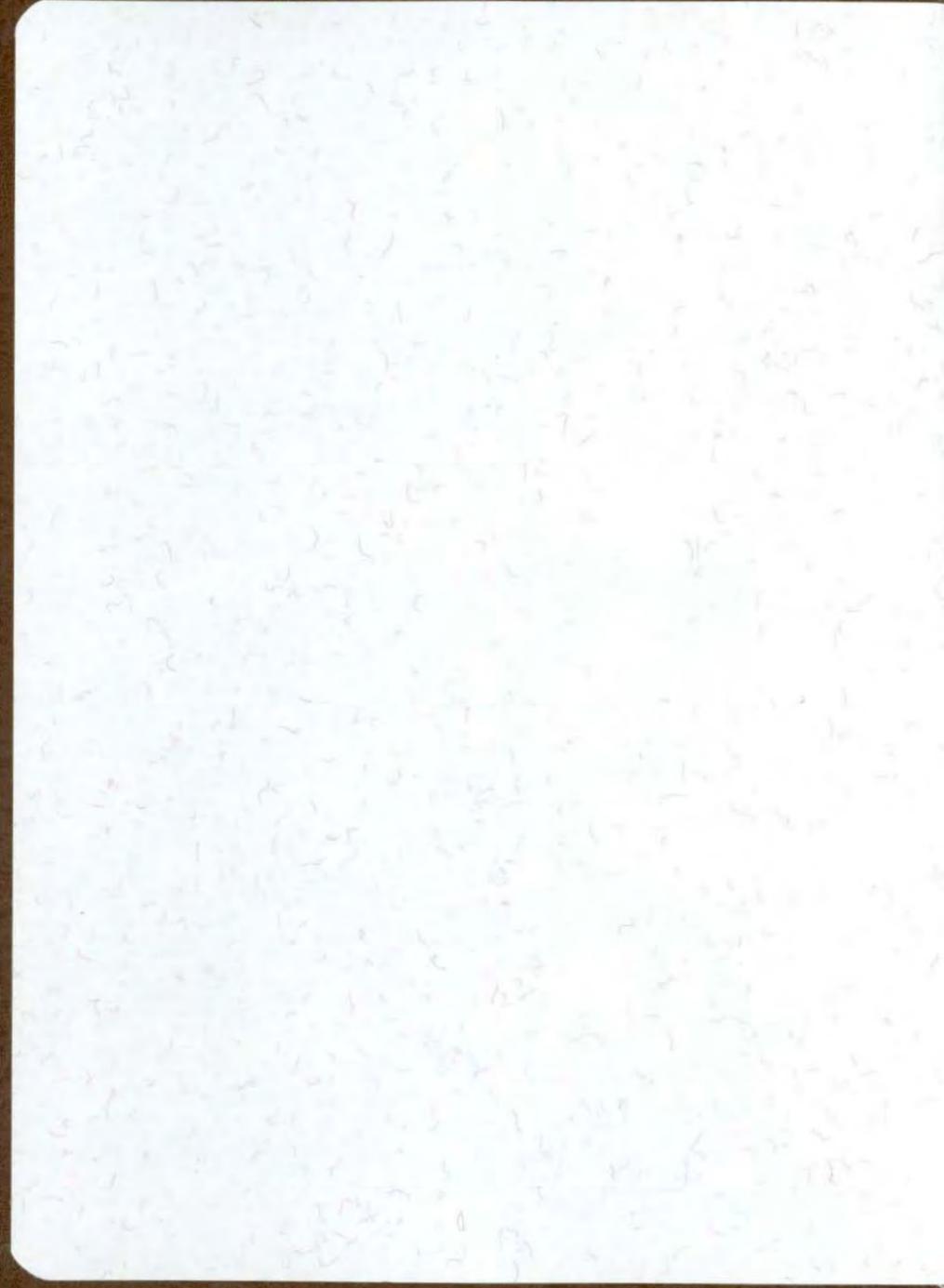


JOURNAL

Volume 1





D'ni Zoological Studies
Volume 1

-Ainia



Saturday 10 Dec 2011

I've been away from the Cavern for more than a year now (too busy with surface life, I guess) but recently was finally able to get back. This was mostly inspired by a MOULA forum thread begun by larryf58 earlier this month to document his zoological observations throughout the D'ni ages. Reading about his exploits really underscored how much I'd been missing my explorer days. So I dug up my old ki and Relto book and I'm now heading off on a similar adventure. I think I'll also bring along a pocket photo printer (battery-powered, of course) and tape so I can annotate my journal in the field.

* * * *

I'm in Teledahn to hunt the elusive Buggaro. I've been climbing around the giant mushrooms, searching for an appropriate lookout post for Buggaro watching and now find myself sitting atop the wooden platform on one of the larger mushrooms in the lagoon behind the dam. It looks like there once was a working machine screw attached here; it seems to be the one that has been broken for untold years and I can't really tell what it might have powered here. But in any event, I think I have sufficient altitude and privacy to accomplish my zoological quest.

* * * *

I've been waiting for about an hour and have gotten a few good pictures with my ki, the best when the Buggaro nearly landed on me! I was

sitting quietly here on the platform and had already photographed him a few times earlier as he flew about. But then he apparently decided the platform looked like a handy place to settle down and before I knew it, I was face to face with a very surprised beastie! Luckily, he veered away at the last moment. I can't imagine what I might have done if he'd actually landed on me.



He veered away at the last minute.



Another photo taken earlier as he flew by me
unaware.



Here he is flying straight toward me.

Ok, I'm off to look for Shroomie; I'd like to get some nice photos of her too.

* * * *

I keep baiting the water from the spore machine but Shroomie has yet to show up. But

while I've been waiting, it's occurred to me that the spore machine paddles look exactly like Buggaro wings. I'm sure this can't be a coincidence, but I wonder what it means? Did the D'ni admire or value the Buggaro? Does the Buggaro have an important role in the life cycle of the mushrooms or with the spreading of its spores?



While looking for Shroomie, the Buggaro cruised
by; I wonder if he's become curious about me
after that near miss?

* * * *

While I'd been sitting quietly waiting for the
Buggaro on the mushroom platform earlier, I'd

noticed a screw cap nearby on the flooring that looked suspiciously familiar. I'd read a posting by larryf58 regarding a dead Flapper he'd seen stranded on a platform in Teledahn and I wondered if this might be what he'd seen. I poked my head over the side and underneath the platform and sure enough, there was the screw running up the side, ending underneath the "Dead Flapper" on the top. So I took a few ki shots so I could let him know my suspicions.



I managed to get a nice shot of the platform as well as the screw and cap.



Taken when I poked my head over the side.



The screw cap, aka 'Dead Flapper'.



Taken farther down the mushroom trunk; two screws articulate, with the lower one being capped similarly to the cap at the top platform.

* * * *

Well, I guess Shroomie will have to wait for another visit. But it's been a great day, full of

fun and adventure. I need to get back home and post my results on the forum thread, then get to bed. I can tell I'm just getting started with my explorations here!

Sunday 11 Dec 2011

I finished posting my photos on the forum a couple hours ago and have heard back from larryf58 already. He helped me iron out a couple kinks with my photos and welcomed me warmly. I think I'm going to have a lot of fun here! I'm already planning out my next zoological expedition.

Sunday 18 Dec 2011

Being inspired by Larryf58's previous expedition, I decided to revisit Laki'ahn today. I particularly want to look for the pod of Laki he's mentioned seeing offshore, so I'm packing along some snorkeling equipment. And I'm going to bring my own camera rather than relying on the ki for my photographs. Particularly after the dim light in Teledahn, I realize I need something a bit more sophisticated so I can compensate for less-than-ideal local conditions.

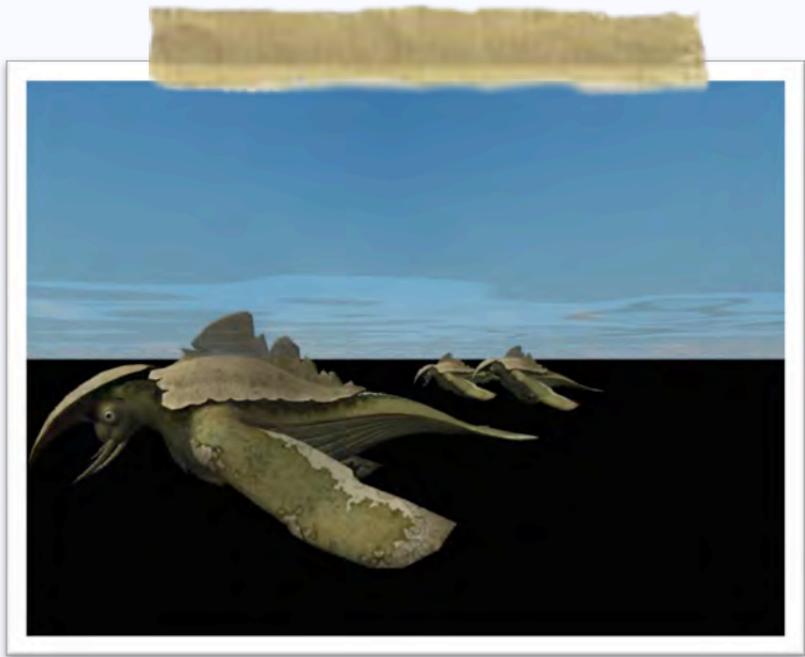
* * * *

I've been paddling around in the ocean for a while and finally spotted their top fins above the waves in the distance. I'm hoping I can approach them near enough to photograph. I have

no idea if they spook easily; or if they are aggressive.



Trying to swim quietly, I photograph them from above water.



Diving underwater, I can see all three of them
in their entirety. They look absolutely amazing!
(I don't know what the heck is wrong with my
camera; it discolored the background.)



I used my zoom to take this picture. No telling if they are aggressive or not, so I'm keeping my distance when possible.

Overall, all three were surprisingly docile. Perhaps they aren't as fierce as the D'ni and Kresh make out? Or perhaps they'd just eaten and so I was of little interest to them?

Well, now that I've risked life and limb swimming with the Laki, it's time to hunt down the less fearsome wildlife here.

* * * *

Humph, I've walked all over the island twice now and have yet to find a Piranha Bird. Maybe they're just being shy right now? Or maybe there's something important about their daily routine I don't yet understand... My real dream is to find a nest or colony of them some day. I guess this will have to wait until my next visit though. But I think I should start a list of future projects in the back of this journal.

* * * *

Well, I found a nice group of Butterflies up by the linking bubble and lodge. They appear to be the Crimson Kadish and have been fluttering between the bubble and a shady pond nearby amidst the huge boulders here. I've been struggling to photograph them but with only moderate luck.

Ok, I've sat down with my back up against one of the big boulders near the pond and am sitting quietly instead of trying to chase them around. It seems to be working much better as the Butterflies are no longer darting out of my way but have resumed their more leisurely pace.



They flew by within inches of my camera. I held my breath and hoped the camera noise wouldn't disturb them.



Here they've just flown past me and are getting ready to approach the pond.

Seeing them here has gotten me to thinking about the ones we see in Kadish's vault on Kadish Tolesa. It never made sense to me that they are native to Tolesa since we never see them in the forest. So how did they get there

anyway? Can they link through like the Eder Kemo Fireflies? That would make sense...

So for now, I'm assuming that they are native to Laki'ahn here; and that they linked through to the vault, perhaps with Kadish himself? Could this be part of the old mystery of Kadish's death with his hand next to an unused linking book?

Considering the history of Laki'ahn and the now-extinct "sport" of butchering the Laki in an arena of cheering D'ni spectators, it wouldn't surprise me in the least if Kadish was responsible for instituting this custom. It fits right in with what we know of his personality...

Thankfully, the Laki survived the madness.

