

THE MANGROVE SWAMP

AN INTRODUCTION

THE TRIBESMAN LEADS YOU ALONG THE SWAMP path, stepping through the explosion of green as if he was walking through a summer meadow. You struggle behind him, sword hacking away at vines and foliage that continually tangle in your armour and wrap around your legs. Your Wizard companion loses his temper and you hear a small eruption of flame as a section of forest is incinerated behind you, you would admonish him but if you could create flames with your mind you'd also be laying waste to this godsforsaken place.

You continue on and after some time your guide halts and beckons you forward. Ahead you see a break in the trees, the scent of salt is in the air and the crashing of waves can be heard in the distance, you see a glimmer of azure water and blinding sunlight through the trees. This is the place you were told about, the route to the fishing grounds the villagers use, or did use, until recently. Something has taken up residence here, the villagers are unsure what but a number of fishermen have gone missing over the last few weeks and some of their belongings have been found along this section of the path. Your guide looks nervous, he keeps repeating a phrase you have yet to translate, but he whispers it with fear in his voice. You thank him for his help and move silently forward.

The path leads into a small lagoon, stagnant briny water steams away in the sun's heat. Bright green pond scum covers much of its surface, along with huge lily pads and other aquatic plants. A makeshift walkway made from rotting wooden planks crosses the deeper looking areas. As you step onto the walkway you see movement in the water ahead, you draw your weapon and continue forward. As you reach a small sandy island in the centre of the lagoon the Wizard makes a startled noise, you turn to see him peering into the murky water. Before you can react a giant pink tongue shoots out of the water, wraps itself around the Wizard and pulls him in. At the same time small robust figures spring from the water all around you, rudimentary spears held in their webbed hands, you look back towards your Wizard friend and see his legs kicking wildly, sticking from the mouth of a giant toad. As you watch the toad suddenly expands and explodes in a flaming mass of toad gore and the odd bit of Wizard. The frog people look stunned for a second and then with an angry cry (croak?) they attack.

NOTES AND TIPS

- 30x30 map grid
- The lily pads can hold the weight of a small creature (1x1 pad), or a medium creature (2x2 pad or more). More than one creature on any pad will make it unstable and result in some kind of penalty.
- The water can be as clear or as murky as you want! All the better to hide your ambushers! It can also be as deep as you want, shallows make for a larger battle area.
- Bullywugs would be great for this map, along with giant frogs and toads. Remember Bullywugs often capture their victims.
- Drag your player characters off the walkways and into the water

- with rope traps or have giant toads or frogs grapple them.
- Most aquatic races could work here as well, so Merfolk, Sahuagin, Koa-Toa or Merrow.
- Climbing through the mangroves could be possible but will certainly be difficult terrain but may also allow for half cover.
- Try a crocodile or alligator attack, it could be covered in pond scum and look like a floating log. Use those passive perceptions!
- Throw in a shark or two!
- This could be a place to harvest a special type of pearl, have your players dive into the water and then... well you know, try to kill them.

VARIANTS

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