

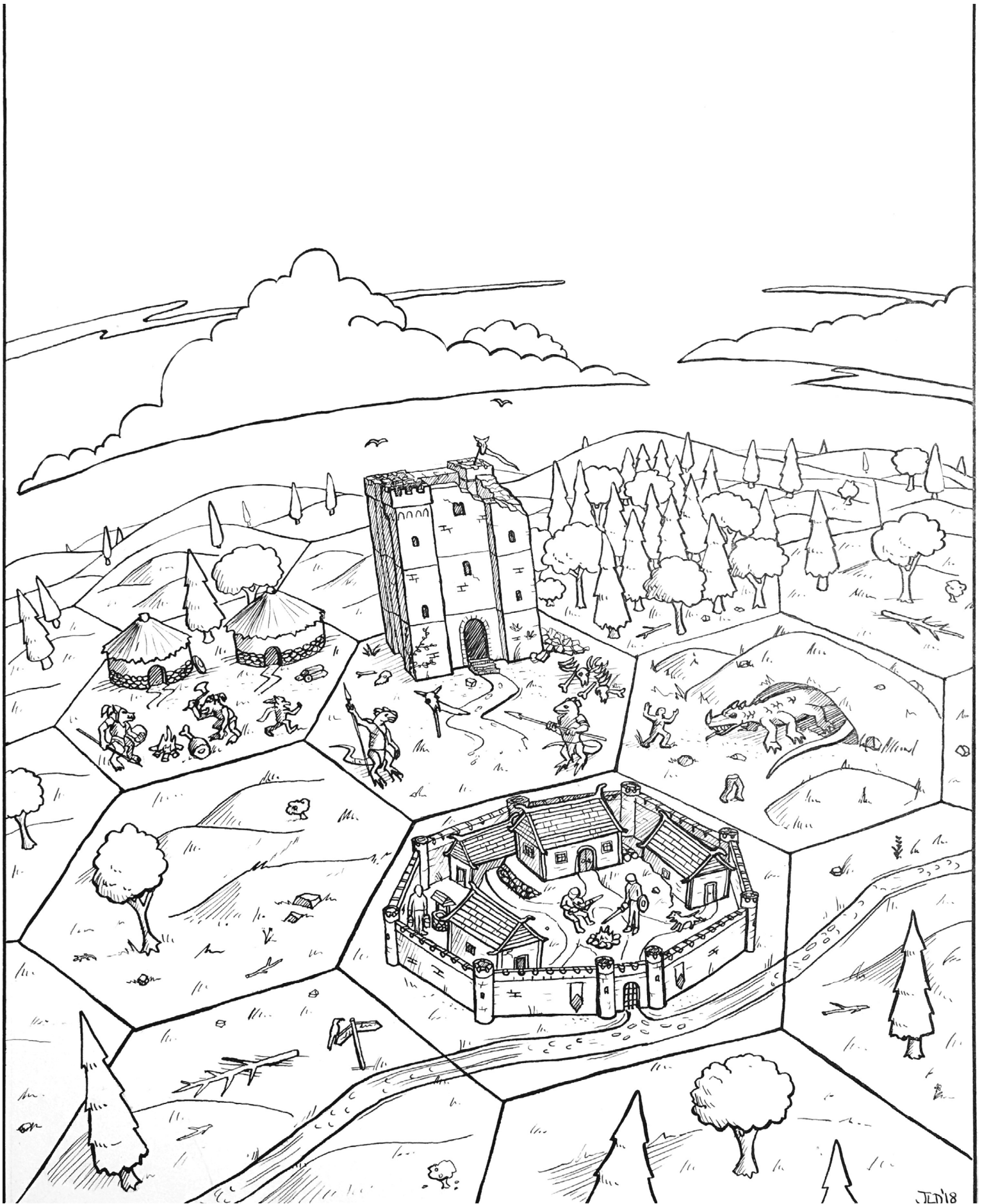
# Hex 15.21

## The River's Source



Todd Leback

DESIGNED FOR USE WITH  
**OLD-SCHOOL  
ESSENTIALS**



**Hex 15.21 - The River's Source**

# Hex 15.21

## The River's Source

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### Populated Hexes

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# Introduction to Populated Hexes

Welcome to Populated Hexes, the series of 6-mile hexes in the world of Absalom! The goal is to provide a number of individual 6-mile hexes, fully populated with lairs and features, that can either be dropped into an existing campaign as a point of interest, the destination of a treasure map found in the bowels of a dark dungeon, or as a stand-alone mini-sandbox.

These supplements use the Old School Essentials rules published by Necrotic Gnome, but like many OSR products, pretty much any system can be easily adapted.

## Maps & Scale

Each hex will be presented with two hex maps: a smaller map with locations and features noted, and a larger map with only major features noted that can be printed and used as a player handout. The scale represented on the maps included in these products are as follows:

- ✿ Large hex = 6 miles, face to face.
- ✿ Subhex = 1.2 miles, face to face.

## Hexcrawling Rules

**Thirdkingdom Games** produces supplements that are used throughout these releases. Two of them – *Domain Rules* and *Hexcrawling Basics* – are free to download and are designed to work in conjunction with this series. You can find out where to pick up these and other supplements in the **Populated Hexes** line at [patreon.com/Populatedhexes](https://patreon.com/Populatedhexes).

The following books will be useful to have access to throughout the series. Many of them are free!

- ✿ Old School Essentials Classic Fantasy Rules Tome
- ✿ Old School Essentials Advanced Fantasy Genre Rules
- ✿ Labyrinth Lord Basic and Advanced Edition Companion
- ✿ OSRIC
- ✿ A variety of other OSR resources

## Absalom

The world of Absalom is one of constant change, where Law and Chaos are more than abstract philosophical ideas but are instead metaphysical realities that shape the very world itself.

Absalom is dominated by Cycles, each lasting between two to four hundred years. Each Cycle is divided into an Apex – when Law holds sway – and a Nadir – when Chaos sweeps over the lands, driving back the light of Civilization.

Cycles are marked in the beginning by the Apex and ascent of Law, and the end by the Nadir. During each Apex the civilizations of Man do their best to expand their domains and bring law to the land; these civilizations often shrink, or even crumble, during the Nadirs as barbarians, beastmen, and worse fall upon the kingdoms of Man.

## Campaign Setting

The following assumptions are made in this setting:

### Starting Date

This series is set at the beginning of the Sixteenth Cycle of recorded history. There have been many civilizations that have risen and fallen, some of Men, some of others.

### Humanocentric

The adventurers will be human, setting out to explore the new world with the ebbing of the forces of Chaos. Non-human classes are certainly allowed – and indeed, these supplements present rules for many non-human classes – but the base assumption is that most PCs will be human.

### Chaos Storms

During Nadirs – and occasionally in an Apex – events called Chaos storms can spontaneously occur, changing the very landscape, distorting distances, and wreaking havoc upon the nature of reality. Maps from the previous Cycle may prove unreliable.

### The Gods

Gods are real but are local. They are the Small Gods of Terry Pratchett or the hearth deities of ancient Rome. Belief gives strength and power to spirits of the world.

## Using Populated Hexes

As stated above, each 6-mile hex can be used as a mini-setting, a drop-in adventure location that is encountered during travel, or as part of a greater hexcrawl. Elements can be added or abandoned as needed, as is true of all supplements.

These hexes are released one at a time, seven in a series. Each series is a cluster of seven hexes: a central hex and the six surrounding it.

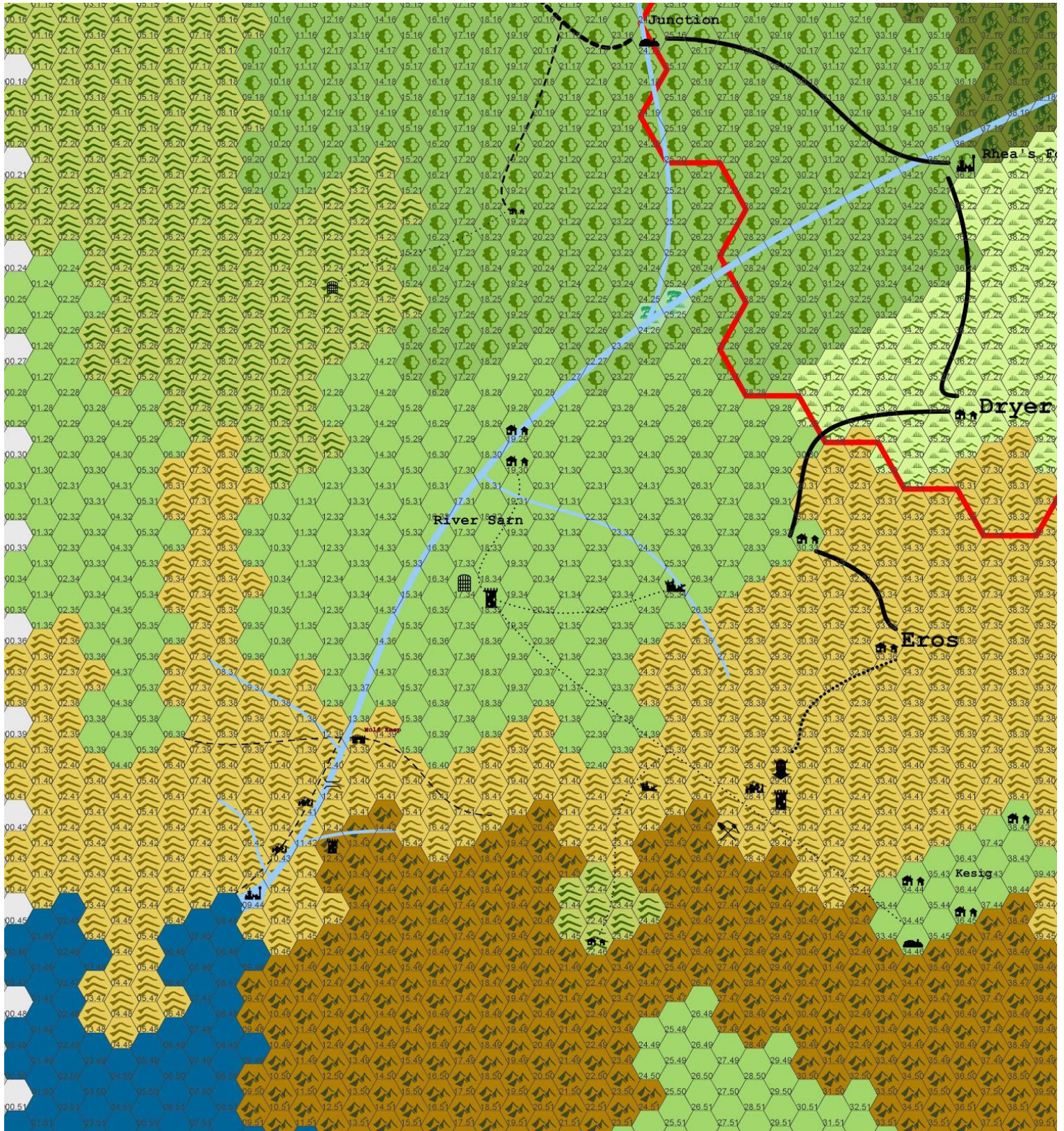
Each release will be divided into two sections: the hex itself, with keyed encounter locations, and an Appendix, which builds on encounters and concepts in the hex. Populated Hexes offers some expanded alternatives to the basic rules found in Old School Essentials, and these will be introduced as needed in each hex. Broadly speaking, the intention is to introduce character options – to bring some of D&D 5e into B/X. These rules can be used or abandoned, as desired.

