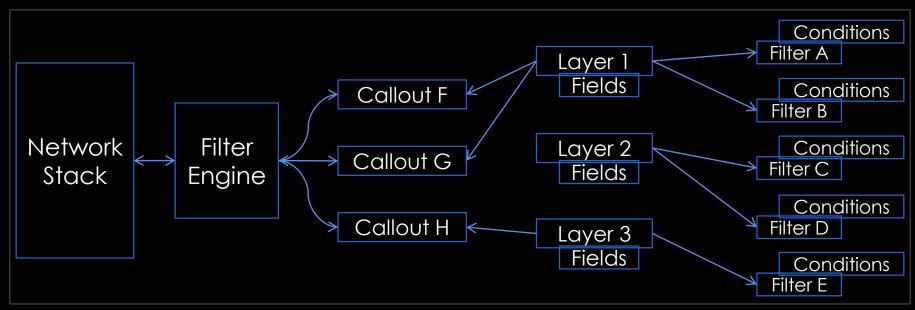
"MiniFilters attach to the file system stack to filter I/O operations. Using a PreOperation callback (triggered before the file system processes a request), access to files or directories can be explicitly denied by returning STATUS_ACCESS_DENIED or FLT_PREOP_COMPLETE. In the PostOperation callback (triggered after the request finishes), the DirectoryBuffer - which temporarily holds the directory listing - can be modified to remove specific entries, effectively making files and folders invisible to user-mode applications like File Explorer."





NETWORK CONTROL

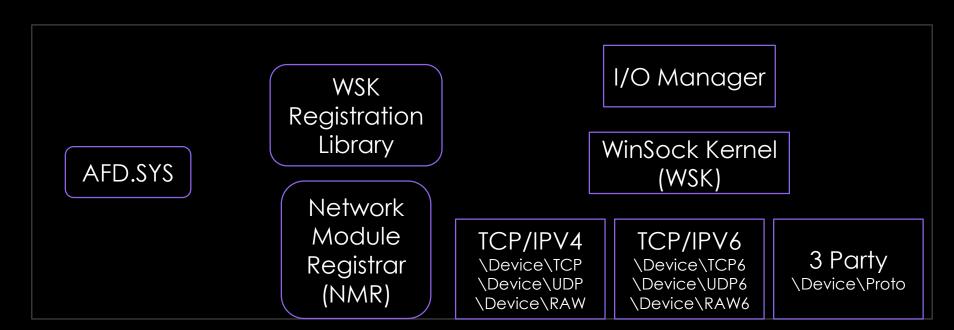
"Windows Filtering Platform (WFP) allows real-time inspection and control of network connections. By attaching filters (static rules applied at specific layers of the network stack to identify traffic based on attributes like IPs or ports) and callouts (custom drivers that execute dynamic logic on flagged traffic), it's possible to classify traffic based on metadata such as the remote IP address and the associated process. Traffic that matches specific rules can be blocked, logged, or modified, enabling comprehensive network security policies."





NETWORK REQUESTS

"WinSock Kernel (WSK) allows kernel-mode programs to perform complex network operations, such as establishing connections, binding sockets, and transferring data. With support for asynchronous communication using IRPs, WSK enables efficient and controlled interaction with network protocols, ensuring low-latency communication and making it a robust solution for implementing kernel-level networking features."





BENTICO

KernelRootkit001_HelloWorld

KernelRootkit002_Threading

KernelRootkit003_ZwFunctions

KernelRootkit004_Callbacks

KernelRootkit005_IOCTLs

KernelRootkit006_DKOM

KernelRootkit007_KeyboardFilter

KernelRootkit008_Minifilter

KernelRootkit009_FilterCommunicationPort

KernelRootkit010_WindowsFilteringPlatform

KernelRootkit011_WinSockKernel









THE GATEWAY

Rootkit Installation
Kernel Mode Driver

1. Vulnerable Kernel Driver

(BYOVD) Not Well Known
Bring Your Own Vulnerable Driver





THE GATEWAY

Rootkit Installation
Kernel Mode Driver

1. Vulnerable Kernel Driver

(BYOVD) Not Well Known
Bring Your Own Vulnerable Driver

2. Leaked Certificate

Driver Signing Policy





THE GATEWAY

Rootkit Installation
Kernel Mode Driver

1. Vulnerable Kernel Driver

(BYOVD) Not Well Known

Bring Your Own Vulnerable Driver

2. Leaked Certificate

Driver Signing Policy

3. UEFI Bootkit

SecureBoot

Infect a Computer's Boot process

Physical Access

Microsoft Vulnerable Driver Blocklist

Microsoft blocks drivers with security vulnerabilities from running on your device.

