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Greatwood Forest

[parent_page_wsnations](#) Greatwood Forest is the largest forest in the Western Shores, and is also the ancestral home of the Elves. Elvish legend states that long ago Elves were the only race, and all the lands were covered with a single, great forest. In the ages since that time, men, Dwarves, Orcs, and other races appeared, cutting away areas of the forest to feed their fires and build their homes. The Elves were gradually driven back as the forests shrank. A naturally peaceful race, they at first did not fight other races, as long as there was deeper forest to move into. This changed, however, when there was no more room to retreat. In C.Y. 2901, the Elves forcibly expelled all Ambrians from Greatwood Forest, giving no explanation, but using no undue force. The Elves then began regularly patrolling the borders of the forest, cutting themselves off from all friendly contact with non-Elves (except for some druids, who they deemed non-threatening to the Forest and allowed to stay). Any humans, Dwarves, or Halflings who came under the eaves of the forest were turned away or driven off. Any marauding Orcs or trolls from the mountains, however, were given no quarter. This strategy seemed to work, and it wasn't long before Greatwood Forest was regarded by other peoples as the sovereign territory of the Elves. In the year 3214, a pivotal event occurred. King Faldrin, who had ruled the forest for as long as any Elf could remember, was hunting alone when a violent storm blew down from the mountains. Struck by a falling tree, the king would have died if he hadn't been found after the storm by a wandering human druid. The druid returned the king to his people, where he quickly regained his health. Faldrin vowed that the druid (whose name is unknown) would receive any reward that it was within his power to give. The druid asked that the Elves once again open the borders of the forest, so that all races might once again enjoy the beauty of the Western Shore's greatest wood. Faldrin honored the request, and the Elves ceased their border patrols. Though the Elves still claim the territory as their own (and expel any evil or destructive visitors), the woods have remained open to this day.

Roleplaying Synopsis

Greatwood Forest is the home of the Elves of the Western Shores, and also makes a good place for rangers and druids to come from. Though the Elves patrol the central forest, the outlying areas are more wild, and make a good location for wilderness adventures.

THE LAY OF THE LAND

Greatwood Forest is home to all types of trees, though most found within its borders are deciduous. All trees in Greatwood grow to huge size, at least 150% as large as their non-Greatwood relatives. Many scholars speculate this is some magical effect, for neither the climate (temperate) nor the forest soil seem remarkable. Greatwood is a hilly forest, being at the base of the Grand Range. It is extremely easy for a traveller who doesn't know his way around to get lost, as all of the wooded ridges begin to look alike after a while. Fortunately, the Elves and druids are usually more than willing to help out any lost travellers they come across. Nymphs, dryads, centaurs, and other forest creatures also roam the forest, but none are as numerous as the Elves.

LIFE IN GREATWOOD FOREST

Greatwood is a nation within a nation. Surrounded by Ambria on all sides (and felt by many Ambrians to be a part of their country), the Elves nonetheless consider themselves to be an independent land, and conduct themselves accordingly. They are ruled by a King (Faldrin) and a Queen (Tiriel). Not only the Elves, but the nymphs, dryads, centaurs, and other forest creatures consider Faldrin and Tiriel to be their rulers. The Elves themselves are divided into two types. High Elves are those who have been alive since the time of the one great forest, before the coming of man and the other races. Wood Elves are the less lordly of the Elvish folk, born in the later years. Although Elvish society does not make any distinctions between the two types, the high Elves are less numerous, and tend to be less concerned with day-to-day affairs. There are rumors of a secret citadel populated entirely by High Elves, but these rumors have never been confirmed. The Elves live in complete harmony with the forest, cutting wood only from dead or dying trees, and cultivating small gardens beneath the boughs. The Elves are largely self-sufficient, and trade little with outsiders. The only group they trade in any quantity with are the Dwarves of the Drakor Mountains (from whom they receive what little metal ore they need for their weapons and jewelry). The Elves are familiar with the concept of money, but employ no currency within their borders. The Elves live in tree-top villages, which can hardly be seen from the ground, unless the Elves desire it. Each community is nominally ruled by an elder, although the Elves have little use for authority other than the King and Queen. Despite the newly-opened borders, the Elves still diligently patrol the wood. Any evil creatures found near Elvish territory are quickly dispatched. Ambrian woodmen and hunters found to be unduly damaging the forest or its wildlife are driven out. Consequently, most Ambrians consider the Elves a strange, sometimes hostile force to be avoided if at all possible. Recent openness is beginning to change these prejudices, however. The Elves are atheistic, worshipping nothing but ideals. Each subspecies worships a different ideal. The Elves are very fond of magic, and all are quite skilled in its use. Elven magic tends to have subtle and beautiful manifestations, usually working through forces of nature. Elves are capable of more overt magic, but normally choose not to use it. Elven magical items are among the finest in the world, and are only rivalled by artifacts of ancient Celinad.

PLACES OF INTEREST

Moondeep: (pop.40,000) This town may be the most beautiful in all the Western Shores (only Halay, in Zylistan, can dispute this claim). Built amongst the treetops, the center of the town is the royal palace, a beautiful structure nestled in the top of a huge (300' tall) oak. The young Druidwash bubbles out from a spring at the foot of the trunk. At night, the city is lit only by fireflies and faint Elvish lanterns. Moondeep is always filled with laughter and music. **Pool of Lights:** This enchanted pool is located in the very heart of the forest. It is guarded by a nymph, who allows only the pure of heart bathe here. It is said that the pool's water cleanses not only one's body, but one's spirit as well. Friends of the lucky few who have ever found the pool swear that their comrades look ten years younger after bathing there. **The Southwood Caves:** As the name implies, this area is located in southern Greatwood. Little is known about it, except that it is supposedly guarded by a secretive order of druids that are less than benign. A certain species of moss is reported to grow in the caves which, when eaten, gives a man the strength of ten men for a day. Many warriors have often gone in search of these caves, but none have ever been known to return.

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