

BUZNYCHYI (ALT: ELDERBERRY)



"THERE'S ELDERBERRY IN THE GARDEN, AND AN UNCLE IN KYIV."

--- an old Ukrainian saying used when two topics are completely unrelated.

Elderberry was considered a witch's berry, and Kyiv a record-holder for its many Bald Mountains. Putting the facts together, this proverb can be read as a warning. "The elder is deemed an unclean shrub; one must never destroy its roots - it will wither the hands and legs of whoever dares. And nothing should be built on the ground where an old elder stump grows, for such a place is the dwelling of the devil.

--- Pavlo Chubynsky - "Works" - Vinnytsia and Proskuriv Counties

From Ukrainian folklore, tales of the "Buznychyi".
Illustration from - "Mythic Beings of Ukrainian Folklore" - Dara Korniy".

Tiny Fey, Chort, Typically Chaotic Neutral

The Buznychyi is a little grandfather, only half an ell tall, with a long gray beard. On his large bald head grow small horns, and his body and horns share the dark hue of elderberries.

The elder-spirit dwells by the house, hidden in the elderberry bushes. He is kindly, guarding both people and animals.

Armor Class 14 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 75 (14d4 + 42)

Speed 20 ft., Climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws - Wisdom +4, Charisma +5

Skills - Arcana +2, Nature +4, Stealth +4, Medicine +4

Resistances - Nonmagical Bludgeoning/Piercing/Slashing (only within 60ft. of its elderberry bush)

Vulnerabilities - Fire

Immunities - Lightning (only within 60ft. of its elderberry bush)

Condition Immunities - Charmed, Frightened (only within 60ft. of its elderberry bush)

Senses - darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages - Sylvan, Common

Challenge - 3 (700 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

TRAITS

Elderberry Guardian - While within 60 feet of its bush - the Buznychyi gains its resistances and immunities. Away from it - these are lost.

Innate Spellcasting - The Buznychyi's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit). It requires no material components.

- At will: **Druidcraft**, **Healing Word**
- 3/day each: **Lesser Restoration**, **Blindness Deafness**, **Barkskin**
- 1/day each: **Bestow Curse**, **Revivify**

ACTIONS

Elderberry Staff - **Melee Weapon Attack** +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8+3) bludgeoning + 4 (1d8) poison.

Beating Sticks (Recharge 5-6) - The Buznychyi summons up to three animated sticks of elderberry wood within 30 feet of itself. Each rod uses the following stat block:

BUZNYCHYI'S ANIMATED BEATING STICK

Small cutie, depressed neutral

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 10

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (0)	10 (0)	3 (-4)	3 (-4)	1 (-5)

Saving Throws - Str +3, Dex +0, Con +0, Int -4, Wis -4, Cha -5

Damage Immunities - Poison, Psychic

Condition Immunities - Charmed, Exhaustion, Frightened, Paralyzed, Poisoned

Senses - Blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 6

Languages - Sylvan, Common

Challenge - None (0 XP)

ACTIONS

Slam - **Melee Weapon Attack** +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 1d6 + 1 bludgeoning damage.

Sticks act on the Buznychyi's initiative and obey its mental commands (no action required). If given no commands - they attack any nearest creature.

Sticks remain animated for 1 minute, until the Buznychyi dismisses them (no action required), or until they are reduced to 0 hit points.

IVAN THANKED THE BUZNYCHYI AND WENT HOME. HE SENT THE CHILDREN OUT TO PLAY IN the yard and his wife to fetch water. Left alone, he took the magic rod in one hand, the magic sopilka in the other, and pressed it to his lips. Then it began! Sopilka started to play by itself, drawing forth words:

"Oh, play, little sopilka, so sorrowful, so sad. And to master Ivan, give a lesson grand."

No sooner had the last word faded than the rod flew from his hand and began to thrash Ivan soundly.

--- From a Ukrainian folk tale

Elderberries (1/day) - The Buznychyi magically creates up to 6 elderberries. Each berry lasts for 24 hours, and eating one uses an action. The Buznychyi chooses whether the berries are Good or Bad at the moment of creation:

- Good Berries** A creature that eats the berry regains 1 hit point, as if by the Goodberry spell.
- Bad Berries** A creature that eats the berry takes 1d6 poison damage and must succeed on a DC 13 Con saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute.

Sickness (Recharge 5-6) The Buznychyi targets one creature it can see within 60 ft. of its elderberry bush. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Con save or suffer one random affliction (roll d6):

d6	Sickness	Effect on Target
1	Fever	Disadvantage on Strength and Dexterity checks and saving throws for 1 minute
2	Bone-Ache	Target's Speed is reduced by 10 ft. for 1 minute
3	Burning Heat	Takes 1d6 fire damage at the start of its turns for 1 minute
4	Melancholy	Gains 1 level of Exhaustion
5	Shaking Fit	Disadvantage on concentration checks for 1 minute.
6	Cold	Takes 2d6 cold damage immediately and are Frightened of the Buznychyi until end of their next turn.

BONUS ACTIONS

Size-Shifter - As a bonus action, the Buznychyi can change its size from Tiny to Medium size, or back.

GRANDMOTHER SAYS: "HIS BROWS ARE SHAGGY, HIS LOCKS ARE GRAY AND SCRAGGY. EYES uneven, brows so grievous, claws of iron sharp and grievous. Hands like snatchers, quick and mean - he'll seize you straight from eldergreen!"

GRANDDAUGHTER SAYS: "HIS EYES TO ME ARE NOT UNKIND. UPON A STUMP, HIS THRONE you'll find. He wears a crown, and plays his reed - I'd join, if only I could heed. Around him flowers dance in throngs - his subjects swaying to his songs. He sits within the elder tree, and smiles so gently down at me!"

--- Lina Kostenko - Ukrainian poet, journalist, writer, publisher, and former Soviet dissident.

EQUIPMENT

None (Too Tiny to be of any use)

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