

Monster ENCyclopedia: Myconid

This is a series of articles about specific monsters from D&D's history. Each entry takes a look at the origin of one D&D creature, and tracks its appearances and evolution across different editions. We have now reached the half-way point of an alphabetical tour through the hypothetical *Utterly Complete Monster Manual*, and for our "M" creature, we are taking a look at D&D's mushroom men—the myconids.

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Origins

Myconids made their debut in *A4: In the Dungeons of the Slave Lords*. In the foreword to the 2013 reprint collection *A0-A4: Against the Slave Lords*, author Lawrence Schick writes:

By far my favorite part of the module was creating the myconids and their amusing and alien society. D&D needed mushroom men, and I was proud to provide them. Erol Otus supplied the original concepts. "What I want," I told him, "is the dancing mushrooms from Walt Disney's Fantasia, only sinister." Being Erol, he knew exactly what I meant, and boy, did he deliver.

Fantasia animator Art Babbitt in turn credited *The Three Stooges* as his guide for animating the dancing mushrooms, so indirectly, the myconids are the sinister stooges of the D&D world.



Fantasia (1940), image from [YouTube](#)

Schick's request to Otus was for the myconid artwork to be sinister and, indeed, the front cover of *A4: In the Dungeons of the Slave Lords* shows some fairly threatening myconids, especially the trio in the background. Given that the fungus men are generally a peaceful race, it is perhaps an unusual way to introduce them, but it is also true that most of the violence on the cover is being done to the myconids, rather than by them. Perhaps appropriately for fungi capable of causing violent hallucinations, their debut illustration is in vivid colors.



A4: In the Dungeons of the Slave Lords (1981)

1st Edition

There is a lot of information on myconids packed into *A4: In the Dungeons of the Slave Lords*, not only in their monster entry at the back, but also spanning three pages of the adventure itself. When the adventurers first reach the fungus colony, the creatures they initially encounter are not the myconids themselves, but creatures animated by the myconid king. These monstrosities are a rotting, slime-covered kobold with toadstools growing from its eye sockets; two giant worker ants with drooping antennae and sluggish movements; a fire beetle with no glow and equally sluggish motions; and a human corpse whose flesh has mostly been replaced by a bulbous purple fungus.



Welcoming Committee, *A4: In the Dungeons of the Slave Lords* (1981)

Past these animated guardians is the fungus forest where the myconids dwell. All of the myconids' chambers are quite damp, and between the many stalactites stand giant mushrooms and toadstools which occasionally rustle and sway as if touched by an invisible wind. Some of the larger glowing fungi are ambulant, and move slowly around while making grumbling sounds. The myconid village is lit by blue phosphorescent ceiling-mold. Myconid houses are huge, hollow puffball-shaped fungi scattered between other giant mushrooms. The residents enter their homes through self-sealing oval ooze-membranes.

Myconids have bloated, spongy flesh, and vary in color from purple to gray. Contact with myconids is dangerous, since their skin oozes a substance which does 1-4 poison damage on contact. The only body parts free of the ooze are their stubby hands, each of which has two fingers, plus two opposing thumbs. The description of the fungus farm in the adventure seems to imply that the tiniest myconids begin life attached to the ground, only becoming mobile when they reach a minimum size.

A myconid's abilities vary depending on its hit dice. Each myconid community has a single king, who has six hit dice, and the rest vary from one to five hit dice. The smallest myconids are two feet tall, and they gain two feet for each additional hit die, so that their king towers a full twelve feet tall. The damage they do when clubbing opponents also gradually increases, with 1d4 damage done per hit die. There is an even spread of myconid sizes in each community, with the exception of the king, who is always uniquely the largest member of the community. A colony is broken down into a number of "circles" each with (usually) twenty members. A colony might have as many as ten circles, but the group in *A4: In the Dungeons of the Slave Lords* has only three circles, for sixty myconids in total.



A4: In the Dungeons of the Slave Lords (1981)

Myconids emit a variety of spores, gaining new types as they grow. All of them begin with the ability to release *distress* spores, which quickly alert all myconids within 120' of danger. At two hit dice, a myconid gains the ability to emit *reproducer* spores when new myconids need to be grown. A dying myconid also emits these spores automatically. Myconids cannot speak, so only when they reach three hit dice (and six feet in size) can they communicate with other creatures using their *rapport* spores. The target of these spores must fail a save against poison (possibly voluntarily) after which they can communicate telepathically with that myconid for ten minutes per hit die of the myconid.

At eight feet tall, a four hit dice myconid already overshadows most adventurers, but it also has useful *pacifier* spores. Like the *rapport* spores, a myconid can only direct the *pacifier* spores at one target. If the target fails a save vs. poison, it becomes totally passive for as many rounds as the myconid has hit dice, unable to react even if attacked.



A4: *In the Dungeons of the Slave Lords* (1981)

The fungus folk have a three-part daily cycle. For one third of each day, the fungus folk rest (their equivalent of sleeping). For the next third, they farm crops and take care of other work. For the final third, they participate in a collective telepathically-connected hallucination which serves as entertainment, worship and social interaction combined. This activity is known as a meld, and is facilitated by both *rapport* and *hallucinator* spores. Once they are in a meld, only *distress* spores will cause myconids to end it prematurely, for they consider the meld to be the reason for their existence.



A4: *In the Dungeons of the Slave Lords* (1981)

The *hallucinator* spores are produced only by the largest myconids, which have five hit dice and are ten feet tall. The spores can also be used as a weapon. Any non-myconid in contact with the spores must make a poison save. A failed save means the target will either cower whimpering (50%), stare into nothingness (25%), flee shrieking (15%), or attack the closest creature (10%). Myconids can release each of their spore types a number of times per day equal to their hit dice.

Towering over all others of his kind is the myconid king. At six hit dice and twelve feet tall, the king is a large, yet solitary figure. Unlike all of the other myconids, he does not participate in the melding process. Instead, the king plans myconid work schedules, deals with affairs external to the colony (such as visitors) and brews potions. The king tries to ensure that the other members of his colony do not have to commit violence, as doing so causes them to experience unpleasant hallucinations during their melds. The other myconids view the king's separation from the circle with horror, but if he dies, the largest remaining myconid will always dutifully accept the dreaded role.



A4: *In the Dungeons of the Slave Lords* (1981)

One way the king can protect the colony is by animating guardians. Only the king produces *animator* spores, and these can be used to infect and animate a recently-deceased corpse. A purple fungus covers an infected body, takes over the internal systems, and animates it. The corpse rises 1-4 days after infection, and it stays active for 2-5 weeks before decaying too much to continue functioning. While it is active, the corpse can be given simple orders using *rapport* spores. Although it resembles a zombie, and has a similar lack of self-preservation, an animated creature is not undead, and cannot be turned. Animated creatures are slow, and always go last in a round.

The myconids in *A4: In the Dungeons of the Slave Lords* are hospitable enough, and provided that visitors are not rude or demanding, they will be allowed to meet with the king. The king is interested in news from the labyrinth outside the myconids' home, and willing to provide assistance to the adventurers in return for

them completing a side quest involving a giant crayfish. If things do not go well during the visit, the myconids will quickly raise the alarm using their *distress* spores. If the party attempts to flee, the myconids will likely permit them to do so, but if displeased, the king may have them incapacitated by *pacifier* and *hallucinator* spores, stripped of all their belongings, and dumped back outside the colony.

Myconids live exclusively underground, have a deathly fear of sunlight, and never venture outside. They are a peaceful race, but do have conflicts with humanoid races over resources. Unfortunately, humanoids and fungoids tend to view each other as disgusting threats. Myconids are lawful neutral in alignment.



A4: In the Dungeons of the Slave Lords (1981)

The adventure *A4: In the Dungeons of the Slave Lords* was reprinted in the edited compilation *A1-4: Scourge of the Slavelords*, but without the myconid monster entry, since that had in turn been reprinted in the *Monster Manual II* along with a new black and white illustration. The more recent hardcover compilation *A0-A4: Against the Slave Lords* included the full text of the original adventure. It also contains an appendix filled with fan-submitted art from the *Slave Lords* series.



Monster Manual II (1983)

Several other 1st Edition sources add to this initial trove of myconid lore. The correct pronunciation of myconid is “MY-ko-nid”, according to *Dragon #93*. The article *Methods to Your Madness* in *Dragon #138* notes that inhaling myconid spores can cause acute psychosis.

The AD&D hardcover *Dungeoneer's Survival Guide* is packed with mentions of myconids. They are identified as one of five distinct underground cultures that date back to ancient times, and along with jermlaine, the myconids are the most pervasive of the five, spreading into most of the deeper underground regions. In the section detailing the lands of Deepearth, the myconids dwell in the fungus forest area (obviously). This particular colony is focussed on irrigation, as their forests lack a natural water supply.

GDQ1-7: Queen of the Spiders has a short encounter with a myconid outpost in its "Further Adventures in the Depths" section. These myconids farm slimes and fungi in a large, open vault also inhabited by formians. The fungus folk and the centaur-ants engage in a form of chemical warfare with each other using slimes, puddings, oozes, and molds. Given that there are 200 myconids and 130 formians resident in the area, this conflict has the potential to erupt into a large-scale battle at any time.