# Introduction to Populated Hexes

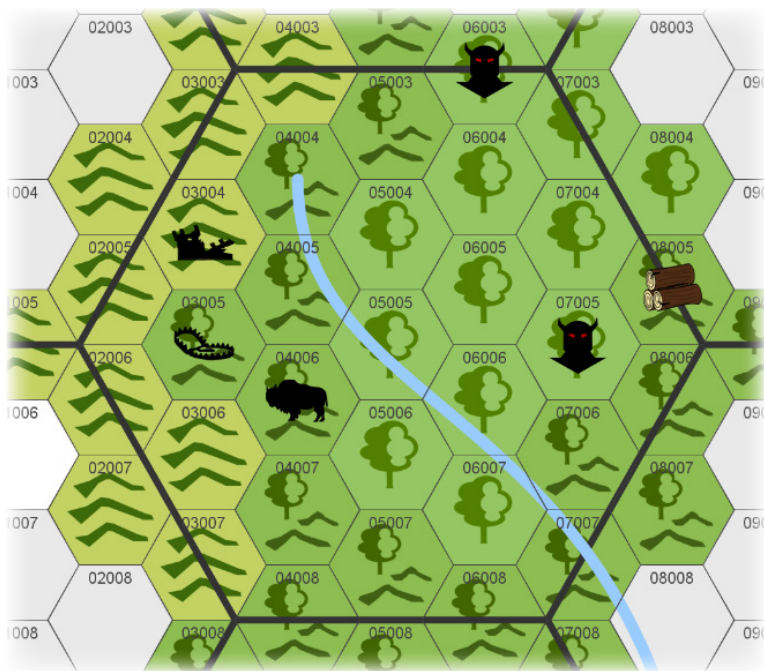
## This Release

Nestled in the hills of this subhex is a sandstone keep occupied by the Rawhide Gang, a vicious gang of brigands

that make a living raiding the few human settlements and caravans in the region. You can support more hexes and additional supplements at [patreon.com/Populatedhexes](https://patreon.com/Populatedhexes).



# Hex 15.21 – River's Source



**Resources:** Animal, game (deer, 2); Vegetable, industrial (timber, 2)

The deer in this hex are not to be found in any single subhex; the herd moves around (avoiding subhexes 0406 and 0705). There is no set number for the herd; if hunted they will yield 240 gp worth of meat and hides.

## 0304. Crumbling Hunting Lodge.

Left over from the days of Zaphisdreah the Magnificent, this once palatial hunting lodge has largely collapsed. A laid stone foundation wall, ten feet tall, thirty wide, and nearly eighty feet long is all that remains, the wooden roof having long since collapsed inward.

Facing south is the doorway set into the foundation. With the door long rotted away it opens up into the interior of the place, a crazed jumble of fallen timbers, slate shingles, and sapling trees growing through the debris.

Rising above the north wall is a still impressive stone chimney, fifteen feet wide, ten feet deep, and rising thirty-five feet into the air.

The lodge is abandoned and not inhabited by any creatures save birds, squirrels, and the occasional (normal) snake. It would take roughly 200 man-hours to clear the debris from the interior. If this were to be done the foundation and chimney would be found to be in decent condition, given the age of the structure, and would be worth 3,000 gp toward a structure.

## 0305. Timber!

The first time the adventurers enter this subhex an old,

rotten tree falls as they pass underneath. It will potentially hit **1d4–1** members of the party, determined randomly. Those individuals must Save v. Death to avoid being struck by the falling tree. Failure indicates that they take **4d6** points of damage. If the characters are mounted an individual and their mount count as one “target”; the save is made by the rider, but on a failed saving throw both rider and mount take the damage.

## 0404. The Source of the Kirkikit

The river Kirkikit that flows south through several of the mapped hexes is born here, from a spring-fed pool in the hills. The pool is some thirty feet in diameter and about five feet deep in the center. It's shaded by trees and the surface is dotted with water lilies. Small fish dart through its waters, which are cold and crisp.

The spring is inhabited by an elder guileu (see Appendix) named, appropriately enough, Kirkikit. The guileu is bound to the spring in much the same manner as a dryad is bound to a tree; as such he is more powerful than the stats given in the Appendix.

Kirkikit is as old as the spring itself and remembers the existence of the Skeldrene Dynasty and the passing of the rule of Men in these lands. He speaks Fey, Swampspeak, and an archaic form of Common.

Once per week Kirkikit can answer questions as per the *legend lore* spell, except that it has a “casting time” of ten minutes and a range limited to objects, individuals, or events that have occurred, existed, or currently exist within twelve miles (roughly two 6-mile hexes) on either side of the flow of the Kirkikit. He does not perform this for free, though, requesting offerings of rare items or, perhaps, deeds. Kirkikit is aware that the orcs in hex 16.23 have polluted that section of his river and would trade at least one casting of *legend lore* were they to be eliminated.

Due to his age and connection to the spring Kirkikit has some extra abilities, detailed here. Like all guileu Kirkikit regenerates 3 hp per round while in water; if slain while in the spring Kirkikit will reform with 1 hp one week later. He cannot be permanently slain unless killed outside of the pool or if the spring were significantly polluted and fouled.

He may spit a concentrated gob of poison twice per day instead of once per day. Kirkikit can cast *obscuring mist*, *protection from fire*, and *speak with animals* three times per day each. Once per day he can summon a water elemental as per the druid spell *conjure earth elemental*, except that it has 8 HD instead of 16.

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**Kirkikit (1)**, AC 6 [13], HD 6+3\*\* (hp 26), Att 1 x spit (1d6 + poison), THACO 13 [+6], MV 90' (30') / 120' (40') swim, SV D11 W11 P11 B14 S12 (M6), ML 9, AL Neutral, XP 980, NA unique, TT L

**0406. Boars.** A sounder of six boars lives in this hex. They are extremely ill-tempered; apply a –2 penalty to any reaction rolls.

**Boars (6)**, AC 7 [12], HD 3 (6, 8, 8, 10, 10, 14 hp), Att 1 x tusk (2d4), THACO 17 [+2], MV 90' (30'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F2), ML 9, AL Neutral, XP 50, NA 1d6 (1d6), TT Nil

### 0603. Lizard Lounge.

Six draco lizards lair here. They take full advantage of the trees, lurking in wait on branches for prey to pass underneath. When encountered in this lair, assuming that none have been killed in a prior random encounter, 1d4+1 of the lizards will be hiding in trees and will swoop down upon the party, gaining surprise on a roll of 1-4 in 6 and gaining a +2 bonus to the first round of attacks (whether or not they gain surprise).

The lizards dwell in a small hollow; meals are usually dragged back to their lair to be devoured. Four onyxes, each worth 50 gp, can be found in a small rotting sack under a jumble of human remains.

**Lizard, draco (6)**, AC 5 [14], HD 4+2 (10, 19, 20, 22, 24, 26 hp), Att 1 x bite (1d10), THACO 15 [+4], MV 120' (40') / 210' (70') flying, SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F3), ML 7, AL Neutral, XP 215, NA 1d4 (1d8), TT U

### 0705. Spiders!

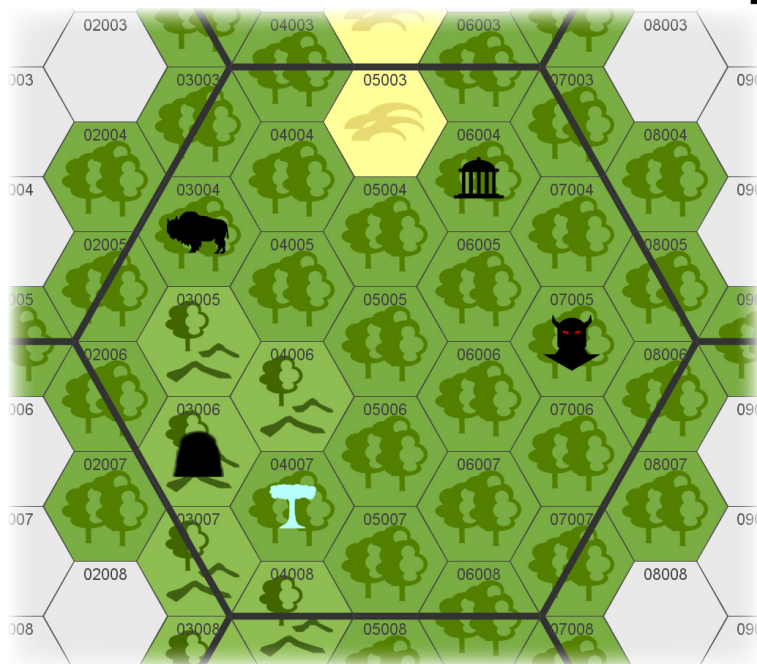
Two giant tarantula spiders dwell in this hex, in a copse of trees surrounded by the bones of their victims.

**Tarantula (2)**, AC 5 [14], HD 4 (17, 26 hp), Att 1 x bite (1d8 + poison), THACO 15 [+4], MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F2), ML 8, AL Neutral, XP 135, NA 1d3 (1d3), TT U

### 0805. Old Growth Oak.

These hexes are filled with old growth white oak trees that have grown up in the shade, with no lower limbs and fine, straight grain, making them suitable to be harvested for fine furniture.