Saturday 24 Dec 2011

Finally got a chance to post my Laki'ahn photos to the forum thread and pose my questions about the Butterflies and Kadish. I've gotten some interesting responses from folks who clearly know far more than I regarding good old Kadish and the D'ni of his time.

Someone even posted a translation of Kadish's death note. It seems he deliberately chose not to link away and remained unrepentant for all his life's misdeeds (not a surprise). Still, I keep wondering if the Kresh had finally had enough of the D'ni interference and arrogance and rebelled in some way. It's almost as though Kadish beat a hasty retreat to his vault and wanted to spend his last moments with his

treasure. His note makes it pretty clear that he knew he was dying. Was he wounded? I can certainly picture the natives of one age or another getting fed up with him and resorting to violence. The presence of the Butterflies simply has me suspecting the Kresh of Laki'ahn in such a scenario...

Wednesday 28 Dec 2011

Checked the thread again today and see that larryf58 has been busy. He returned to Laki'ahn and got some marvelous photos of the Laki from underneath! Wow, I never would have felt brave enough to get that close. I just use my zoom a lot.

From his description, it sounds like he found the same Laki pod that I did. So out of the three, two always remain close by each other. My best guess is they are probably a mother and child. But considering that they all appeared to be full-grown, I would then guess that a calf remains close to its mother for a prolonged time. Another research question for the list.

Having the holidays off from work has given me a great deal of time to spend on my zoological interests in the ages. I continue to be inspired by Larry58's earlier exploits and am about to head for Direbo and Noloben today to study and photograph the animals there. I've already checked the D'ni Zoological Society web site to see what animals have been documented for these ages.

* * * *

I'm starting here in Direbo, an age I assume was written by Esher (though I'm just guessing this because he introduced Dr. Watson to this age). I'd already passed through here on my way to Laki'ahn a week ago but hadn't really stopped to look through the age itself.

Ok, right away, I can see that there are two different kinds of Fireflies here. One is white and flies alone over the water; the other is yellow and flies in swarms over the land. The yellow ones have discernible heads and wings if you can get close enough to view them (I had to scroll through the photos on my camera viewscreen to see it).



Above is the white, solitary Firefly; he appears to be round in shape. The DZS website doesn't mention this type.



These are the yellow spawning Fireflies. If you look carefully, you can see their heads and wings.

The two species behave quite differently, so I wonder if the white is more territorial (and thus solitary); or if it prefers the cooler temperature or higher humidity of the water.

There's also a pale Butterfly here, which behaves much like the white Firefly. It is solitary and stays near the water.



This one was flying near the linking bubble and the shoreline.



The same Butterfly flying at the water's edge.
The DZS fails to mention them as well.

I'm continuing to search each of the four islands carefully. Here near the Laki'ahn linking bubble, I see something hovering... Yes, it's a dragonfly! He is very bold, allowing me to

approach him and even to touch him gently. He simply continues hovering, his wings all a blur.



I wonder why he remains over land instead of flying over the water?

So far, I've found a total of four different insect species, three of them undocumented by

the DZS. This is very exciting! The only animal I've failed to find is the Direbo Nightjar, reported to fly in flocks amongst the columns throughout the swamp. They also are reported to be difficult to sight, so perhaps I don't need to feel too bad about failing to see them.

Next stop—Noloben!

* * * *

I arrived here at Noloben about an hour ago and have been hiking the big island extensively, trying to survey the different animals I need to document. The most challenging will be the birds since some of them are in constant flight. I will need to climb as high as I can manage and then use my zoom for them.

The DZS has documented two birds for Naloben, the Bluff Pelican and the Fan-crested Gull, yet I seem to see three different types...

* * * *

Ok, now that I've scaled the sheer face of one of the smaller islands, I believe the two types nesting here are the Fan-crested Gull and the female Bluff Pelican. The female Bluff Pelicans are a rosy color and their male counterparts are white-grey with black wings. So there are two bird species after all. The male Bluff Pelicans are in perpetual flight, soaring high above; I expect they are constantly hunting fish, probably to feed themselves and their mates. I can certainly hear and see the occasional splash

when I'm down near the beaches, as these birds
dive underwater to land their prey.

The Fan-crested Gulls are somewhat shy; they freeze whenever I approach, though their noisy chatter doesn't diminish. In contrast, the female Bluff Pelicans are fearless and almost friendly. One looked at me curiously as I was taking her picture.



Above, a female Bluff Pelican nesting amongst
a group of Fan-crested Gulls.

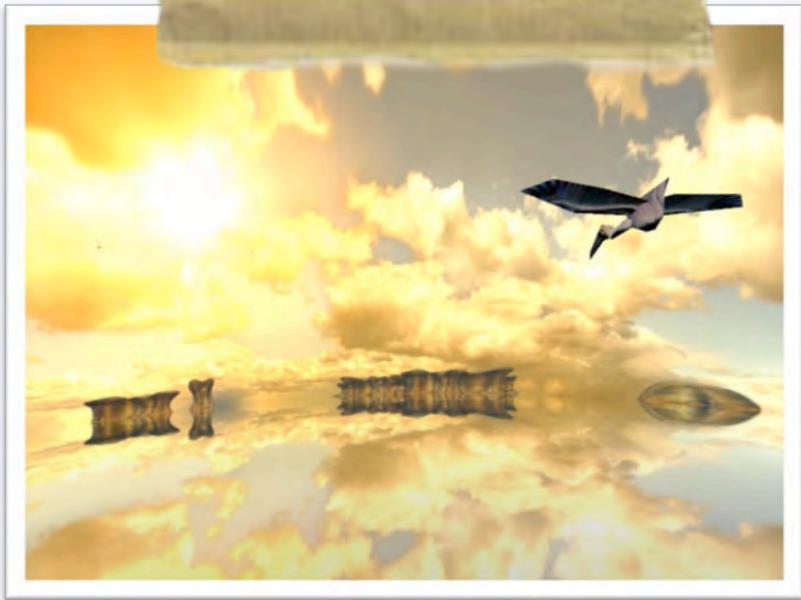


The gulls remain frozen while I am there, while the female pelican eyes me curiously.

A male Bluff Pelican flew close by while I photographed the nesting birds. Perhaps he was the female's mate, checking to make sure she was unharmed by my presence?



Here he is approaching me.



He continues past, apparently satisfied that I am harmless.

Even though I am unable to find any fish to photograph, it's reasonable to assume there are some species here, the natural prey of the Bluff Pelicans. I need to head back to the beaches on the main island and take a closer look at the

abandoned settlement. I recall seeing animal remains there.

* * * *

Ok, I've made it back to the main island safely and can see some sort of bivalve shellfish hanging from a frame. It looks like the Bahro natives hung the shells here to preserve them for further use later.



The shells are a beautiful teal color.



From the back, I can clearly see the indentation where the animal's neck protruded from the shell.

There also are the remains of some huge animal's bones and tusks here. Part of this animal was used to build a structure here on the beach, while the rest was left at the water's edge,

presumably the site where the carcass was landed
and later was dressed.



The shelter appears to be constructed primarily
from these huge bones.



There are some smaller unused tusks and bones remaining on the beach.

Now I need to get back and post my findings on the forum thread.

Thursday 29 Dec 2011

I wound up having to post my Direbo and Noloben notes separately, they were so lengthy. I finally finished earlier today and already have gotten some feedback. It's nice to know that there are others who are finding my studies interesting and useful.

I've been thinking about how I want to spend the last of this holiday season, the end of the old year and the beginning of the new. I really can't think of a nicer activity than a photo safari of all the known ages, documenting all the animals I can find there. I'll need to get started right away, though, if I want to finish before it's time to resume my surface life and schedule.

I think I'll start by heading back to Noloben.

* * * *

Hmm, now that I'm here, I'm taking a closer look at the beach "carcass" and see that it's actually an old ruined boat. Yikes, I need to be more careful and observant while exploring. I'll have to update my earlier posting to correct my error.



Above, the beach remains are obviously an old boat made from animal tusks, bone and wood.

So now I'm realizing that the Bahro must have abandoned this age long ago, probably because of Esher's presence and atrocities against them. It would be the most practical solution for them since he so cleverly hid his

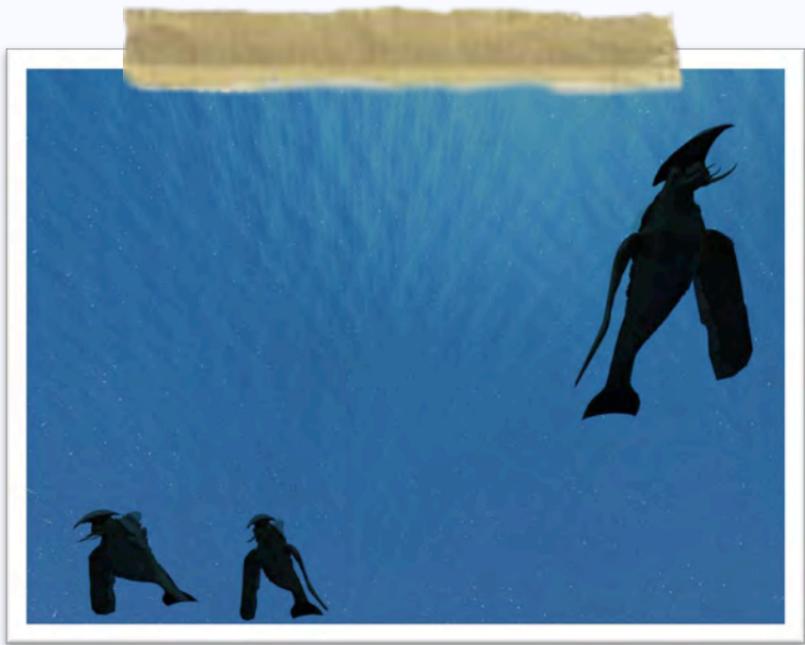
laboratory amongst the native Tunnel Snakes, which are deadly to the Bahro.

So the Bahro must have hunted and fished from off shore, using boats to land their prey. I wonder what animal these huge tusks and bones are from and whether it is a Noloben ocean native. It is generally believed that Noloben is the Bahro home age; and I've noticed that these tusks in particular are featured in all Bahro-made structures I've ever seen throughout the various ages. So I can only assume that this animal is deeply important to the Bahro, that they have very close ties to it. It has become an intrinsic part of their culture. I wish I knew more about this animal but have no idea where to start. I've certainly seen no sign yet of a living one here in Noloben...

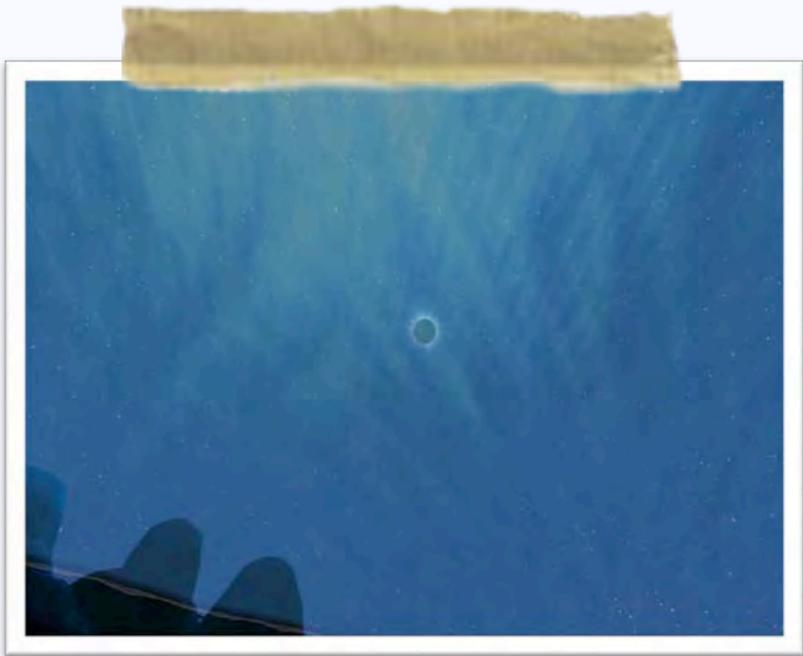
Since I seem to be starting out by revisiting
ages I've recently visited, I'm heading next to
Laki'ahn.

