

# Overwatch 2's new hero Lifeweaver puts down roots in season 4

*Overwatch 2* has been releasing new heroes at a pretty good clip, and with the pending arrival of season 4 comes the latest hero: Lifeweaver. Lifeweaver's addition to the game had been teased by the *Overwatch* developers in the last few weeks, with them calling the new hero "cute," leading some in the *Overwatch* community to speculate that we'd be getting another animal-based hero like the much-desired "jetpack cat."

But thanks to an unfortunate leak and the slow drip of information ahead of his official launch, we now know the developers should have used "sexy" instead of "cute" because Lifeweaver is a stone-cold fox.

Lifeweaver, as his name should hint, is a support hero. In his developer update video, the development team describes Lifeweaver as a "sci-fi druid" who uses a self-designed mix of nature and tech called Biolight to heal his allies. Though he's a support character, his kit's extremely interesting in that it's mostly centered on movement, not healing. Lifeweaver's rejuvenating dash ability lets him zip in and out of danger while healing himself. Petal platform creates pressure-sensitive flower platforms that lift anyone who steps on them high into the air. And, for all you *Final Fantasy XIV* healers out there, Lifeweaver's Life Grip ability lets him pull the standing-in-the-ouchies players out of danger, which, according to hero design producer Kenny Hudson, made for some heroic saves in playtesting.

Lifeweaver's ultimate, Tree of Life, summons a huge tree that

sends out pulses of healing energy over time. Its large profile also acts like a barrier to block line-of-sight for the unfortunate soul caught out in the midst of Pharah's Rocket Barrage or Soldier 76's Tactical Visor.

As a support main, I appreciate the addition of Lifeweaver to the roster, but what fascinates me most about this hero is his story. (It's also the fact that he's Kurama from *Yu Yu Hakusho* brought forward into modern times, but that's a fangirl flail for another day.) Lifeweaver is *Overwatch*'s first pansexual hero, and while he's not the game's first or only queer character, it seems like he's the first to be open about his sexuality in the game. Where before queer characters like Tracer and Soldier 76 had their orientations confirmed outside the game in comics and shorts, according to the developers, Lifeweaver's in-game lines and conversations with other heroes will affirm his sexuality. It's not, nor has it ever been, enough that *Overwatch*'s queer characters only exist as such in the ancillary materials. It's about time *Overwatch*'s queer representation be overt in the game itself, and I hope the developers retroactively do the same for its other queer characters in the future.

The developers are also leaning into Lifeweaver's Thai identity. The mandala is a signature visual feature of his abilities and clothing. He'll speak Thai for some of his voice lines, and in the developer update, senior technical artist Takki Thammawan shared that, like Thai people, Lifeweaver has a nickname that means water lily in English.

Lifeweaver's meant to be a warm and comforting hero. He smiles easily and is always ready to extend a helping hand. It's honestly a shame Lifeweaver wasn't around for Valentine's Day because he would have been the absolutely perfect Valentine for every hero – and fan.

<https://www.theverge.com/2023/4/4/23669682/overwatch-2-new-hero-lifeweaver>