The adventure *Escape from Demoncoomb Mountain* in *Polyhedron #38* includes a colony of myconids that is unremarkable, except for the fact that they have chosen to write a warning on the cavern walls leading to their mushroom gardens. The warning reads "Wouldn't you rather pause here for breath than keep on pursuing your untimely death?" This tells us that although they don't have a spoken language, myconids (or at least *these* myconids) can write (in Common) and are also capable of understanding both rhyme and rhetorical questions.

2nd Edition

The myconids featured quite prominently in 2nd Edition, starting with two full pages in the *Monstrous Compendium Volume Two*. The artwork shows a myconid whose eyes have migrated from its stalk to the dome on the top of its head. This myconid also has only three fingers on each hand, although the text still specifies two fingers plus two thumbs. We also learn here that fungus folk have wide feet with vestigial toes.



Monstrous Compendium Volume Two (1983)

The abilities of the myconids are largely unchanged from 1st Edition, but the ranges of most of the spore effects are capped at 40 feet. The description of the *animator* spores also gives stats for a typical animated corpse (it has one hit die and 2 claw attacks for 1-3/1-3 damage). We learn that myconids have a typical lifespan of 24 years, growing one hit die (and two feet) every four years. Their listed size now ranges from tiny to large (instead of the small to large of 1st Edition). Fungus folk have a morale of steady (12) to elite (13).

Myconids are explicitly herbivores. They don't feed directly on the fungi they farm, but off the soil nutrients left by decaying fungi. They are a peaceful race and conflict between myconids is unheard of. Myconids have no desire to conquer anyone and would prefer to be left alone. They view humanoids as violent, insane species out to conquer others. They have trouble trusting any humanoids, generally expecting them to become violent at any moment. Even when approached peacefully, they tend to be suspicious of outsiders.

Communal myconid space includes mounds of moss-covered stones that double up as seats and beds. The fungus folk also share a large garden area, where they eat and drink, and where the king grows potion ingredients. Dead myconid kings are buried beneath the mounds while other dead are buried near the gardens. The only myconids usually found outside of their community are work details looking for dead creatures they can bring back for their king to animate.



AD&D Trading Cards, card #689/750 (1991)

At first glance, the artwork on card #368 of the 1991 *AD&D Trading Cards* looks like someone has coloured in the black and white picture from the *Monstrous Compendium*, but it is actually a completely new picture, just of exactly the same myconid. It has a pale purple skin and yellow eyes.



Monstrous Manual (1993)

In the *Monstrous Manual* hardcover collection, the text and statistics are reprinted exactly as they first appeared in the *Monstrous Compendium*, but there is a new color picture and the myconid's eyes have returned to their normal place on its stem.

The article *Familiar Faces* in *Dragon #200* suggests a one hit die myconid as an alternative familiar for an Underdark mage. The special benefit provided by such a familiar is an acute sense of smell. *PHBR11: The Complete Ranger's Handbook* suggests that myconid could also be followers for rangers, but notes that such a follower has low trainability.

The *Night Below* boxed set includes an opportunity for adventurers to free a small group of myconids from an unusual persecutor. An insane, exiled male drow suffers from the delusion that he is a minor god of fungi, and he has acquired a *wand of plant charming* to assist him in his quest for followers. Together with his band of gas spores, ascomoids and, strangely, wererats, the drow is attempting to forcibly convert the confused myconids.

The adventure *The Dark Forest* in *Dungeon #22* includes what seems to be the first myconid to be given a name. King Armillaria leads a circle of twenty other fungus folk living near a subterranean forest. The background information provided indicates that a myconid kind can sometimes add his own *reproducer* spores to those produced by other myconids, in order to create an improved hybrid individual. New spores require a careful balance of nutrients and water during their first year of life, and are carefully tended and defended by the myconid colony during this time.

Shards of the Day in *Dungeon #60* is an Underdark adventure where the resident myconids are being experimented on by illithids. The mind flayers are trying to perfect *dust of contrariness*, and have chosen the fungus folk as test subjects. There is a large community of myconids in this adventure, and when the adventurers meet King Reyseta, he is stirring a cauldron which produces fumes that have the same effect as *rapport* spores.



The Gates of Firestorm Peak (1996)

Myconids feature in *The Gates of Firestorm Peak* as potential allies for the adventurers. In an area known as the Twisted Caverns, the myconids live in a state of constant warfare with the local population of troll

mutates. This pressure has turned these fungus folk into far more aggressive specimens than most. They have set up a variety of traps in strategic areas of the caverns, including covered pits filled with dangerous molds and key entrances crossed by webs lined with hallucinogenic powders.

Their social structure is also slightly different with the king having bodyguards (five hit dice) who, like him, remain apart from the circles and assist in the defense of the colony. The king keeps clubs coated with dangerous yellow mold next to the boulder which serves as his throne. Despite their more war-like countenance, the myconids remain peaceful creatures at heart, and are willing to communicate with the adventurers. If they agree to destroy the myconids' main enemy, the king will send one of his bodyguards to assist, as well as sharing *healing* potions with his allies. In the encounter with the king it is noted that myconids do not bend easily, and spend most of their lives standing.



The Gates of Firestorm Peak (1996)

The adventure *Uzagli of the Underdark* in *Dungeon #67* features an undead myconid king, named Uzagli. The leader of a myconid colony destroyed by derro, the king was raised by a derro necromantic spell and now serves the dwarves. Because he is undead, Uzagli's spores do not simply animate corpses, but instead create dimly intelligent undead. The animation process causes them to become partially frozen by rigor mortis, so these creatures have limited flexibility and move around by hopping. This, combined with an abhorrent need to bite people, gives them the name *hanuk arazuul* or "hopping vampires". The touch of one of Uzagli's minions has the same effect as *mummy rot*.



Uzagli, *Dungeon #67* (1998)

Uzagli himself is bloated and his flesh is milky and decayed. He is perpetually surrounded by the equivalent of a 30' diameter *stinking cloud*, and can produce some unusual spores, including *preserver* spores which slow the rate of decay of his minions, a semi-paralytic spore and a *death* spore which fills the lungs, causing suffocation.

During the 2nd Edition era, TSR (and later WotC) released a bewildering range of D&D starter sets. Some of these were intended as introductions to basic D&D, some as introductions to AD&D, some used their own not-quite-compatible-with-any-edition rules, and others (like *Dungeons and Dragons Adventure Game: Diablo II Edition*) were just strange licensing deals.

Perhaps because a peaceful mushroom man is an appealing creature to include in a set potentially aimed at younger children, myconids featured in many of these sets, including the *Introduction to Advanced Dungeons & Dragons Game*, the *Complete Starter Set* and the *Dungeons and Dragons Adventure Game*. All three of these sets reuse the artwork from the *Monstrous Manual*, and have simplified abilities and only a brief description. Also produced during the 2nd Edition era was the *Spellfire* collectable card game. The myconid featured on card #89 of *The Underdark* expansion, using the *Monstrous Manual* art.

3rd Edition

The myconids made their 3rd Edition debut in the article *Bad Seeds* in *Dragon #292*. There's a preface to the article soliciting feedback and noting that some of the material is intended for an upcoming product, foreshadowing the *Monster Manual II* later the same year.

Most of the 1st/2nd Edition lore remains the same, but these myconids have more physical variation. Their hands have a random number of digits, and occasional individuals have extra arms or legs. A myconid's eyes are perfectly concealed when closed. The location of the eyes isn't specified in the text, but the illustration places them on the edge of the cap. These myconids no longer have the poisonous skin of the previous two editions, but they do gain the standard immunities of 3rd Edition plants (poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and mind-influencing magic).



Dragon #292 (2002)

Mechanically, these myconids share the same 1-6 hit dice variation as before, with each hit die still equating to four years of age and two feet of height. Each of the six myconids has its own stats block and title. The junior workers (one hit die) are adolescents of 4-8 years. Although feeble, they are the circle's first line of

defence when needed. Average workers (two hit dice) are 8-12 years old, and form the backbone of the community. Elder workers (three hit dice) serve as supervisors and shock troops. Guards (four hit dice) are 16-20 years old, and are charged with overall defense of the circle; they tend to be more aggressive. Circle leaders (five hit dice) are older than 20 years, and lead and administer the circle.

As previously, each tribe has a single king (six hit dice), whose spores animate guardians, and who is also able to make a number of potions for the community. The other five types of spores (*distress*, *reproduction*, *rapport*, *pacification* and *hallucination*) are also unchanged, with some rules clarifications to the *pacification* effect making it similar to the dazed condition. Spores can be released in a 120-foot spread or a 40-foot ray, depending on the type.

Myconids have a movement speed of 20 ft, an armor class of 12 (13 for small workers, 14 for the tiny junior workers), and a single slam attack which does from 1d3-1 to 1d8+4 point of damage. All mycoids have the *alertness* feat; leaders also have *weapon focus (spores)* and their king has *brew potion* and *toughness*). They are listed as having a “usually lawful neutral” alignment and might be encountered solitary, in pairs, gangs or patrols (3-5), work gangs (3-5 guards and 3-5 workers), circles (a total of 20) or in a tribe (3-10 circles, plus one king and 5-10 animated zombies).



Monster Manual II (2002)

The text in the *Monster Manual II* is an edited version of the *Dragon #292* article, with a new illustration and a new gender-neutral title for the myconid leader, who is now their “sovereign”. The lore confirms that myconids are immobile until the age of four, and gives them an alternative name of “fungus ones”. Such is their distrust of outsiders that they actively seek homes away from busy areas. Their extensive knowledge of fungus farming is emphasized, including optimum growing conditions, crop sizes, and how to use the

different parts of each type. The organization of circles within a tribe is said to favor distances between circles no greater than the range of the *distress* spores (120 feet).

