

RAGING SWAN PRESS

GM'S SCREEN #12: DARK CAVERNS



SYSTEM
NEUTRAL



Join
Raging Swan Press
on Patreon

Prep faster
Prep easier
Game better

GM'S SCREEN #12: DARK CAVERNS

Space behind your GM's screen is precious (and limited). You've got dice, figures, the adventure, reference books—obviously a drink and snacks—as well as pencils, pens, a notebook and more! Often times a GM needs to be a juggler to make it all fit. That's why we created the GM's Screen line. Most GM screens focus on presenting the rules. This GM's Screen line is different. Instead of rules, each instalment presents hyper-focused pages of dressing, minor events and more all designed to add depth and flavour to an adventure. (And better yet, you can use the tables without your players realising what you are doing!)

This instalment of GM's Screen comprises three tables designed to bring to life the dark caverns in your campaign and is compatible with virtually any roleplaying game.

DESIGN CREDITS

Design: Creighton Broadhurst

Development: Creighton Broadhurst

Art: William McAusland. Some artwork copyright William McAusland, used with permission.

©Raging Swan Press 2018.

The moral right of Creighton Broadhurst to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted in accordance with the Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior permission in writing of Raging Swan Press or as expressly permitted by law.

HOW TO USE THIS SUPPLEMENT

Using this supplement is easy. Simply print out page 2 and pin it to the inside of your GM's screen. (You can also print it out and cut it up before clipping it to your screen so you do not obscure vital tables printed on the screen itself).

When play calls for it, roll on the relevant table and use the result to build verisimilitude, detail and flavour into your game. Always re-roll inappropriate results, but consider any given result as a starting point. Describe the situation and see how the players react!

Because words have power, we've also added some flavoursome examples to help you bring the setting alive in your players' minds.

SYSTEM NEUTRAL EDITION

Welcome to this Raging Swan Press System Neutral Edition supplement. Herein you'll find evocative, inspiring text designed to help you—the busy GM—run better, quicker and easier games.

This book is compatible with most fantasy roleplaying games. It's impossible to create a truly system neutral book, though, and some generic game terms—wizard, fighter, human, elf and so on—lurk within. These generic terms are easily modified to the GM's system of choice.

One special note about the NPCs in this supplement. While some are wizards, fighters, clerics and so on, others are simply normal folk. Because different game systems handle normal folk differently we've made no attempt to note their "class" leaving them simply as "female human" and so on.

SUPPORT RAGING SWAN PRESS ON PATREON!

Save YOUR precious time. Make YOUR session prep easier, quicker and less stressful.

Join Raging Swan Press on Patreon and get your books CHEAPER and before they are available anywhere else.

Learn more, at patreon.com/ragingswanpress



DARK CAVERNS

CAVERN DRESSING

1. The rubble from a broken stalagmite covers the floor, nearby to its stump that yet juts up from the floor.
2. A single booted footprint on the muddy floor betrays the passage of previous explorers.
3. Rubble covers the floor throughout this area, except for an obvious path, which has been cleared. Piles of rubble flank the pathway, creating areas difficult to move through.
4. Mud covers the floor and water drips from the ceiling above. The mud hides several deep hollows in the floor, which could trip unwary explorers.
5. The faint scent of burnt flesh reaches the party's nostrils.
6. A luminescent fungus grows high up one wall. Its faint glow reveals a narrow passageway slanting steeply upwards.
7. A narrow fissure little more than one-foot wide splits the floor in twain. A faint breeze emanates from below.
8. Three splintered crossbow bolts lie about the floor. None have any blood on their points.
9. A rocky outcrop on one wall looks a little like a melted giant's face emerging from the rock, in the party's flickering lights.
10. Water drips from a crack in the ceiling. Explorers passing through the area discover the water is very cold.

