

# NOTES FROM THE APOTHECARY

## Volume 1

This is a collection of expanded information about unique poisons, drugs and potions that feature in Auram d20 adventures. The following terminology is used (when appropriate) when describing each entry:

**Name:** The name of the substance and any common nicknames.

**Type:** Whether it is mainly viewed as a drug or a poison, and the major characteristics such as the source it is derived from (Animal, Plant, Chemical, Magical) and a keyword that denotes its effect (Psychotropic, Asphyxiate, Accelerant, Depressant, etc).

**Delivery:** Provides the means the substance is introduced to the subject (Contact, Ingested, Inhaled, or Injected) and the save DC to avoid its initial and secondary effects if not deliberately taken. A character that willing and knowingly takes a substance automatically fails both saves, and cannot choose to fail one but not the other.

**Initial:** The initial effects the substance has within seconds of taking it.

**Secondary:** Additional effects that begin to take affect a short time later, usually 1 minute after the initial effect. A save versus the secondary effect must be made for unwilling recipients regardless of whether the initial save was made or not.

**Side Effect:** The long-term effects or addiction risks, if any, the substance may have.

**Description:** A description of the substances sensory qualities and method of effect.

**Antidote:** If the substance has a particular antidote that neutralizes it, it will be noted here. Most antidotes will just halt the progress of a drug or poison, but in some cases may actually reverse or remove all existing effects it has had on the character.

**Background:** Provides any myths or history of the substance, such as where it originated, who originally created it, and what it was traditionally used for.

**Creation:** Describes the ingredients and creation process, along with skills and DCs required to create, handle or use a substance correctly as appropriate. Creating a poison requires a Craft (Poison Making) check against the DC given, with a +2 synergy bonus if the creator has 5 or more ranks in alchemy or Profession (Apothecary). Handling a poison requires a Craft (Poison Making) or Alchemy check of the given DC to avoid poisoning oneself when attempting to create or use a poison. Failure means the character has possibly exposed themselves to the poison, requiring them save against its effects. If the handle poison check is failed by a margin of less than 4 however, the save against the poison is made with a +4 circumstance bonus, and all effects are at -1 per die due to the trace amounts of exposure.

**Market Price:** The market value for a single dose of the substance.



**Name:** Illixia

**Type:** Drug (Plant); Psychotropic

**Delivery:** Ingested DC 15

**Initial:** 1d4 Int damage

**Secondary:** 1d4 Cha damage + 1d4 Wis damage

**Side Effect:** Exceedingly addictive. After the first dose wears off, the affected creature must make a Will save (DC 16) or become addicted to Illixia. If failed, the addicted character must make a Will save (DC 16) to fight the addiction every day they do not take a dose of Illixia or take 1d2 Wis damage and 1d2 Cha damage. They can successfully overcome the addiction by succeeding addiction saving throws for two consecutive days in a row, but may become addicted again if they ever take another dose of Illixia and fail the addiction save.

**Description:** Illixia appears as a mauve colored powder, with a subtle scent reminiscent of dates. It is a psychotropic drug with hallucinogenic qualities and is usually dissolved in liquid for oral consumption. Most any liquid can be used but red wine is favored due to its ability to mask the drugs strong, tangy flavor. Some people find the tanginess of Illixia unpleasant and will dilute the drug over several cups of wine. However, doing so means they tend to become quite drunk by the time they have taken a full dose, and are more prone to the nastier effects of the drug (-2 penalty to the save against the negative aspects of the secondary effect, for every level of intoxication; slightly, moderately, heavily, severely).

Illixia's initial effect is an almost immediate, warm, giddy feeling, that gives a heightened sense of well-being and happiness. Creatures under these initial effects of Illixia tend to find amusement in everything, and have immense pleasure in every sensation, even to the point of lessening levels of pain. Creatures under this effect may experience some difficulty thinking rationally or recalling facts however, due to the constant distractions that drug provides. This is represented by the temporary intelligence damage of the initial effect. The duration of the initial effect is 1d4 hours.

The secondary effect of this drug starts to become evident in the creature about 10 minutes after taking it (instead of the usual 1 minute for secondary effects). The affected creature begins seeing hallucinations that vary in intensity from subtle effects only

seen in peripheral vision, to dramatic manifestations indistinguishable from reality. The intensity of the hallucinations depend upon the amount of Wisdom damage the affected creature suffers, the higher the damage, the stronger the hallucination. The charisma damage represents the effects of the creature interacting with hallucinations, varying from a slight distracted edginess, to complete conversions or possibly violent responses to the figments.