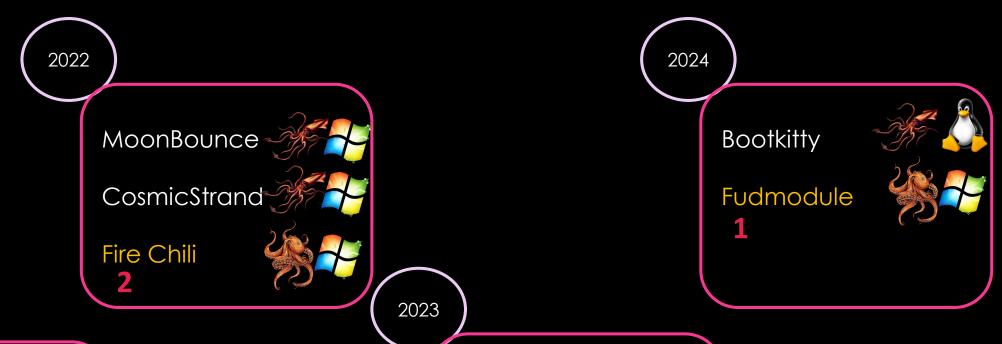






2021

B / ROOTKIS IN THE WILD

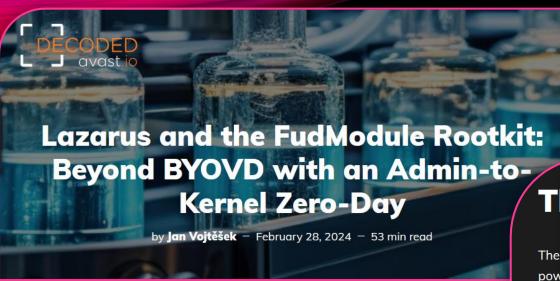


Sespecter

FinSpy

Moriya

BlackLotus



- Advanced Persistent Threat 38
- Bring Your Own Vulnerable Driver
- N-DAY, CVE
- Windows Kernel Mode Driver
- Minifilter Driver
- Windows Filtering Platform

FUDMODULE

The FudModule Rootkit

The entire goal of the admin-to-kernel exploit was to corrupt the current thread's PreviousMode. This allows for a powerful kernel read/write primitive, where the affected user-mode thread can read and write arbitrary kernel memory using the Nt(Read|Write)VirtualMemory syscalls. Armed with this primitive, the FudModule rootkit employs direct kernel object manipulation (DKOM) techniques to disrupt various kernel security mechanisms. It's worth reiterating that FudModule is a data-only rootkit, meaning it executes entirely from user space and all the kernel tampering is performed through the read/write primitive.

The first variants of the FudModule rootkit were independently discovered by AhnLab and ESET research teams, with both publishing detailed analyses in September 2022. The rootkit was named after the FudModule.dll string used as the name in its export table. While this artifact is not present anymore, there is no doubt that what we found is an updated version of the same rootkit. AhnLab's report documented a sample from early 2022, which incorporated seven data-only rootkit techniques and was enabled through a BYOVD exploit for ene.sys. ESET's report examined a slightly earlier variant from late 2021, also featuring seven rootkit techniques but exploiting a different BYOVD vulnerability in dbutil_2_3.sys. In contrast, our discovery concerns a sample featuring nine rootkit techniques and exploiting a previously unknown adminto-kernel vulnerability. Out of these nine techniques, four are new, three are improved, and two remain unchanged from the previous variants. This leaves two of the original seven techniques, which have been deprecated and are no longer present in the latest variant.

FUDMODULE

0x01 – Registry Callbacks

The first rootkit technique is designed to address <u>registry callbacks</u>. This is a documented Windows mechanism which allows security solutions to monitor registry operations.

0x10 – Windows Filtering Platform

<u>Windows Filtering Platform</u> (WFP) is a documented set of APIs designed for host-based network traffic filtering. The WFP API offers capabilities for deep packet inspection as well as for modification or dropping of packets at various layers of the network stack.

Specifically, the kernel

API allows for installing so-called <u>callout drivers</u>,

ead's PreviousMode. This allows for a read and write arbitrary kernel memory FudModule rootkit employs direct kernel lechanisms. It's worth reiterating that and all the kernel tampering is performed

Lab and ESET research teams, with both the FudModule.dll string used as the oubt that what we found is an updated 22, which incorporated seven data-only eport examined a slightly earlier variant 3YOVD vulnerability in dbutil_2_3.sys. In exploiting a previously unknown adminroved, and two remain unchanged from ave been deprecated and are no longer

FORTIGUARD LABS THREAT RESEARCH

New Milestones for Deep Panda: Log4Shell and Digitally Signed Fire Chili Rootkits

By Rotem Sde-Or and Eliran Voronovitch | March 30, 2022

During the past month, FortiEDR detected a campaign by Deep Panda, a Chinese APT group.