NOTABLE CAVERN FEATURES

1. Water drips through cracks in the ceiling, creating a liquid curtain. This provides a concealing mist that makes it slightly harder to notice enemies nearby.
2. Steep steps lead to a small cavern that shows signs of mining. Perceptive PCs notice glimmering flecks of unidentified metal (platinum) in the walls.
3. The floor is unstable. A weight of 150 lbs. or more causes it to collapse into a water-filled sinkhole. The 80-ft. deep (and cold) water breaks the falling character's fall, but falling rocks may prove fatal.
4. A small stand of heligmites—stalagmites resembling trees with "branches" growing off from the main body in erratic and bizarre directions—fills the area.
5. Thick, cloying mud covers the floor and fills several deep pits. Within, the mud acts like quicksand.
6. A thin sheet of dripstone reaches from the ceiling to the floor. In several places near the floor, small holes pierce the dripstone.
7. A field of gour water-filled pools—pools whose rims stand about three-foot high—dot the chamber. Water drips from the ceiling into the pools; in this caverns it sounds like it is raining.
8. Long ago an explorer died here. His calcified bones remain, transfixed in a slowly growing stalagmite.
9. A bubbling pool fed by a vauculian spring dominates, this chamber.
10. Detritus and rubble obviously deposited by flooding covers the floor. To the east, a trickle of water dribbles from a cavern mouth high up on one wall.

POOL, STREAM, RIVER DRESSING

1. A bedraggled, ripped brown cloak is snagged between two large boulders. The sodden cloak is half in and half out of the water. It is cut for a halfling-sized creature (or perhaps a human child).
2. The rusty hilt of a notched two-handed sword juts from the water. Any attempt to pull the sword from the water snaps the blade.
3. Several pieces of splintered wood—perhaps remnants of a spear's haft—bob in the water.
4. Two abandoned crudely crafted wooden buckets stand on the river bank. One has been knocked over, but the other is full.
5. Crystals embedded in the wall just below the surface of the water glimmer invitingly when the PCs' lights reach the area.
6. A thin crack in the ceiling lets a solitary beam of faint light play upon the water's surface. The shimmering glimmer is noticeable from quite some distance. Perhaps subterranean predators have learnt the light often attracts prey, and lurk nearby...
7. minerals in the rock discolour the water; perceptive explorers spot a faint pink tint—akin to diluted blood—to the water.
8. The water is deceptively deep. At its deepest point, perceptive PCs spot what looks like a small cairn partially covered in silt and mud.
9. A large stone as a stepping stone across the water. Unfortunately, it is precariously balanced.
10. Tiny (harmless) white albino fish live in the water. Always hungry, they swarm anything entering their domain.

WORDS & DETAILS HAVE POWER—USE THEM TO ADD FLAVOUR AND ATMOSPHERE TO YOUR GAME

Cave: cavern, cavity, hollow, grotto; **Dark:** dim, gloomy, murky, pitch-black, shadowy, tenebrous; **Lifeless:** barren empty, bare, uninhabited; **Illumination:** light, lighting, ray, beam, brightness, radiance; **Illumination (Strength):** faint, dim, low, feeble, bright, blinding, intense, flashing, radiant, flickering; **Stone:** rock; **Stony:** rocky, rough, gritty, gravelly, rock-strewn; **Quiet:** soft, low, muted, faint, muffled, indistinct; **Underground:** subterranean, hypogean; **Cave Hazards:** turgid air, explosive gas, strong winds, flash flooding, sinkhole.

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.

8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10 Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

12 Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

13 Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

14 Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

15 COPYRIGHT NOTICE: Open Game License v 1.0 ©2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

Open Game License v1.0a. Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast Inc.

System Reference Document: ©2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Authors: Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, based on material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

GM's Miscellany: 20 Things Volume I. ©Raging Swan Press 2016; Author: Creighton Broadhurst.

Caves & Caverns. ©Raging Swan Press 2011; Author: Creighton Broadhurst and David Posener.

20 Things #11: Dark Caverns. ©Raging Swan Press 2017; Author: Creighton Broadhurst, David Posener and Alex Riggs.

GM's Screen #12: Dark Caverns. ©Raging Swan Press 2018; Author: Creighton Broadhurst.

Product Identity: All trademarks, registered trademarks, proper names (characters, deities, artefacts, places and so on), dialogue, plots, storylines, language, incidents, locations, characters, artwork and trade dress are product identity as defined in the Open Game License version 1.0a, Section 1(e) and are not Open Content.

Open Content: Except material designated as Product Identity, the contents of *GM's Screen #12: Dark Caverns* are Open Game Content as defined in the Open Gaming License version 1.0a Section 1(d). No portion of this work other than the material designated as Open Game Content may be reproduced in any form without written permission.

To learn more about the Open Game License, visit wizards.com/d20.





SYSTEM
NEUTRAL