



Radagast the Brown

By: Jim Johnson

'[A] worthy Wizard, a master of shapes and changes of hue; and he has much lore of herbs and beasts, and birds are especially his friends.'

— Gandalf, *The Fellowship of the Ring*

Race: From across the Sea

Racial Abilities: Agelessness (Radagast suffers no effects from illness or aging, though he appears to age at a very slow rate.)

Attributes: Bearing 11 (+2), Nimbleness 10 (+2), Perception 13 (+3)*, Strength 8 (+1), Vitality 11 (+2), Wits 12 (+3)*

Reactions: Stamina +4, Swiftess +4, Willpower +6*, Wisdom +3

Orders: Magician, wizard

Order Abilities: Dwimmer-crafty (*Change Hue, Mastery of Shapes*), Mastery of Magic, Sanctum (Rhosgobel), Sanctum Power, Sense Power, Spellcasting 5, Spell Specialty (Beasts, Fire), Staff, Staff of Power, Wizard Spellcasting 3, Wizardly Power

Advancements: 35 (as of *The Fellowship of the Ring*)

Spells: *Animal Messenger, Beast Speech (ability), Beast Summoning, Blinding Flash, Burning Sparks, Change Hue, Create Light 2 (40-foot radius), Fiery Missile, Finding and Returning, Fireshaping, Fog-raising, Fog-weaving, Healing Spell, Kindle Fire, Lightning, Mastery of Shapes, Misdirection, Naming, Power of the Land, Quench Fire, Rain-ward, Shutting-spell, Slumber, Smoke-weaving, Springtime*

Skills: Armed Combat: Clubs (Staff) +6, Climb +2, Healing (Herbal Remedies) +12, Insight +3, Intimidate (Power) +3, Inquire (Converse) +3, Language: Beorning +6, Language: Dunlendish +4, Language: Quenya +7, Language: Rohiric +2, Language: Silvan +3, Language: Sindarin +4, Language: Westron +5, Lore: History (Elves, Men) +3, Lore: Realm (Arnor, Dunland, Eregion, Fangorn, Rhovanion, Mirkwood) +8, Lore: Magic (Beasts) +8, Lore: Other (Herbs, Beasts, Birds) +10, Mimicry +4, Observe (Spot) +4, Persuade (Oratory) +2, Ride (Horse) +4, Search +4, Stealth (Hide) +4, Survival (Forest, Mountains, Plains) +6, Weather-sense +3

Edges: Allies 4 (Beorn, Thranduil, others of the Wise and powerful), Armour of Heroes, Bird-friend (works as Elf-friend), Healing Hands, Tireless 2, Travel-sense, Woodcrafty 2

Flaws: Apathy (toward the concerns of the Free Peoples), Code of Honour (not to harm wild beasts), Enemy (Orcs), Naïve, Oath (to perform his mission for the Valar; foresworn), Oath (to protect wild beasts from harm)

Health: 12

Courage: 4

Renown: 15

Gear: Knapsack of herbs and medical paraphernalia, pouch of gift-feathers, robes, staff of power

∗: Favoured attribute or reaction

In the Novels

One of the five Wizards who hail from Valinor, across the Sea, Radagast the Brown travelled to Middle-earth with his brethren some thousand years into the Third Age. Like Gandalf and Saruman, Radagast is known by different names among different peoples, though “Radagast” remains the most common of those names. In Valinor, he was called Aiwendil, roughly translated as “Bird-lover.” Radagast appears as a tall Man, old of visage, dressed in robes of earthen hue and carrying a staff.

Radagast was initially a part of the Wizards’ mission to contest the will of Sauron and to unite the Free Peoples against his depredations. He spent many a year travelling some of the realms of Middle-earth, his reputation as an herb-master and healer preceding him. However, as the centuries waxed and waned, Radagast found himself drawn more and more toward the wild beasts and birds of Middle-earth than toward either the troubles of the world’s inhabitants or the campaign against Sauron.

Radagast gradually distanced himself from the concerns of the Wizards and lost himself in plain, mountain, and forest. He befriended many a beast, bird, and other being, including King Thranduil of the Elven community in Mirkwood and the wild man named Beorn. Radagast’s travels eventually concentrated in Rhovanion, a realm Radagast became so enamoured with that he soon built his sanctum, Rhosgobel, along the western borders of Mirkwood forest. There, Radagast passed many a quiet century immersing himself in herb-lore and the mysteries of birds and beasts.

Once Rhosgobel was established, Radagast rarely travelled beyond the borders of Mirkwood or Rhovanion save for those times of great need or when the various Councils of the Wise gathered to discuss the great events of the time. Radagast kept little contact with either Gandalf or Saruman, to the extent that Gandalf eventually lost track of his whereabouts and doings. As the Third Age progressed, and the power of the Shadow grew, Radagast gradually spent less time in Rhosgobel, fearing it was too good a target for the forces of Sauron to resist.

In TA 3018, Radagast went to Isengard at Saruman's behest. Saruman told Radagast that the Nine, the dark Nazgûl, had crossed the river Anduin in search of a land called "Shire." Saruman charged Radagast with finding Gandalf the Grey and imparting this information to him. Radagast could not divine a reason for the Nazgûl's actions and was fearful of what those actions might mean. Saruman carefully played on Radagast's concerns much as a minstrel might play on a pipe, turning Radagast into an unwitting pawn in his selfish game.