Subhex 0805 contains 2,590 gp worth of lumber that can be harvested. There's a 1 in 20 chance per 1000 gp harvested that a tree yields lumber of a high enough quality to be used as special components in magical items (worth 1d6 x 250 gp) and a further 1 in 20 chance per 2000 gp harvested that a tree's wood is of such quality that it can be used as a magical principle with a value of 3d6 x 500 gp.



## Hex 16.21 – Forest's Blessing

**Resources:** Animals, game (small game, 4); Vegetable, industrial (rare woods, 3)

To the northeast of the central cluster, this hex is lightly wooded and resource rich. Small game animals can be found in abundance here: the animal resource listed above is spread throughout the hex and consists of small woodland creatures — squirrels, racoons, badgers, etc. — that are hunted for their hides as much as for meat. A total of 1,140 gp worth of these animals is spread throughout the hex.

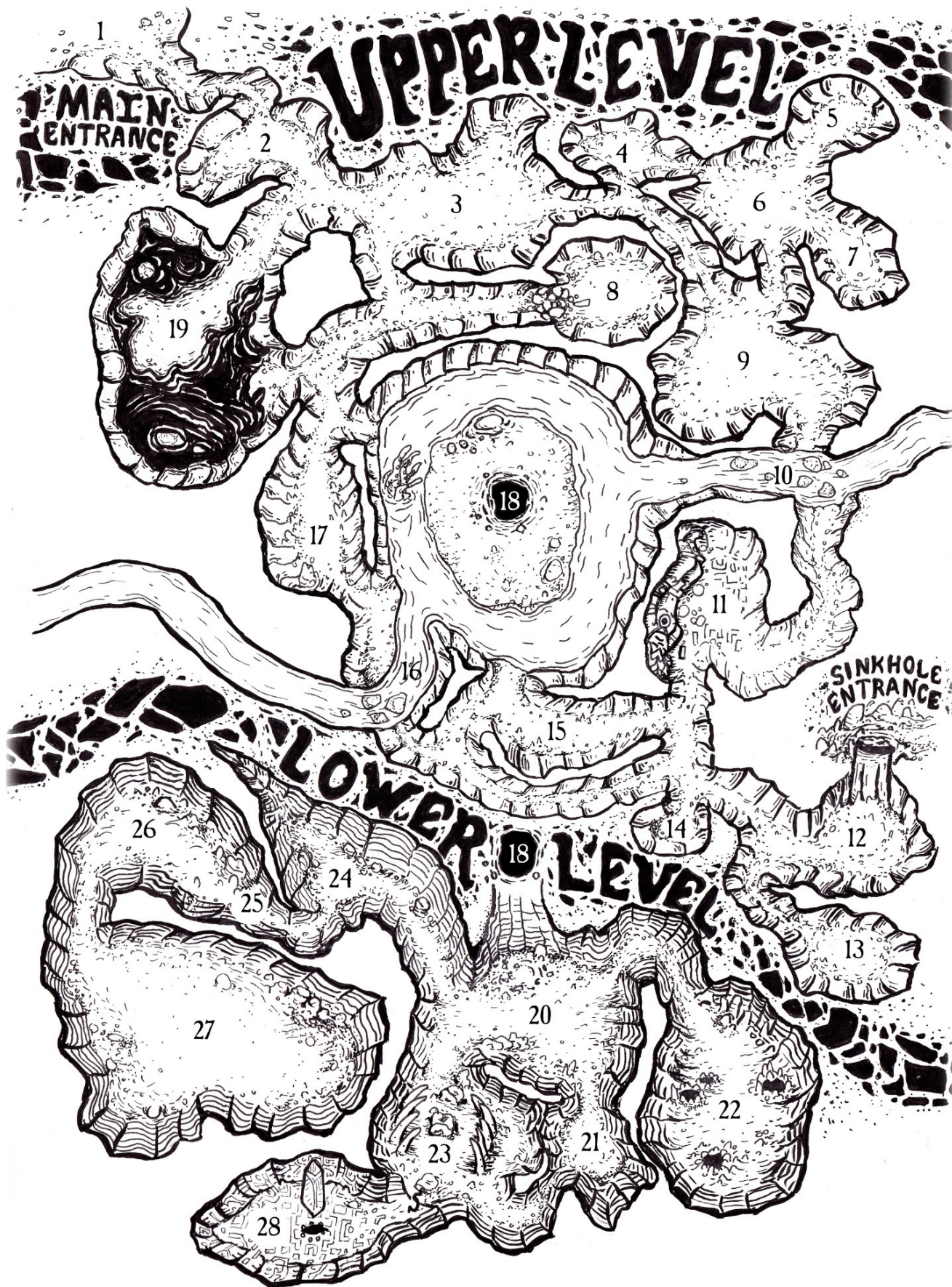
In the southwest corner, where the land is still transitioning from hill country to flatlands, a largish cave system can be found, inhabited by some dangerous creatures and hazards. There are only two proper lairs in this hex, but a number of areas of interest.

### 0304. Unicorns.

A blessing of seven unicorns dwells in this subhex. They are the self-appointed guardians of this section of forest, mostly maintaining their watch over a range from this subhex to several hexes north. The growth of sand dunes in subhexes 0503 and 0502 worries the majestic creatures, but they have as yet been unable to determine what is causing it.

The blessing is led by an old mare called Sun-Through-Leaves, a unicorn wise in her years but hesitant to take risks. She has two partners, both of whom are more headstrong and daring, and the rest of the blessing is made up of her children.

The unicorns have affected this subhex as per the description in the Appendix.





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**Unicorns (6)**, AC 2 [17], HD 4 (15, 19, 19, 21, 21, 21 hp), Att 2 x hooves, plus 1 x horn (1d8/1d8/1d8), THAC0 16 [+3], MV 240' (80'), SV D8 W9 P8 B9 S12 (F8), ML 7, AL Lawful, XP 135, NA 1d6 (1d8), TT Nil

**Sun-Through-Leaves (1)**, AC 2 [17], HD 6 (hp 25), Att 2 x hooves, plus 1 x horn (1d8/1d8/1d8), THAC0 14 [+5], MV 240' (80'), SV D6 W7 P8 B7 S10 (F12), ML 8, AL Lawful, XP 570, NA Unique, TT Nil

### 0306. Cave System.

A small cave system can be found in this hex, through which an underground river courses. This river burbles to the surface in the hex to the immediate southeast. The caverns are accessed via two entrances: one is a cleft in a hillside partially obscured by brush and undergrowth, the other a sinkhole that has opened up in the ground, allowing one to climb down to the caverns some sixty feet below.

This is a wet, living cave, carved by water through limestone. Most surfaces, including the floor, will be slick with moisture. The following characteristics are true of this cave system:

- Running or attempting acrobatic maneuvers requires the character to roll at or below their Dexterity on 3d6 to avoid slipping and falling, taking 1d3–1 points of damage.
- The ceiling height varies from 8-12', unless otherwise stated.
- Walls, floor, and ceiling are natural and uneven and a dark gray in color.
- There is no light unless otherwise stated.
- The scale of the map can be left up to the Referee. As drawn, though, the ratio of rooms to corridors is distorted to fit on the page. The chambers range in size from twenty feet in diameter (rooms 4, 7, 14) to about 300 feet in diameter (rooms 18, 19, and 27). It is recommended that clusters of rooms (4-7) be joined by corridors averaging 10-20 feet in length while individual caverns be separated by corridors 60-120 feet in length.

1. The cleft opens up into a largish room, partially lit by sunlight streaming through the opening. A grumpy grizzly bear can be found here, fiercely protecting its lair. The bear will be found within on a roll of **1-2 in 6**. If not there when the adventurers enter it will return in **1d20** turns. Apply a -2 penalty to a reaction roll if the bear is encountered in its lair.

**Bear, grizzly (1)**, AC 6 [13], HD 5 (18 hp), Att 2 x claws, plus 1 x bite (1d3/1d3/1d6), THAC0 15 [+4], MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F2), ML 8, AL Neutral, XP 200, NA 1 (1d4), TT U

2. This chamber has exits at the far end and a low ceiling, only five feet high or so. The grizzly avoids coming back this far. In a niche in the southwest corner can be found a human skeleton clad in ring mail, partially encased in limestone. The ring mail is magical and possesses a +2 enchantment. It takes four turns with a hammer and iron spike to remove the armor from its stone cocoon. Each turn spent hammering triggers a wandering monster check.

3. This chamber is mostly empty except for exactly 467 ball bearings spread across the floor. The ball bearings are steel, and quite rusty, but they are still slippery. Everyone crossing the room must roll at or below their Dexterity on 3d6 or fall prone, suffering **1d4** points of damage. The ball bearings can only be spotted if the floor is examined for traps before entering the room.

**Rooms 4-7.** Several months ago a band of orcs broke ranks with the Gangrenous orcs in Hex 13.21 and fled east, seeking sanctuary. They discovered this cave and entered when the bear was out hunting. Since then the orcs have staked claim to a small corner of the cave but live largely in fear of their neighbors. Their numbers are slowly being whittled away as the orcs are forced to leave their lair for food and water.

4. The orcs maintain a small watch here, with a low, smoky fire made from dried bear scat they've managed to scavenge from cavern #1 when the grizzly is not present. Three orcs can be found here at all times, maintaining a nervous watch to the south. The two normal orcs are armed with short stabbing spears and the reaver wields a large club studded with nails.

**Orcs, normal (2)**, AC 6 [13], HD 1 (2, 8 hp), Att 1 x spear (1d6), THAC0 19 [+0], MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 8, AL Chaotic, XP 10, NA 2d4 (1d6x10), TT P. They have a half dozen bent coppers between the two of them.

**Orc reaver (1)**, AC 6 [13], HD 1 (8 hp), Att 1 x club (1d6+1), THAC0 19 [+0], MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 8, AL Chaotic, XP 17. The reaver has 3 gp tucked into his knobby boot.

5. This chamber has been claimed by the orc chieftain, Gribuz, as her own. She can usually be found here, with her five bodyguards, trying to plot a way out of their current predicament. An oil lantern provides light for the orcs here; they have but five flasks of oil remaining, and when those are gone will have to resort to burning bearshit.