* * * *

I've been here several hours now, searching
fruitlessly for the elusive Piranha Bird. Dang,
this is frustrating! But while I revisited the
Laki pod (and being emboldened by larryf58's
recent photos), I had the extraordinary luck to
photograph them just as one of the Laki'ahn
eclipses began. The photos are stunning.



The Laki are silhouetted against the starry sky
above.

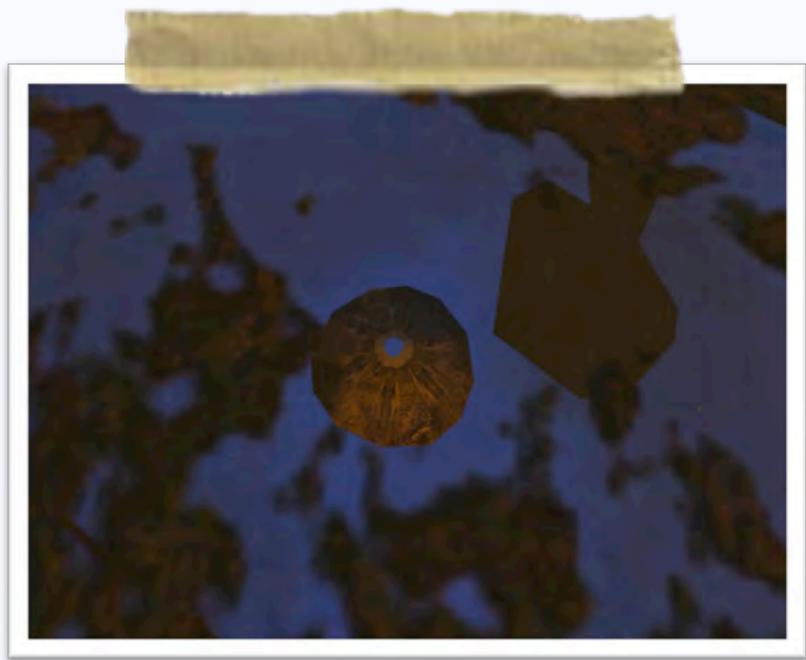


The eclipse seen from below water; it looks
wonderfully magical.

My next stop will be Teledahn. I need to photograph the Flappers and Shroomie since I neglected them in my trip earlier this month.

* * * *

I'm hoping to start with the Flappers. Larryf58's earlier observations about their behavior has gotten me interested in getting photos of their entire feeding cycle. I've found several near one of the wooden walkways, so with a combination of careful wading and the use of my zoom, I should get some good photos.



Above, the Flapper is starting to launch; its central hole is starting to widen as its body is beginning to contract and gain upward speed.



The Flapper is now increasing speed, widening its hole even further. It was actually quite a challenge to capture this stage because it was moving so fast.



The Flapper is now fully contracted and moving
at top speed. Its "mouth" is completely opened.



Another view of the same stage, from the side.



The Flapper is now beginning to float back down,
its body belling outward like an umbrella and its
hole closing to slow its descent.



The "mouth" is nearly closed and the Flapper is descending gradually, filtering the air through its central hole and in the process harvesting pollen spores to feed upon.



The Flapper is now nearly completely flattened, getting ready to land on the water's surface. Its flapping cycle is nearly done.

* * * *

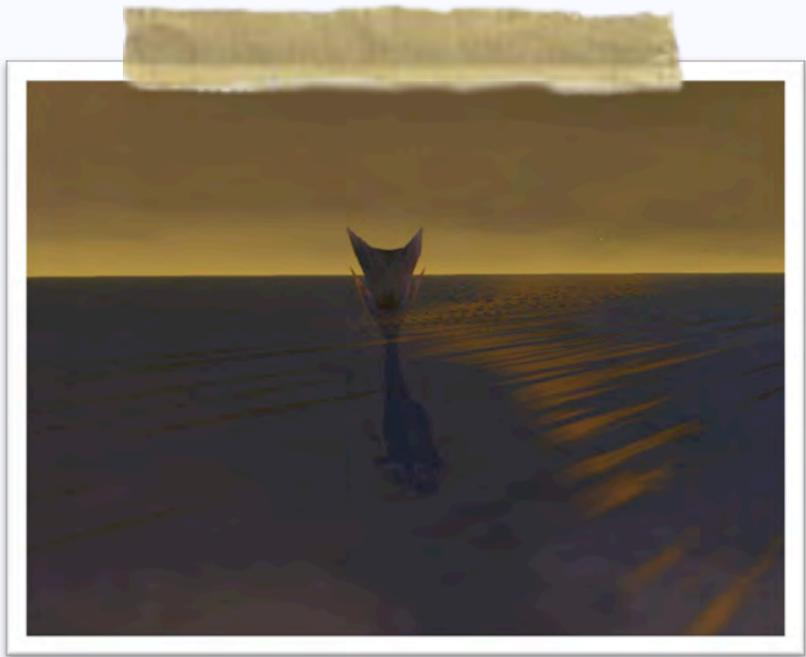
After pumping spores into the open ocean for hours (my arm is tired!), I've finally figured

out that in order to photograph Shroomie, I need to swim rather than use a boat. She is so shy of noise that an outboard motor or even oars are out of the question.

It's taken a great deal of practice, but I've finally learned how to approach her rapidly yet stealthily (she doesn't stay on the surface long to feed on the spores) and then slowing down as I get close. If I don't do this just right, she will spook and dive away. I've taken several hundred photos and managed to get a decent number of good pictures (and tons of bad ones or near misses).



Here she is at a distance as I'm approaching.



I make the mistake of continuing to approach
too quickly and she spooks, diving into the deep.



After much practice, I finally approach her
successfully and get this head-on shot.



I then swim to the side and get this lovely pose.

After watching her for the better part of a Terran day, I got to thinking about how she makes such constant use of her forelegs. She waves them about, sometimes sticking them above the water, sometimes, using them actively below water. They don't look like they have much

use as paddles, they are so slender. Perhaps they can be used to manipulate objects? Or are sensory organs? This latter would fit with her tendency to use them just before she surfaces, checking the environment above water.



Shroomie sticks her forelegs above water while she is submerged.



Now she's doing the same while her head is above
water.



A few moments later, she starts to lower her forelegs.



Now her forelegs are completely submerged while
her head is barely above water.



A few moments later, she begins to raise her head. I was afraid she might be getting ready to voice one of her booming calls, but thankfully she didn't. Although I was using my zoom, I was still quite close and not sure if my ears could tolerate the noise.

Ok, it's been a long day and I need to Relto home and get to bed. I have a lot of ages yet to cover and will need to be rested.

Friday 30 Dec 2011

I'm starting my second day of this photo safari in Negilahn. I've always wanted to explore this age from outside the pod, so am bringing along some climbing gear to help scale the pod walls (such as they are) and squeeze out through the ceiling crack.

My most important goal for this trip is to track down the Two-tailed Monkey, the Panuhdoy. Although I've visited this age numerous times, I've never managed to see him, though I always hear him (his hoots are very loud indeed).

* * * *

Ok, I've managed to crawl out the crack and rappel down the side of the pod. The native

Fireflies, the Kiri, are very easy to spot; there's a swarm of them flying about the swamp nearby. So I will start with them.

Now this is very interesting! Since the Kiri aren't particularly shy, I found it easy enough to walk into the middle of the swarm. Up close, I can see that they are a fan-shape rather than round. I never would have discovered this from inside the pod.



A swarm of Kiri from a distance.



Up close, I can see their unique shape clearly.

The variety of Fireflies in all the ages really is quite interesting. I need to do a comparison of them all (add to list).

The next step in searching out the Panuhdoy should be to climb one of the Stilt Trees, I think.

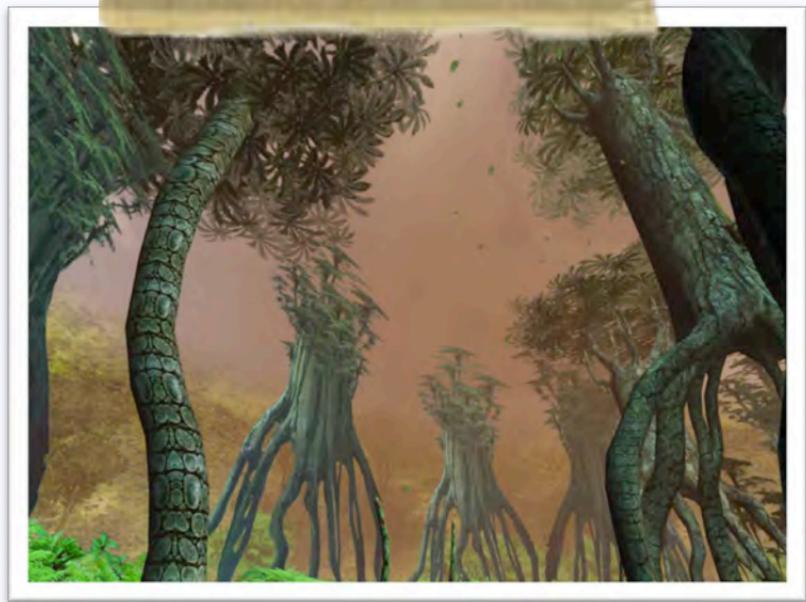
It will give me a good vantage point and I can use my binoculars to scan for him while remaining unseen.

* * * *

I've been sitting atop a Stilt Tree for a couple hours by now but have yet to spot a Panuhdy. But the climb up here was quite a learning experience. Grappling with the problem of scaling this huge tree got me to noticing how they actually appear to be clusters of fused individual trees. I noticed in particular how there are a few slender individual Stilt Trees here and there. Although I was worried that the clusters might therefore be hollow inside and on top, I find that the apex is firm and fairly flat; it makes for a very nice lookout post.



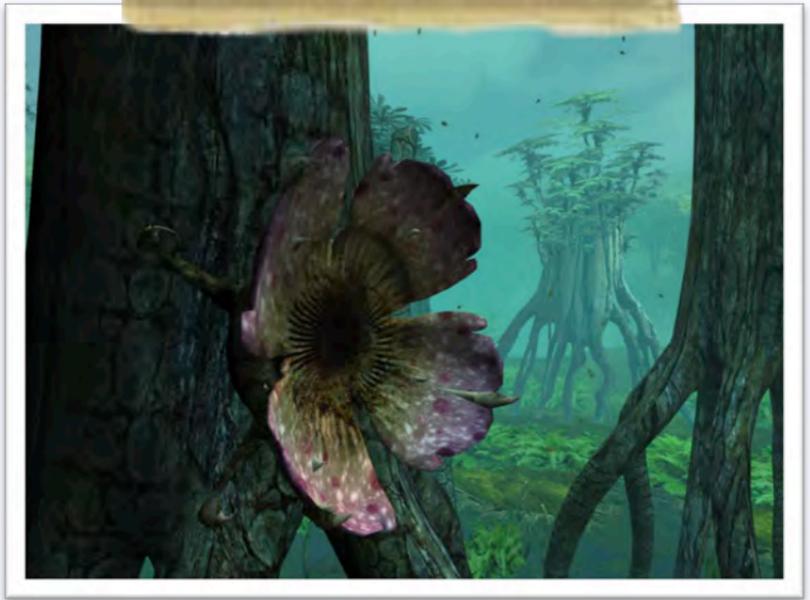
Fused clusters of Stilt Trees from the ground.



