Black Ruby: Combining Ransomware and Coin Miner Malware

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Back February 28, 2018 — Ravikant Tiwari

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In the midst of all the news and hype surrounding cryptocurrency, we've seen several coin miner malware programs popping into the wild, infecting a number of computers on the internet. There's been an upsurge in coin miner malware that victimizes individual PCs and businesses using the same techniques and exploits that were previously attributed to distributed ransomware. With all this happening, the cybersecurity industry started speculating that there is a shift from ransomware to coin miners as the preferred choice of payload for cybercriminals.

Interestingly, what we found was a new ransomware called Black Ruby that adds coin mining as a module on top of its ransomware capabilities. Attackers are optimizing their attack methodology to maximize the profits they make from their victims. Rather than focus on one type of attack, this indicates rise in both ransomware and coin miners.



Technical Analysis

Black Ruby was discovered earlier this month. The first Virustotal submission was dated 2018-02-04 09:50:37, just the day after it was compiled according to the timestamp in the PE header. A new variant of Black Ruby with some minor changes was also discovered a few days later.

pFile	Data	Description	Value	
00000084	014C	Machine	IMAGE_FILE_MACHINE_I386	Eigure 1: Timestamp in PE heade
0000086	0003	Number of Sections		
0000088	5A757A87	Time Date Stamp	2018/02/03 Sat 09:01:59 UTC	

Figure 1: Timestamp in PE header

The ransomware identifies itself as Microsoft Windows Defender, using file names like "*Windows Defender.exe*" or "*WINDOWSUI.EXE*". The image below shows the details from the file's version info.

Property	Value	
Description -		
File description	Microsoft Windows Defender	
Туре	Application	
File version	3.10.19.120	
Product name	Microsoft Windows Defender	Figure 2: File version details
Product version	3.10.19.120	
Copyright	Copyright © Microsoft all right reserved	
Size	432 KB	
Date modified	2/9/2018 3:03 PM	
Language	Language Neutral	
Original filename	Windows Defender.exe	

Figure 2: File version details

The malware binary (MD5: 81E9036AED5502446654C8E5A1770935) is a dotnet executable that is obscured using Babel Obfuscator.

It encrypts user files using RSA and AES. The Monero miner module is contained in an encrypted form within the resource directory, which is then decrypted and deployed during execution.

GeoIP and Environment Checks

It starts by creating a mutual exclusion object (mutex) with name **"TheBlackRuby"** and exits if the name already exists to ensure that only one instance of the application is running. The next check determines the machine's country, which is done by connecting to "*http:// freegeoip.net/json/*". If the response contains **Iran's** country code, the malware stops and exits.



Figure 3: Snippet to fetch country codes

Installation and Persistence

Black Ruby adds following registry to maintain persistence:

HKEY_CURRENT_USER\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\BlackRuby 'Install' = 'Max' HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Run 'Windows Defender' = 'C:\Windows\system32\BlackRuby\WindowsUI.exe'

If Key 1 is already present on the machine, the malware just starts the coin miner executable (shown in following code snippet) that it would have deployed earlier, when the install key was not present or during its first run. The *CreatePersistence()* function generates the above mentioned registry key. If Key 1 is not found, it returns as "false", otherwise it returns as "true".



Figure 4: Part of void main()

function

Figure 4: Part of void main() function

DeployExecutables() creates a new directory named "BlackRuby" in the system directory ("C:\Windows\System32'), copying the main executable with the name "WindowsUl.exe" and adding the coin miner executable (decrypted from resource directory) as "Svchost.exe".



Figure 5: Copying executables

After successfully deploying its malicious executables, Black Ruby executes the *RansomwareMain()* function, which is responsible for key generation, deleting shadow copy of the user's files, clearing event logs, modifying boot status policies, and encrypting the user's files.

Key Generation

Black Ruby uses an AES symmetric cipher to encrypt user files. Unlike other ransomware strains which use per file AES keys and session RSA keys for stronger encryption, Black Ruby uses the same AES key to encrypt all files on the system. The AES encryption uses following configuration:

The file encryption AES key is generated by combining a random password computed once on each machine, with some other artifacts like machine name and count of logical drives, in following format.

```
<random_password>-<machine_name>:<logical_drive_count> (e.g.: >x6Ru@ufT4@lxsYkgj$X)OzuIVs&MjV&pUkf7rVJ7h8X>BMZuNVrbqurR-DESKTOP_XXXXXX:2)
```

This AES key is then encrypted with a master RSA public key that is hardcoded in the binary in its base64 form. The encrypted AES key is converted to base64, which is then transformed into its hexadecimal representation and written to the ransomware "Help" file as *HOW-TO-DECRYPT-FILES.txt* along with other ransom notes. These help files are present in each directory containing the encrypted user files.