Beneath a pile of filthy and matted furs can be found the reason

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the orcs are in hiding; when they fled the Gangrenous orcs they stole a relic of the tribe, the flagon of Rohurglug. Only Gribuz, her chief bodyguard Gorlag (the one with 20 hp), and the witch doctor Blorgdish know that they have the relic.

The flagon is full, and if attacked Gribuz's first action will be to snatch it from its hiding place and quaff it.

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**Orc reaver bodyguards (5)**, AC 6 [13], HD 2 (10, 10, 13, 13, 20 hp), Att 1 x club (1d6+1), THAC0 18 [+1], MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F2), ML 9, AL Chaotic, XP 20. Each bodyguard has 1d4 gp.

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**Gribuz, chieftain (1)**, AC 3 (16), HD 4 (27 hp), Att 1 x sword (1d8+4), THAC0 15 [+4], MV 120' (40'), SV D10 W11 P12 B13 S14 (F4), ML 9, AL Chaotic, XP 80. In addition to the flagon, described below, Gribuz has the following treasure: she carries a sword +1 and a shield +1 (both of which are reflected in her stats), and 3 rather flawed rubies, each worth 100 gp. In another corner, away from the flagon, is a damaged chest of oak that contains the rest of the clan's treasure: 254 gp, 978 sp, and 2,213 cp.

---

**Flagon of Rohurglug.** This beaten copper flagon is dented and well-used, with a stopper of bone. If a creature bleeds into it (4 hp worth of blood in a single day), stoppers it, and leaves it for 24 hours the blood is turned into a liquid that acts as a potion of giant strength and potion of invulnerability. The benefits can only be gained by the individual whose blood was poured into the flask, and the effects last for one hour. Because of the nature of the magic, the hit point loss cannot be regained — whether through magic or rest — until the user has consumed the potion; the wound that was made to fill the flagon remains open, weeping small amounts of blood. The flagon can only be used once per day.

There is a 1% non-cumulative chance per use that the alignment of the user changes to Chaotic. This change can only be undone by a wish or similar magic.

6. The bulk of the clan stays in this chamber, lit faintly by a smoky fire of bear chips. An enormous crab claw turns on a spit above the embers; a recent hunting party was successful, but at the cost of two orcs. The crab was not slain, but they did take a claw. Three more orcs keep an eye on the passage south, while the rest of them while away the hours dicing for coppers, binding their wounds, or dreaming of a better life.

This cave contains fourteen orcs in total, three of which are 1st-level reavers.

---

**Orcs, normal (11)**, AC 6 [13], HD 1 (1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 5, 7, 7, 7, 8, 8 hp), Att 1 x spear (1d6), THAC0 19 [+0], MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 8, AL Chaotic, XP 10, NA 2d4 (1d6x10), TT P. They have 32 cp and 10 sp between the them.

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**Orc reaver (3)**, AC 6 [13], HD 1 (8, 8, 8 hp), Att 1 x club (1d6+1), THAC0 19 [+0], MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 8, AL Chaotic, XP 17. The trio carry a total of 12 gp.

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7. Tucked away in a small side cave is the residence of Blorgdish, the clan's ancient and half-blind witch doctor. Two badly injured orcs have been placed in her care; Blorgdish is doing the best she can to heal them, which isn't that much. The two injured orcs are non-combatants and have 1 hp each.

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**Blorgdish, witch doctor (1)**, AC 8 [11], HD 1 (3 hp), Att spell (as per spell), THAC0 19 [+0], MV 120' (40'), SV D13 W14 P13 B16 S15 (MU1), ML 8, AL Chaotic, XP 15, NA 2d4 (1d6x10), TT P. Blorgdish knows the spells Burning Hands, Enlarge, and Jump. Blorgdish has a raven familiar named Duzbei, which allows her to function in the sunlight without issue. Her only treasure is a small, crude figure made of sticks and twine, described below.

---

**Twig Homunculus.** Once per day an arcane spellcaster can breath life into this little figure of branch and yarn by pricking a finger and dabbing 1 hp worth of blood on its tiny acorn head. The homunculus remains animate for one hour; after which point it collapses, the magic animating it spent. It has a speed of 10' per round, an AC of 9 [10] and 2 hp. The spellcaster can command and control its movements silently but with gestures, as though it were a marionette on very long strings. It is but six inches tall, can collapse and rearrange itself at will, and can be set to perform extremely simple tasks. Most importantly, the magic-user can cast a single 1st-level level spell through it, as though the spell was emanating from the figure. Doing so ends the magic animating the figure, though.

8. This chamber dead-ends at the end of a passageway. The single entrance to it is choked by fallen rock and rubble, allowing only one person at a time to enter. Every time a person scrambles over it there's a **1 in 6** chance the rocks shift, causing **1d4** points of damage unless the character rolls at or below their Dex on 3d6. The rocks will only shift twice before stabilizing. It would take two man-hours to clear the rocks away.

The chamber is totally empty.

9. The chamber is empty save for small amounts of debris and rocks on the ground. The ground is slick with moisture, and a river flows through the southern end. The river is approximately fifteen feet wide, about ten deep, and fast moving. The water is cold. A number of columns barely protrude from the river, forming a path of stepping-stones that can be used to cross.

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A successful search check while exploring the room reveals fragments of crabshells and blood, indicating that a fight with the giant crab in Area 10 took place here recently.

**10.** A giant crab dwells among the columns, missing a claw, which was recently taken by the orcs in Area 6. It will rise from the depths and attack anyone crossing the river. The stepping-stones are slippery enough that anyone making an attack, getting hit by the crab, or moving faster than a walking speed must roll at or below their Dex on 3d6 or fall into the water. Characters who fall must roll at or below their Strength on 3d6 or be swept downstream at a speed of 20' per round, toward the lake (Area 18) and the monster that dwells within it. Those with metal armor, of course, also run the risk of drowning.

If the adventurers did not discover the broken crab-shells they suffer a -2 penalty to surprise rolls.

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**Crab, giant (1), AC 2 [17], HD 3 (20 hp), Att 1 x pincer (2d6), THACO 17 [+2], MV 60' (20'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F2), ML 7, AL Neutral, XP 50**

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**11.** Two orc corpses are sprawled on the ground here, roughly in the center of the room. An examination reveals they have no visible wounds and seemingly died without a struggle. In fact, they died from oxygen deprivation, as this room is filled with an inert colorless and odorless gas.

This room dips down lower than some of the other nearby rooms, which is unfortunate, because a small cleft in the ground slowly releases a heavier-than-air gas that is clear and odorless. Anyone spending more than one minute in this room must make a Save v. Poison or fall asleep from oxygen deprivation. Those falling asleep in the room will die five minutes later unless removed from the room.

The orcs have no treasure of which to speak, and the room is otherwise empty.

**12.** The second entrance to the cave system is via this sinkhole, an opening 10' in diameter at the surface, descending 60 feet down through a twisting shaft. A colony of bats lives in this cave. There are 85 bats, and for every adventurer that descends via the shaft there's a **1 in 6** chance the colony is disturbed; if this occurs the bats will ascend through the shaft, targeting any within as per their *confusion* ability. On a result of "no action" the adventurer will fall, suffering the appropriate damage.

The bats divide into four swarms, each with approximately 20 members. The swarms rise through the shaft one at a time, 1d2 rounds separating each. If not destroyed the bats will return to roost in the cave after 1d4 turns.

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**Bat, regular (85), AC 6 [13], HD 1 hp each, Att confusion, THACO 19 [+1], MV 120' (40') flying, SV D14 W15 P16 B17 S18 (NM), ML 6, AL Neutral, XP 6**

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**13.** This cavern is empty.

**14.** This small cavern is empty save for a curiously shaped stalagmite near the southern end of the cave. A close inspection reveals that the stalagmite was once a crude statue representing what appears to be a sort of octopoid, multi-armed creature, now limed over by layers of stone.

In Cycles past, this cave system was inhabited by a race of primitive, degenerate Men who worshiped the ancestors of the monster that dwells in the lake in room 18. The morlocks have since retreated further into the cave system.

**15.** This long chamber is empty and devoid of anything of note, save that the ceiling is lower than most anywhere else, only about 8' tall in the center.

**16.** More columns rise out of the water here, providing a rudimentary path of stepping-stones across the swiftly moving river. Each time an adventurer crosses there's a **1 in 6** chance one of the columns breaks off, forcing the character to roll at or below their Dexterity on 3d6 or fall into the water, suffering the effects as detailed in Area 10. The river leads further underground, to an area for the Referee to detail.

**17.** Another orc corpse is found here. Unlike the ones in Area 11, this one obviously suffered a violent death. It is missing one arm and covered in vicious lacerations. The orc ran afoul of the monster in Area 18 and staggered this far before collapsing and dying. A search reveals a quartz worth 10 gp tucked into the orc's belt.

**18.** An enormous cave with a high, vaulted ceiling, the river branches in two here, forming an island in the center of the room. A sinkhole in the island leads down to the second level of this dungeon, but to cross the river the adventurers will need to deal with the monster that lurks in the shallows.

The river widens in this cavern, to about twenty feet in width, and averages five or so feet in depth, except for the deep spot indicated by the creature's waving tentacles on the map, where the seven-tentacled monster slumbers in the darkness.

The monster resembles an octopus, with a five-foot long body and seven tentacles reaching nearly fifteen feet in length. The tentacles are barbed and cruelly rip the flesh from those they hit.

The creature is ancient and possesses a strange, alien intellect. Its ancestors came to this plane from another world through a crack in reality and took up residence here, where they were worshiped by the degenerate Men that once dwelled here.

Those sad humanoids have since retreated down to the second level of the dungeon, through the sinkhole in the island, and have long since forgotten that they once dwelled closer to the surface and worshiped an alien monstrosity.

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The creature in the lake calls itself Xuog. Normally asleep for long periods of time, the orcs' arrival has woken it up; Xuog has not feasted so well in decades and it drowns fitfully now, waiting for more prey to enter and be dragged under the currents.