Most of the time these effects are positive for the affected creature, being pleasant and entertaining, but sometimes they can turn into paranoia and terrifying delusions, depending upon the disposition of their mind. If the save against the secondary effect fails, or the drug is taken willingly, the creature must also make a Will save (DC 10) to avoid having a bad experience during the drugs secondary effect. The secondary effect also lasts for 1d4 hours.

**Antidote:** There is no antidote for the effects of Illixia, except to wait for the drug to run its course. The best option for someone having a bad experience on Illixia is try and sleep it off, though it may prove difficult to convince an affected person to do this, short of knocking them unconscious.

**Background:** Illixia is a derivative of a naturally occurring psychotropic substance, which is found in the petals and seeds of the Purple Megallion Flower, a species native to Maritaan. The Megallion is most commonly found around oases of the *El'Amordia Yaar* (Desert of Entropy), and is a stubby plant with a single broad petalled flower and a fruit shaped like a drop of blood, both a deep, glossy, purple in color. There are rings of poisonous thorns around the stalk of the flower to ward off predators. The petals of the Megallion Flower are chewed by the Shaera, one of the older tribes of the Y'naari-Kahn, to promote feelings of happiness and well-being, similar, though much weaker, to the effects of concentrated Illixia. The fruit provides similar effects, but will also induce strong hallucinations, that are an integral part of the spiritual rituals performed by the Shi'ir Ghuls (Y'naari witchdoctors).

Y'naari tribal mythology tells of the plant first growing from where the blood of the Goddess Yaarneya was said have been shed by Siritar the Just, during his great battle with her at the Oasis of Shadows. Because of this, the flower of the plant is considered sacred, and it is a crime against Yaarneya for anyone other than a Shi'ir to pick or eat the fruit of the Megallion. The punishment for being caught by the Shaera tribe, with the fruit, is to be left staked in the desert for the vultures.

The mysticism surrounding the flower is reinforced by the occasional person found killed by apparently self-inflicted exposure to its poisonous thorns (Injury DC14; 1d2 Con/1d4 Con+1d4 Wis). This is caused by another defense mechanism of the Megallion. Any creature eating the fruit within 60' of a Megallion may be affected by the scent put out by the flower and will be required to make Will save (DC 5), or suffer a hallucination that usually manifests itself as a sexual illusion. Figments of an attractive mate of the same species will appear and the flower scent will lure the victim to the flower where they inevitably come into contact with the poison thorns. The reason the Shi'ir do not usually suffer a similar fate is due to their strong will power, and religious ceremony that prevents them from consuming the fruit anywhere near a Megallion plant.

**Creation:** Black market demands will often overcome the fear of people risking the acquisition of Illixia. There are foreign smugglers who will risk the wrath of the Shaera tribes, to steal the fruit of the Megallion for use in the making of Illixia. The petals, fruit and thorns of the plant are all used in the processing of the drug, though the fruit is the major ingredient, each needing to be treated separately to extract their active ingredients. This makes Illixia is a very difficult drug to make, breaking down and becoming inert within a day if not enough of the thorn toxins are used, or becoming poisonous (Ingested DC11; 1d2 Con/1d4 Con+1d2 Wis) if too much toxin is used. Once isolated, the separate ingredients must then be recombined under heat and pressure, and treated with special salt solutions before being left to dry. The end result sees all moisture evaporate, forming crystals of Illixia which are scraped from the evaporation trays and ground into a powder form resembling purple colored salt.

Successfully making a batch of Illixia requires a Craft (Poison Making) or Alchemy check (DC 25). The recipe requires 1 fruit, 1-3 thorns, the petals of several Megallion flowers, and 10gp worth of salts and reagents to create 1d4 doses of Illixia.

**Market Price:** 40gp (traditionally sold in small wood 'pill-boxes').

**Name:** Laqueera

**Type:** Drug (Animal/Plant); Aphrodisiac

**Delivery:** Ingested DC 12

**Initial:** 0

**Secondary:** -1d4 Wis penalty; +1d4 Cha bonus

**Side Effect:** Additional doses of Laqueera, taken within 24 hours of the each other, may still produce an aphrodisiac effect along with the Wisdom damage it causes, but the feelings of well being and happiness are far less, no longer providing a Charisma bonus.

