

## Verdant Rider

*Some mandragora spirits are vibrant enough to project this animus beyond their own bodies. Called verdant riders, these mandragoras explore the world atop unique companions formed from the mandragora's vines and animated by their nearly boundless energy. Both mount and rider brim with new growth, sporting bright flowers, whipping tendrils, clouds of pollen, and other manifestations charged with nature's power.*

The verdant rider is an archetype of the chocobo knight class, available only to mandragora chocobo knights.

**Plant Mount (Ex):** At 1st level, a verdant rider buds off and cultivates his vines into an animal form, imbuing them with limited intelligence. The verdant rider selects a mount appropriate for his size as normal, but this mount is a plant with the leshy subtype and has the same immunities as a vine leshy.

A verdant rider can absorb and regrow his plant mount. This can either replace a slain mount or change a mount's form; the new form must still be a suitable mount the verdant rider is capable of riding. Either function takes 1 week, after which the newly regrown mount immediately benefits from its special abilities.

At 4th level, regrowing a mount takes only 24 hours.

This ability alters chocobo mount.

**Tanglevine (Su):** At 1st level, as a standard action, the verdant rider can create a 15-foot-long, animated vine that springs from his hand. This vine lasts for 1 minute and can be used to make a single disarm, steal, or trip combat maneuver, using his Charisma modifier in place of his normal CMB. He can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + his Charisma modifier.

This ability replaces challenge.

**Photosynthesis (Ex):** At 2nd level, the verdant rider feeds upon nature's raw essence. The verdant rider and his mount's need to eat and sleep is reduced as if wearing a ring of sustenance, and they gain a +2 racial bonus on saving throws made against poison and paralysis effects. At 8th level, these bonuses increase to +4.

This ability replaces a mounted talent gained at 2nd level.

**Effloresce (Su):** At 2nd level, a verdant rider can use a standard action to create efflorescences, explosive growths fed by his animating spirit. A verdant rider can use this ability three times per day, plus one additional time per day for every four chocobo knight levels he has beyond 2nd. A verdant rider can apply effloresces to himself, or his plant mount if it is adjacent.

Efflorescences last for 1 round per chocobo knight level, and a verdant rider can have at most two efflorescences in effect at a time. A verdant rider can end an efflorescence during his turn as a free action.

At 6th level, a verdant rider can effloresce as a move action.

At 12th level, a verdant rider can effloresce as a swift action, and he can have two efflorescences in effect simultaneously. At 17th level, a verdant rider can effloresce twice as part of the same action.

At 2nd level, a verdant rider can use the following efflorescences:

*Floatflower (Ex):* Allies within 10 feet ignore the effects of non-magical difficult terrain. At 9th level, they also gain the effects of *air walk* while within 10 feet of the verdant rider.

*Shieldvines (Ex):* Allies within 10 feet do not provoke attacks of opportunity when leaving threatened squares; this increases to 20 feet at 9th level.

At 5th level, a verdant rider gains the following efflorescences:

*Bolsterbloom (Su):* The verdant rider and his allies within 30 feet gain fast healing 1; this fast healing increases by 1 at 9th level, and again at 14th and 17th levels.

*Innervating Pollen (Ex):* The verdant rider and his allies within 30 feet gain a competence bonus either on attack rolls or to saving throws (the verdant rider's choice; all allies gain the same benefit) equal to one-third the verdant rider's chocobo knight level.

At 9th level, a verdant rider gains the following efflorescences:

*Charged Blossoms (Su):* Choose an energy type: earth, fire, ice lightning, water, or wind. The verdant rider and his allies within 10 feet gain elemental resistance 10 to the chosen elemental type. At 14th level, this affects allies within 20 feet, and the elemental resistance increases to 20.

*Slipstrands (Su):* The verdant rider and his allies within 10 feet are affected by *freedom of movement*; this increases to 20 feet at 17th level.

At 14th level, a verdant rider gains the following efflorescences:

*Ambrosia (Su):* The efflorescence temporarily suppresses enfeebling spells and curses on the verdant rider and his allies within 30 feet. Affected creatures ignore the effects of such conditions for the duration of the efflorescence, after which the conditions' full effects resume. The duration of suppressed conditions continues to elapse while the condition is suppressed.

*Luckleaf (Su):* When attempting a d20 roll, allies of the verdant rider within 30 feet of him can roll twice and use the better result; each ally can benefit from this ability only once per efflorescence. Luckleaf can be activated once per minute.

This ability replaces steadfast mount, master feeder, and an advanced mounted talent gained at 12th level.

**Sinuous Steps (Ex):** At 3rd level, a verdant rider and his plant mount gain the woodland stride beastmaster class feature. In addition, they do not take any penalty to AC after making a charge attack.

This ability alters knight's charge.

**Restful Shade (Su):** At 4th level, while within a forest, the verdant rider and his plant mount recovers hit points and ability score damage at twice the normal rate while resting. In addition, in forest terrain, he receives a +4 bonus on Heal checks to provide long-term care.

This ability replaces expert trainer.

**Silverclaw (Su):** At 4th level, a verdant rider's plant mount gain DR/silver equal to his chocobo knight level. In addition, their natural weapons are considered silver for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

This ability replaces a mounted talent gained at 4th level.

**Ironpaw (Su):** At 7th level, a verdant rider may grant his plant mount DR/cold iron equal to his chocobo knight level. In addition, their natural weapons are considered cold iron for the purpose of overcoming damage

reduction. This ability does not stack with the silverclaw ability. The verdant rider must decide if the plant mount gains the benefits of silverclaw or ironpaw. He may change which ability applies to her plant mount by spending 1 hour in prayer and meditation with the plant mount within 100 feet.

This ability replaces improved chocobo mount.

**Rooting (Ex):** At 15th level, as a move action, the verdant rider can extend roots into the ground. His mount's movement speed is reduced to 5 feet, but his mount gains a +4 bonus to natural armor and a +10 bonus to CMD against bull rush, overrun, reposition, and trip maneuvers. His mount also gains tremorsense 30 feet and fast healing 1. The verdant rider can use this ability for a number of minutes per day equal to his chocobo knight level. This duration need not be consecutive, but it must be used in 1-minute increments.

This ability replaces superior chocobo mount.

**Shepherd of the Trees (Su):** At 20th level, the verdant rider's verdant heritage fully manifests. He and his mount gains a +4 natural armor bonus. He and his mount gains immunity to paralysis, poison, polymorph, and stunning, and he gains tremorsense 30 feet, even while mounted or rooted.

This ability replaces an advanced mounted talent gained at 20th level.