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**Xuog, tentacle monster of the dark (1), AC 4 [15], HD 9 (46 hp), Att 7 x tentacles (2d4 damage + bleed), THAC0 11 [+8], MV 10' (3') on land or 60' (20') swimming, SV D8 W9 P10 B10 S12 (F9), ML 8, AL Chaotic, XP 1700**

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*Xuog attacks with its tentacles, which can lash out of the water and have a reach of fifteen feet. It can attack multiple opponents at once. On a successful hit the target must Save v. Death or continue to bleed at a rate of 1 hp per round. This is cumulative with each hit and continues until the target is dead or is targeted by healing magic.*

*Because of its alien mindset Xuog is immune to spells that affect the mind, such as illusions, charms, etc. It suffers ½ damage from fire-based spells (1/4 on a successful save) and, due to its rubbery physiognomy, ½ damage from blunt weapons.*

*It can use telekinesis at will, as per the spell and as if cast by a 9th-level magic-user. While using telekinesis it can only attack with two tentacles. Thrice per day it can cast hypnotism, as the 1st-level illusionist spell, by waving three of its tentacles in an undulating pattern. It may continue to attack using the other tentacles.*

*Once per day Xuog can automatically succeed on a saving throw of its choice.*

*At the bottom of the depression where it lairs can be found its treasure, odds and ends it has collected over the centuries as tribute or that have simply been on the corpses of its victims. There can be found 1,200 gp, a ring of platinum worth 2,500 gp, and a tightly stoppered efreeti bottle.*

The island is littered with the bones of Xuog's victims. In the center is an opening some twenty feet across that leads to the lower level. The roof of the cavern below falls away from the hole, making it nearly impossible to climb down without the aid of magic. Were one to lower a rope, or descend via magic, they would find themselves 100 feet below the surface, in Area 20.

**19.** The ground in this cavern is covered in a thick black tarry substance known as *coype*, seeping up from the ground. The smell is intense, and those remaining in the room for more than one round must Save v. Poison or be nauseated, suffering a –2 penalty to all rolls for one hour.

The tar is, however, valuable to alchemists. It's sticky and foul-smelling, and difficult to harvest without getting nauseous, but a quart of *coype* is worth 10 gp to an alchemist. It takes one turn to collect a quart, and when the adventurers first

enter the cave 1d100 quarts can be collected. The tar-like substance replenishes at a rate of one quart per week.

### Level Two

The second level of this dungeon is very similar to the first level, but is, if anything, even wetter due to the running water above. Moisture is constantly dripping from the ceiling — anyone looking up to examine the ceiling will get water splattered across their face.

**20.** Below the island is an enormous cave, at least one hundred and fifty feet in diameter, with a concave ceiling that reaches one hundred feet above the floor. Nourished by the constant drip of water from the ceiling above is a forest of fungi, adapted to growth in complete darkness and tended to by the ministrations of the dwellers of the lower level.

There's a **1-2 in 6** chance that whenever the adventurers enter this cavern 1d6 morlocks will be present, harvesting and tending to the fungi. They have devolved even further than others of their ilk and suffer the –2 penalty to attack rolls when exposed to any light source, not just daylight. Therefore, when possible, the morlocks will first attack those carrying a light source so as to extinguish it.

The fungi are all perfectly edible and harmless, averaging about five feet tall. Any morlocks encountered within the fungal garden have a +2 bonus to AC as they are adept at moving from stalk to stalk, using the fleshy mushrooms as partial cover. Morlocks that are killed here are subtracted from the total found in Area 27.

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**Morlock (1d6), AC 8 [11], HD 1 (avg. 5 hp), Att 1 x club (1d6), THAC0 19 [+0], MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 9, AL Chaotic, XP 5.** *The morlocks are armed with bone clubs studded with sharp stones.*

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*If there are five or six morlocks there will be a morlock bully (see Appendix) overseeing them, in addition to their normal numbers.*

**21.** This smallish cavern is empty.

**22.** This cavern appears to be empty but is actually home to a green slime that is clinging to the ceiling. There's a –2 penalty to spot the slime due to the excessive moisture. It drops down on anyone entering this room.

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**Green slime (1), AC NA, HD 2 (7 hp), Att special, THAC0 18 [+1], MV 3' (1'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 12, AL Neutral, XP 38**

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**23.** This cavern contains an enormous ribcage, arching ten feet high and nearly twice as wide, along with its spinal column. No other bones or remains can be found, and there is no obvious way for a creature this large to have gotten in here. The bones have long calcified from the dripping water and are covered in several inches of limestone.

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Bloodstains mark the ground here amidst the bones, for the morlocks worship these skeletal remains as a god. When food is scarce they resort to cannibalism and ritually sacrifice one of their own in the center of the ribcage.

After generations of worship, and countless morlocks slaughtered here, the ribs have in fact achieved a small spark of godhood. Lawful clerics who examine the bones will feel a sense of foreboding; if they actually touch the bones they must Save v. Death. Failure indicates they contract a wasting disease that reduces their Wisdom by 1 per day. When reduced to 0 the afflicted cleric transforms into a morlock.

The ribs can grant up to 1st-level clerical spells. A section of the southern wall of this cave is actually false, built Cycles ago by the ancestors of the morlocks, when they were still able to fashion such things. The secret door is crude and easily discoverable by anyone who spends more than a cursory amount of time searching this wall.

The current generation of morlocks are unaware of this secret door.

**24.** This curiously shaped cavern tapers to a narrow point at the northwest end. Five morlocks dwell here, along with the shaman of the tribe, a 2 HD creature capable of casting a single spell per day. The morlocks have no treasure.

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**Morlock (4)**, AC 8 [11], HD 1 (1, 2, 3, 4, 5 hp), Att 1 x club (1d6), THACO 19 [+0], MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 9, AL Chaotic, XP 5. The morlocks are armed with bone clubs studded with sharp stones.

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**Morlock bully (1)**, AC 8 [11], HD 1 (8 hp), Att 1 x club (1d6), THACO 19 [+0], MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 9, AL Chaotic, XP 5. The bully is armed with a bone club studded with sharp stones.

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**Morlock shaman (1)**, AC 8 [11], HD 2 (11 hp), Att 1 x club (1d6) or spell, THACO 18 [+1], MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F2), ML 9, AL Chaotic, XP 29. The shaman has the Toughness Knack, and typically has the following spells available: cause fear, darkness.

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**25.** A pile of rocks here in the passageway is precariously balanced — not on purpose, but purely by accident — and the morlocks are small and nimble enough that they do not risk dislodging it. Any Man-sized individual in metal armor, or carrying a shield or two-handed weapon, will dislodge the rocks on a roll of **1 in 6**. The individual, plus whomever is immediately behind them, must roll at or below their Dexterity on 3d6 or suffer **1d4** points of damage from the shifting stones. The morlocks in Area 27 will be automatically alerted to the presence of intruders.

**26.** This chamber is used as the morlock midden. The northern

side of the cave slopes downward severely, although that is not really apparent, as generations of morlocks have tossed bones, vegetable debris, and other detritus in here, until the level has reached that of the southern side of the floor.

If anyone investigates the northern half of the cavern before prodding the ground with a pole they must Save v. Paralysis or sink into the refuse, suffering 1d6 points of damage.

**27.** This cavern is home to a dozen morlocks and their eight giant rat pets. The morlock king dwells here as well, an enormous brute who is the de facto ruler of the clan by dint of his strength, as well as two champions that serve as his bodyguard.

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**Morlock (10)**, AC 8 [11], HD 1 (3, 3, 4, 5, 6, 6, 7, 8, 8, 8 hp), Att 1 x club (1d6), THACO 19 [+0], MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 9, AL Chaotic, XP 5. The morlocks are armed with bone clubs studded with sharp stones.

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**Morlock bully (2)**, AC 8 [11], HD 1 (6, 8 hp), Att 1 x club (1d6), THACO 19 [+0], MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 9, AL Chaotic, XP 5. The morlocks are armed with bone clubs studded with sharp stones. One of them has the Toughness Knack, the other gains a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls.

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**Morlock king (1)**, AC 7 [12], HD 4 (15 hp), Att 1 x club (1d6+3), THACO 14 [+5], MV 120' (40'), SV D10 W11 P12 B13 S14 (F4), ML 9, AL Chaotic, XP 50. The morlock king has 1d10 hp per HD and, once per day, can attack twice in a single round. Bonus to damage and THACO are from exceptional Strength.

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**Giant rats (8)**, AC 7, HD 1d4 hp (2, 2, 3, 3, 3, 3, 4, 4), Att 1 x bite (1d3, disease), THACO 20 (+0), SV D11 W12 P14 B16 S15 (F1), M6, AL Neutral, XP 6

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*There is nothing of value in this room.*

**28.** Cycles previous, when the morlocks first retreated to this lower level, the most capable amongst them constructed a false wall at the back of Area 23 to conceal their treasures. Over the years it has been forgotten by their descendants, the treasures within covered over by layers of limestone.

The false wall is difficult to discern, as over the years it has been coated with a thin layer of sediment. It can only be detected on a roll of **1 in 8**, or through magic, and takes 6 turns to break down, or half that if the adventurers have tools such as sledgehammers, crowbars, and picks.

The room beyond is dominated by an enormous quartz crystal, now limed over with a crust of calcium carbonate. At one point the crystal was the focal point of the morlocks' worship of the dwellers in the lake above, and they brought it with them to continue that worship below.

The crystal is the height of a man and flawless. It weighs 400

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pounds and is worth 10,000 gp due to its size and clarity. It could be used as a magical component or principle, provided it could be removed from the cave and cleaned.

Also in this room can be found a dozen human-like skulls, the relics of previous shamans who were ritually sacrificed, their skulls preserved in the same room as their idol. These, too, are now limed in calcium. Each skull contains 1d100 gp worth of spiritual energy that can be tapped and used for divine spells and item creation.

### 0407. Spring of Mercy.

A small spring can be found in this subhex, bubbling forth at the base of a venerable oak tree. It is no more than five feet in diameter and a mere foot deep, and is small enough that it doesn't actually overflow its banks.

The water is cool and tangy. Creatures that have been dead (from causes other than old age) for no more than 24 hours can be immersed in this pool. After seven hours they will awake, at full health and capability, as if they had just had a good night's rest. An individual may only benefit from the pool once in their lifetime.

### 0503. Forest Dunes.

Three Cycles ago a Chaos storm opened a gate to the Elemental Plane of Sand. Since then sand has been trickling through the portal, gradually burying the forest under rolling sand dunes. The portal lies to the north, outside the scope of this hex. The dunes are spreading at an approximate rate of 1 subhex every 5 years.

Here and there can be seen tips of dead trees poking out of the sand, like the fingers of a corpse. Every time this subhex is entered there's a **1 in 8** chance of encountering 1d4 sand elementals, frolicking in the dunes.