Laqueera is also mildly addictive. Starting from the day the first dose is taken, the creature must make a Will save (DC 6) or become addicted to Laqueera. If failed, the addicted character must make a Will save (DC 8) to fight the addiction, every day they do not take a dose of Laqueera, or take 1d2 Cha damage. They can successfully overcome the addiction by succeeding addiction saving



throws for two consecutive days in a row, but may become addicted again if they ever take another dose of Laqueera and fail the addiction save.

**Description:** Laqueera appears as a dry, pink paste, with a slight citrus smell, and is usually found in jam jars or pots. The paste is dotted with the occasional small seed of the same fruit the drug is made from. It tastes sour with a bitter after taste, like grapefruit crossed with persimmon, but some people find the flavor quite pleasant, and it will often grow on them (like anchovies are sometimes an acquires taste). Creatures that become addicted to Laqueera sometimes do so as much for the flavor as its effects. Laqueera is commonly taken with foodstuffs, often by spreading it on bread and eating it, sometimes combining the Laqueera with a jam.



Laqueera promotes strong erotic feelings and instills the affected creature with a sense of confidence and well-being. This focused confidence is represented by the charisma bonus, but is only effective in pursuit of intimate contact, as those affected seek to fulfill their carnal desires with a single-minded focus. Creatures under its effects can become very intense, even to the point of being out of character, and sometimes doing things not normally in their nature. This single-minded focus is represented by the wisdom penalty, demonstrating reduced powers of perception while their attention is obsessed with desire. Furthermore, they suffer a -1 circumstance penalty to any actions not viewed as getting them closer to fulfilling their carnal desires.

The effects of Laqueera last for 1d4 hours, and all the effects disappear when the drug wears off, including the wisdom penalty.

**Antidote:** There is no antidote for Laqueera, except maybe a bucket of cold water.

**Background:** Laqueera is made from a small grub, which only can be found in Pommeraje, a fruit that grows in arid conditions, notably in Y'sira and Maritaan. Pommeraje is very sour and definitely an acquired taste. It is usually sweetened with honey or herbs before consumption. The grubs are the larvae of a desert moth, which only lays its eggs in the Pommeraje, often leaving every fruit on a tree crawling with hundreds of tiny white grubs. It is thought that, in centuries past, wily farmers, finding their orchards ruined by the grubs, used the fruit as food for animals and noted its euphoric effects of eating the larvae. Experimentation led to people eating the grubs to experience the aphrodisiac effects and those living in regional communities in Y'sira still do. However the drug became more popular after it was made into Laqueera (Y'siran for 'happy' worm), presenting it in a more palatable form. Since its discovery it has always seen heavy use by the Yaarneyan cult.

**Creation:** The creation of Laqueera is quite simple, and basically just requires mashing the the grub-infested pommeraje fruit up, adding a few herbs and spices to taste and boiling the pulp up until it achieves a sticky jam-like consistency.

**Market Price:** 1gp

**Name:** Garridia ("Gray Death")

**Type:** Poison (Animal); Nerve

**Delivery:** Injury DC 18

**Initial:** 1d6 Con damage

**Secondary:** 2d6 Con damage

**Description:** Garridia is a dark, green colored liquid with the consistency of treacle, and a sharp, acidic odor. It can damage nasal tissue if inhaled carelessly. It causes a rash, and itchy discomfort if it comes into contact with bare skin but it needs to be introduced to a victim's bloodstream to become truly effective. It should still be handled with care however, as the smallest cut is all that is required to receive a possibly lethal dose.

When introduced to the bloodstream, Garridia begins to attack the victim's nervous system, starting with the target area. Survivors of Garridia poisoning describe intense feelings of shooting pain and severe cramping, combined with difficulty in breathing as the toxin gradually spreads into the abdomen and chest. Death from Garridia usually occurs from cardiac arrest when the poison reaches the victim's heart, usually within a minute of exposure.

The bodies of people killed by Garridia are usually found in a fetal position, displaying expressions of extreme agony. There is always a large area of dark bruising centered on the site where the poisoning occurred.

**Antidote:** There is currently no known specific antidote other than magic that can help a victim poisoned by Garridia. Standard techniques used by skilled healers for providing first aid to a poison victim may provide the usual benefits however.

**Background:** Garridia is distilled from the toxin of a particular species of soldier ant, known as the Garridian Gray, a native to

the jungles of Po-Ka (although colonies are spreading north each year). These inch long ants have a light gray carapace with long black legs. Their bite gives similar symptoms, but a single ant bite is more painful than dangerous (DC 10; 1 Con/1d2 Con). Being swarmed by a nest of Garridian Grays is an extremely painful way to die however, and is sometimes used as a method of ritual execution by the viscious Arimah tribes of Po-Ka.