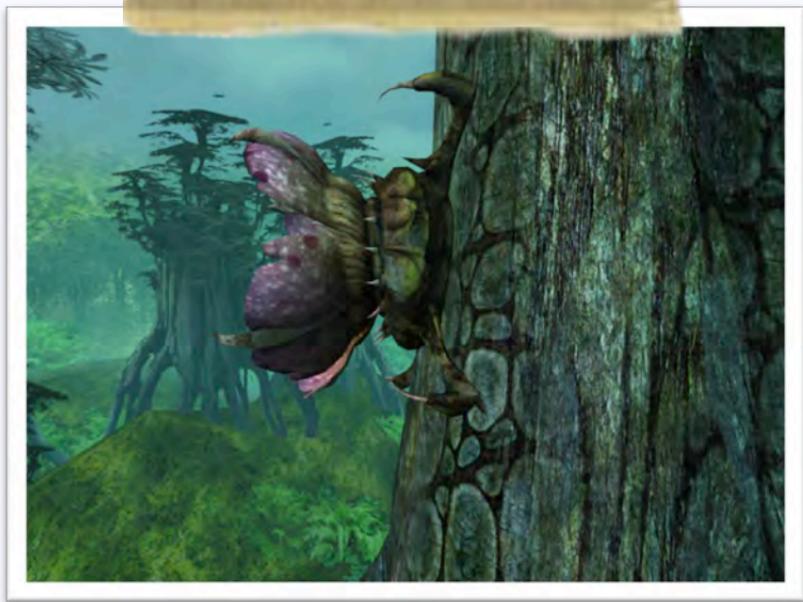
To the left, an individual Stilt Tree.



The top of the Stilt Tree provides a great deal of room to move about and a nice view; the branches provide a degree of camouflage so I can better search out the wildlife with my binoculars.



I could see a Piranha Flower on the next tree as I climbed. The blossoms are huge and have an overpowering sickly sweet odor.



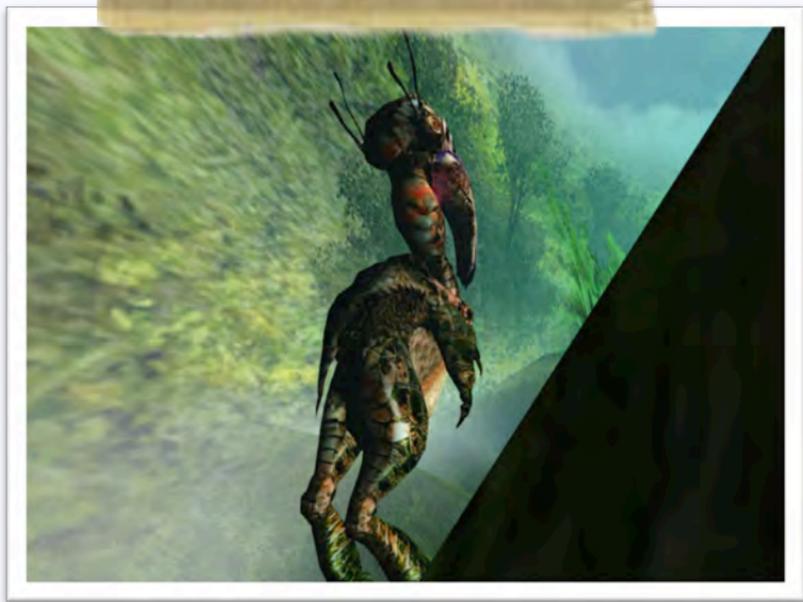
They cling to the tree with huge claws; I couldn't help but imagine this one slowly crawling up the side and so gave it a wide berth. Very creepy! Are they parasitic?

Even though I still can't see a Panuhdoy, I have spotted an Urwin off in the distance. I guess I should go ahead and head back down to

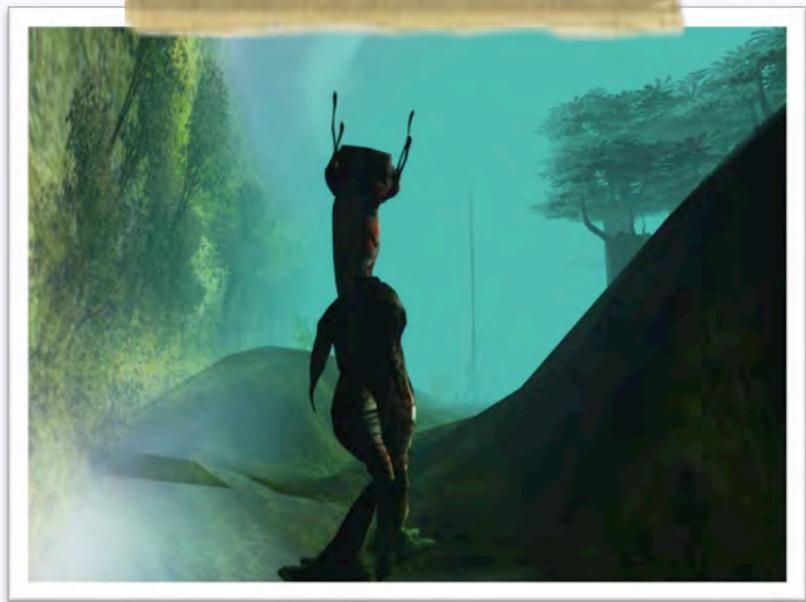
photograph him for my records. At least I found something besides the Kiri...



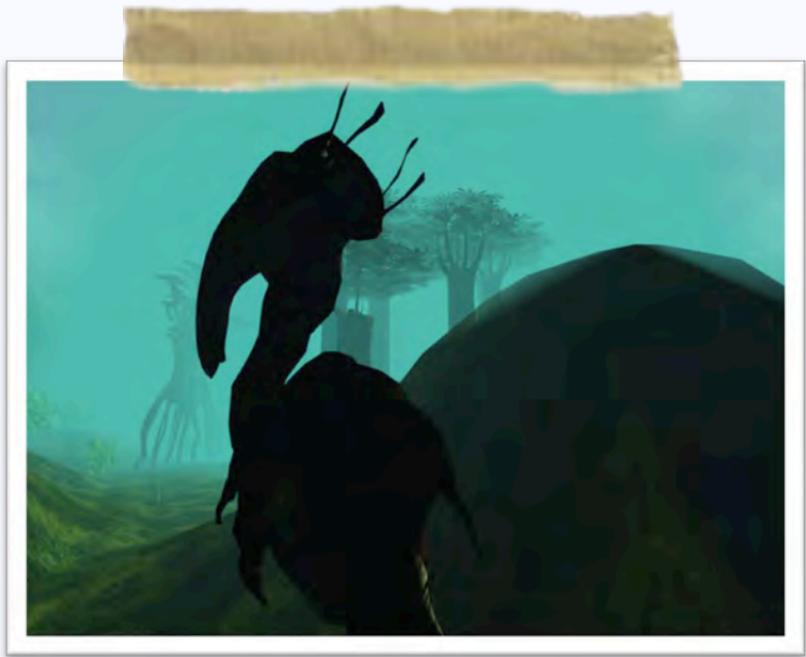
He is standing discreetly behind a hill in the distance.



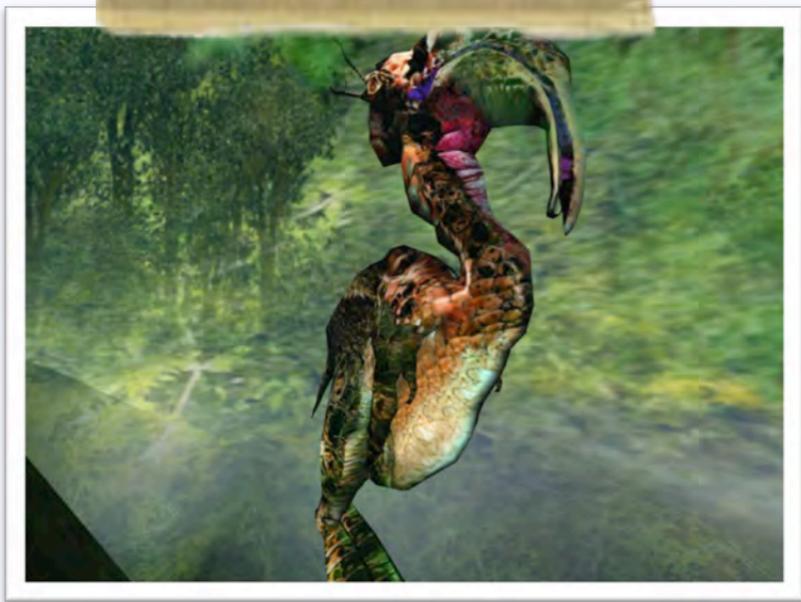
Since he is huge and of an unknown temperament, I decided to approach him quietly from behind.



Either he didn't hear me or wasn't bothered by my presence so I crept behind him for this shot.



I used my zoom from a discreet distance to take
this one.



Emboldened by my success so far, I crept back around the hill to the front and took this photo. He eyed me carefully but remained calm.

I beat a hasty retreat from the Urvin, realizing on my walk back toward the pod that I'd been somewhat foolish in approaching him as I

did. Having my Relto book with me can make me more willing to take risks, I guess.

I think I will take a leisurely route back to the pod so I can check for the Panuhdoy in the places I couldn't see from the treetops—the bushes, the back sides of trees, the far side of the pod.

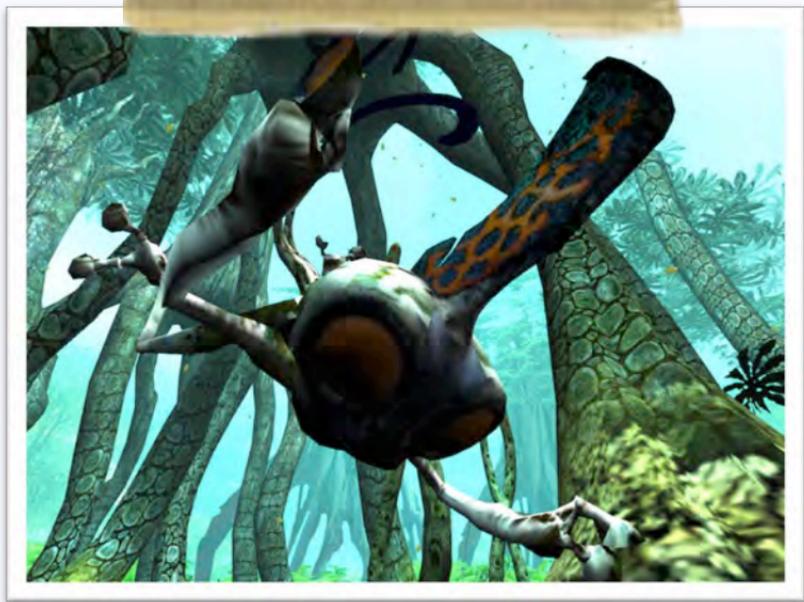
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I'm very frustrated! I've searched everywhere I can think of and still see no sign of the Panuhdoy. The only place I haven't looked is underneath the pod itself... Now that I think about it, this makes some sense and could explain why his hoots can sound so deafening from inside the pod.

I can see that the ferns and grasses have grown up around the pod's perimeter but that there actually is a great deal of space underneath. Now to find a place to crawl under.