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**Sand elemental, minor**, AC 5 [14], HD 3 (avg 12 hp), Att 1 x punch (1d8) or 1 x scour (2d4 sandblasting), THACO 17 (+2), SV D11 W12 P14 B16 S15 (F3), ML 10, AL Neutral, XP 65. Sand elementals can form fists that they punch with. They may also attack with a scour, by sending out a spray of sand, doing 2d4 points of damage to everyone within 15 feet of them, or half that on a successful Save v. Breath. This ability can be used once every 1d6 rounds (roll each time it is used to determine how long it takes to recharge).

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### 0604. Tureltsa's Temple.

Cycles ago, pre-dating even the Skeldrene Dynasty, the Men who dwelt in this hex worshiped a deity called Tureltsa. There are none now who remember this god, and its shrine has collapsed in on itself; all that remains is a laid stone foundation twenty feet to a side containing a basalt slab that once served as the altar.

One of the old gods, Tureltsa's worshipers sacrificed animals and sometimes Men upon the black stone altar. Little evidence of this remains these days, as what has not succumbed to the elements has been thoroughly picked through by scavengers, both Man and beast.

The black stone remains clean and unblemished, untouched by lichen or moss. Clerics who touch the stone must roll at or below their Wisdom on 4d6; those that succeed catch glimpses of a tall woman with three arms and a lower half comprising a lizard's hindquarters. She bears, in her three arms, the following: a stone knife in her left hand, a wood stave in her right hand, and a ripe apple in the central hand.

This vision is of Tureltsa, who is little more than a memory trapped in stone these days. The cleric will continue to be visited by dreams of Tureltsa for 1d8 days after they leave this subhex. The fragment of divinity that is the goddess will have completely faded away one year after this first occurs.

### 0705. The Tolerable Troll.

A solitary troll dwells in this subhex, in a crude hut of woven branches and daubed mud. It is surprisingly civil and intelligent for its kind, and more inclined to either hide from larger groups or parley with them than attack.

The troll calls herself Zarglas; cast out from her clan because of a shocking lack of savagery, she found herself here and decided to build a dwelling, far from her kin. She is aware of the unicorns in subhex 0304 and is working up the nerve to approach them to make overtures of friendship.

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**Zarglas, civil troll(1)**, AC 4 [15], HD 6+3 (32 hp), Att 2 x talon (1d6), 1 x bite (1d10), THACO 13 [+6], MV 120' (40'), SV D10 W11 P12 B13 S14 (F12), ML 8, AL Neutral, XP 650, NA 1d8 (1d8), TT D

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*Zarglas wears a gold bracelet worth 400 gold coins and a platinum toe-ring inset with tiny rubies worth 1200 gp.*

## Wandering Monster Tables

### Hex 15.21

1. Boars (1d4)
2. Boars (1d6)
3. Lizards, draco (1d4)
4. Unicorns (1d4+1) from hex 16.21
5. Spider, tarantula (1d2)
6. Ants (1d4) from hex 16.22
7. Wolves (1d8) from hex 16.22
8. Autrak (dragon) from hex 16.22

### Hex 16.21

1. Zarglas
2. Zarglas
3. Unicorns (1d4)
4. Unicorn (Sun-Through-Leaves +1d4–1 others)
5. Autrak (dragon) from Hex 16.22
6. Lizardmen (2d4) from Hex 17.20
7. Ants (1d4) from Hex 16.22
8. Autrak (dragon) from Hex 16.22

## Appendix

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### Guileu

From *A Hamsterish Hoard of Monsters* by Erin Bisson

**Armor Class:** 6

**Hit Dice:** 2+3\*

**Move:** 90' (30')

**Swim:** 120' (40')

**Climb:** 90' (30')

**THACO:** 17[+2]

**Attacks:** 1 spit

**Damage:** 1-6 + poison

**No. Appearing:** 2-12

**Save As:** M3

**Morale:** 9

**Treasure Type:** L

**Alignment:** Neutral

**XP Value:** 35

Slow of motion and placid of nature, guileu are frog-shaped creatures of perfectly clear water; long-limbed like a tree frog, a guileu has eyes like transparent black pearls and, when motionless, is betrayed only by the ripple of light on its "skin". Guileu are inoffensive creatures, preferring to gather bits of wisdom along with the occasional pearl, and sometimes lurk amongst mortal creatures to dispense healing in return for reverence.

Guileu do not like combat and avoid it whenever possible, preferring to negotiate or retreat from the field of battle. If violence appears to be inevitable, a guileu will climb the nearest vantage-point and spit toxic waters at its antagonists; this "bolt" has a range of 50' and inflicts 1d6 hit points of damage, plus an additional 2d4 hit points and 1 point of Constitution (recoverable with a day of rest) if a Save v. Poison is failed. A guileu may choose to concentrate all of its available toxin for a day to make a single bolt that kills the victim outright if the save is failed but may then create no further bolts for 24 hours. Due to their shimmering transparency, all to-hit rolls take a -4 penalty against a guileu.

Guileu may cure poisoning and disease at will, using the fluids of their own bodies. They take double damage from wind and fire, but no damage from water, earth or acid; submerged in a body of water, they regenerate 3 hit points per round.

### Unicorns in Absalom

Unicorns in Absalom are unrelated to Faeries; they are a force for Law in the world, and the area around their homes becomes a place of stability in an otherwise Chaotic world.

Unicorns can automatically sense Chaos/Law within a 60' radius. They don't care a whit about maidens; only creatures of Lawful alignment may touch a unicorn, and only those who have proven themselves champions of Law may ride a unicorn.

They still possess the ability to teleport themselves or a rider once per day, up to a range of 360' feet. Additionally, once per day, a Chaotic creature struck by a unicorn's horn must Save v. Spells or be affected by a *curse*, as per the reversed version of *remove curse*. Those affected by a unicorn's curse are blinded until the unicorn lifts the curse or it is cured by powerful magic.

A blessing (the collective noun for a group of unicorns) of four or more unicorns will be led by a matriarch. This older, powerful unicorn has 6 HD, an AC of 2, and the ability to cast *heal* once per week when touching someone with her horn.

When one or more unicorns establishes a home and lives there for more than one year the subhex surrounding their lair takes on certain characteristics:

- ▶ Chaotic creatures entering the subhex must Save v. Spells. Failure indicates they feel uneasy and seek to leave as quickly as possible. In order to remain in the subhex they must succeed on a morale check. This morale check must be made for every hour the creature wishes to remain.
- ▶ Lawful creatures gain a +1 bonus to all of their saving throws while within the subhex.
- ▶ Healing magics are cast at maximum effectiveness. A *cure light wounds* spell, therefore, would automatically heal 7 points of damage.

The blood of a unicorn can be used as a special component for magical items; their horns can be used as principle components. If freely given — for occasionally unicorns will give their life for a noble and Lawful cause — these components are worth double. They are also worth double if the unicorn is slain and its blood or horn is used for Chaotic purposes.

### Morlock

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Morlocks are the degenerate descendants of Men that, centuries before, retreated underground, away from the light of the sun and civilization. Over countless generations they have adapted to life beneath the earth; their skin lightened to a pasty white, their eyes and ears grown to unusual size.

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Morlocks have devolved into a more primitive form of Man, unable to work with metal or communicate complex thoughts. Any vestige of their life above ground was soon lost to them, except perhaps as a dim, tribal memory of a cruel burning light shining down from a vast emptiness above.

*Their base statistics are as follows: Morlock, AC 8 [11], HD 1 (4 hp), Att 1 x weapon (by weapon), THACO 19 [+0], MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 9, AL Chaotic, XP 5, NA 1d12 (5d10), TT C*

Morlocks do not have the technology to fashion metal armor, or even to tan leather, so must resort either to wearing the hides of beasts they have slain or piecing together a random collection of metal armor scavenged from the corpses of unfortunate adventurers. In such cases their AC can not be better than 5.

Likewise, morlocks do not possess the ability to wield complex weapons such as bows or crossbows and lack the skill to maintain edged weapons such as swords and axes. The only missile weapons they can use are spears and slings. If they use edged weapons they suffer a -1 to hit and damage due to the poor condition they keep them in.

Morlocks have the following racial characteristics:

- **Infravision to 90'.** Their vision has adapted to a life underground.
- **Sunlight sensitivity.** Conversely, they suffer a -2 penalty to attack rolls if exposed to sunlight.
- **Awareness.** Their enhanced hearing and sight make them difficult to surprise. They are only surprised on a roll of 1 in 8. If caught aboveground during the day they will be surprised on a roll of 1-3 in 6.
- **Resistance to illusions.** Because morlocks rely on all of their senses to survive underground they are less likely to be fooled by illusions. They roll twice when making a Save v. Spells to disbelieve illusions, taking the better of the two results.
- **Different mindset.** Although once human, generations of living in isolation and inbreeding has radically altered their thought patterns. They are considered monsters, rather than persons, for the spells *charm person* and *hold person*.
- **Brute Strength.** Morlocks make up for what they lack in weapon skill and finesse with brute force. They do 1d6 points of damage with simple weapons (clubs, rocks, etc.), rather than 1d4.
- **Stealthy.** Lives of hunting darkened caverns have taught the morlocks to be stealthy. They Move Silently and Hide in Shadows as a thief of the same level as their HD.

- **Ambush.** If morlocks are able to attack a surprised foe they gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls and do an extra 1d6 points of damage during the surprise round.
- If a morlock slays an opponent they may make an immediate attack against another adjacent target. They may do this a number of times per round equal to their HD, provided each blow slays a target.

If, for some reason, a player wants to play a morlock character the racial class is built in the following manner (using the rules from *Classing up the Joint*). Note that with regard to weapon and armor usage the restrictions listed above are for morlocks dwelling in their own communities. They are certainly intelligent enough to learn how to use bows, or don plate armor, provided they are taught.

Attack as fighter. +2. Note that NPC morlocks attack using the Monster Attack Matrix.

- Save as fighter. +1
- HD 1d8. +1
- Weapons, 4. +2
- Armor, 4. +2
- Infravision, 90'. +.75
- Hide in shadows as thief. +.5
- Move silently as thief. +.5
- Awareness. +1
- Resistance to illusions. +.5
- Treated as monsters rather than humanoids. +1
- Brute Strength. +.5
- Ambush hunters (as backstab). +1.25
- Sunlight vulnerability. -.75
- Alignment restrictions: Cannot be Lawful. -.5
- Fear of Magic (as barbarian). -1.5
- Level Restrictions (max 8th level). -5
- Total build modifier of 6.25
- Morlocks require 1,250 XP to reach 2nd level.
- They have no ability score requirements, and a prime requisite of Strength, as a fighter.

