

SUNKEN CORAL GARDENS

Sunken Coral Gardens are a breathtaking, yet terrifying, spectacle. Once vibrant reefs now lie choked by a creeping, bioluminescent blight, the parasitic growth pulsing with an unnatural life force. Powerful currents and whirlpools, born from the growth's insatiable hunger, relentlessly churn the waters, reshaping the labyrinthine coral structures and threatening to pull unwary travelers into the abyss.

ADVENTURE HOOKS & RUMORS

- Whispers among surface divers speak of Merfolk patrols, their spears glinting in the gloom, driving away any who approach the blighted reefs. They claim the growth is a festering wound, and outsiders are only hastening its spread.
- A desperate plea has reached the surface – a Merfolk elder seeks aid in finding a way to sever the parasitic growth's connection to the coral, before it can breach the barriers protecting the world above. The elder offers ancient knowledge in exchange for assistance.
- Sailors report strange, swirling vortexes appearing near the sunken gardens, pulling ships off course and dragging them down into the crushing depths. Some believe these are not natural phenomena, but manifestations of the parasitic growth's power.

LOCATIONS

1. The Whispering Reef

The entrance opens into a vast, submerged cavern dominated by skeletal coral structures. An eerie, green bioluminescence emanates from the walls, pulsing with a slow, rhythmic beat. Powerful currents surge through the cavern, creating unpredictable whirlpools that churn the water and buffet any who enter. The air is thick with the sound of rushing water and faint, mournful whispers carried on the currents the remnants of the coral's life force. Patches of the creeping blight are visible, clinging to the remaining coral, a sickly contrast to the vibrant hues of the healthy reefs that once thrived here.

2. The Sunken Observatory

A ruined structure offers a glimpse of the surface world, but the currents make navigation treacherous.

3. The Bioluminescent Labyrinth

A maze of coral tunnels glows with strange light, concealing hidden pathways and dangerous creatures.

4. The Echoing Grotto

Water echoes with haunting melodies, revealing clues to the blight's origin and the Merfolk's history.

5. The Heart of the Bloom

A colossal chamber, once the heart of the coral gardens, is now completely overrun by the parasitic growth. Towering, pulsating structures of the blight dominate the space, their

ENCOUNTERS

Name	Details
Blighted Reef Guardians	Animated coral constructs, corrupted by the parasitic growth, attack intruders.
Merfolk Patrol	A group of Merfolk warriors, suspicious of outsiders, demand proof of good intentions.
Current	Driven Leviathan A massive, mutated sea creature is drawn to the currents, posing a significant threat.
Blight	Infested Crab Swarm Aggressive crabs, mutated by the parasitic growth, attack in large numbers.

TREASURE

- Sunken Amulet of Tide Control:** Grants limited control over currents, but prolonged use risks attracting dangerous creatures.
- Bioluminescent Scale of Protection:** Provides resistance to the blight's effects, but emits a distracting glow.
- Ancient Coral Scepter:** Amplifies magical abilities, but can also attract the attention of powerful, unseen entities.

NPCS

- Coralia Swiftfin:** A wise Merfolk elder, cautious but willing to help those who prove their worth.
- Kaelen Deepwater:** A rebellious Merfolk warrior, distrustful of authority and eager to fight the blight.
- Vorlag the Shadow Broker:** A cunning and ruthless Merfolk, seeking to exploit the blight for personal gain.

PLOT RESOLUTIONS

- The adventurers could broker a fragile peace between the Merfolk and the rebellious warriors, choosing to either side with the elder's cautious approach or the warrior's aggressive one. This choice will determine the Merfolk's trust and the resources they'll offer, impacting their ability to combat the blight.
- The PCs might discover a hidden chamber containing a ritual to sever the blight's connection to the coral, but performing it requires a sacrifice – a valuable treasure, a personal memory, or even a life. The consequence of failure is the blight's rapid spread, while success offers a chance to heal the gardens but potentially enrage unseen entities.
- The adventurers could attempt to harness the power of the bioluminescent blight itself, using the Ancient Coral Scepter to amplify their abilities and fight back. However, this path carries the risk of corruption, attracting Vorlag the Shadow Broker and potentially turning them into agents of the blight.