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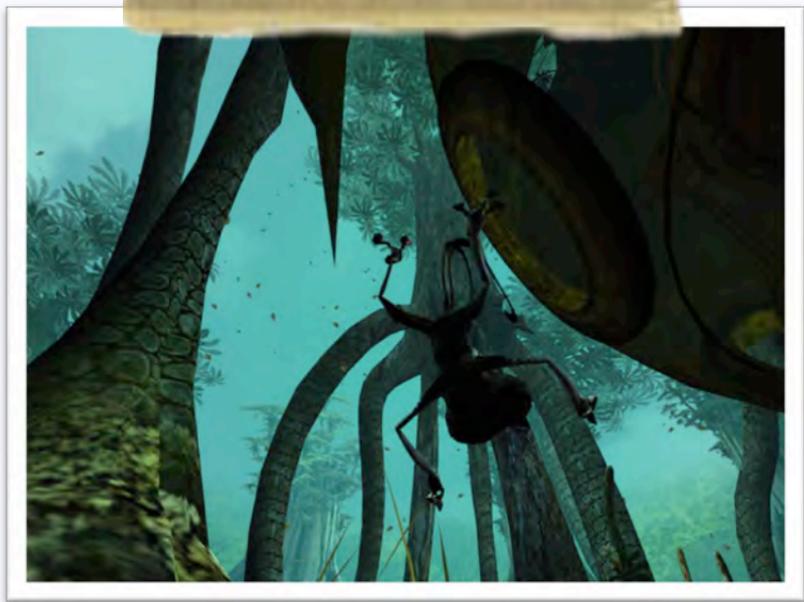
Good lord, I nearly ruined my underwear! But I was right about the Panuhdoy; he must have been watching me quietly as I approached because as soon as I crouched down, he burst out with a shriek. I don't quite know how I did it, but I actually managed to get a few photos of him before he scrambled off.



The Panuhoy leaps up in a sudden burst, right
in my face.



He is continuing to rise as he jumps.



And now his is scurrying off.

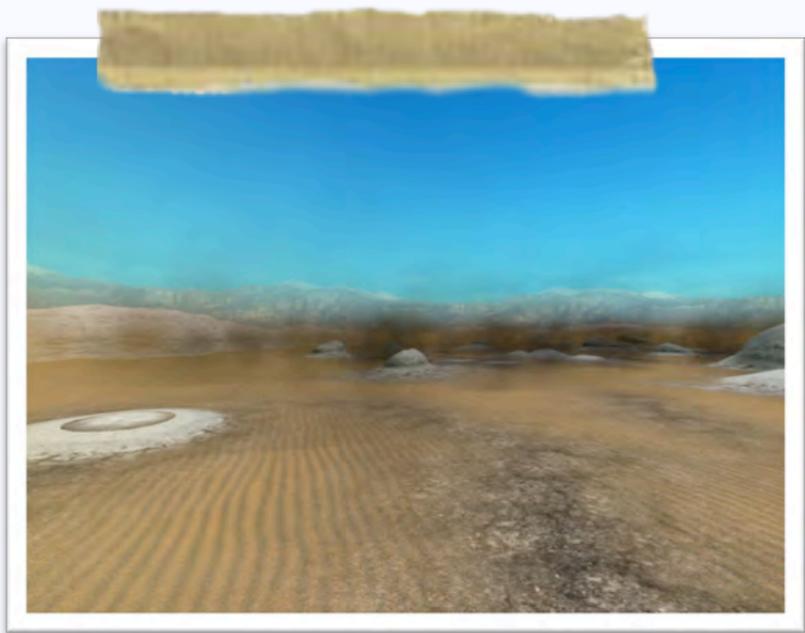
I had to take several deep breaths to regain my composure but then laughed almost hysterically for several minutes. Whew, what a day it has been! And what a victory, at long last!

I think I will continue with the other pod ages, so am heading next for Payiferen to visit the Urwin's cousin, the Sandscrit.

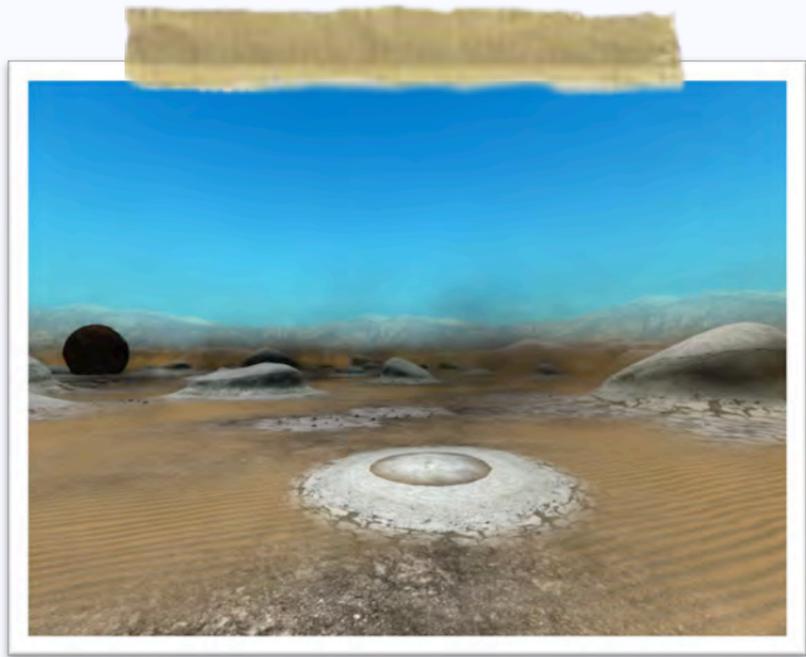
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Looking out the pod windows, it appears to be morning in Payiferen. As usual, the sandstorms appear brutal. But the only way to find the Sandscrit is to head outdoors, so I'd better get started.

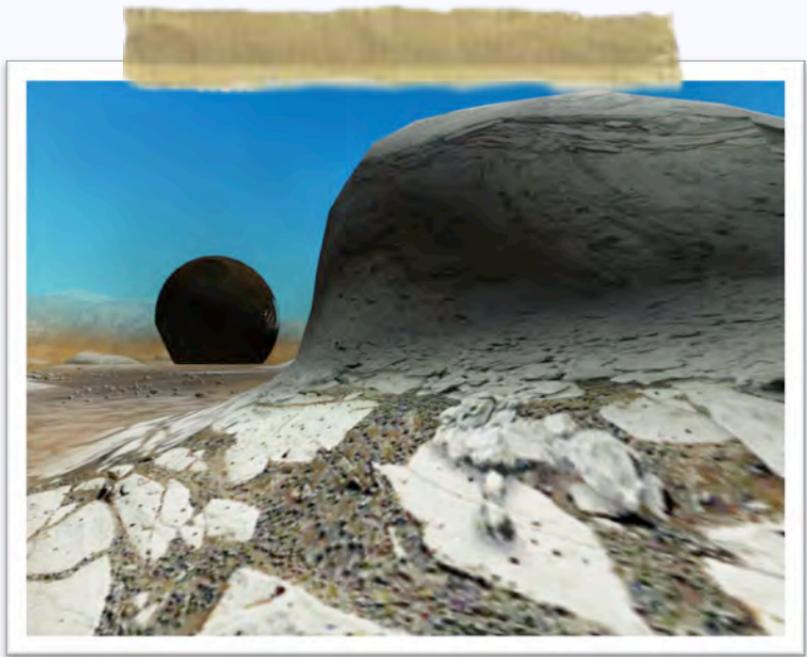
Outside, I scale various hilltops, scanning the nearby landscape. Luckily, the blowing sand doesn't much obscure the views.



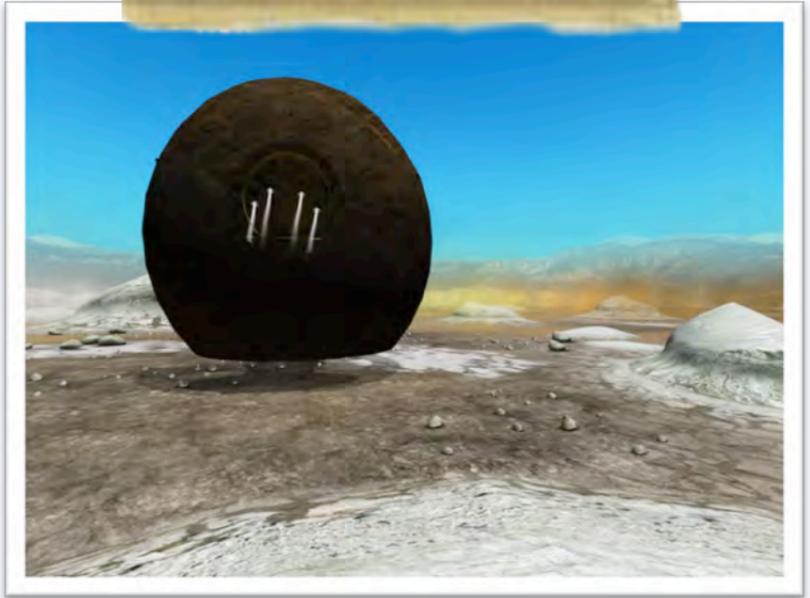
The view from atop one of the hills.



Turning, I can see the pod in the distance.



Wandering about, I encounter the pod from
around the side of a hill.



I can see from the front of the pod that the sunbeams are about to make contact and initialize Yeesha's Bahro link. But I have a Sandscrit to track.

So far as I can tell, the Sandscrit is nowhere within the pod's immediate area. This leaves the

landscape behind the surrounding sand dunes to search.

* * * *

Sure enough, here he is. And I nearly missed him too as he's buried himself up to his eyeballs in the sand! How very odd. I'm sure there's a purpose to this—perhaps it offers warmth or shelter from the wind? Although I'm sure his hide must be thick and resilient, it's entirely possible that he still might need additional protection.



I nearly stumble over him, approaching him
from behind.



He remains calm as I approach him gingerly.



I'm so near I can almost touch him. This finally gets his attention, though and he begins to climb out of the sand to the surface.



After he shakes himself off, he stands calmly,
watching me.



I begin to circle behind him, intending to beat a
hasty retreat.



My final photo of him before heading back to the pod. He remained calm throughout my short visit.

The Sandscrit was surprisingly docile, though quite possibly didn't perceive me as any sort of threat. After all, I am dwarfed by his size and it's likely he has no natural enemies. Since I

found no others nearby, I suppose they are solitary animals, quite possibly territorial.

Ok, I need to get out of here; the wind is driving me crazy and I expect it will take days to get rid of all this sand in my hair and clothes. Dereno is next on the list. I need to gear up first though—snow boots, a parka and a wetsuit.

* * * *

Dereno. Good grief, it's cold here. And I hate being cold.

Now that I'm here, I think I'll start by exploring the surface. But I'll have to use the third-floor pod windows to get there since at least half the pod is submerged in the frigid arctic waters.

* * * *

Ok, now that I'm outside, it's even colder. But at least there's no wind. And it's eerily quiet out here; only an occasional pop or groan from the ice. The silence is deafening...

I can see some Iceberg Trees in the near distance but otherwise, nothing else but the ice formations and the pod...

Oops, I'm mistaken. I've walked behind the pod and can see some Arctic Coral has grown up through the surface of the ice. In looking at it more closely, it appears to be perfectly healthy too. But what odd behavior for a Coral—is there something on the surface or in the air that it uses? Or is this merely a fluke, perhaps from a

brief period when the ice at this particular location was melted or loose?

Ok, time to head back in and warm up a bit.



A nice view of an Iceberg Tree and the pod.



Behind the pod, some Arctic Coral growing up through the ice.