Radagast left Isengard in search of Gandalf and soon encountered him along the Greenway, just outside the village of Bree. These were realms unknown to Radagast, and he was yet fearful from the dire warnings Saruman had sown in his mind. Radagast informed Gandalf of the Nazgûl's crossing and of their search for the Shire. Alarmed, Gandalf asked Radagast to travel to Mirkwood with all speed, and once there to ask his allies—beast, bird, and otherwise—to report to Orthanc any actions or movements of the enemy. This Radagast did, reporting to King Thranduil, Beorn, and even the Great Eagles. In the meantime, Gandalf rushed to meet Saruman in Isengard, unaware that imprisonment awaited him there.

Heeding Radagast's request, the Great Eagles travelled the many lands and observed much worth notice, from wolves to Orcs, the Nine Riders searching the lands, and the news of Gollum's escape. Gwaihir, the king of the Great Eagles, went to Orthanc to report this news. Once there, he discovered Gandalf imprisoned atop the dark tower and effected the Grey Pilgrim's escape. Had Radagast not informed the Great Eagles of Gandalf's request to send any news to Orthanc, Gandalf may not have escaped the clutches of Saruman and the War of the Ring may have ended in utter defeat for the Free Peoples.

No record exists of Radagast's part in the final campaigns of the War of the Ring. It is possible that he travelled north to assist King Brand of Dale and King Dáin Ironfoot in their battles against the Easterlings at the great mountain of Erebor. Another possibility is that Radagast retreated to the forests and the plains to safeguard the birds and wild beasts he had befriended over the ages. Of course, it is also possible that he retreated to any number of hiding places or delvings to wait out the dramatic events of the late Third Age.

In the Game

Any group traversing the realms of Middle-earth stands a good chance of running into Radagast, depending on when their adventure takes place. If it is set many centuries before the War of the Ring, they may encounter Radagast wandering the realms of Arnor, Dunland, or Eregion, researching herb-lore or observing the many beasts that inhabit those realms. Radagast will come across as willing to help if asked, but could be portrayed as being somewhat distracted, as he prefers to investigate sightings of beasts and birds.

If the adventure is set in the years immediately prior to the War, heroes probably will not encounter Radagast unless they travel the realm of Rhovanion or specifically look for him along the borders of Mirkwood forest or at Rhosgobel. Radagast will show a strong reluctance to assist those in need, though he can overcome this resistance if the calling is truly significant. Also,

Radagast will be an eager teacher for loremasters and any others who may express interest in the ways of wild beasts or herb-lore.

Radagast the Brown's activities during the Fourth Age are unknown to the annals of the time. It is unlikely that he crossed the Sea to return to Valinor following the War of the Ring; his love for the beasts and birds of Middle-earth is too strong to have been simply abandoned. It is believed among the informed that Radagast yet remains in Middle-earth. He may have returned to his home at Rhosgobel or may have resumed his wandering nature, travelling from realm to realm with nary a pause in his movements. A quest to seek him or his aid could be a feature of many Fourth Age chronicles.

Radagast's Staff

Like each of the Wizards, Radagast has fashioned a staff to act as a focus of his power. Each staff is uniquely attuned to the Wizard who made it, and it can only be fully wielded by that individual. Radagast's staff has the following powers:

Defence: During combat, Radagast's staff counts as a large shield. In addition, he can make one free parry attempt per round with it.

Scribe Sign: Radagast can scribe a short message onto any solid surface with a single sign, which appears as nothing more than an indecipherable rune. Radagast and any allies he designates understand the sign's message, which may be up to a dozen words in length. The sign lasts until Radagast erases it by striking it with his staff or one week passes. Radagast may only have three signs in existence at any given time.

Spell Patterns: Radagast may cast the spell *Healing-spell* once per day without making a Stamina test to resist Weariness. Furthermore, this spell does not count as one cast by Radagast for the purposes of determining the Weariness TN of other spells he casts. Thus, Radagast could use this ability and immediately cast another spell without suffering the standard test result penalty for casting too many spells in a short period of time or having multiple spells in effect at one time. Radagast may use this power once per day.

Strength of the Staff: When recovering Weariness Levels, Radagast reduces the time needed by half. He can use his staff to recover a total of three Weariness Levels in this manner per day.

Feathers of the Noble Birds

Radagast the Brown has a long history and friendship with the noble birds of Middle-earth. Whenever he befriends a new bird, it gives him one of its feathers as a symbol of that new friendship. The magic created by this simple gift-giving is both subtle and powerful.

When in need, Radagast may toss one such feather into the air and utter the calling word unique to the bird of that feather. The bird will hear the call wherever it may be, no matter the distance,

and will endeavour to answer Radagast's call if able. Once the bird has answered the call, it is free to go back from whence it came.

Radagast possesses gift-feathers from dozens of birds, including eagles, falcons, hawks, robins, starlings, and thrushes. Even the noble Gwaihir himself has given Radagast one of his feathers, though Radagast doubts a situation would arise where he would require aid from the king of the Great Eagles.

Rhosgobel

Radagast's primary sanctum, Rhosgobel, is located along the western border of Mirkwood forest, east of the Carrock in the great Anduin River and north of Mirkwood's Old Forest Road. Unlike Saruman's imposing tower of Orthanc, Rhosgobel is a modest home set on a modest parcel of land. Radagast has simple tastes, content to surround himself with beasts, birds, herb-lore and books of many subjects. Radagast maintains a garden containing a wide variety of plants and herbs carefully cultivated from his extensive travelling of Middle-earth.

Due to their close ties with Radagast, both the Beornings and the Elves of Mirkwood take it upon themselves to keep an eye on Rhosgobel when Radagast's travels take him away from his sanctum.