

SPIDIX



With its eight legs tucked in tightly and layers of fibrous, wood-like armored plates, the tiny, spider-like spidix (SPY-dix) is nearly indistinguishable from an ordinary pine cone, allowing it to drop down on its prey or ambush it from the forest floor without warning.

Daughters of Pinophyta. Pinophyta was once a towering, lush, and graceful treant who traveled the forests within the Realm of Fey, keeping them safe for all. Nuthannhen, the Spider Queen, despised Pinophyta and plotted against her, sending minions to burn her bark and poison her heartwood. Horribly disfigured and gravely wounded, Pinophyta retreated into the depths of a rift so dark even the lights of the Seelie Court couldn't penetrate the gloom. Nuthannhen found her there, near death, and filled her with her eggs which drained the last of Pinophyta's strength. Six days later, the first spidix burst from her drooping branches and quickly became a plague across the forests of both the Feywild and Material Plane.

Spidix Colonies. Spidix live in small colonies ranging from ten to thirty members that are all spawned from a single spidix queen. Very similar to an actual pine cone, new spidix, called "seedlings," are birthed when the spidix queen opens up her shell and drops them along the forest floor. A newly birthed seedling reaches adulthood within a week's time and can live up to a year depending on the severity of the seasons and how well it eats. A spidix colony typically forms around a large pine tree or a tight grouping of pine trees. Once established, the queen continually births several new queens each year which latch onto large animals or sneak into traveler's packs in order to be transported elsewhere and start new colonies. In this way, spidix can quickly and continuously spread Nuthannhen's evil across entire forests and regions.

Ambush Hunters. Unlike true spiders, a spidix is unable to create intricate webs to trap food with. Instead, the spidix remains entirely motionless for prolonged periods of time, hanging from its hind legs on low branches or lying on the forest floor in order to appear like a pinecone. When prey gets close enough, the spidix drops down from above or lunges up from below, sinking its fangs into the creature and pumping its potent venom directly into its bloodstream. After the creature has been paralyzed and left for several hours, the entire colony feasts upon the creature's liquified insides.