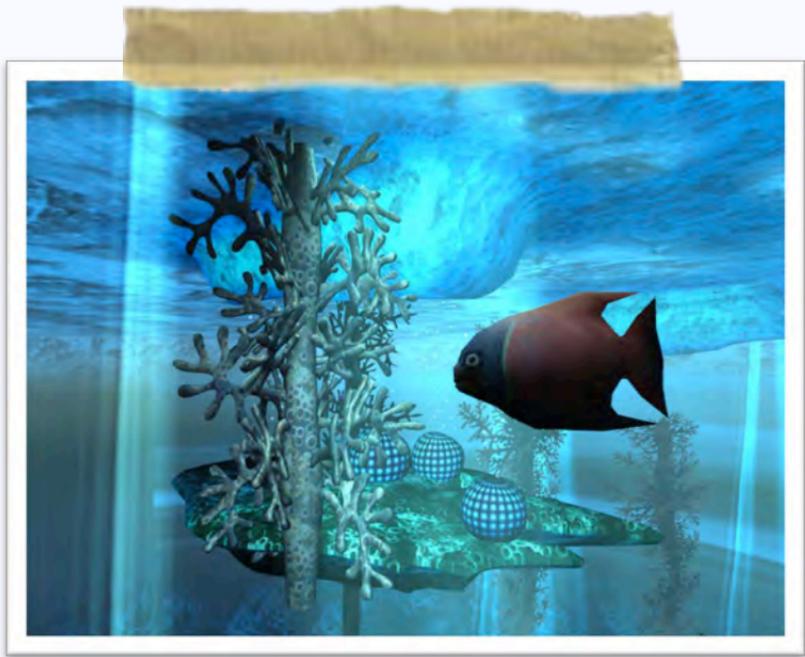
* * * *

Ok, I'm back from my scuba trip. It actually feels warm here in the pod by comparison! But

my fingers are still stiff and chilled, so I'll try to write things up quickly.

On the surface, I found a narrow break in the ice at the edge of the pod where I was able to slip underwater and swim with the animals below. There were a surprising variety of them. This is so amazingly different from Terran sea life, where the extreme cold is inhospitable to so many sea creatures.

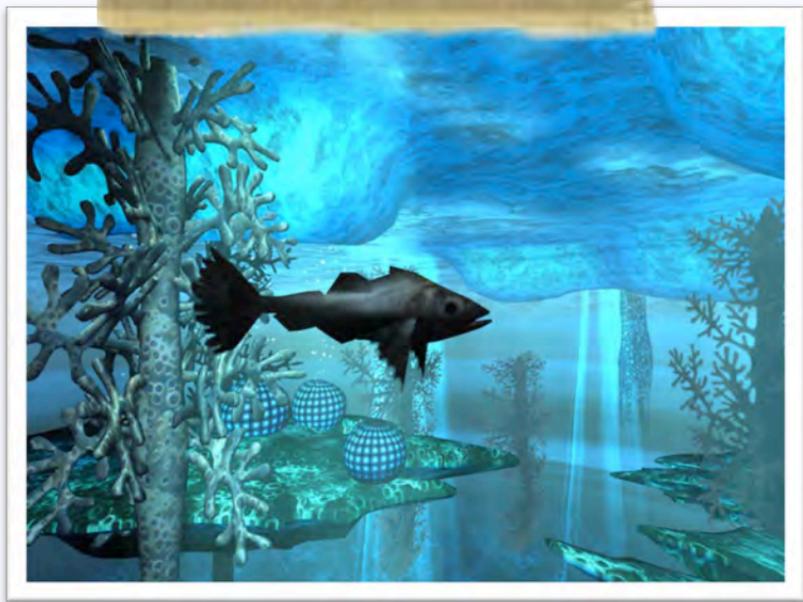
I first set out to find the Arctic Coral I'd seen on the surface. It appeared to be thriving just as heartily here as on the ice surface. As I was photographing it, several fish swam by.



The Arctic Coral I saw from the surface; a Ruddy Angelfish swam into view just as I took the photo.

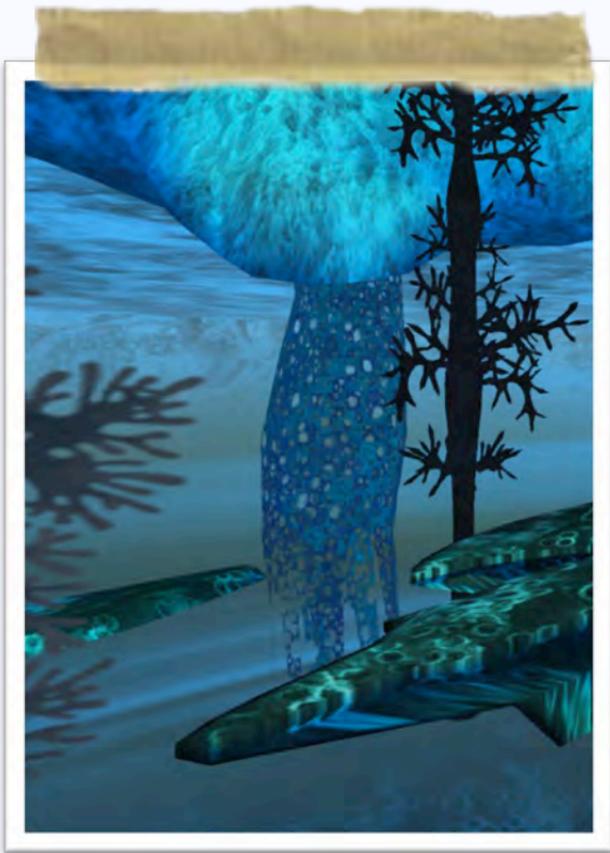


A Striped Rockfish; note the numerous Globe Sponges in the near distance, perching atop an unidentified flat green Coral.



A Fan-tailed Icefish; note the mottled column
in the distance.

I was intrigued by the distant column so
swam nearer to get a better view.

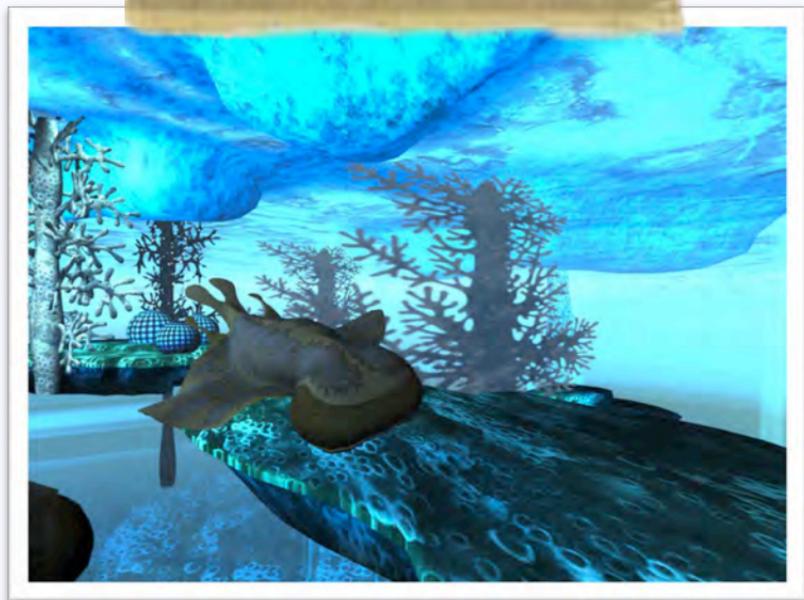


A closer view of the column.

The trunk pattern of the column bore a striking resemblance to the Arctic Coral, though was far wider and lacked the stag horn fronds. My

best guess is that it's the decayed remains of a very mature Arctic Coral and that most of the skeleton has deteriorated, leaving only the barren outer trunk.

On my way back to the pod, I searched out the Kamkenta.



Here is one as he cruised by; note the single eye
across his entire head.



He wasn't bothered by me at all; another one brushed by me as I took this photo.

Overall, the underwater world here appears tropical by Terran standards. Quite amazing really.

Note to self: If I ever come back here, bring a large thermos of hot coffee. Or a flask of brandy. Or both.

I need someplace warm! Although it can get unbearably hot near the lave pit, being hot is sounding very appealing right now. So Eder Gira, here I come.

* * * *

I'm sitting here by one of the steam vents in Eder Gira and it feels absolutely wonderful! I'm no longer shivering and my hands are no longer stiff with cold. I hate, hate, ~~HATE~~ being cold!!

It's a bright day here and the sunshine feels lovely. Now that I'm warm again, I think I'll start my safari by climbing the large steam

tower for a closer view of the Forest Hawk. The steam tower appears to be the tallest thing here and so is my best chance for viewing the Hawk; he flies very high and I've yet to see him land.

* * * *

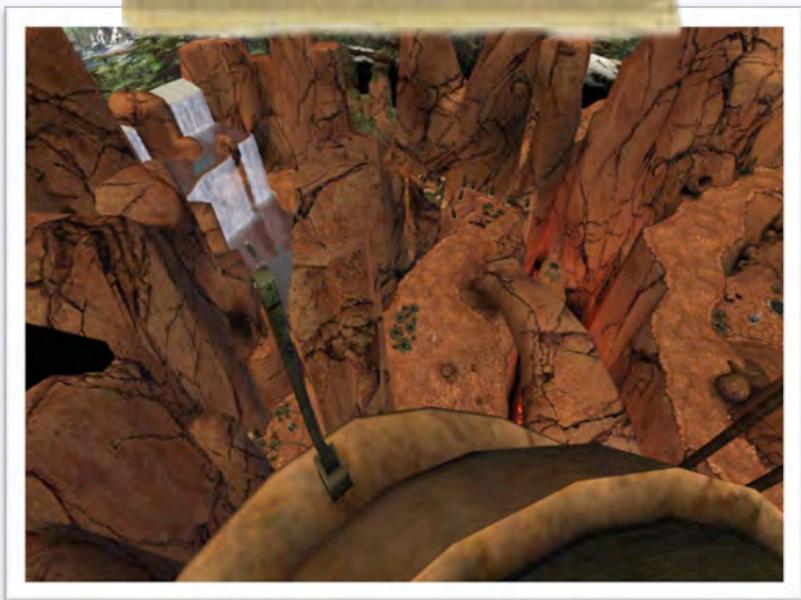
I've gotten several nice photos of the Hawk. The only other known denizen, the Gira Ray, is far below in the pools by the waterfall. I'll have to climb back down later to view them.



The Forest Hawk is banking to his left and so I
can see him from the top.



He's now leveled out and circling back.

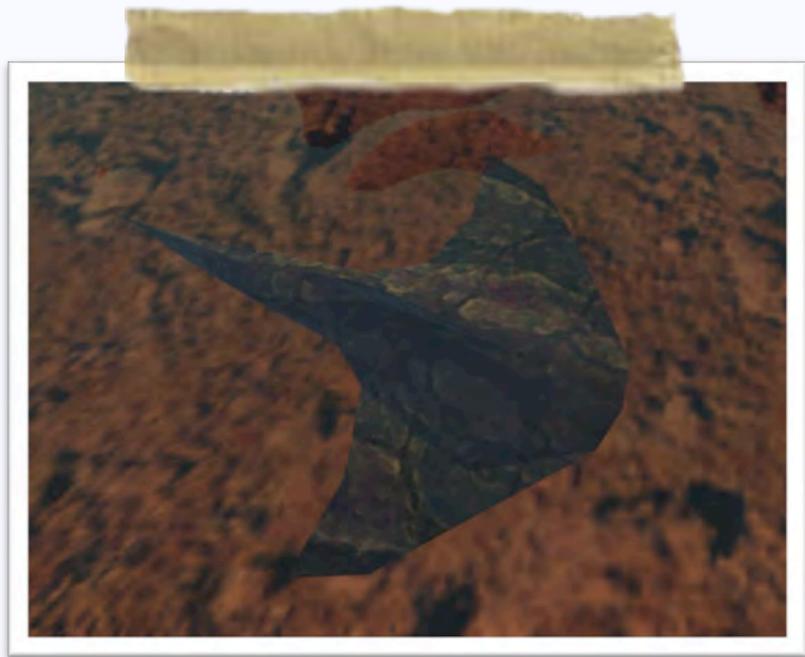


The view from atop the steam tower is amazing!