Figure 6: Decoded Master RSA public key



----- Identification Key -----

 7A554848626440575431715544407568776E3568404448757A7942436D697

 95232486150675A537254386569725A3633502F426772704E34646D453971

 41384052307A646F56656F775A4F416C5A405A344B396738546639645746

 7513754492F726D6568286C6773517068656E5977454E65664B7758313675

 5A7064653442787877686528443656713778684E4C5944327A7A634133535

 759494F5565624C70745766356339444C663064686F692F49453279796839

 624E2F7377575455171374F5A68526E76555A523379517756633148364C3

 348713954677635706254554937637177616745406C6D7365496F2878714F

 7932677355657A7254454364792F744F4851632F45656974334C484539745

 6403640365067777136763154424368404E5A69594C50448E7A5550426762

 76494A37627668736557787576486F456C7A7A77625342796C5546575A755

 3515872734E513030

----- Identification Key -----

Figure 7: AES key in its encrypted form

File Encryption

The Black Ruby ransomware enumerates all files on fixed, removable and network drives, and encrypts only those types that are included on the list of extensions hardcoded in the binary and have a file size less than 512 MB. It also skips files with a name larger than 255 bytes. If the file has an extension "*bkf*", it is deleted.



enumeration routine

Figure 8: Drive enumeration routine

Black Ruby reads the full file in the memory array and appends the original file name at the end, before passing it to AES encryption routine. After encryption, the original file content is overwritten with encrypted content and the file is moved into the same directory with a random file name in following format.

Encrypted_<random_string> .BlackRuby (e.g. Encrypted_VdGcVZ7RUKFUYvYk6gZCVTNLkNsUin5SuvmfovndF.BlackRuby)

Unfortunately, if an exception occurs while modifying any file attributes or encryption process, the file gets deleted from the machine.



Figure 9: File attribute modification, Encryption and Move operation

Encrypted file content	Figure 10: File structure after encryption.
Encrypted file name	

Figure 10: File structure after encryption.

Black Ruby does not encrypt files present under these folders:

Table 1: Excluded folders

".gif", ".apk", ".groups", ".hdd", ".hpp", ".log", ".m2ts", ".m4p", ".mkv", ".mpeg", ".epub", ".yuv", ".ndf", ".nvram", ".ogg", ".ost", ".pab", ".pdb", ".pif", ".png", ".qed", ".qcow", ".otp", ".s3db", ".qcow2", ".rvt", ".st7", ".stm", ".vbox", ".vdi", ".vhd", ".vhdx", ".vmdk", ".vmsd", ".psafe3", ".vmx", ".vmxf", ".3fr", ".3pr", ".ab4", ".accde", ".accdt", ".ach", ".acr", ".sd0", ".sxw", ".adb", ".advertisements", ".agdl", ".ait", ".apj", ".asm", ".awg", ".back", ".backup", ".sti", ".oil", ".backupdb", ".bay", ".bdb", ".bgt", ".bik", ".bpw", ".cdr3", ".cdr4", ".cdr5", ".cdr6", ".ycbcra", ".cdrw", ".ce1", ".ce2", ".cib", ".craw", ".crw", ".csh", ".csl", ".db_journal", ".dc2", ".pptm", ".dcs", ".ddoc", ".ddrw", ".der", ".des", ".dgc", ".djvu", ".dng", ".drf", ".dxg", ".eml", ".ppt", ".erbsql", ".erf", ".exf", ".ffd", ".fh", ".fhd", ".gray", ".grey", ".gry", ".hbk", ".ibd", ".7z", ".ibz", ".iiq", ".incpas", ".jpe", ".kc2", ".kdbx", ".kdc", ".kpdx", ".lua", ".mdc", ".mef", ".config", ".mfw", ".mmw", ".mny", ".mrw", ".myd", ".ndd", ".nef", ".nk2", ".nop", ".nrw", ".ns2", ".ns3", ".ldf", ".ns4", ".nwb", ".nx2", ".nxl", ".nyf", ".odb", ".odf", ".odg", ".odm", ".orf", ".otg", ".oth", ".py", ".ots", ".ott", ".p12", ".p7b", ".p7c", ".pdd", ".pem", ".plus_muhd", ".plc", ".pot", ".pptx", ".py", ".qba", ".qbr", ".qbw", ".qbx", ".qby", ".raf", ".rat", ".raw", ".rdb", ".rwl", ".rwz", ".conf ", ".sda", ".sdf", ".sqlite", ".sqlite3", ".sqlitedb", ".sr2", ".srf", ".srw", ".st5", ".st8", ".std", ".stx", ".sxd", ".sxg", ".sxi", ".sxm", ".tex", ".wallet", ".wb2", ".wpd", ".x11", ".x3f", ".xis", ".ARC", ".contact", ".dbx", ".doc", ".docx", ".jnt", ".jpg", ".msg", ".oab", ".ods", ".pdf", ".pps", ".ppsm", ".prf", ".pst", ".rar", ".rtf", ".txt", ".wab", ".xls", ".xlsx", ".xml", ".zip", ".1cd", ".3ds", ".3g2", ".7zip", ".accdb", ".aoi", ".asf", ".asp", ".aspx", ".asx", ".avi", ".bak", Figure 11: List of extensions ".cer", ".cfg", ".class", ".cs ", ".css", ".csv", ".db", ".dds", ".dwg", ".dxf", ".fif", ".fiv", ".html", ".idx", ".js", ".key", ".kwm", ".laccdb", ".lit", ".m3u", ".mbx", ".md", ".mdf", ".mid", ".mlb", ".mov", ".mp3", ".mp4", ".mpg", ".obj", ".odt", ".pages", ".php", ".psd", ".pwm", ".rm", ".safe", ".sav", ".save", ".sql", ".srt", ".swf", ".thm", ".vob", ".wav", ".wma", ".wmv", ".xlsb", "3dm", ".aac", ".ai", ".arw", ".c", ".cdr", ".cls", ".cpi", ".cpp", ".cs", ".db3", ".docm", ".dot", ".dotm", ".dotx", ".drw", ".dxb", ".eps", ".fla", ".flac", ".fxg", ".java", ".m", ".m4v", ".max", ".mdb", ".pcd", ".pct", ".pl", ".potm", ".potx", ".ppam", ".ppsm", ".ppsx", ".pptm", ".ps", ".r3d", ".rw2", ".sldm", ".sldx", ".svg", ".tga", ".wps", ".xla", ".xlam", ".xlm", ".xlr", ".xlsm", ".xlt", ".xltm", ".xltx", ".xlw", ".act", ".adp", ".al", ".1", ".bkp", ".blend", ".cdf", ".cdx", ".cgm", ".cr2", ".crt", ".dac", ".dbf", ".dcr", ".ddd", ".design", ".dtd", ".fdb", ".fff", ".fpx", ".h", ".iif", ".indd", ".jpeg", ".mos", ".nd", ".nsd", ".nsf", ".nsg", ".nsh", ".odc", ".odp", ".pas", ".pat", ".pef", ".pfx", ".ptx", ".qbb", ".qbm", ".sas7bdat", ".say", ".st4", ".st6", ".stc", ".sxc", ".tlg", ".wad", ".xlk", ".aiff", ".bmp", ".cmt", ".dat", ".dit", ".edb", ".flvv", ".avhd", ".back ", ".c ", ".ctl ", ".dbf", ".disk ", ".dwg", ".gz", ".mail", ".nrg", ".ora ", ".ova", ".ovf", ".pmf", ".ppt", ".pptx", ".pst", ".pvi", ".pyc", ".sln", ".tar", ".vbs", ".vcb", ".vfd", ".vmc", ".vsd", ".vsdx", ".vsv", ".work", ".xvd", ".123", ".3dm", ".602", ".aes", ".asc", ".brd", ".bz2", ".cmd", ".dch", ".dif", ".dip", ".docb", ".frm", ".gpg", ".jsp", ".lay", ".lay6", ".m4u", ".mml", ".myi", "onetoc2", ".PAQ", ".ps1", ".sch", ".slk", ".snt", ".suo", ".tgz", ".tif", ".tiff", ".uop", ".uot", ".vcd", ".wk1", ".wks", ".xlc"

Figure 11: List of extensions

Removing Shadow Copies and Covering Tracks

Black Ruby executes following commands in sequence to remove automatic backups created by the Windows volume shadow copy service, and to delete the event logs from the machine.

cmd.exe /C vssadmin.exe delete shadows / all / Quiet cmd.exe /C WMIC.exe shadowcopy delete cmd.exe /C Bcdedit.exe /set {default} recoveryenabled no cmd.exe /C Bcdedit.exe /set {default} bootstatuspolicy ignoreallfailures cmd.exe /C wevtutil.exe cl Application cmd.exe /C wevtutil.exe cl Security cmd.exe /C wevtutil.exe cl System

Figure 12: List of executed commands

It also terminates any process that contains "sql" in its name. This full routine is executed before file encryption process.