### Morlock Demographics

Typically, a morlock community consists of 5d10 individuals eking out a subsistence living in the depths of the earth, venturing out above ground only at night. These basic communal units are called "caves".

For every five morlocks in the community there will be one bully. For every fifteen morlocks there will be one champion.



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For every twenty-five morlocks there will be one subchief. Each cave of morlocks is ruled over by a chieftain.

These numbers are in addition to the normal morlocks. A sample cave, therefore, has 5d8 members. If the roll yields 23, that would be the number of normal morlocks; it would have additional leaders as indicated above.

Occasionally larger communities of morlocks are encountered, made up of 1d4+1 caves. These communities are fundamentally unstable due to the Chaotic impulses of these creatures and the need to scavenge or raid for food. Such combined communities only arise in moments of need; a strong leader will unite a number of caves under its leadership to fight off a common enemy, make raids upon the surface world or other chthonic communities, or because of some cataclysmic event. These larger communities are inherently fractious, and rarely hold together for longer than 2d6 months before splintering into a number of smaller caves.

Each cave of morlocks may also include any of the following, with the chances indicated:

**1-3 in 6.** Morlock shaman (cleric) with caster level of 1d6.

**1-2 in 6.** Morlock sorcerer (arcane caster) with caster level of 1d6.

**1-2 in 6.** 1d6 albino apes (1-2), 1d10 giant rats (3-4), 1d6 fire beetles (5), or 1d4 giant shrews (6).

The following includes descriptions and special qualities for the non-ordinary morlocks that may be encountered. Each quality may only be selected once per group encountered; roll again if the quality appears more than once.

### Morlock Bully

These creatures lead gangs of 2-5 morlocks. Each bully has one of the following (chose or roll at random):

1. The morlock has 1d10 hp per HD.
2. +1 to attack and damage rolls due to ferocity.
3. Tougher than normal skin. +1 bonus to AC.
4. **Cajole.** Once per day, a bully can threaten and cajole others of its kind within 30', allowing them to reroll a failed morale check. They may do this in addition to their normal actions.

### Morlock Champion

Champions have 2 HD and select one trait from the Bully table.

### Morlock Subchiefs and Chiefs

Subchiefs have 3 HD, a morale of 10, and select a total of two qualities from the Bully options or their own, below. Chiefs are identical except they have 4 HD. Both chiefs and subchiefs have a natural AC of 7, rather than 8.

1. Morale is increased to 10, as is that of all other morlocks within 30' of their chief.
2. Once per day the morlock can automatically succeed on a single saving throw.
3. Once per day the morlock can negate the damage from a single, non-magical form of attack.
4. Once per day the morlock may attack twice in a single round.

Each subchief has 1d4 bullies that serve it as bodyguards. Each chief has 1d6 bullies and 1d4-1 champions that function as bodyguards. These morlocks are in addition to those normally present.

### Morlock Warlords

Every so often a morlock chieftain becomes powerful enough that it is able to unite multiple caves. These warlords have 5 (1-4), 6 (5-7), 7 (8-9) or 8 (10) HD. Morlock warlords with 7 or 8 HD can select a total of three qualities from the previous options. Warlords with 6 or more HD have an AC of 6, rather than 8.

Each morlock cave under a warlord has its own hierarchy, led by a subchief or chief, with its full complement of bullies, champions, bodyguards, etc. Additionally, a warlord will have:

- 3d4 bullies
- 2d4 champions
- 1d4-1 subchiefs
- 1-4 in 6 chance of a shaman of level 1d4+2
- 1-3 in 6 chance of a sorcerer of level 1d4+2

### Morlock Shaman

Morlock shamans venerate ancient chthonic gods of Chaos. Their spell lists are a combination of cleric and druid spells. They have the same racial characteristics as standard morlocks, plus the following abilities:

- Divine Spellcasting (100% progression, +8 build points).
- Level limit 6 (-2 build points).
- The other changes to their XP build are:
  - 1d6 hit points per HD. +.5 instead of +1
  - Attack as cleric. +0 instead of +2. Note that NPC morlock shamans attack using the Monster Attack Matrix.
  - Instead of turning undead as a cleric the shaman can attempt to control vermin and primitive cave-dwelling animals, such as giant centipedes, spiders, rats (normal and

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giant), snakes, etc. +1.5. See below for more information on commanding vermin.

- Total modifiers of 11.25, for an XP requirement of 2,250 to reach 2nd level.

Their spellcasting progression is as follows:

Morlock Shaman Spell Progression					
Level	Spell Level				
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
1	1	—	—	—	—
2	2	—	—	—	—
3	2	1	—	—	—
4	2	2	1	—	—
5	2	2	2	1	—
6	2	2	2	1	1

Shamans have the following spells they may cast. They pray for spells as clerics do, and must have some sort of focus that represents their dark deity: the ritually prepared skull of a slain foe, a curiously engraved stone taken from an unholy shrine, etc. Spells with an asterisk are from the **OSE** supplement *Druid and Illusionist Spells*. Those with two asterisks can only be cast as the reversed versions of normal spells.

**1st level.** *Animal friendship\**, *darkness\*\**, *detect danger\**, *protection from good*, *purify food and water*, *cause fear\*\**, *resist cold*

**2nd level.** *Barkskin\**, *blight\*\**, *heat metal\**, *hold person*, *resist fire*, *silence 15' radius*, *snake charm*

**3rd level.** *Continual darkness*, *cause disease\*\**, *curse\*\**, *fungus shape\** (underground version of tree shape), *growth of animal*, *hold animal\**

**4th level.** *Create water*, *cause serious wounds\*\**, *neutralize poison*, *protection from fire and lightning\**, *speak with plants*, *summon animals\**

**5th level.** *Commune*, *create food*, *dispel good*, *insect plague*, *finger of death\*\**, *pass plant*, *transmute rock to mud\**

At 2nd level morlock shamans can craft fetishes (see Hex 17.22 for more information on these) and at 4th level may brew potions. In both instances use their actual level for determining chances of success.

When attempting to control vermin the shaman must be within 30' of the creature(s) to be controlled. A reaction roll is first made; if the result is Unfriendly or Hostile the control attempt is made with disadvantage: roll 2d6 twice and take the lower of the two results.

The control attempt uses the same table as the cleric on p. 23 of *OSE Core*. The success of the control roll depends upon the creatures' HD; white apes, for instance, use the 4

HD column. Like normal turning, a second 2d6 is rolled to determine the total number of HD controlled.

On a normal success the targets are controlled for a period of 1d4 hours; on a T (automatic turn) the duration is 2d6 hours; on a D the control is for 1d4 weeks. At any time the shaman can only control a number of HD of animals equal to twice the shaman's HD.

Controlled creatures will obey simple commands even if they do not understand language; the bond between shaman and creature is beyond the mundane and instinctively understood. The creature will do nothing obviously suicidal (they still make morale checks), but can be ordered to fight for the shaman, to flee, etc., and to perform other actions in line with the creature's abilities. If the same creature is controlled three times the control becomes permanent.

Shamans can attempt to control the following creatures: ape, white; bat (giant, giant vampire, normal); bear (all types); beetle (all types); cave locust; centipede (giant); insect swarm; rat (normal and giant); rhagodessa; shrew (giant); snake (all types); spider (all types); weasel (giant).

At 1st and 4th level the shaman is able to pick one of the following Knacks. Each one can only be selected once, unless otherwise stated.

- **Toughness.** The shaman uses 1d8 for HD instead of 1d6. Additionally, their AC improves by 1 from 8 to 7.
- **Apostasy.** For each spell level the shaman can cast add the following to their spell list:
  - **1st.** *Sleep*
  - **2nd.** *Invisibility*
  - **3rd.** *Protection from normal missiles*
  - **4th.** *Charm monster*
  - **5th.** *Wall of stone*
- **Master of Beasts.** The shaman makes rolls to control animals as if the shaman were one level higher, and when rolling to determine the maximum number of HD affected rolls twice, taking the better of the two results. At any time they can also control a total number of HD of creatures equal to three times the shaman's HD.
- **Regeneration.** Granted unnatural healing abilities by their chthonic deities, morlocks regenerate 1 hp per round, provided they are in darkness. Exposure to light brighter than torchlight (sunlight, magical light, etc.) suppresses this ability. If slain but left in darkness their body will eventually heal itself, but they lose one level in the process. 1st-level shamans that are reduced to 0-level in this manner become shadows. Burning the shaman's body is the only way to permanently prevent the regeneration.

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- **Corrupted Healing.** The dark gods do not typically provide their shamans with the ability to heal, but shamans with this Knack can touch others and imbue them with temporary hit points. The hit points are added to and can exceed the target's normal total number of hp, but vanish in 1d4 minutes. If the target drops to 0 once the temporary hp vanish they die. Shamans with this Knack can imbue others with 5 hp per shaman level, and they can touch more than one target per day, dividing the temporary hp among them. A target cannot have temporary hp that take them above twice their normal maximum. The shaman can use this ability once per round as either their move or attack action.
- **Master of Undeath.** In addition to controlling vermin the morlock shaman can also use their turning ability to control or rebuke undead. The total HD commanded at any one time is split between vermin and undead, as long as it doesn't exceed the maximum allowed.

### Morlock Sorcerer

Morlock sorcerers are innate arcane spellcasters. They do not need to study or learn spells, but instead are able to draw upon their own internal energy to cast a limited number of spells. They have a more limited selection of spells than a magic-user has access to but can cast their spells more often.

Morlock sorcerers have the same racial abilities as a normal morlock, plus the following:

- Arcane Spellcasting (125% progression, +20 build points).
- Level limit 6 (–2 build points).
- The other changes to their XP build are:
  - 1d6 hit points per HD. +.5 instead of +1
  - Attack as magic-user. –1 instead of +2. Note that NPC morlock sorcerers attack using the Monster Attack Matrix.
  - Save as magic-user. –1 instead of +1
  - They do not have the Ambush or the Brute Strength qualities. –1.25 and –.5
- Total build modifier of 17
- Morlock sorcerers require 3,400 XP to reach 2nd level.

Morlock sorcerers draw from the following spell list. Spells with an asterisk are taken from the **OSE** supplement *Druid and Illusionist Spells*.