The *D&D v.3.5 Accessory Update* booklet has some minor changes to all six sizes of myconid. These are limited to additional skill points and in some cases an additional feat. The chosen feats give the elder worker more hit points (*toughness*), and the guard slightly better attacks (*weapon focus*).

4th Edition

The *Wizards Presents: Worlds and Monsters* preview book introduces the myconids of 4th Edition as immigrants from the Feywild of long ago, who are now more numerous in the Underdark than anywhere else. They are described as mysterious and fiercely secretive. Encounters with these myconids typically end with someone left helpless or poisoned by the myconids' spores.

Despite this preview, myconids didn't make it into the *Monster Manual*, and had to wait until the *Monster Manual 2*. There, myconids are listed as unaligned, and although they are still not evil creatures, the 4th Edition fungus folk are expansionist, constantly striving to expand their territory and numbers. This places them in frequent conflict with other residents of the dark places they dwell in. The myconids' insidious presence has spread from the Feywild to infect both the Underdark and the Shadowfell's equivalent (the Shadowdark). These myconids have a connection to fomorians, and are described as being "touched by the madness" of the twisted giants.



Monster Manual 2 (2009)

In the *Monster Manual 2*, the traditional six-tier hierarchy is replaced with just three types of myconids. The largest myconid retains the 3rd Edition title of "sovereign". A large-sized creature, the sovereign has 58 hit points, an armor class of 18 and a speed of 6. It has *commanding spores* which it uses to move other myconids into place in front of it, and a *spore burst* attack which it then uses to poison and daze enemies in combat with its allies. *Roots of the colony* is a free action which allows the sovereign to split any damage it is dealt to another nearby myconid. It also has a slam attack which does up to 15 points of damage. The sovereign is the only myconid able to communicate with non-myconids, using a form of telepathy. Unlike in previous

editions, this isn't explicitly a spore-related ability, although communication between myconids remains spore-based. All myconids also have tremorsense with a range of 10.

Only slightly less powerful than the sovereign (but much smaller) are the myconid guards. They are medium-sized, have 56 hit points, and the same armor class (18) and speed (6) as their sovereign. Guards have the traditional *pacification spores* which stop enemies from acting, as well as causing poison damage. Like the sovereign, they have *roots of the colony* which enables them to share damage with other myconids. As shown in the illustration, the guards have spiked arms which they use as their standard form of melee attack, doing 2d6+3 damage.

The third type of myconid is a rotpriest. Rotpriests are medium sized, with 48 hit points, and armor class of 15 and a speed of 5. These have abilities not previously seen in myconids, including a spray which causes the target to decompose (taking 1d10+3 necrotic damage), a *life burst* which can be used to heal other myconids, and regeneration of 5 points per round unless the rotpriest was just injured by radiant damage, to which is it vulnerable. Rotpriests have the same *roots of the colony* ability to share damage as guards and sovereigns do, but they can also do the opposite by using *sacrifice for the colony*, choosing to take all of the damage dealt to a nearby myconid if that myconid uses *roots of the colony*. A rotpriest typically wields a stipe staff for 2d10+3 damage.



Underdark (2010)

Underdark plays up the myconids' role as a threat to the Feydark (the Feywild's Underdark), stating that aggressive growth and a touch of sentience combine to threaten all denizens of the Feydark with contamination, with myconids spreading wherever the environment permits them a foothold. Most residents of the Feydark destroy myconid infestations rather than attempting to create allegiances with the fungus folk. Although fomorians sometimes seek to contain myconids in their gardens, there are also regular clashes between the two races.

Underdark expands the fungus ones' family to include the myconid gas spore and colony swarm. The gas spore resembles the gas spore from the original AD&D *Monster Manual*, and has a similar *spore burst* attack. As a minion, the spore has only one hit point. It has a slow hovering speed of 2 and an armor class of 18. Spores attack by slamming their acidic bodies into targets; when they drop to 0 hit points, their *spore burst*

activates. This attack poisons non-plants and heals plants. Spores act as remote spies and a first line of defense for remote myconid colonies, usually drifting into combat in packs.

The colony swarm is a collective of smaller, carnivorous fungal creatures. A colony swarm has 51 hit points and a *swarm of slams* attack doing 1d6+5 damage. Swarms rise up to defend myconid colonies using their poisonous *devouring spores* and *rotting decay* attacks. *Devouring spores* is a ranged attack that poison targets and those next to them, while the *rotting decay* creates a zone of putrid black slime that does necrotic damage to those within it. These special attacks have a limited effect on fey or shadow creatures.

The Great Cathedral of Psilofyr is described in *Underdark*. This is an ancient petrified toadstool towering 600 feet high and spanning over 400 feet in diameter. It is located in the Feydark. The myconids believe that the stone fungus holds the slumbering essence of their creator, Psilofyr (see [Myconid gods](#) below). The cathedral is ruled by a powerful myconid lord called Amasutelob. He commands armies of otyughs, fey-grove chokers, shambling mounds and other plant creatures. Amasutelob claims to be the “Last Spore of Psilofyr” and affirms dominion over all sentient plant life in the Feydark. He regularly sends forces against powerful fomorian kingdoms, only to have them decimated, and it is unclear if this is part of some long-term strategy, or whether Amasutelob is simply insane. *Player’s Option: Heroes of the Feywild* also mentions fomorians fighting skirmishes against legions of myconids in the Feydark.



Living Grotto, *Underdark* (2010)

In the adventure *Den of the Slavetakers* in *Dungeon #171*, myconids are one of the factions vying for control of a meteor shard. At the climax of the adventure, the myconids raise a giant fungal tower they have “glued together with spittle and ooze” to get to the temple which houses the shard.

The idea that myconids spread implacably and continuously is emphasized again in *Into the Unknown: The Dungeon Survival Handbook*, one of the last 4th Edition supplements. Myconids spores are apparently capable of creating enormous fungal masses that crowd out other plants and animals. The fungus ones do not react well to adventurers who hack their way through these fungal constructs and consider such actions as an

attack on their colony. Negotiation with the myconid sovereign is recommended as an alternative to facing an angry myconid community, who are said to pour from their lair like a colony of fire ants once attacked.

“It started when we found spores clinging to the soles of our boots after we returned from the tunnels, and it just didn’t stop. Mushrooms began popping up over the whole village, crowding us out of our houses and smothering our gardens. It wasn’t long before they started moving around, wondering what we were doing in their home.”

—Durthee, svirfneblin refugee

Into the Unknown: The Dungeon Survival Handbook (2012)

It is perhaps noteworthy that the 4th Edition myconids are both the only version of the myconids with aggressive, expansionist habits and the only edition which doesn’t make any mention of the myconid meld. Could it be that the myconids of other editions are such peaceful creatures only because their meditative practices stem their expansionist tendencies?

5th Edition

It is perhaps fitting that the myconids were reintroduced to the latest version of the D&D rules once again via *In the Dungeons of the Slave Lords*. During the long playtest period between 4th and 5th edition, WotC reprinted some older edition material, and this included the hardcover compilation *A0-A4: Against the Slave Lords*. Although the reprint remained faithful to the original AD&D rules, that month’s playtest packet included a new document titled *D&D Next Monster Statistics for Against the Slave Lords (A0-A5)*. The myconid adult, juvenile and sovereign are all detailed inside.

The juvenile is the smallest myconid. It has just 7 hit points and a single slam attack which does 1d4 bludgeoning and 1d4 poison damage. A juvenile has both *rapport spores* to allow it to communicate telepathically with other creatures, and *distress spores* which can broadcast an alarm to other myconids within a 50 foot range. The medium-sized adult has 22 hit points, and does three times as much bludgeoning damage with its slam attack (3d4 plus 1d4 poison). The range of its distress spores is double that of a juvenile (100 feet), and an adult can also release *pacifying spores* which stun a target for up to a minute.

The myconid sovereign is a large creature with 33 hit points and a slam attack which does 5d4 bludgeoning damage. It has the same abilities as other adults, but two additional spore attacks. It has *hallucination spores* which cause a creature to react randomly for up to a minute, and *animating spores* which can animate the corpse of a humanoid or a beast of up to large size for between two and five weeks. The playtest document includes statistics for an animated human commoner. All three types of myconid are averse to sunlight; it kills them after an hour of exposure. They also have a poisonous skin which does damage relative to the myconid’s size to anyone who touches them. Plants are immune to this effect.

One month after the first publication of the D&D Next stats for the myconids, James Wyatt covered the mushroom folk in his *Wandering Monster* column on the D&D website. Wyatt observes that there are three defining characteristics of myconids: circles, spores and hallucinations. Their society is based on circles, tight-knit social groups of twenty myconids that work, live, and—for eight hours each day—meld together.

Melding involves the release of spores to bind them into a state of shared consciousness and provides dreams that serve as entertainment, social interaction and worship. This bonding experience has an element seeking higher consciousness or union with a divine force.

The *Wandering Monster* article recaps the various types of myconid spores, and notes the unpredictable effects of the *hallucination spores* on non-myconids, resulting in a measure of confusion but also potentially some level of rapport with the fungus folk. Myconids are traditionally peaceful creatures, and may become allies if approached peacefully. However, they generally have an uneasy relationship with humanoids, which they view as violent and expansionist. Ironically, these are the characteristics associated with myconids in their 4th Edition incarnation.