Ransom Notes

A ransom note HOW-TO-DECRYPT-FILES.txt is created in all the directories containing the encrypted user files.

HOW-TO-DECRYPT-FILES - Notepad

File Edit Format View Help

×

/ / ________/ / (___ / // // ____ // ___ // ___ / >, / __/ // /_/ /_/ // // // /_/ /

----- Identification Key -----

7A55484862644D5754317155444D7568776E35684D4448757A7942436D697 95232486159675A537254386569725A3633502F426772704E34646D453971 41384D52307A646F56656F775A4F416C5A4D5A34483967385466396645746 7513754492F726D6568286C677351706B656E5977454E6566487758313675 5A7064653442787768652844365671377868424C5944327A7A634133535 759494F5565624C70745766356339444C663064686F692F49453279796839 624E2F73775775455171374F5A6B526E76555A523379517756633148364C3 3487139546776357062545549376371776167454D6C6D7365496F2878714F 7932677355657A7254454364792F744F4851632F45656974334C484539745 04D364D3650677771367631544243684D4E5A69594C50484E7A5550426762 76494A37627668736557787576486F456C7A7A77625342796C5546575A755 3515872734E51303D

----- Identification Key -----

[Can not access your files?]

Congratulations, you are now part of our family #BlackRuby Ransomware. The range of this family is wider and bigger every day. Our hosts welcome our presence because we will give them a scant souvenir from the heart of Earth.

This time, we are guest with a new souvenir called "Black Ruby". A ruby in black, different, beautiful, and brilliant, which has been

bothered to extract those years and you must also endure this hard work to keep it. If you do not have the patience of this difficulty or you hate some of this precious stone, we are willing to receive the price years of mining and finding rubies for your relief and other people of the world who are guests of the black ruby.

So let's talk a little bit with you without a metaphor and literary terms to understand the importance of the subject. It does not matter if you're a small business or you manage a large organization, no matter whether you are a regular user or a committed employee, it's important that you have a black ruby and to get rid of it, you need to get back to previous situation and we need a next step.

The breadth of this family is not supposed to stop, because we have enough knowledge and you also trust our knowledge. We are always your backers and guardian of your information at this multi-day banquet and be sure that no one in the world can take it from you except for us who extracts this precious stone.

We need a two-sided cooperation in developing cybersecurity knowledge. The background to this cooperation is a mutual trust, which will result in peace and tranquility. you must pay \$650 (USD) worth of Bitcoins for restore your system to the previous state and

Figure 13: Ransom Note part 1 Figure 13: Ransom Note part 1

HOW-TO-DECRYPT-FILES - Notepad × File Edit Format View Help Do not forget that your opportunity is limited. From these limits you can create golden situations. Be sure we will help you in this way and to know that having a black ruby does not always mean riches. You and your system are poor, poor knowledge of cybersecurity and lack of security on your system!. [HOW TO DECRYPT FILES] 1. Copy "Identification Key". 2. Send this key with two encrypted files (less than 5 MB) for trust us to email address "TheBlackRuby@Protonmail.com". 3. We decrypt your two files and send them to your email. 4. After ensuring the integrity of the files, you must pay \$650 (USD) with bitcoin and send transaction code to our email, our bitcoin address is "19S7k3zHphKiYr85T25FnqdxizHcgmjoj1". 5. You get "Black Ruby Decryptor" Along with the private key of your system. 6. Everything returns to the normal and your files will be released. [What is encryption?] Encryption is a reversible modification of information for security reasons but providing full access to it for authorised users. To become an authorised user and keep the modification absolutely reversible (in other words to have a possibility to decrypt your files) you should have an "Personal Identification Key". But not only it. It is required also to have the special decryption software (in your case "Black Ruby Decryptor" software) for safe and complete decryption of all your files and data. [Everything is clear for me but what should I do?] The first step is reading these instructions to the end. Your files have been encrypted with the "Black Ruby Ransomware" software: the instructions ("HOW-TO-DECRYPT-FILES.txt") in the folders with your encrypted files are not viruses, they will help you. After reading this text the most part of people start searching in the Internet the words the "Black Ruby Ransomware" where they find a lot of ideas, recommendation and instructions. It is necessary to realise that we are the ones who closed the lock on your files and we are the only ones who have this secret key to open them. [Have you got advice?] [*** Any attempts to get back you files with the third-party tools can be fatal for your encrypted files ***] The most part of the tried-party software change data with the encrypted files to restore it but this cases damage to the files. Finally it will be impossible to decrypt your files. When you make a puzzle but some items are lost, broken or not put in its place - the puzzle items will never match, the same way the third-party software will ruin your files completely and irreversibly. You should realise that any intervention of the third-party software to restore files encrypted with the "Black Ruby Ransomware" software may be fatal for your files. If you look through this text in the Internet and realise that something is wrong with your files but you do not have any instructions to restore your files, please contact your antivirus support. Figure 14: Ransom Note Part 2 Figure 14: Ransom Note Part 2