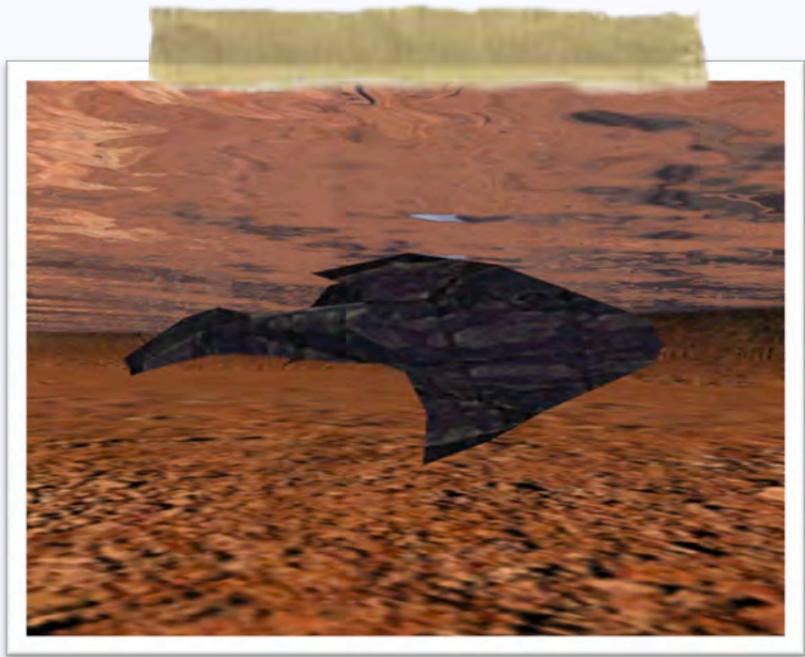
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Although I don't tend toward vertigo, I was glad to climb back down. I freely admit that I clung tenaciously to the tower's antenna while I was up there.

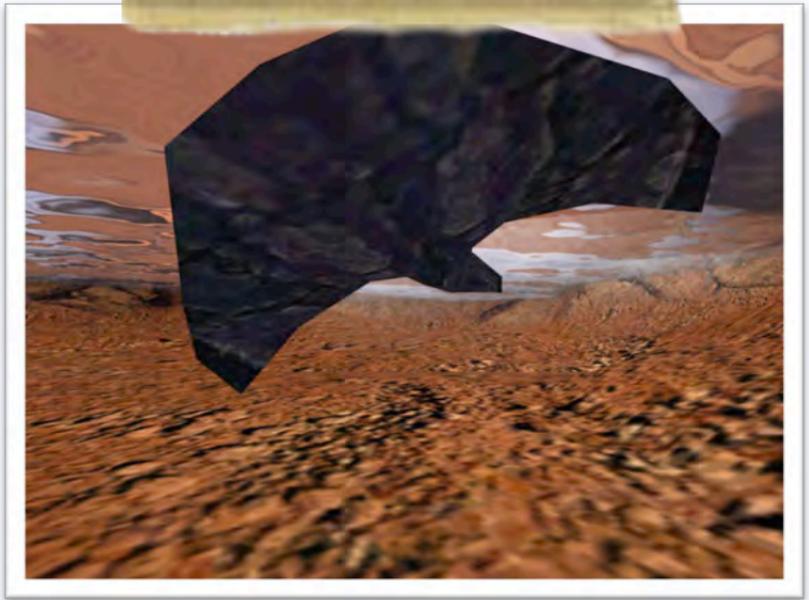
I'd like to get some pictures of the Gira Ray next. To truly capture them, I will need to stay into the night but in the meanwhile, some daytime pictures of them would be nice. I'll need to climb into the shallow pond at the foot of the waterfalls to get close enough though. The tower climb and descent has helped me work up enough of a sweat that I don't think I'll get cold; and the water here is actually only barely cool.



A Gira Ray photographed from above water.



Another one from below water.



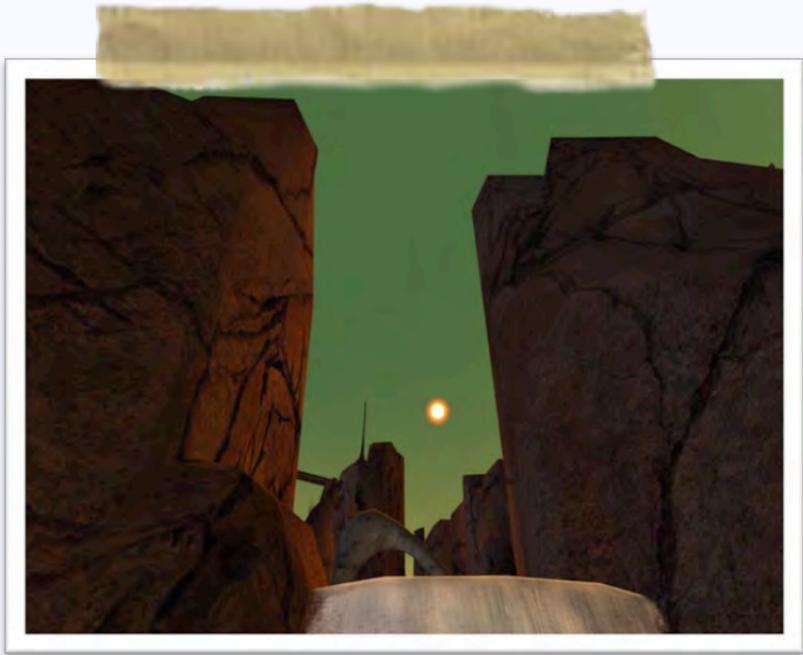
Here's one from underneath; they are colorfully mottled in a somewhat dull palette.

I'm not sure exactly where I am in the Eder Gira day cycle. Although it lasts only 10 hours, I may have a long wait yet for my nighttime photography. I think I'll take advantage of this and scale some of the cliffs to get a better view.

I've heard that the Qira sunsets are stunning
and so I'd like to photograph that while I'm here.



The sun is descending toward the horizon; the
Eder Qira day is beginning to end.



The sky has shifted from its brilliant turquoise
blue to a turquoise green.



The sky continues to deepen and the first stars
are starting to peep through.



I climbed a different cliff to better see the horizon and brilliant colors.



The twin moons have arisen and the horizon is now a deep purple.



Night has now settled in at Eder Gira.



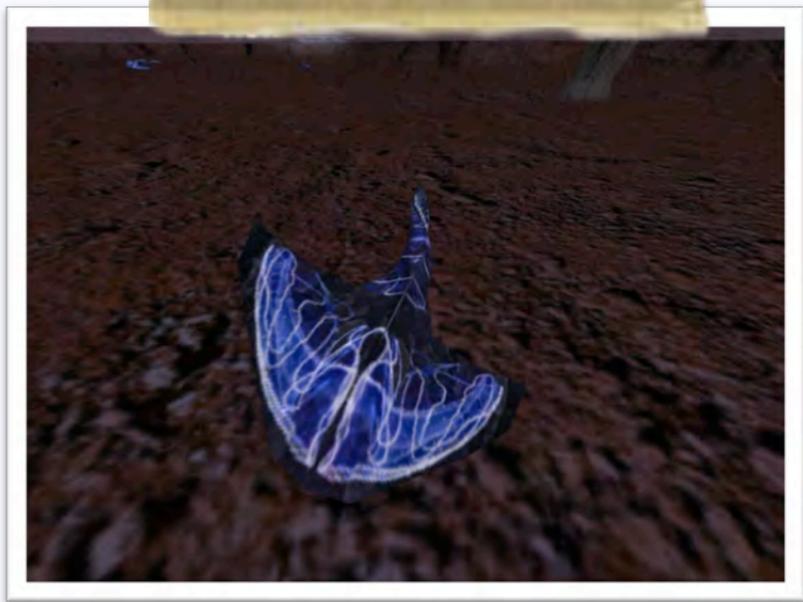
The Gira Rays in the pool far below are glowing;
it's time to go down and see them up close.

Stunning doesn't begin to describe the Eder Gira sunset. I'll have to let the photos try to speak for me, although in the end, they are but thin images. The sunset is an immersive

experience and a two-dimensional slip of paper is only a crude beginning to a description...

* * * *

I'm now back down at the pool and have climbed into the water again. The water still is only cool and apparently doesn't change temperature at night, quite probably because of all the volcanic activity and steam vents here.



A Gira Ray from above; their fluorescent glow
is quite amazing.



The same fellow from the side.



And a small parade of them.

The Gira Rays are just as beautiful as the sunset. Years back when I first visited Eder Gira, I wondered whether I'd ever get to like such a hot and barren age. Tonight has shown me that it's one of the most beautiful of all the D'ni ages. I absolutely love it here!

However, I need to press on. I think its sister age, Eder Kemo, is the sensible next stop.

* * * *

Ah yes, it's lovely being back here. Eder Kemo was the very first garden age I ever visited back in the beginning. I fell in love with it immediately and still love it today, though it might now get displaced by Eder Gira. That awe-inspiring sunset is tough competition.

I think I'll sit here in the gazebo for a while and rest. As I sit here writing, I realize I'm unexpectedly tired... and the sounds of the intermittent rain and creaking Moss Trees are quite soothing...

* * * *

I guess I must have fallen asleep. I'm not sure how much later it is, but I slept peacefully and now feel much refreshed. I need to eat some jerky though.

That's one of the problems with all this rapid age exploration—it becomes impossible to keep track of the time since each age has a different day cycle. I guess my body clock has been getting confused and overwhelmed.

Ok, now to get started. I think I'll begin with the Keanulints.

* * * *

I'd never noticed it before, but they each seem to have a unique mottled blue pattern on their dark backs. This would be an easy way to identify

individuals and opens up the possibility of longer-term studies of their behavior, social relationships, life cycles, you name it.



They look nightmarish with their six eyes and long hooked tails but they actually are very quiet and quite harmless.

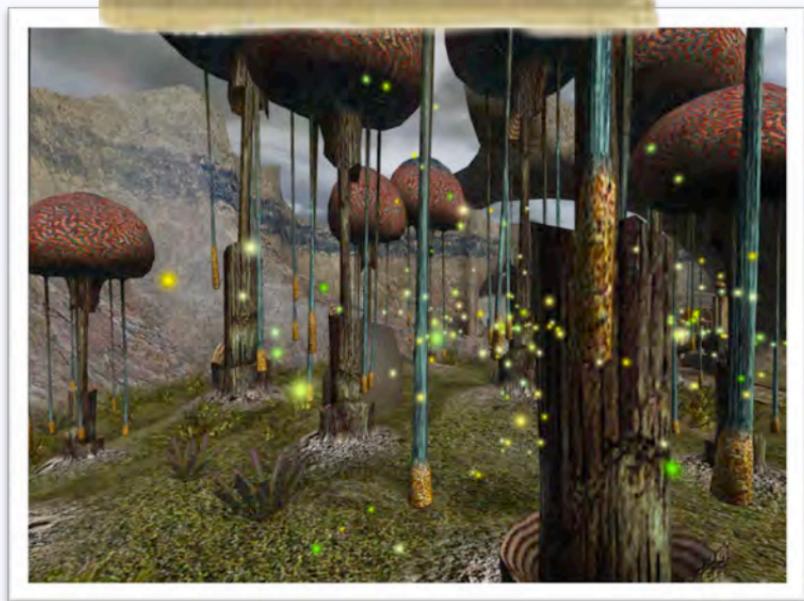


After staring at me for a long moment, this fellow resumed his meal.

Next are the Kemo Fireflies, the Chirtee'tahm.

* * * *

A cloud of Fireflies is buzzing about amongst the Trooms, as usual, feeding on the pollen. We already know that they aren't shy of humans, so it should be an easy matter to take some close-up photos.



A cloud of Chirtee'tahm feeding at the Trooms.

The Fireflies come in a surprising variety of colors, ranging from pale yellows and greens to bright yellows and greens.