Monster Manual (2014)

The *Monster Manual* makes a few changes to the D&D Next playtest version. Myconids no longer have poisonous skin and their aversion to the sun is now called *sun sickness*. The juvenile is known as a “sprout” and its distress spores have a much greater range (240 feet). Its rapport spores, on the other hand, now last only one hour instead of six. Both the sprout and the adult have reduced movement speeds (10ft. and 20ft. respectively). The sprout’s *fist* attack does one point less damage (1d4-1 plus 1d4 poison). An adult myconid’s melee attack does 1d4 less bludgeoning damage but 1d4 more poison damage (2d4 plus 2d4 poison).

Both the adult (AC 12) and the sovereign (AC 13) have an improved armor class compared to the playtest versions. Like the adult myconid, the sovereign now does less bludgeoning damage but more poison damage (3d4+1 plus 3d4 poison). The sovereign has nearly twice as many hit points (60 hp), and has gained the *multiattack* ability which lets it use either *hallucination spores* or *pacifying spores* and then still hit with its fist. In the playtest rules, the *hallucination* and *pacifying spores* had a limited number of uses per day, but in the

final version they are unlimited. The effect of the hallucinations is now always to incapacitate the target, instead of being determined randomly.

The D&D Next version of *animating spores* has the creature rise almost immediately, but in 5th Edition the process takes a full 24 hours to work, closer to the 1-4 days of AD&D. The animated corpse still lasts 1d4+1 weeks. The *Monster Manual* includes a more interesting sample spore servant (a quaggoth) but also helpfully provides a whole template for converting other creatures into servants. Only creatures of large size and smaller that were once flesh and blood can be animated, so no constructs, elementals, oozes, plants or undead.



Monster Manual (2014)

The *Monster Manual* is quite light on myconid lore, but it is clear from the paragraph describing their spore-based reproduction that their 4th Edition expansionist tendencies are no more. Instead they carefully control the release of their reproductive spores to avoid overpopulation. Circles of twenty or more myconid are still the basic social structure, and once again they use their *rapport* spores to meld into a group consciousness. As in earlier editions, they consider the meld to be the reason for their existence. If approached by travelers, myconids will gladly provide shelter and safe passage.



Stool, *Out of the Abyss* (2015)

Given that (spoiler!) the 2015 adventure *Out of the Abyss* culminates in the wedding of Zugtmoy, Demon Queen of Fungi, it is not surprising that the fungus folk feature quite prominently in the adventure. This is their most significant presence since *A4: In the Dungeons of the Slave Lords*, and there are almost as many named myconids here as in the rest of D&D history combined.



Rumpadump, *Out of the Abyss* (2015)

Quite early on in the adventure, the heroes meet Stool, an inquisitive young myconid who has been taken prisoner, and who may become an important ally. A little later on, there is another potential encounter with a group of myconids who have fallen under the sway of “the Lady”, and who are behaving erratically, dancing to tunes that only they can hear. One of their group is a friend of Stool’s, named Rumpadump. An introverted myconid by nature, Rumpadump is the only unaffected member of the group. He is able to lead the adventurers on to Neverlight Grove, a myconid refuge where much of the adventure is set.



Neverlight Grove, *Out of the Abyss* (2015)

Unusually, two sovereigns share control over Neverlight Grove. Sovereign Phylo has unfortunately fallen under the sway of Zuggtmoy's influence, and he has established new rules governing which myconids meld with each other, allowing some of the circles to focus entirely on supporting the Demon Queen. Sovereign Basidia has not yet been infected with Zuggtmoy's spores, and will try to warn visiting adventurers away, lest the corrupted myconids sacrifice them to her. It is an integral plot point in the adventure that Basidia is later able to reach out to the heroes using rapport spores over a much greater distance than would normally be possible.



Sovereign Basidia, *Out of the Abyss* (2015)

The Grove's community consists of seven circles of myconids, most of which serve a specific function. The Circle of Builders is responsible for maintaining the group's dwellings and structures. The Circle of Growers are the community's farmers. Responsible for the sporing and tending of new myconids is the Circle of Spores (also referred to once as the Circle of Sowers), while the Circle of Explorers consists of those restless myconids willing to act as scouts and pathfinders. The Circle of Hunters tracks dying creatures and retrieves their carcasses for reanimation. The remaining two circles—the Inner Circle and the Circle of Masters are unique to this community and a result of Zuggtmoy's growing influence over Phylo.

One of the appendices in *Out of the Abyss* provides three new types of spores available to adult myconids under Zuggtmoy's influence. *Caustic spores* cause acid damage, *euphoria spores* cause poison damage to non-myconids and leave the creature exhausted as an after effect. *Infestation spores* infect flesh and blood creatures with a disease and madness that gets gradually worse until the victim is cured or dies, likely to be reanimated as a spore servant. Four new examples of spore servants (chuul, drow, duergar and hook horror) are also detailed in the appendices.

In *Infernal Machine Rebuild*, an adventure released in 2019 in support of [Extra Life](#), a coven of green hags has used “dark gardening” techniques to graft myconids onto trees and treants, to create dangerous hybrids capable of ejecting various types of spores at those moving through the forest.

There is a band (literally) of myconids pictured in the *Adventures Outlined Coloring Book*. Leroy and his crew love to play for the gnomes living deep in the Underdark, but few adventurers have been lucky enough to hear the strange, rhythmic music echo through the cavernous halls.



Dungeons & Dragons Adventures Outlined Coloring Book (2018)

Monster Slayers

In 2015, WotC released a 22-page PDF, titled *Monster Slayers: The Champions of the Elements*. This was a short adventure using a vastly simplified version of the D&D rules, touted as suitable for introducing kids of age six and up to the game, and was a sequel to a similar 4th Edition-era release.



Monster Slayers: The Champions of the Elements (2015)

The adventurers are required to defeat the four champions of the elements in order to gain favors from Inferna, a mysterious fire-haired woman. The Champion of Earth is a red-capped myconid with a *mushroom goo* attack power which has delightfully specific effects. To use this attack, the myconid sneezes out a “slimy gob of mushroom snot” right at one of the hero’s foreheads. If it hits, a tiny mushroom which smells like

moldy, cheesy socks grows out from between the hero's eyes, and inflicts the hero with mushroom madness, causing them to attack randomly until the mushroom is peeled off.

Sometime after the initial publication, the PDF file was updated. It isn't clear why, but the myconid received a name change during this update. Throughout version 3 of the file, it is consistently renamed to "mycanoid".

Myconid relatives

Although myconids could probably claim to be distant cousins of any of D&D's variety of fungal creatures, there are two species for which the relationship is explicit. Both are smaller and sillier versions of the myconid. The first, the campestris, feature in the comic relief adventure *Old Man Katan and the Incredible, Edible, Dancing Mushroom Band* in *Dungeon #41*.



Old Man Katan and the Incredible, Edible, Dancing Mushroom Band, *Dungeon #41* (1993)

Campestris are much smaller than myconids and have no limbs. Usually happy-go-lucky creatures, not given to worries, in this adventure they have been displaced from their swamp by giant mosquitoes, and have sought out Old Man Katan to help them. Each individual campestri is only a little smarter than a domestic cat, so they have not been very successful in their efforts. They have noticed that when they sing loudly and badly, it drives away the fish, and causes Katan to stop fishing and instead light up a foul-smelling home-made cigar. This helps the campestris by keeping the dangerous giant mosquitoes away.



Campestri, *Dungeon #41* (1993)

With only one hit dice and a single attack that does only one point of damage, the campestris are unlikely to be part of a combat encounter. Their habits of playing silly practical jokes, singing (usually badly) and dancing make them more useful as a role-playing encounter or a distraction. They have two means of defence. The first is a cloud of spores that acts as a *slow* spell on nearby creatures. Each campestri can release these spores once per day, and they serve mainly to distract opponents. Their second defense is a diet high in salt, which makes them unpalatable to all except bullywugs.

The campestris get a full page *Monstrous Compendium*-style entry at the end of the adventure. This was reprinted in the *Monstrous Compendium Annual Volume One* along with a new, color picture.



Campestris, *Monstrous Compendium Annual Volume One* (1994)

After a twenty seven year break, the campestris returned to D&D in 5th Edition's *The Wild Beyond the Witchlight*. Their affinity for songs and music has not abated; they will sing along to anyone playing an instrument or singing, dancing and capering as they do so. They are able to easily imitate lyrics and music, and will be able to flawlessly regurgitate any tune in their obnoxiously nasal falsetto voices after practicing it only a few times. Although campestris understand Common, they speak only by mimicking the voices or songs of other creatures.

Campestri stems vary in color from white to tan to dark brown, but they always have red or purple caps covered in speckles. A campestri walks by manipulating the hyphae making up the mycelium base of its stem. They have only two hit points, and a *head butt* attack which does a single point of bludgeoning damage. As they did in 2nd Edition, campestris have two defenses: their diet of salty soil, from which they extract nutrients and salt, and their spores. In 5th Edition, the spores fill a sphere of 5-foot radius around the campestri, and incapacitate targets failing a saving throw. The spores have no effect on constructs, elementals, plants or undead. *The Wild Beyond the Witchlight* contains a stat block for a swarm of campestris in addition to one for a solo campestri.



Campestri, *The Wild Beyond the Witchlight* (2021)

Another creature related to both myconids and campestris is the friendly fungus, described in *3 Wizards Too Many* in *Dragon #196*. They are small, mobile mushrooms no taller than a foot. They have a cap-like head and a stalk-like body, but they do not have discreet limbs and can instead grow tentacles or pseudopods as needed from their amorphous lower ends. Each friendly fungus attaches itself to a single larger creature that is willing to look after it by feeding, scratching and stroking it. In return, they can carry small items, and fetch small items, much like some pets. They make a variety of sounds to indicate a range of emotions from contentment to disgust, and are capable of remembering and passing on a mental image. They see—the equivalent of infravision—through countless pores on their bodies, and typically have only 4 hit points.



Revenge of the Rainbow Dragons (1983)

The *Endless Quest* book *Revenge of the Rainbow Dragons* was published in January 1983, after the myconids' first appearance in *A4: In the Dungeons of the Slave Lords* but before they were reprinted in *Monster Manual II*. It includes some mushroom folk who are never referred to as myconids but who are at least similar in form. The creatures refer to their territory as the "land of the mushroom people" and are described as human in shape, but also as enormous walking mushrooms. They have rough, brown, lumpy skin and have narrow gill-like openings on their necks. They have large, soft feet and speak in mealy, muffled voices. When agitated, they hiss and sway back and forth.

These mushroom people tend fields of mushrooms and make shape-changing potions for a trio of evil wizards. They can also make a stew that turns other creatures into mushroom folk. Some of the individuals encountered have visible suggestions of eyes, noses and mouths, but not all of them do, suggesting that the community consists of a mixture of real mushroom people and transformed creatures.



Revenge of the Rainbow Dragons (1983)

One of the mushroom folk is the nephew of the villainous wizards. He was magically turned into a mushroom person after putting on a cursed amulet. Once the amulet is broken and he reverts to his human form, the mushroom people prepare to go to war against their oppressors by scraping glowing silver fungus off the cavern walls, and smearing it on their bodies like war paint. If the adventurers are successful, the story concludes with the evil wizards forced to tend the mushroom fields under the guard of the mushroom folk as penance for their evil deeds.

Myconids parts

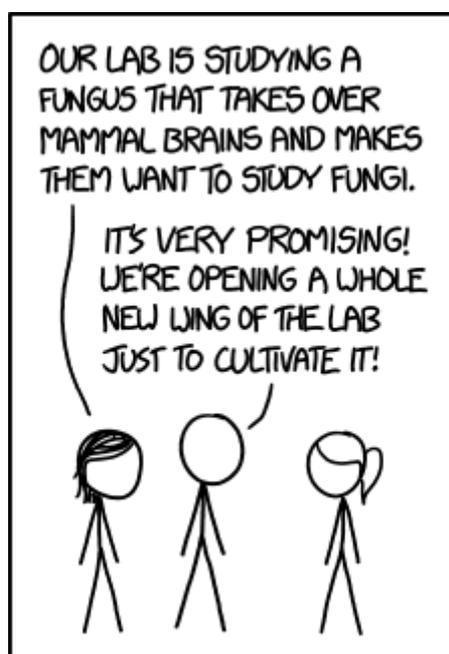
In *Better Living Through Alchemy* in *Dragon #130* the typical ingredients for *incense of meditation* are given as "1 oz. of hallucinogenic spores from a myconid, and one holy/unholy symbol". *Dragon #137* sets the going rate for collecting and selling one-pint jar's worth of myconid spores as 100 gp (or 100-600 gp for a "sprout"). In the adventure *The Dark Forest* in *Dungeon #22*, Randal the Alchemist is prepared to pay 300 gp for "each handful" of spores they bring back. He also clarifies that the spores must be given voluntarily by the myconids, because they disintegrate if the myconids carrying them are killed.

There is obviously quite a retail mark-up, since the price of spores as an alternative spell component is given as 1,000 gp in *Dragon #147*. The article *Variety, the Spice of Magic* notes that myconid spores can be used for the illusionist's *dream* spell, and must be inhaled prior to sleep. It doesn't specify how much must be inhaled (just a handful or a whole pint jar's worth?), but doing so reduces the time the spell takes to function by half. There is a risk though, since 10% of the time a twisted nightmare results instead.

According to *Secrets of the Magister*, a remnant of myconid (fresh or dry, spores or body part) is one of the components for the 7th-level wizard spell *obliviasphere*. One of the spell's possible effects is to turn someone into a myconid. *Monstrous Compendium Volume Two* confirms that myconid spores are useful in poisons and in *potions of delusion*.

In the *Living Greyhawk* adventure *PAL4-05: Possessions in the Dust*, there is a vial of myconid spores, which, when inhaled, grants the ability to communicate telepathically within 30 feet. The effect lasts for one hour. Another adventure, *URC3-01: Brotherhood of the Oath*, mentions *powdered myconid jelly*. This is a moderate narcotic which allows its imbiber to resist pain.

It is possible to animate creatures using an alchemical powder with similar properties to those of the myconid king's *animator* spores. In the the adventure *Ex Libris in Dungeon #29*, there are gnoll zombies created in this fashion. It isn't clear if the animating powder uses myconid spores as a component, or if it just works in the same way.



Mycology, [XKCD 1664](#) (2016)

A magic location known as a *garden of resplendent hues* can sometimes grow where a myconid king and his entire tribe are killed (*Drow of the Underdark*). When this happens, the spores the dying myconids release settle on the rocks and grow into a forest of colorful but immobile mushrooms, puffballs and molds. These gardens may harbor a desire for vengeance. If a ranger or druid champion willing to avenge the tribe's

destruction visits the garden, it has the power to transform him or her into a myconid-like plant creature for a period of a month.

The 4th Edition supplement *Into the Unknown: The Dungeon Survival Handbook* details *pacification dust* which svirfneblin create using spores harvested from nearby myconids. *Dragon #429* describes *myconid essence* as an oily substance with an earthy tang. It is harvested from the core of a dead myconid sovereign and saps strength from those who consume it. Drow use it on dangerous slaves and have been known to keep living myconids from whom they painfully extract the *essence*.

According to *Dragon #420*, the hardened heads of dead myconid sovereigns can be fashioned into a *pileus helm*, described below. The cap of a myconid is also one of the ingredients of Urten'nach Underdark cheese, according to *CCC-GSP-PHIL01-03: The Whispering Shadows of the Eldest Ruins*.

Myconids and other monsters

Myconid kings animate all kinds of dead creatures, including humanoids (derro, duergar, flinds, gibberlings, gnomes, goblins, hobgoblins, humans, jermlaine, kobolds, orcs, quaggoths), mammals (mobats), insects (fire beetles, giant ants) and monsters (trolls).

Naturally, myconids co-operate with giant fungi, including shriekers (*A4: In the Dungeons of the Slave Lords*). Mold men have been known to associate with myconids, but view them as having rather limited interests (*Dragon #265*). Myconids view mold men, on the other hand, as rustic cousins (*Monstrous Manual*). They seem to have neutral relationships with derro (*Dungeon #20*) and are on amicable terms with svirfneblin in *Dungeon #60*. They have an antagonistic relationship with formians in *GDQ1-7: Queen of the Spiders* but have learned to coexist with jermlaine in the *Dungeoneer's Survival Guide*. The myconid colony in *Waterdeep: Dungeon of the Mad Mage* endures occasional attacks from nearby gargoyles, but are comfortable sharing their caverns with giant centipedes and fire beetles, which help control the growth of fungi in the caverns.

Fizban's Treasury of Dragons provides several examples of dragons having a relationship with myconid colonies. An amethyst dragon dwells near a myconid community and communes with its members telepathically. A black dragon with a penchant for alchemy has turned the spores of a colony into a weapon it can use. A moonstone dragon had dreams of a myconid sovereign and as a consequence decided to befriend a whole colony of myconids. Finally, a young shadow dragon shields a colony from dangerous creatures of the Underdark, but it demands tribute in return.

Nightshades—the elemental spirits of poisonous plants—are said to be on good terms with “evil” myconids (*FRQ3: Doom of Daggerdale*), perhaps those who are loyal to Zuggtmoy?

The reptilian humanoids known as laerti or asabis (*Monstrous Compendium Annual Volume Two*) are known to eat myconids, although they prefer the internal organs of humans or camels. The troll mutates, on the other hand, will eat myconids with gusto (*Monstrous Compendium Annual Volume Four*). In turn, myconids favor ground-up troll mutates as fertilizer for their farms (*The Gates of Firestorm Peak*). At least on Oerth, kobolds occasionally cook and eat myconids; in the *Living Greyhawk* adventure *URDi3-01: No Holds Bard*, the kobold cook and her assistants are preparing to chop up a captive myconid for a stew.

In the Forgotten Realms, in Fluvenilstra, the Garden City of the Lowerdark, the slyth residents employ myconids to control the various plant creatures they use to defend their city. In the 4th Edition *Monster Manual 2*, myconids are said to be used as cheap labor or slaves by drow, fomorians and shadar-kai. They can be encountered together with geonids, rust monsters, green slimes, homunculi and deathjump spiders. In the adventure *Stormcrow Tor*, in *Dungeon #169*, a tiny colony of four myconids have a fungal bloodthorn as an ally. This aggressive vine strikes and grapples opponents using its impaling thorns. These same myconids are in conflict with nearby kenku. *Dungeon #187* notes that myconid slaves manage vast underground fungal forests for the duergar. *Underdark* notes that they can be encountered with dark creepers, gravehounds and troglodytes. The 5th Edition adventure *Six Faces of Death*, included with *Dragon+ #21*, refers to myconid slaves in the galley of a drow ship on the river Styx.

According to *The Ecology of the Vegepygmy* in *Dungeon #201*, Vegepygmies and myconids sometimes form alliances. These are usually short lived, as the myconids find the vegepygmies' outlook to be less enlightened than theirs. In *Undermountain: The Lost Level* the vegepygmies have driven out the myconids who previously lived in the Champignon Caverns, so clearly the two species don't always get on. *Volo's Guide to Monsters* confirms that in 5th Edition, vegepygmies and myconids coexist well together, along with shriekers and violet fungi.

Although they are not usually known as slavers, in the *Living Greyhawk* adventure *SHE8-01: Severance*, a small group of myconids has captured a gnome whom they keep in chains.

Myconid gods

The myconid god Psilofyr was introduced in *DMGR4: Monster Mythology*. He is often depicted as a fungal world-tree, with mycelia reaching through the planes into the homes of the myconid kings. Psilofyr is a benevolent and protective deity dedicated to the myconid race and the pursuit of perfection through meditation. He keeps the myconids safe, teaches them the secrets of potion-making, and, when a king dies, guides the senior myconids in their selection of the next king. He constantly shares his thoughts with his kings. One king in twenty is selected by Psilofyr to become a priest-king.

In avatar form, Psilofyr looks like a gigantic myconid with a vast mycelium complex drifting behind him. He levitates just above the ground and changes color, depending on mood and environment. A blue-gray color is common. He can cast wizard and priest spells, as well as using a variety of spore-based powers. These include *cause disease*, *cloudkill*, *sleep*, *pacification*, weakness, radiance, and an effect equivalent to *dust of sneezing and choking*. Psilofyr's avatar takes only half damage from blunt weapons, water and cold attacks, and communicates telepathically. He only rarely sends an avatar to commune with a myconid king, if that community faces a great threat.

Planes of Law notes that Psilofyr's proxy is a short myconid named Cybin Decayer, who speaks in a whisper and tries to avoid drawing attention to itself. Psilofyr's realm of Mycelia is described in the Planescape section below. Wyatt's *Wandering Monster* article on the myconids during the D&D Next period characterized Psilofyr as more of a Buddha-figure than a deity, particularly given that he dwells in Mechanus, a plane for which the original name was Nirvana.

In the Forgotten Realms, Psilofyr is an ally of the elven god Shevarash (according to *Demihuman Deities*). *Drizzt Do'Urden's Guide to the Underdark* suggests that Araumycos, a great fungus and possibly both the largest and longest-lived organism of Faerûn is actually a manifestation of Psilofyr. Araumycos is also involved in Zugtmoy's plans in the 5th Edition adventure *Out of the Abyss*, and the possibility that Araumycos is Psilofyr adds an extra layer of intrigue to that story.

Not all myconids are loyal to Psilofyr. *Demonomicon of Iggwilv: Zugtmoy* in *Dragon #337* notes that there are evil myconids among the Queen of Fungi's favorite minions. In Zugtmoy's abyssal realm of Shedaklah, the Slime Pits, there are half-fiend fungus creatures like basidironds, phantom fungi, phycomids and myconids. *Fiendish Codex I* notes that there are myconids loyal to Zugtmoy living in the realm's settlement of Xhubhullosk. These fungus ones are insane, and their caps are covered in tumors and parasitic growths.

In 4th Edition, it is unclear if Psilofyr is still alive. *Underdark* notes that it has been an age since any myconid has heard Psilofyr's meditative instructions, and the myconids are increasingly oblivious of their creator. Some sages believe that Psilofyr was slain by a primordial of rot, while others claim that he is conserving energy in preparation for a grand metamorphosis. Religious scholars theorize that as the myconids outgrew the need for a caretaker, Psilofyr faded away.



The Carrion King, *Dragon #420* (2012)

Although he is not actually a deity, *Dragon #420* introduces a Feywild ruler known as the Carrion King. Like many other Feywild rulers, he has a seat at the Court of Stars, but the archfey of the Court regard him with a mixture of respect, pity and disdain. Little is known about this fungal lord, but he is the master of the 4th Edition myconids and one of the most powerful residents of the Feydark. Like the myconids, the Carrion King is given to madness and he desires only to see his legions spread across the world. He does not occupy a single body, but is a distributed consciousness dwelling in a single, wide-spread root system. He grows new mushroom-like bodies whenever he needs to interact with others. The Carrion King can also monitor events through the blindsight of every shrieker in the Feydark and is surprisingly welcoming to adventurers visiting the Feywild if he thinks they help him further his plans.

As part of his schemes to ensure the spread of the myconids, the Carrion King has cultivated a new species of myconid symbionts, which can bond with humanoid plant monsters. The resulting host and symbiont combinations serve the Carrion King and act as his emissaries. The Carrion King counts both Lolth and Zuggtmoy as his enemies, as well as a number of incarnations of himself; these are giant mushrooms spawned by his consciousness that have subsequently gone rogue. Three of these renegades are described in *Dragon #420*: The Mirelord, a massive blue slime mold that believes it is an extension of Jubilex; the Great Mushrump, a gigantic red-and-white toadstool who advises the the gnome monarch King Finutar of Dorchdan; and the Caliph of the Depths, an oversized rocklike toothy truffle who consorts with Zuggtmoy and believes that a myconid allegiance with the fomorian kingdoms is their path to salvation.

Underdark suggests that the Carrion King could be simply a later incarnation of Psilofyr, and that Amasutelob might be one of the King's rogue manifestations. Notably, the Carrion King has allowed Amasutelob to rule the Great Cathedral without interference.

Myconid potions

The myconid affinity with potions is reflected in their treasure in 1st and 2nd Edition, with the listed type "S" including only potions. In *A4: In the Dungeons of the Slave Lords*, the king has a collection of potions stored in bottles made from the heads of giant ants. They are *extra-healing*, *growth*, *healing*, *invisibility*, *speed*, and *water-breathing*. The myconids in *Dungeon #20* have made potions of *clairaudience*, *clairvoyance*, *delusion*, *diminution*, *growth*, *poison*, *speed* and *vitality*. In *The Gates of Firestorm Peak*, the myconids make their *potions of extra healing* from the distilled essence of their hope for peace, and store them in stoppered plant pods.

The myconid entry in *Monstrous Compendium Volume Two* details five new, unique potions that can be brewed by a myconid king. These include a *potion of fungus growth* which causes a single myconid to grow rapidly, gaining a hit die and size, and a *potion of fungus healing* which is a healing potion that only works on fungoids. The rarely brewed *potion of decay* infects someone with the purple fungus the king uses to animate bodies; a *cure disease* spell is needed to prevent the imbiber from dying. *Powders of hallucination* are a back-up form of the myconids' *hallucinatory* spores, and are sometimes combined with spider silk to form a trap. Each myconid community keeps one *potion of anointment* ready. This is used on the largest myconid in the event that the king dies, and triggers immediate and painful growth. It is poisonous to non-myconids.

Dungeon #22 includes a Fungal Internal Infections table for determining the effect of myconid healing potions on non-fungus beings. The undead myconid king in *Dungeon #67* creates *potions of decay*, *oils of timelessness* and *paralytic goo*, in addition to *powders of hallucination* and *potions of enhanced fungal growth*.

In 3rd edition, the list of potions brewed by the myconid sovereign is a little more vanilla: *bull's strength*, *cure light/moderate/serious wounds*, *delay poison*, *endurance*, *endure elements*, *greater magic fang*, *invisibility to animals*, *lesser restoration*, *magic fang*, *negative energy protection*, *neutralize poison*, *protection from/resist elements*, *remove blindness/deafness/disease/paralysis*, and *resist elements*.

Neither 4th Edition nor 5th Edition provide much information on the brewing talents of myconid sovereigns. In *Waterdeep: Dungeon of the Mad Mage*, the sovereign Chantella has a *potion of diminution* and a *potion of longevity* as her treasure, and another sovereign (Flood) has a *potion of mind control* and a *potion of superior healing*, but it isn't clear if the sovereigns brewed these potions.

Myconids and magic

The *cloak of symbiotic protection* from *FR4: The Magister* and *Dragon #112* provides special protections against molds and fungi, including a +4 bonus to saves against myconid spores. This is because the cloak is made, in part, from a living substance which feeds upon spores and microscopic airborne life.

The *Bazaar of the Bizarre* column in *Dragon #224* details the *bane toadstool*, which could be used against myconids. This *toadstool* gives its wielder a number of powers including the ability to pacify fungoid creatures, a poison touch which also putrefies food, and *detect poison*. However, secretly, each time a character handles the *toadstool*, there is a chance of contracting a progressive disease. The disease initially causes only aversion to sunlight, but progresses to hair loss, the appearance of thread-like mold over the skin, and eventually complete transformation into a fungoid entity.

Since D&D mostly treats fungi as plants, spells like *protection from plants, 10' radius* will work on myconids. According to the *Wizard's Spell Compendium, Volume III*, the spell needs to be cast at 7th-level or higher, in order to affect them.

A *pileus helm*, described in *Dragon #420* is a comical looking helm made of the heads of dead myconid sovereigns and smelling of soil. It confers a short range telepathy on its wearer as well as resistance to necrotic and poison. In *Out of the Abyss*, the appendix notes that a myconid sovereign can create an awakened zurkwood mushroom by performing a lengthy ritual. Zurkwood are enormous fungi growing thirty to forty feet in height.

Finally, a bard's songs are musical rather than necessarily magical, but *Xanathar's Guide to Everything* suggests that the signature work for a bard might be *Waltz of the Myconids*, an upbeat tune that is particularly enjoyed by children.

Birthright

Myconids can be found in Cerilia. *Warlock of the Stonecrowns* describes a group of [hook horrors](#) with one member recently infected with yellow mold, following conflict with myconids.

Council of Wyrms

Myconids appear on the tables for arctic and temperate subterranean encounters in the *Council of Wyrms* boxed set.

Dark Sun

There is no mention of myconids on Athas before 4th Edition, but in the adventure *Marauders of the Dune Sea* there are fungus folk living in the abandoned tunnels of the Cult of Dust.

Dragonlance

Beneath the South Pole of Krynn is the underground world of Chorane. According to *DLRI: Otherlands*, the inhabitants of Chorane include myconids.

Eberron

The protagonists of the Eberron novel *Skein of Shadows*, based on the *Dungeons & Dragons Online* game, have an encounter with a myconid colony near Tarath Marad on the continent of Eberron. The party's artificer destroys the colony by firing fungicide-laden crossbow bolts at the myconid sovereigns.

Forgotten Realms

Myconids have been residents of Faerûn since early in both the world's history and the setting's history. The 1989 adventure *The Ship of Night* in *Dungeon #20*—one of the earliest Forgotten Realms adventures—takes place in the mountains in the North of the Forgotten Realms. One area of the Underdark in this region is ruled over by a meld of twenty-one myconids. The novel *Mortal Consequences*, set in Netheril during the Age of Humanity mentions myconids tracking a giant lizard across a swamp in the Myconid Forest at the foot of the Channel Mountains. *Netheril: Empire of Magic* confirms that the myconid residents of this forest coexisted peacefully with the ancient Netherese people. The novel *Thornhold* implies that this forest was at some point transformed into desert suddenly and violently.

The fungus folk also make an early appearance in the story of Drizzt Do'Urden. In the 1990 novel *Exile*, the dark elf spends some time with a myconid colony before they are all slaughtered by a basilisk and then Drizzt's family. This area is later known as the Oasis of the Stone King, after the petrified former myconid king (*Drizzt Do'Urden's Guide to the Underdark*). In the more recent novel *Rise of the King*, there is reference to an old saying that someone is “no shrinking myconid” implying that the Realms has a fungal equivalent of the idiom “no shrinking violet”. *Archmage* uses the phrase “might as well have been talking in the tongue of the myconids”, which seems like an unusual comparison to make, given the myconid's lack of a spoken language. In the novel *Timeless*, Jarlaxle and Zaknafein meet regularly in a tavern called the *Oozing Myconid*, which prides itself on having the foulest beverages in Menzoberranzan.

Myconids seem to be quite pervasive in the Realms. They live in Chondalwood (according to the revised *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting*), in caverns below the hamlet of Ulgoth's Beard near Baldur's Gate (*Volo's Guide to the Sword Coast*) and as far south as Chult (*FRM1: The Jungles of Chult*). Myconids also live in Qurth Forest near the city of Derlusk (*Power of Faerûn*) and in the Neth Stand forest on the edge of the Border Kingdoms (*The Border Kingdoms*). According to the *Moonshae Isles Regional Guide*, myconids can be found in the Deepshaes, specifically below the island of Graygruun.

A large colony of myconids tends vast fungi farms below the High Moor in the Western Heartlands (*Elminster's Ecologies Appendix II: The High Moor*). According to *Lost Empires of Faerûn*, in the south of the

continent, beneath the Sea of Swords, lies an area known as the Nemessor Tunnel. Tribes of xenophobic myconids cultivate aggressive plants to defend these lands.



Elminster's Ecologies Appendix II (1995)

Volo's Guide to Waterdeep mentions that myconids are among the exotic staff employed at *The Misty Beard* tavern in the famous city. While in Skullport below, at least one kitchen has been known to include myconid on the menu. The halfling Smallfry of Smallfry's Pantry serves a vegepygmy salad dusted with myconid spores (*Skullport*).



Myconid Venom Spore, *Expedition to Undermountain* (2007)

There is a colony of myconids dwelling in the Obstacle Course level of Undermountain in *The Ruins of Undermountain II: The Deep Levels*. The 3rd Edition *Underdark* pegs the population of Fluvenista, garden city of the Lowerdark, as 4% of the total (about 370). They control the plant creatures that defend the city through some unknown means. The late 3rd-Edition adventure *Expedition to Undermountain* introduces a variant known as a myconid venom spore. These aberrant fungi are the result of the flood of magic washing through Undermountain when Halaster died. These myconids became warped and degenerate and can now produce venomous spores which incapacitate and nauseate most other creatures. *Waterdeep: Dungeon of the Mad Mage* has a colony ruled over by a friendly sovereign named Floom, whose bioluminescent cap sheds light in a 20-foot radius. Another colony in Trobriand's Graveyard has been all but wiped out by hobgoblins, and only the sovereign (named Chanterella) has survived, at death's door.

According to the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Guide*, in the post-spellplague era of 4th Edition, myconids are known to inhabit the Castle of the Rose in High Imaskar. They also still inhabit the city of Fluvenilstra, now located eleven miles below the Shaar Desolation. The *Neverwinter Campaign Setting* notes that there are myconids living in the atrium of Castle Never.

The relationship between the myconids and the fungal colony known as Araumycos, hinted at in *Drizzt Do'Urden's Guide to the Underdark*, is expanded on in the *Campaign Guide* and again later in *Menzoberranzan: City of Intrigue*. The spellplague caused a change in the consciousness of Araumycos. It now calls itself King Araumycos and has brought thousands, if not millions of myconids under its rule. Toward the end of the spellplague era, Araumycos started sending tendrils and spores throughout the Northdark, as well as projecting an alien influence into the dreams of other inhabitants. Countless humanoids have heeded the call of the great fungus and wandered off, never to be seen again.



Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden (2020)

In *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*, a quaggoth servant of the duergar of Sunblight fortress has a captured myconid sovereign named Pleurota. The quaggoth is harvesting Pleurota's animating spores and using them to create quaggoth spore servants. When the sovereign became uncooperative, the quaggoth ripped off one of her arms.

Both the 4th Edition *Living Forgotten Realms* campaign and the 5th Edition *Adventurers League* series feature myconids. *SPEC1-3: Ghosts of the Past - Hive of Corruption* includes myconids who serve the chaotic evil god Ghaunadaur. They have enslaved the colony of giant ants which previously resided in the area. The lost myconid colony of Sporedome features prominently in the *Rage of Demons* season of adventures, including *DDEX3-03: The Occupation of Szith Morcane*, *DDEX3-11: The Quest for Sporedome*, and *DDEX3-16: Assault on Maerimydra*. There is a myconid known as the Sacred Seer in Sporedome who has become infected and corrupted by the demonic spores of Zugtmoy. She now seeks to infect others to join the ranks of Zugtmoy's followers.

The interactive adventure *HILL1-S: Onslaught* includes a huge flying myconid created by a dark fey army, but disappointingly there are no details provided for this creature, and it simply uses the reskinned stat block of an adult green dragon. In *CCC-TRI-17 ALLY1-2: Ph'theev Unbound*, a myconid named Odora operates a store in the Underdark town of Fool's March, near Hillsfar. In *CCC-ALMOG-20 TALES01-04: Jaunt to the Center of Faerûn*, an optional bonus objective has the adventurers helping two myconid parents rescue their missing sprouts. Two myconid juveniles are among the captives of the kuo-toas in *CCC-ALMOG-27 DAGON01-02: Cove of Fallen Souls*. The adventure *CCC-SQC-03-02: Shiitake: the Talking Mushroom* has the heroes searching for samples to assist druids cure a beloved myconid cook named Shiitake. Another myconid cook, named Cultivation features in *CCC-MAG01-01: Mischief at the Festival*. Cultivation prepares strictly vegetarian meals.

The Forgotten Realms themed *Magic: The Gathering* card set *Commander Legends: Battle for Baldur's Gate* includes two myconid cards. Card #243 is the Myconid Spore Tender and card #259 is the Undercellar Myconid.



Myconid Spore Tender and **Undercellar Myconid**, *Battle for Baldur's Gate* (2022), images from [ArtStation](https://www.artstation.com)

Greyhawk

Greyhawk Adventures notes that myconids inhabit dust-lakes in the Sea of Dust, and they are also listed on the underdark encounter tables in *MC5: Monstrous Compendium Greyhawk Adventures Appendix*. A colony of 56 myconids lives in the Tower of War in Castle Greyhawk (*WGR1: Greyhawk Ruins*). These myconids possess magical moss agate gemstones, which cause a 24' wide blanket of moss to grow wherever they are placed.

Return to White Plume Mountain was the last 2nd Edition appearance of the myconid, and it includes a fairly detailed encounter with a group of myconid refugees making a last stand in a cavern. They have woven mats of fungus fibers to trap the entrance, and defend themselves aggressively. Unfortunately, they are wounded and beaten, and several of their dead lie nearby. The description and statistics here are taken from the *Monstrous Manual*, but we learn that myconids have eyes which “burn with intelligence” and no mouths.

In Gygas’s *Gord the Rogue* novel *Dance of Demons*, there is a mention of “myconid monsters” and Iggwilv refers to her minions as “myconid demonlings”, but it isn’t clear from the context if these are true fungus folk, or simply creatures with mushroom-like qualities.

Historical Reference

Both *Dragon #189* and *DMGR5: Creative Campaigning* suggests myconids as appropriate creatures for an African-themed campaign. *HR6: Age of Heroes* disallows myconids as foreign to a Greek setting.

Planescape

Mycelia, the realm of the myconid god Psilofyr, is detailed in *Planes of Law*. The realm is hidden on one of the far gears of Mechanus and is protected by the paradox that it is hidden from all who seek it, and can only be approached by going away from it. This paradox is a thought pattern established by Psilofyr to keep away those whose minds are too turbulent to fully understand what Mycelia has to offer. Psilofyr views flesh-people as stupid, violent and hasty, and disdains humanoid company. Its petitioners are similar. While in the myconid god’s realm, the principle of nonviolence applies. Residents or visitors who entertain even violent thoughts find themselves instantly transported far across Mechanus. If they wish to return to Mycelia, they must first atone, and then subject themselves to the judgment of a Circle consisting of nine myconid kings. If the Circle finds someone wanting, they face a horrible, rotting death.

Mycelia is an immense cavern hollowed into the side of one of the gears of Mechanus. At least 100 miles wide, the cavern is perfectly round, with all stalactites and stalagmites organized in deliberate patterns. It is lit by a purple light emitted by giant mushrooms which grow everywhere. The floor is mulched organic matter of uncertain origin, and although there is a constant smell of decay, it is almost sweet, and never nauseating. Visitors should be careful not to tread on the tiny fungi growing in the floor, as they may be myconids who are being reborn into this realm. The only notable structure in Mycelia is the Palace of Psilofyr, a huge, hollow mushroom in the middle of a bottomless lake in the center of the realm.



Planes of Law (1995)

Why might someone want to visit this realm? There is a brisk trade in poultices, potions, inks and myconid hallucinatory spores. Myconids are polite towards non-fungal visitors, and interested in news from the outside world. A special property of the Mycelia is that everyone is able to communicate telepathically, so *rapport* spores are not required. Another is that with some concentration, it is possible to see anywhere in the realm within line of sight, no matter how far away. Unfortunately, the air in the realm is full of various spores. Visitors without the foresight to bring a mask, risk saves against poison for every hour spent in Mycelia.

In the anthology adventure *Tales from the Infinite Staircase*, one of the staircase's doors opens into a strange, round, organic tube. This connects to one of the many grown fungal buildings in the myconid city of Mythenosca, which is located in a remote region of Mechanus. *A Guide to the Ethereal Plane* suggests that myconids inhabit some demiplanes.

Spelljammer

One of the encounters in *SJR1: Lost Ships* is with a ship which flings giant metal spiders at opponents. The human mages who run the ship keep a variety of monsters captive on the ship, including myconids.

The earth world of Falx, detailed in *SJR4: Practical Planetology*, is home to a large population of myconids. One of the suggested adventure hooks has the myconids steal something valuable from the adventurers' ship in accordance with a prophecy of some kind.

Miniatures

The first official D&D myconid miniature released was a myconid guard in Wizards of the Coast's prepainted *Aberrations* set in 2004.



D&D Miniatures: Aberrations #41: Myconid Guard (2004), image from [MinisGallery](#)

This was followed by three different myconids in the 2021 *Icons of the Realms: Snowbound* set, an adult, a sprout and a sovereign.



Icons of the Realms: Snowbound miniatures (2021), images from [MinisGallery](#)

The campestri was also released in miniature form as figure #12 in the *Icons of the Realms: The Wild Beyond the Witchlight* set.



Icons of the Realms: The Wild Beyond the Witchlight #12: Campestri (2021), image from [MinisGallery](#)

Computer games

Myconids have made a few appearances in D&D computer games. In 1994's *Menzoberranzan* the adventuring party is given a quest by myconid King Feerus to deal with an [umber hulk](#) that is rampaging through their fungus farms.



Menzoberranzan (1994), image from [Moby Games](#)

Icwind Dale includes both blue and red myconids, as does *Baldur's Gate II: Shadows of Amn*.

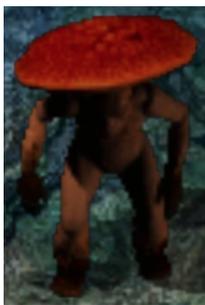


Icwind Dale (2000), image from [Mike's RPG Center](#)



Baldur's Gate II: Shadows of Amn (2000), image from [Let's Play Archive](#)

In *Baldur's Gate: Enhanced Edition*, *Baldur's Gate II: Enhanced Edition*, and *Baldur's Gate II: Siege of Dragonspear* there is a myconid merchant named Keen-Scentin' Concocter of Marvelous Draughts, or "Concocter" for short. With the aid of his svirfneblin sales agent, Concocter sells a wide variety of potions.



Concocter, *Baldur's Gate II: Siege of Dragonspear* (2016), image from [Baldur's Gate wiki](#)

Baldur's Gate III has a quest involving two rival myconid sovereigns. The first sovereign, Spaw, gives the heroes a quest to rid his colony of nearby duergar. The second sovereign is an excessively large myconid named Glut, who can be recruited by the heroes to assist in the fight against the duergar. Glut's colony was destroyed by the duergar, and he now seeks a new one. Spaw's colony has not been welcoming and Glut now schemes to take out Spaw and replace him as sovereign.



Baldur's Gate III (2020), image from [Mishka Rae](#)



Spaw, Brew and Glut, *Baldur's Gate III* (2020), image from [Baldur's Gate 3 wiki](#)

In *Idle Champions of the Forgotten Realms* there is an adult myconid as a boss monster in the *Neutral No More* adventure. There is also a myconid sprout familiar named Puff available as downloadable content.



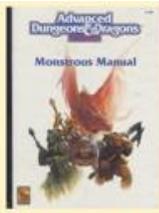
Puff, *Idle Champions of the Forgotten Realms*, *Puff the Myconid Sprout Familiar Pack* (2021)

Myconid names

Agaricus, Amaratta, Amasutelob, Armillaria, Basidia, Breberil, Brelup, Brew, Chanterella, Cultivation, Cybin Decayer, Feerus, Floom, Gasbide, Geldoui, Glut, Hebopbe, Keen-Scentin' Concocter of Marvelous Draughts, Leroy, Loobamub, Meln, Milla, Odora, Phylo, Pleurota, Posbara, Rajae, Rasharoo, Reyseta, Rumpadump, Sacred Seer, Shiitake, Slim, Spaw, Stool, Stout, Uzaglu, Voosbur, Yestabrod, Yrberop.

Comparative statistics

The myconid sovereigns statistics are used for 3rd Edition onwards.

						
Edition	AD&D (1st Edition)	AD&D 2nd Edition	D&D 3.5 Edition	D&D 4th Edition	D&D Next	D&D 5th Edition
Source	<i>A4: In the Dungeons of the Slave Lords</i>	<i>Monstrous Manual</i>	<i>Monster Manual II</i>	<i>Monster Manual 2</i>	<i>Playtest Packet (June 2013)</i>	<i>Monster Manual</i>
Size	S to L	T-L (2' per HD)	Large	Large	Large	Large
Type			Plant	Fey humanoid (plant)	Plant	Plant
Alignment	Lawful neutral	Lawful neutral	Usually lawful neutral	Unaligned	Lawful neutral	Lawful neutral
No. Appearing	1-12 (20-200)	1-12; 20-200 in lair	Tribe (3-10 circles, plus 1 king and 5-10 zombie servants)			
Armor Class	10	10	12	18	10	13
Hit Points	1 to 6 HD	1-6 HD	6d8+21 (48 hp)	58 hp	33 (6d10 + 12)	60 (8d10 + 16)
Speed	9"	9	20 ft.	6	30 ft.	30 ft.
Abilities	Int Average	Int Average (8-10) Morale Steady (12) to Elite (13)	Str 18, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 12, Wis 17, Cha 17	Str 7, Dex 11, Con 18, Int 7, Wis 8, Cha 12	Str 12, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 16	Str 12, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 10
Senses			Alertness, Low-light vision	Perception +0, tremorsense 10	Darkvision 100 ft., Rapport Spores	Darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12, Rapport Spores
Saves			Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +5	Fort 18, Ref 14, Will 15		
Attacks	1	1 (THAC0 19, 17 or 15)	2 slams + 7 melee, or spores +8 ranged touch	Slam +9 vs. AC	Slam +6 to hit	Fist +3 to hit
Damage	1-3 to 6-24 (d4 x HD)	1d4 per HD	Slam 1d8+4	2d6 + 3	13 (5d4 + 1) bludgeoning, 4 (1d4 + 2) poison	8 (3d4 + 1) bludgeoning plus 7 (3d4) poison
Special Attacks	Spore clouds	Spore clouds	Potion making, spores	Spore Burst, Commanding Spores	Animating Spores, Hallucination Spores, Pacifying Spores	Multiattack, Animating Spores, Hallucination Spores, Pacifying Spores
Special Defenses	Poisonous skin	Poisonous skin		Roots of the Colony	Distress Spores	Distress Spores, Sun Sickness
XP	14 + 1 per hp (1HD) up to 425 + 6 per hp (6HD)	65 (1 HD) up to 650 (6 HD)	CR 7	175	400	450
Treasure	2-8 potions: 40%	2-16 potions	None			

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