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Decryption

There is no free decryption tool available for this ransomware yet. The only way to get files back is to follow the instructions provided in the ransom note and pay the attacker the equivalent of \$650 in bitcoins. However, paying attackers is not encouraged.

Attackers offer free decryption for two files less than 5 MB which you can send to their email address along with the Identification Key mentioned in the ransom note.

[HOW TO DECRYPT FILES]
1. Copy "Identification Key".
2. Send this key with two encrypted files (less than 5 MB) for trust us to email address "TheBlackRuby@Protonmail.com".
3. We decrypt your two files and send them to your email.
4. After ensuring the integrity of the files, you must pay \$650 (USD) with bitcoin and send transaction code to our email, our bitcoin address is "1957k3zHphKiYr85T25FnqdxizHcgmjoj1".
5. You get "Black Ruby Decryptor" Along with the private key of your system.
6. Everything returns to the normal and your files will be released.

Figure 15: Decryption instruction in ransom note Figure 15: Decryption instruction in ransom note

Coin Miner

Finally Black Ruby calls *ExecuteMiner()* to launch the Monero miner (Svchost.exe) that it injected earlier. The Monero miner executable turns out to be the XMRig CPU miner that is publicly available on <u>GitHub</u>.

🐼 Svchost Prope	rties		×	
General Compatib	ility File Hashes Secu	ity Details	Previous Versions	
Property Description – File description Type File version Product name Product version Copyright Size Date modified Language Original filename	Value XMRig CPU miner Application 2.4.3.0 XMRig 2.4.3 Copyright (C) 2016-2017 373 KB 2/19/2018 11:00 PM Language Neutral xmrig.exe s and Personal Informatio	'xmrig.com	Apply	Figure 16: Svchost.exe file version details

Figure 16: Svchost.exe file version details



Figure 17: Function to execute

Monero miner

Figure 17: Function to execute Monero miner

Where:

URL = "de01.supportxmr.com"

port = "3333"

UserName = "43DmqxU4LzuTrmA8GLZ7S5J6w32bwCavX9bhvCiSEwwebfn4TCYRAxmPtWTZq9iQ1F6XYsktJEYBYDkhKu4KXw6rCCspxCJ"

It uses the Stratum mining protocol for pooled mining. The username is the wallet address of the attacker, the system's user name is the worker or mining identifier, and the machine name is the password.



Monero wallet info

Figure 18: Monero wallet info

Conclusion

Black Ruby uses the de facto international standard for encryption and there is no way to recover files once they are encrypted unless user has proper backups in place.

<u>Acronis True Image 2018</u> and our other products with <u>Acronis Active Protection</u> enabled will prevent Black Ruby and other ransomware from encrypting your valuable data, stop money from being mined for attackers, and ensure that you have the ability to restore encrypted files.

Acronis Active Protection 🐵 Settings		Acronis Active Protection 🛞 Settin	ngs
Possible ransomware detected A suspicious process is trying to modify your files. Do you trust it?	Black Ruby detected	BlackRuby.exe.exe was blocked Next time the process is paused, you will be able to blacklist it.)
BlackRuby.exe.exe C:\BlackRuby.exe.exe Unknown vendor		ed After recovery, the affected files will be moved to a different folder. View 6 affected files	
View 6 affected files		Always recover files after blocking a process	
Block Trust		Recover files Do not recover	

Black Ruby blocked CybersecurityCyber protection