**1st Level.** *Auditory illusion* \*, *blindness/deafness*\*, *charm person*, *hold portal*, *magic missile*, *shield*

**2nd Level.** *Blur*\*, *detect invisible*, *ESP*, *invisibility*, *levitate*, *quasimorph*\*, *wall of fog*\*, *web*

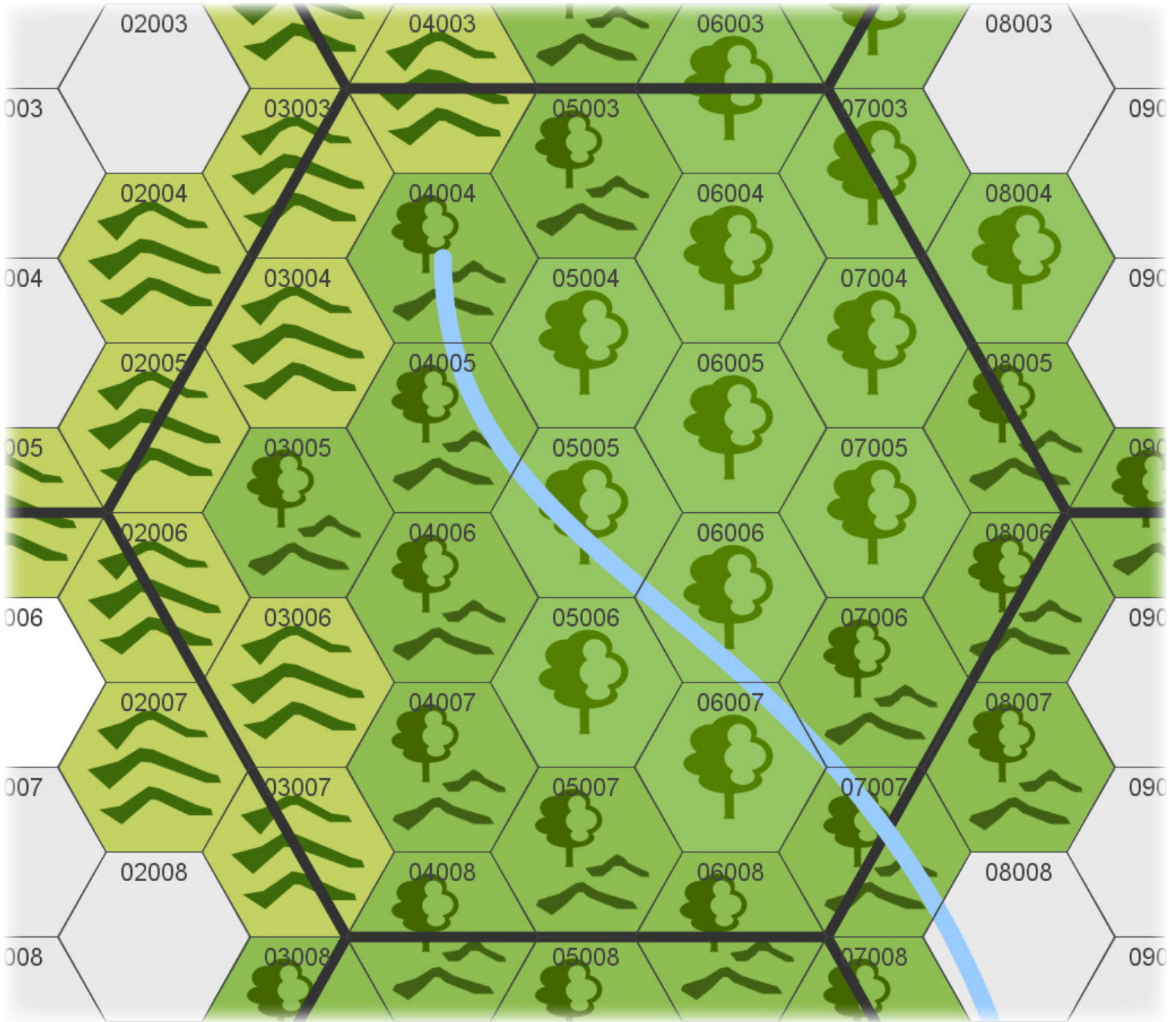
**3rd Level.** *Dispel magic*, *fear*\*, *haste*, *hold person*, *paralyzation*\*, *protection from normal missiles*, *wraith form*\*

At 2nd level sorcerers can create charms (see Hex 17.22) and at 4th level may brew potions. In both cases the sorcerer uses their actual class level to determine their chance of success.

At 1st and 5th levels the sorcerer can pick one of the following Knacks. Each can only be selected once, unless otherwise stated.

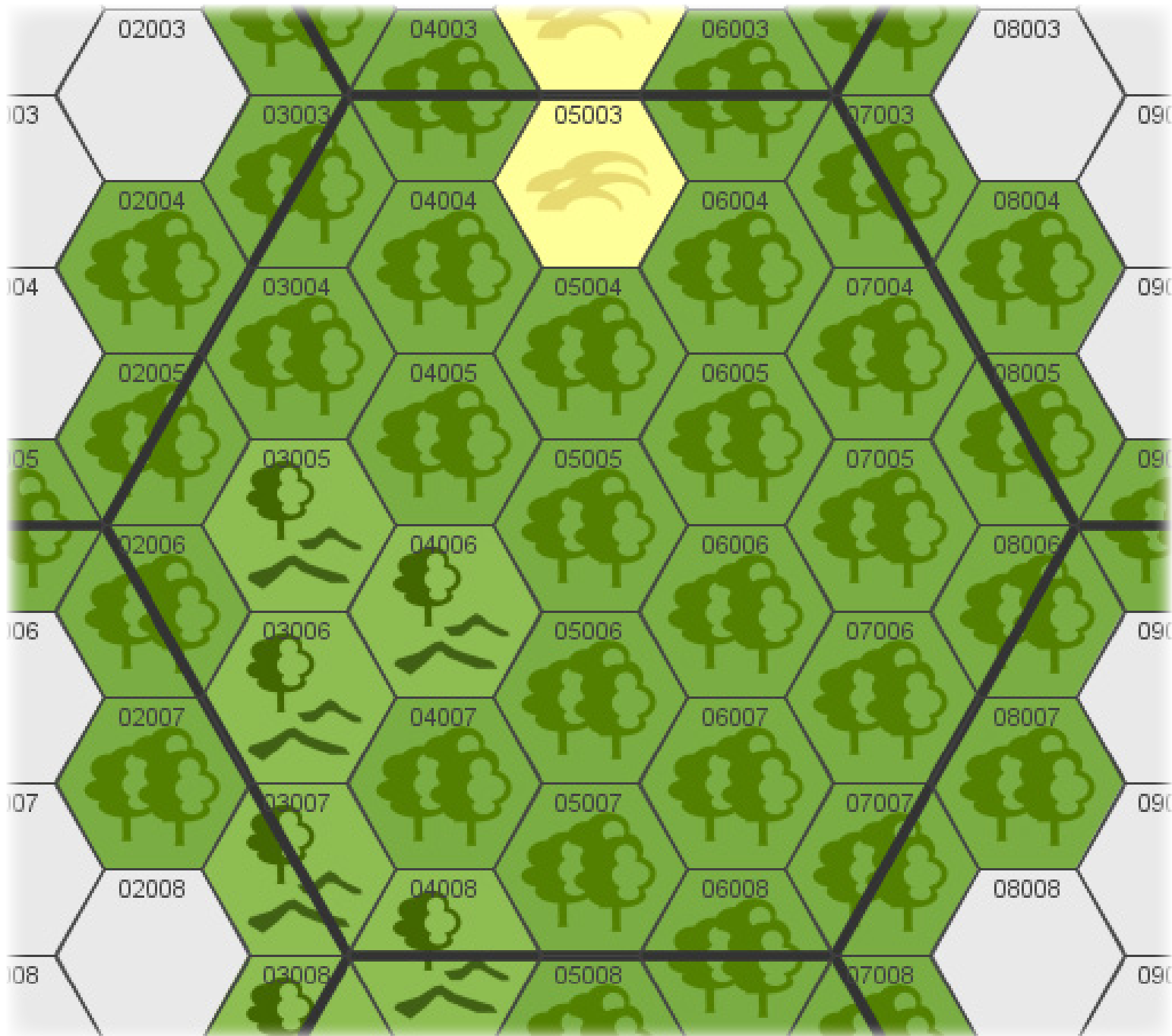
- **Toughness.** The sorcerer has 1d8 hp per HD instead of 1d6. Additionally, their AC improves from 8 to 7.
- **Prodigal Caster.** The caster's level is treated as two higher for purposes of spell effects dependent upon caster level. Any saves made against the sorcerer's spells do so with a –1 penalty to the roll.
- **Scamper.** The sorcerer can move and cast a spell in the same round.
- **Sacrifice Spell.** By spending an unused spell slot the sorcerer can automatically succeed on a saving throw. This costs no actions to use, and may be done multiple times per round.
- **Twin Spell.** The sorcerer can cast two spells in a single round. This pushes the sorcerer's body to its limits, inflicting 1d4 points of damage each time it is used. The total level of spells cast in a single round cannot exceed the sorcerer's HD; a 5th-level sorcerer could not cast two 3rd-level spells, for instance.
- **Familiar.** The caster has a familiar, a creature bound to them by blood and magic. The familiar must be a creature that has no more than 1 HD and must be native to subterranean environments (bats, rats, etc.). The sorcerer gains the following benefits from having a familiar:
  - The sorcerer gains an additional +1 hp per level.
  - By concentrating the sorcerer can project their consciousness into their familiar's body, using its senses and controlling its actions. While doing this the sorcerer can neither see nor hear out of their own body. The familiar must be within 30' to establish this bond, but the actual control has a range of 1 mile per sorcerer level. When controlling the creature's body the sorcerer can cast spells through it.
  - The sorcerer shares an empathic bond with their familiar that functions within 30' per level of the sorcerer.
  - At 3rd and 6th level their familiar gains an extra HD.
  - If the familiar is slain the sorcerer instantly loses their bonus hp, plus 1d4 hp per HD of their familiar. Additionally, they must Save v. Death or be stunned for 1d4 rounds.

# Hex 15.21



Large Hex = 6 miles, face to face  
Small Hexes = 1.2 miles, face to face

# Hex 16.21



Large Hex = 6 miles, face to face

Small Hexes = 1.2 miles, face to face

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