Following exploitation, Deep Panda deployed a backdoor on the infected machines. Following forensic leads from the backdoor led us to discover a novel kernel rootkit signed with a stolen digital certificate. We found that the same certificate was also used by another Chinese APT group, named Winnti, to sign some of their tools.

FIRE CHILI

IOCTL	Action	Description
0xF3060000	Hide file	Add a path to global file list
0xF3060004	Stop hiding file	Remove a path from global file list
0xF3060008	Hide\protect process	Add a file path or PID to global process list
0xF306000C	Stop hiding\protecting process	Remove a file path or PID from global process list
0xF3060010	Hide registry key	Add a key to global registry list
0xF3060014	Stop hiding registry key	Remove a key from global registry list
0xF3060018	Hide network connections	Add a file path or port number to global network list
0xF306001C	Stop hiding network connections	Remove a file path or port number from global network list

ESET RESEARCH

UEFI threats moving to the ESP: Introducing ESPecter bootkit

ESET research discovers a previously undocumented UEFI bootkit with roots going back all the way to at least 2012



Martin Smolár



Anton Cherepanov

05 Oct 2021 • 20 min. read

UEFI Firmware

Execute boot application from EFI partition based on NVRAM variables

Hooked Entry Point of the bootmgfw.efi is executed instead of legitimate bootmgfw.efi entry point

ESPecter initial code

Hook Archpx64TransferTo64 BitApplicationAsm Execute original bootmgfw.efi entry point

Windows Boot Manager (bootmgfw.efi)

UEFI Application

Transfer execution to OS loader using OSLArchTransferToKernel

Hook

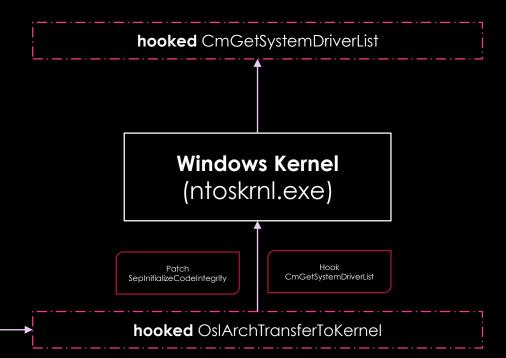
OslArchTransferToKernel

Windows OS Loader (winload.efi)

Transfer execution to OS loader using Archpx64TransferTo64BitA pplicationAsm

hooked Archpx64TransferTo64BitApplicationAsm

ESPECTER





ESET RESEARCH UEFI threats moving to the ESP: **ESPECTER Introducing ESPecter bootkit** ESET research discovers a previously undocumented UEFI bootkit with roots going back all hooked CmGetSystemDriverList the way to at least 2012 **Anton Cherepanov** Martin Smolár 05 Oct 2021 • 20 min. read **Windows Kernel** Execute boot application from **UEFI Firmware** (ntoskrnl.exe) EFI partition based on NVRAM Kernel-mode driver Interception of keystrokes is done by setting up CompletionRoutine for IRP MJ READ requests for the **ESPecter** initi **keyboard driver object** \Device\KeyboardClass0. **UEFI** Applic Execute original bootmgfw.efi entry point Archpx64TransferTo64 BitApplicationAsm Hook Transfer execution to OS OslArchTransferToKernel loader using Archpx64TransferTo64BitA **Windows Boot Manager hooked** Archpx64TransferTo64BitApplicationAsm (bootmgfw.efi)



REVERSE ENGINEERING / MALWARE ANALYSIS / BUG HUNTING

Module 10 – Windows Reverse Engineering

- Windows architecture (User mode and Kernel mode)
- Windows protections (DSE, KPP, VBS, CFG)
- Malware hunting with SysInternals tools
- Windows kernel opaque structures (EPROCESS, ETHREAD)
- Windows kernel debugging
- WinDbg scripting (Commands, Javascript, PyKd)
- Rootkit hooking techniques (IDT, SSDT)
- Rootkit development (Kernel Mode Drivers)
- Bootkit development (UEFI Applications)
- Bootkit analysis (ESPecter, BlackLotus)
- Kernel exploitation (Vulnerable drivers, Write-What-Where)









THANK YOU ©



Rootkits PoCs & Rooted 2025 PPT:

github.com/TheMalwareGuardian/Bentico

Every resource you need to develop Rootkits:

github.com/TheMalwareGuardian/Awesome-Bootkits-Rootkits-Development

Automate Bootkits/Rootkits Development

github.com/TheMalwareGuardian/Bootkits-Rootkits-Development-Environment

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Agradecimientos:





