

The Wild Patch - 2024 Ranger Revision

by Nik, the Savage Attacker

Design notes, ver 2.0 alpha

First off, a huge thank you to Pepebm_GM, whose version you can find [here](#), with whom I've had a very productive conversation and to the others who provided feedback.

Moving onto the second draft, the priority was to trim a lot of the fat and try to make the design more cohesive. I was pretty proud of hiding an important feature for the Ranger behind a ritual, but at the end of the day it just made things more complicated. Of course this means that lv9 ends up with a very bloated feature, but it's the defining thing that Rangers are missing, in my opinion.

See, what emerges from playing a Ranger is how unreliable Hunter's Mark is when it stops hard-carrying the damage; and that's by design, at some point you'll have to leave the baby wheels of a 1st lv spell behind and use big spells, like... the ones from the Druid list. Don't get me wrong, Conjure Barrage is good, Conjure Volley is good, Lightning Arrow *can* be good, but they can only impact one round and come at the cost of your whole action.

So what I propose as the game loop for Ranger is: be prepared. Cast your big guns spell, your Conjure Animals, Summon Fey, even Summon Beast before combat starts, then take advantage not only of a superior (comparable in case of Summon Beast) damage to Hunter's Mark in round 1, but also a freed up Bonus Action in the many ways a Ranger can do that. This is what all the people I know that are playing Ranger already do.

This puts the Ranger in two different modes:

- A budget one that has to choose between losing the attack action or cast a bonus action spell like Hunter's Mark
- A prepared one that has no action economy loss and deals more damage with its Concentration and when it loses that, it can use Hunter's Mark for clean-ups

So, my vision is to make the Ranger better at getting prepared: the Druid can also pre-cast, but the Ranger not only scouts ahead and foresees combat better thanks to Expertise, but also at lv9 gets a feature to extend its spells' Duration. I really like this because I believe that Ranger should be the Exploration class (as in the three pillars of the game) and what is this if not Exploration being extended into Combat?

Also my (ambitious) goal is to touch the subclasses as little as possible, so this revision won't need a constant update. I still wanted to give Enclave Spells to Beastmaster and Hunter, who needed some improvements, but the very class's revision is designed to benefit the Beastmaster less, who already has a damage spike at lv11, by giving several Bonus Action based features. Originally a free source of Bonus Action damage was here, but I removed it as Ensnaring Strike exists and moving Nature's Veil to lv6 after nerfing it. This means

- Beastmaster would need to forfeit controlling the Beast to use them, but they're a fallback option if the beast dies; it gets Enclave Spells, tho
- Fey Wanderer benefits more from being able to prolong the spells with its free casting of Summon Fey
- Gloom Stalker benefits from the lv14 feature, that buffs back Nature's Veil and also makes it able to benefit from Invisibility in the darkness in spite of blindsight (that's the intention at least, I)
- Hunter needed QoL and basically to remove the restrictions on targets and spells from Lv11

Finally, Precise Hunter, even Treantmonk's was not a good damage increase for Tier 4. I decided to just add 1d6 to weapon damage, but it's a placeholder of sort (and intentionally named like that)

Ranger

Level	Proficiency Bonus	Features	Spell Prepared	Favored Enemy	Hunter's Die	Spell Slots per Spell Level				
						1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
1st	+2	Spellcasting, Favored Enemy, Weapon Mastery	2	2	1d6	2	-	-	-	-
2nd	+2	Deft Explorer, Fighting Style, Ranger's Trance	3	2	1d6	2	-	-	-	-
3rd	+2	Ranger Subclass	4	2	1d6	3	-	-	-	-
4th	+2	Ability Score Improvement	5	2	1d6	3	-	-	-	-
5th	+3	Extra Attack, Primal Awareness	6	3	1d8	4	2	-	-	-
6th	+3	Roving, Nature's Veil	6	3	1d8	4	2	-	-	-
7th	+3	Subclass Feature	7	3	1d8	4	3	-	-	-
8th	+3	Ability Score Improvement	7	3	1d8	4	3	-	-	-
9th	+4	Expertise, Primal Trance	9	4	1d8	4	3	2	-	-
10th	+4	Tireless	9	4	1d8	4	3	2	-	-
11th	+4	Subclass Feature	10	4	1d10	4	3	3	-	-
12th	+4	Ability Score Improvement	10	4	1d10	4	3	3	-	-
13th	+5	Relentless Hunter	11	5	1d10	4	3	3	1	-
14th	+5	Nature's Cloak	11	5	1d10	4	3	3	1	-
15th	+5	Subclass Feature	12	5	1d10	4	3	3	2	-
16th	+5	Ability Score Improvement	12	5	1d10	4	3	3	2	-
17th	+6	Savage Attacks	14	6	1d12	4	3	3	3	1
18th	+6	Feral Senses	14	6	1d12	4	3	3	3	1
19th	+6	Epic Boon	15	6	1d12	4	3	3	3	2
20th	+6	Inescapable	15	6	1d12	4	3	3	3	2

Level 1: Spellcasting, Weapon Mastery

Level 1: Favored Enemy

You always have the Hunter's Mark spell prepared, and you can replace its Verbal component with a Somatic one. You can cast it twice without expending a spell slot. You regain one expended use when you finish a Short Rest, and you regain all expended uses when you finish a Long Rest. Moreover, instead of dealing the spell's damage dice, you can use your Hunter Dice, as shown in the Hunter Dice column.

The number of times you can cast the spell without a spell slot increases when you reach certain Ranger levels, as shown in the Favored Enemy column of the Ranger Features table.

Level 2: Fighting Style

New option for Fighting Style (non exclusive)

Instinctive Defense

Fighting Style Feat (Prerequisite: Fighting Style Feature)

Your awareness allows you to rely on instinct rather than agility to avoid incoming blows.

While you're wearing Light or Medium Armor, you can use your Wisdom modifier in place of your Dexterity modifier when determining your Armor Class. Other limitations still apply.

Level 2: Deft Explorer

Level 2: Ranger's Trance

You can enter a state of supernatural focus to prepare for the challenges ahead.

You can spend 1 minute entering a Ranger's Trance, which lasts for 1 hour. When you enter the trance, choose one skill with which you have proficiency. While in this state, you can add one roll of your Hunter Die to ability checks using the chosen skill and to your Initiative rolls.

You can enter a Ranger's Trance once and you regain its use when you finish a Long Rest or you can spend a use of Favored Enemy to activate it.

Level 3: Ranger Subclass

Level 4: Ability Score Improvement

Level 5: Extra Attack

Level 5: Primal Awareness

Choose three Ranger spells that you can cast and have the ritual tag and add them to your prepared spell list. These spells don't count against the number of

Ranger spells you have prepared. Whenever you finish a Long Rest, you can replace one of these spells with a different Ranger spell that has the Ritual tag. These spells can't be replaced using your Spellcasting feature.

The number of spells you have prepared this way increases as shown in the Favored Enemy column of the Ranger Features table.

Level 6: Roving

Your Speed increases by 10 feet while you aren't wearing Heavy armor. You also have a Climb Speed and a Swim Speed equal to your Speed. You have Advantage on the roll whenever you make a Strength (Athletics) check to Climb or Swim and can use Dexterity instead of Strength for it.

You, and a number of creatures of your choice up to your Wisdom modifier traveling with you, do not suffer penalties for traveling at a Normal or Fast pace.

Level 6: Nature's Veil

You invoke spirits of nature to magically conceal yourself. As a Bonus Action, you gain the Invisible condition until the end of your next turn or until you make an attack roll, cast a spell or deal damage. While this condition lasts, you can take a Magic action to extend its duration until the end of your next turn. You can extend it in this way for up to 10 minutes.

You can use this feature a number of times equal to your Wisdom modifier (minimum of once), and you regain all expended uses when you finish a Long Rest.

Level 9: Expertise [PHB, unchanged]

Level 9: Primal Trance

You can draw forth the magic of nature to better prepare against your foes.

When you enter a Ranger's Trance while concentrating on a Ranger spell of 3rd level or lower that has a duration of 10 minutes or longer, that spell's duration becomes equal to the duration of your Ranger's Trance, provided you maintain Concentration on it. While in your Ranger's Trance, you have Advantage on Constitution saving throws that you make to maintain Concentration.

In addition, when you enter a Ranger's Trance, you can choose two skills instead of one.

The maximum spell level affected by this feature increases to 4th level when you reach Ranger level 13 and 5th level when you reach Ranger level 17.

Level 10: Tireless

Primal forces help sustain you on your journeys, granting you the following benefits.

- **Temporary Hit Points.** As a Magic action, you can give yourself a number of Temporary Hit Points equal to 1d10 plus your Wisdom modifier (minimum of 1). You can use this action a number of times equal to your Wisdom modifier (minimum of once), and you regain all expended uses when you finish a Long Rest.
- **Decrease Exhaustion.** Whenever you finish a Short Rest, if you have the Exhaustion condition, your Exhaustion level decreases by 1.
- **Resilient.** The penalty to your D20 Tests from the Exhaustion condition is reduced by 1 per level of Exhaustion, and your Speed isn't reduced by the condition. In addition when you fail a saving throw, you can spend a use of Favored Enemy to add one roll of your

Hunter's Die to it, potentially causing it to succeed.

Level 13: Relentless Hunter

Level 14: Nature's Cloak

The magic of the spirits you invoke to conceal yourself grows in power

- **Improved Nature's Veil.** When you use Nature's Veil, making an attack roll, casting a spell or dealing damage doesn't end the Invisible condition anymore.
- **Magical Distortion.** If a creature can only see you via special senses, such as Blindsight and Truesight, or you would benefit from the Invisible condition if they didn't have those senses, you have Advantage to attack rolls against them and they have Disadvantage on attack rolls against you.

Level 17: Savage Attacks

Spells

The following spells are added to the Ranger's Spell List:

Feather Fall, Purify Food and Drink; Invisibility; Feign Death; Conjure Minor Elementals, Giant Insect

The following spells have been adapted from [Treantmonk's version](#); any further change of my making is in green

Ensnaring Strike

Level 1 Conjuration (Ranger)

Casting Time: Bonus Action, which you take immediately

after hitting a creature with a weapon

Range: Self

Components: V

Duration: 1 minute

The target takes an extra 1d6 Piercing damage from the attack as grasping

Your mastery over weapons increases. Your weapon damage rolls gain an additional 1d6 damage die of the same type of the weapon.

Level 18: Feral Senses

Level 19: Epic Boon

Level 20: Inescapable

Whenever you see a creature within 90 feet of you, you can choose to mark it as though it were affected by your Hunter's Mark spell. This requires no action or Concentration. The mark lasts until you have the Incapacitated condition.

In addition, you automatically succeed on Wisdom (Perception) and Wisdom (Survival) checks made to find a creature marked in this way.

vines appear on it, and it must succeed on a Strength saving throw or have the Restrained condition until the spell ends. At the end of each of its turns, the Restrained target repeats the save, ending the spell on itself on a success.

Using a Higher-Level Slot. The damage increases by 1d6 for each spell slot level above 1.

Hail of Thorns

Level 1 Conjuration (Ranger)

Casting Time: Bonus Action, which you take immediately

after hitting a creature with a weapon

Range: Self

Components: V

Duration: Instantaneous

As you hit the creature, this spell creates a rain of thorns that sprouts from your weapon or ammunition. The target of the attack and each creature of your

choice within 5 feet of it take 1d6 Piercing damage.

Using a Higher-Level Spell Slot. The damage increases by 1d6 for each spell slot level above 1.

Conjure Barrage

Level 3 Conjuration (Ranger)

Casting Time: Action

Range: Self

Components: V, S, M (a Melee or Ranged weapon

worth at least 1 CP)

Duration: Instantaneous

You brandish the weapon used to cast the spell and conjure similar spectral weapons (or ammunition appropriate to the weapon) that launch forward and then disappear. Each creature of your choice that you can see in a 60-foot Cone makes a Dexterity saving throw, taking 5d10 Force damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one.

As you cast this spell, you can choose to Concentrate on it for up to 10 minutes. If you do so, the spell doesn't take effect immediately; instead when your Concentration on the spell ends or it's ended on purpose, you can immediately activate its effect (no action required).

Using a Higher-Level Spell Slot. The damage increases by 1d10 for each spell slot level above 3.

Conjure Volley

Level 5 Conjuration (Ranger)

Casting Time: Action

Range: 150 feet

Components: V, S, M (a Melee or Ranged weapon worth at least 1 CP)

Duration: Instantaneous

You brandish the weapon used to cast the spell and choose a point within range. Hundreds of similar spectral weapons (or ammunition appropriate to the weapon) fall in a volley and then disappear.

Each creature of your choice that you can see in a 40-foot-radius, 20-foot-high

Cylinder centered on that point makes a Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 8d10 Force damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one.

As you cast this spell, you can choose to Concentrate on it for up to 10 minutes. If you do so, the spell doesn't take effect immediately; instead when your Concentration on the spell ends or it's ended on purpose, you can immediately activate its effect (no action required).

Swift Quiver

Level 5 Transmutation (Ranger)

Casting Time: Bonus Action

Range: Self

Components: V, S, M (a Quiver worth 1+ GP)

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

When you cast the spell and as a Bonus Action until it ends, you can make two attacks with a ranged weapon that requires ammunition, such as a Longbow or a Pistol. The spell magically creates the ammunition needed for every attack you make with it.

Each piece of ammunition created by the spell deals damage like a nonmagical piece of ammunition of its kind and disintegrates immediately after it hits or misses. If you know the Hunter's Mark spell, each creature you target with one or more of these attacks is treated as though it were marked by a Hunter's Mark spell you cast for the duration of this spell until the end of your turn.

Subclasses

As mentioned, my goal is to touch the subclasses as little as possible.

Beast Master only gets some spells, notably Warding Bond, Awaken could be something else, the rest come from the Ranger's list and only save preparations

Beast Master

Level 3: Beast Master's Spells

When you reach a Ranger level specified in the Beast Master Spells table, you thereafter always have the listed spells prepared.

Ranger Level	Spell
3rd	Speak with Animals
5th	Warding Bond
9th	Conjure Animals
13th	Dominate Beast
17th	Awaken

Level 3: Primal Companion

You magically summon a primal beast, which draws strength from your bond with nature. Choose its stat block: Beast of the Land, Beast of the Sea, or Beast of the Sky. You also determine the kind of animal it is, choosing a kind appropriate for the stat block. Whatever beast you choose, it bears primal markings indicating its supernatural origin.

The beast is Friendly to you and your allies and obeys your commands. It vanishes if you die.

The Beast in Combat. In combat, the beast acts during your turn. It can move and use its Reaction on its own, but the only action it takes is the Dodge action unless you take a Bonus Action to command it to take an action in its stat block or some other action. You can also sacrifice one of your attacks when you

take the Attack action to command the beast to take the Beast's Strike action. If you have the Incapacitated condition, the beast acts on its own and isn't limited to the Dodge action.

Restoring or Replacing the Beast. If the beast has died within the last hour or is missing any of its Hit Points, you can take the Magic action to touch it and expend a spell slot. At the end of 1 minute, the beast regains all its Hit Points or, if it died within the last hour, returns to life with all its Hit Points restored.

Whenever you finish a Long Rest, you can summon a different primal beast, which appears in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of you. You choose its stat block, appearance and whether it retains the memories of your previous primal beast or not. If you already have a beast from this feature, the old one vanishes when the new one appears.

Hunter

Level 3: Hunter's Spells

When you reach a Ranger level specified in the Beast Master Spells table, you thereafter always have the listed spells prepared.

Ranger Level	Spell
3rd	Ensnaring Strike
5th	See Invisibility
9th	Glyph of Warding
13th	Mordenkainen's Faithful Hound
17th	Scrying

Level 3: Hunter's Prey

You gain the following features.

Colossus Slayer. [unchanged]

Horde Breaker. [unchanged]

Level 7: Defensive Tactics

You gain the following features.

Escape the Horde. Opportunity Attacks have Disadvantage against you.

Multiattack Defense. When a creature hits you with an attack roll, that creature has Disadvantage on all other attack rolls against until the start of your next turn.

Unseen Watcher. You can take the Hide action or the Search action as a Bonus Action.

Level 11: Superior Hunter's Prey

Once per turn, when a spell you cast deals damage to a creature, you can deal extra damage equal to one roll of your Hunter Die to that creature or to a creature you can see within 30 feet of it.