Arimah witchdoctors were first ones to realize the potential for Garridia as a poison and, seeing its effectiveness, they developed a means of extracting the poison without destroying its active properties. Due to the lengthy time and specialized additives required in creating the poison, and the fact that its victims died in an extremely painful manner, Garridia generally only saw use during ritual battles or revenge killings. It was also sometimes used in the past to slay the tribal chiefs or champions of enemy tribes during times of conflict.

Druidical orders in Rhenfara were able to learn the secrets of making Garridia in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century and since then, its recipe has been acquired by a number of apothecaries and alchemists in the northern countries.

**Creation:** A somewhat dangerous process that involves the capture and crushing of hundreds of Garridian Gray Ants. They are placed into a vat of warm oils and slowly simmered until the dead ants settle on the bottom and their toxins float to the surface of the oil to be collected. The raw toxins would then be distilled over several days of further boiling at different temperatures, with alternating mixtures of fresh oil and water until the distilled poison remains. Garridia requires a Craft (Poison Making) creation check (DC 25), and a handle poison check (DC 20) to avoid exposing yourself to the poison. The recipe requires approximately 500 Garridian Gray ants, and about 100gp worth of specific oils and reagents to produce 2d4 doses of Garridia poison. The thick treacle-like mixture retains its potency for 10+2d6 days.

**Market Price:** 1200gp



**Name:** Bitterwort ("Bearbane")

**Type:** Poison (Plant); Nauseant

**Delivery:** Ingested DC 15

**Initial:** 1d4 Str damage

**Secondary:** 1d6 Str damage

**Description:** This appears as a watery liquid, rich red in color, with a slightly foamy texture. Being a water-based liquid it mixes well with most beverages and absorbs easily into foods. It has a strong strawberry smell that is quite pleasant, but by contrast, it has a bitter taste. Its olfactory and culinary qualities can somewhat limit its usefulness; it works best in sweets or strongly smelling foods that can mask its odor with their own.

After consuming a sufficient quantity of Bitterwort, the victim almost immediately begins to feel quite ill as its active ingredient reacts with the victim's digestive fluids. The effects begin with a feeling of nausea and wind, sometimes accompanied by a painful pressure in the chest and back, caused by the severe indigestion. As the toxin progresses, it causes stomach cramps and cold chills. In more severe cases it may also cause vomiting and diarrhea as the victims body tries to purge itself of the toxin. It has never been known to kill anybody, but can leave people of lower constitution, particularly children or elderly victims, incapacitated with nausea and stomach cramps for days.

**Antidote:** Being a strongly acidic toxin, its effects can be lessened by drinking lots of milk or cream. Doing so immediately will lessen the effects by -1 damage per die, but only to rolls not yet made, and increase recovery rate to 1 points of strength damage recovered every hour.



**Background:** Bitterwort is a plant growth, commonly found on shade rocks in the forests of Llan. The wort grows in long pale green clumps, on the base of rocks, close to the moisture of the ground and only during late spring to early summer. The people of Llan have always known that Bitterwort is toxic and causes mild nausea if the hands are not washed after coming in contact with the growths. However, the process of distillation that increases the potency of the wort is not widely known. In fact, once cooked, Bitterwort is still very bitter to taste, but loses its toxins and becomes quite safe to eat. It is known that people in the Llanish shire of Hallesta add Bitterwort to their pies and jams.

As a poison, it is occasionally made by rangers, who use it to drive troublesome animals away from human settlements.

**Creation:** Bitterwort is scraped from rocks and dried, then it is mixed with various herbs, syrups and juices and left to stand and ferment in the sun for a few days. Water is slowly added as the level drops, until the color turns a darker red. The process continues until the majority of water content has evaporated. At this point, the liquid residue is transferred to an air tight container for storage, where it will retain its effectiveness for about 1-2 years. Bitterwort requires a Craft (Poison Making) creation check (DC 15), but a relatively low handle poison check (DC 3). Requires 5 handfuls of the wort (the scrapings from about twenty good sized rocks) and about 15gp worth of materials, mainly syrup and fruit juices, to produce 1d4 effective doses of Bitterwort poison.

**Market Price:** 100gp



# Auran d20

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## Adventures