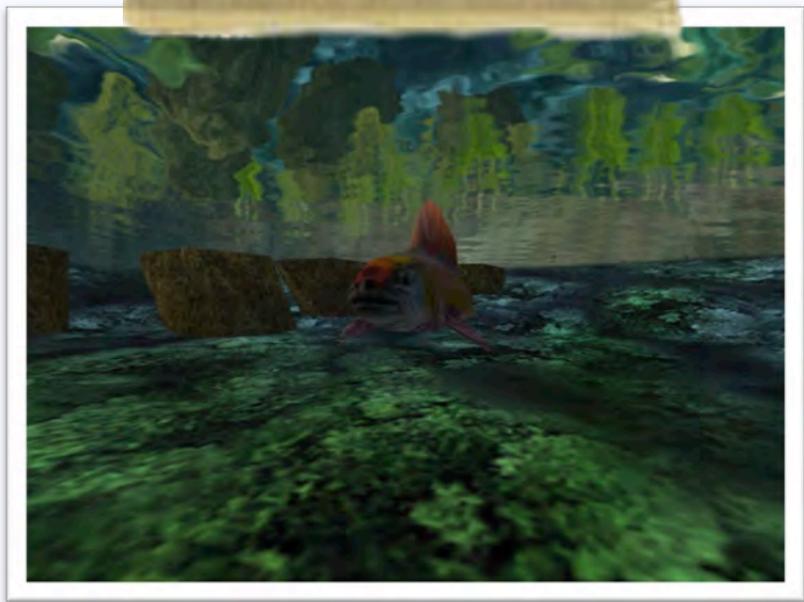
My last stop will be the pond and the Kemo fish.

* * * *

The three Kemo are here as always. Their colors remain the impossibly vibrant rainbow and they still don't mind that I climb into the water with them. Their beauty stuns me all over again.



The Kemo swim about lazily as I join them.



This fellow decides to give me a closer look.



But apparently I am not terribly interesting.

It does concern me that these fish are endangered—these three are the only known members of this species. They appear healthy enough, but their numbers still haven't increased. It would be such a shame if they should die out.

Ok, I think I'll finish with the other garden
ages and then call it a day.

* * * *

I'm here in Eder Tsogal and can hear birds
but there are none within easy view on the
ground or in the sky. I can see a colorful forest
above along the cliff edge but the cliffs
themselves seem to be unscalable. So I will move
on.

* * * *

Eder Delin is just as lovely as ever but the
mist is thick starting at about 50 feet up. I can
hear the birds somewhere above the mist but have
been unable to climb the sheer cliffs successfully.
The trees are equally difficult to climb, oddly

enough. I can hear an occasional goose-like call; it sounds relatively close by which makes this particularly frustrating.

Oh well, time to head back to Relto and home. I need to rest up for tomorrow, which is bound to be jam-packed. I have a great many ages left to document.

Saturday 31 Dec 2011

I think I'll start today by returning to Direbo and attempting to find the elusive Direbo Nightjar. It would be nice to get something off my to-do list!

The DZS wiki describes them as flocking birds which fly rapidly between the pillars throughout the swamp, so maybe my binoculars will be helpful. The swamp itself is treacherous to wade, so I'll need to stay ashore on the islands.

* * * *

Now that I'm here, I think I've spotted a flock of Nightjars! But wait, through my binoculars they don't look like birds but like a small swarm

of the Dragonflies! Very strange. In group, the Dragonflies seem to prefer the water after all.

This is quite a puzzle. In every other respect, these Dragonflies match the DZS description of the Nightjar. Could the DZS have been mistaken about them? They describe them as very difficult to spot, so perhaps they never got a clear photograph of them... So it's doubly important that I get at least one good shot of the Dragonflies while I'm here.



They are very fast! It is difficult to catch the
Dragonflies in a photo.



They show up better here against the stone column.



Close up, their wings are discernible and their shape is clear.

The flock seems to prefer the swamp area between the islands, which worked nicely to my advantage in photographing them. I finally got a good image using my zoom. There's now no doubt that these flocking animals are Dragonflies.

Everything else remains the same as before. I'm remembering Larryf58's earlier post about the Butterflies, mentioning that they can be found at The Cleft caldera too. I wonder if this means they can link like the Eder Kemo Fireflies (and presumably the Crimson Kadish)? This is definitely worth investigating! And I haven't yet documented The Cleft anyway, so my next stop is obvious.

The Tahgira bubble linking book should do the trick. If memory serves, that particular book links to the top-most Eder Tomahn along the Great Shaft. From there it should be a short walk to the small cave at the bottom of the caldera, then an easy climb up the rope ladder.

* * * *

I arrived in the Eder Tomahn just a few minutes ago and turned around to see a very surprised Bahro! Apparently I'd intruded upon him here; he linked away as soon as I began moving about, though, so apparently he was of the shy sort. And when I walked toward the doorway, I startled several bats. So while I'm here, I guess I should document the animal life in the Great Shaft as well.



The Bahro watched me from a discreet corner
after I linked in.



Bats fluttering through the Eder Tomahn
doorway.



Yet another Bahro just outside the doorway at the
end of the hall.



One of the countless bats flying throughout the upper hallways of the Great Shaft.

Ok, now to make for the cave and up into the caldera.

* * * *

It's broad daylight up here in the caldera and the air is delightfully balmy. It smells wonderful after the dank air of the Great Shaft, though I notice the small pond has a sulfur-like odor when I get close.

As I look around, I can see at least three blue Butterflies and a swarm of insects flying near the small pond. I need to get some good photos of the Butterflies so I can make a clear identification.

When I walk close enough to see them, they do appear to be the same species; yet they look a great deal bluer here. Is it a trick of the light I wonder?



The sun is behind this one and his blue is still quite intense.



The sun is shining full on this one and his blue looks the same; no trick of the bright light here, then.

I can only conclude that the dimness of Direbo makes quite a difference in how these Butterflies look.

The Flies here are not the usual pests, thankfully, but all the same are challenging to capture with my camera. They are extremely active but seem to prefer the pond area.



They appear to be typical Terran Flies.

Next, I'd like to get some photos of the Zone-tailed Hawks, which I can see soaring high above. However, they are such tiny black specks from

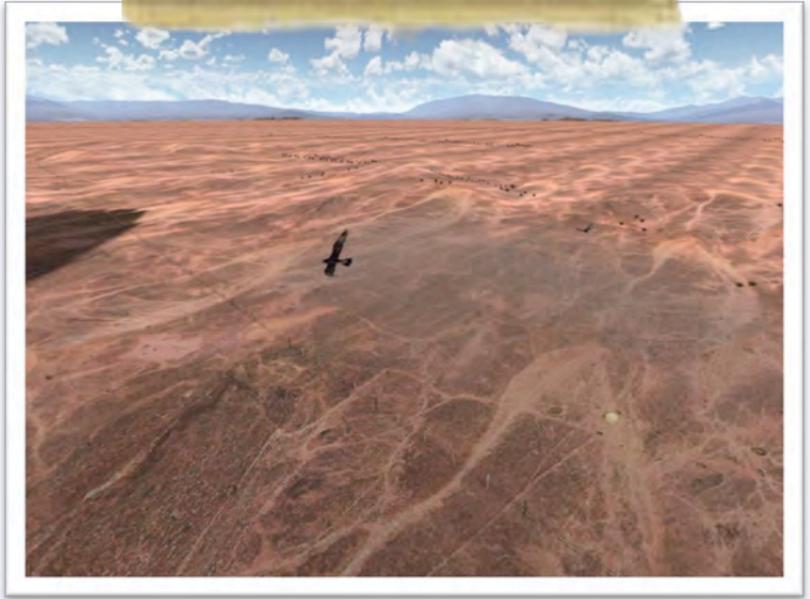
here that my zoom will not do me that much good. I really don't have time to try Larryf58's trick of a remote-controlled miniature airplane... The best solution seems to be climbing up the sides of the caldera and scaling the highest apex of its walls. At least I got lots of climbing practice in Eder Gira.



The Zone-tailed Hawk is just a small speck high above.

* * * *

Wow, the view from up here is stupendous—at times, I'm even higher up than the Hawks!



One Hawk is circling beneath me; he should get close enough on his circuit that I can get a better shot.



Sure enough, he flew fairly near the caldera
walls; my zoom did the rest.



Here he is again from below; he was riding the thermals upward.

What beautiful birds...

Now to continue documenting the Great Shaft. I should check out New K'veer as I remember seeing bats in there on one of my

trips. It will be interesting to see if they are the same species as those up here near the surface.

* * * *

Sitting here in the Great Shaft elevator, I have time to continue writing up my field notes. It's a very long trip down and the elevator light is a nice stroke of luck.

When I climbed back down the rope ladder, I saw a third Bahro in the small cave. As with the other two, as soon as he saw me moving, he linked away. And when I entered the cave itself, a large swarm of bats rushed toward me and out into the caldera. Apparently, they aren't bothered by Bahro.



The Bahro is busy examining something on the cave floor.



He hears me and stops to stare for a long
moment before linking away.



As I enter the cave, a swarm of bats rushes at me; but my nerves are getting better, enabling me to get this photo of them.

Good grief, I just had a thought... I won't be able to get to New K'veer from the Cavern at all. In Atrus' time, it was completely cut off from the rest of the City (and hence a prison for him); and that situation hasn't changed since. I must

link in. Ok, back to Relto and my City linking book.

* * * *

I'm here at New K'veer in the round room and can see numerous bats flying about. They are quick and unpredictable in their flight, so I'd better get started.



I'm not sure how long I tried, but this was the best I photo could get; between the dimness and their erratic flight, the bats were very difficult to photograph.

I've always wondered about this room where we link in. It has the feel of a nexus of some stripe, yet I've always been curious about the

details. Where do all the blocked doorways lead?
Another unanswered question for my growing
list.

* * * *

Now I'm in the hallway and there is a small
troupe of bats flying back and forth here. And
when I peek through the two windows into the
upper gallery, I can see several Bahro hanging
about up near the ceiling.



Two bats darting about the upper hallway.



Through the window, a Bahro hanging about one
of the flying buttresses.



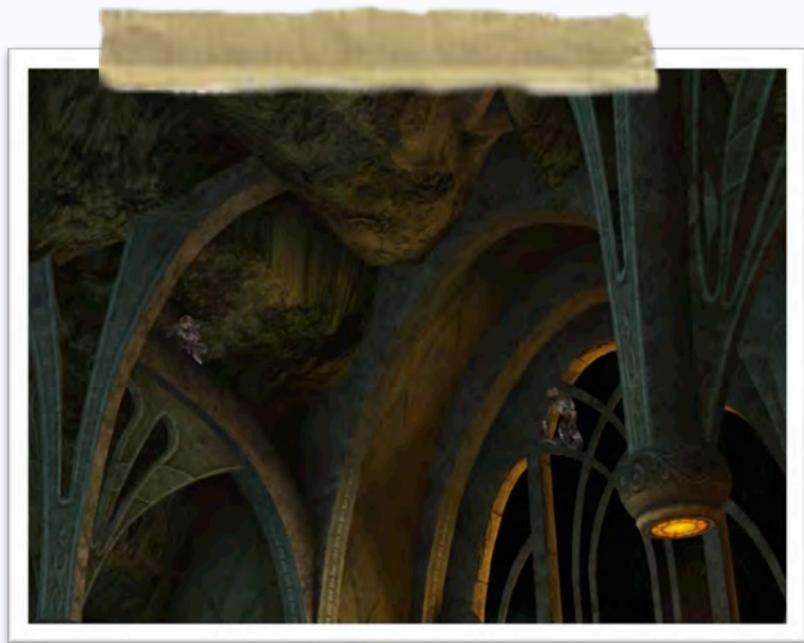
Through the second window, two other Bahro near
the cathedral window.



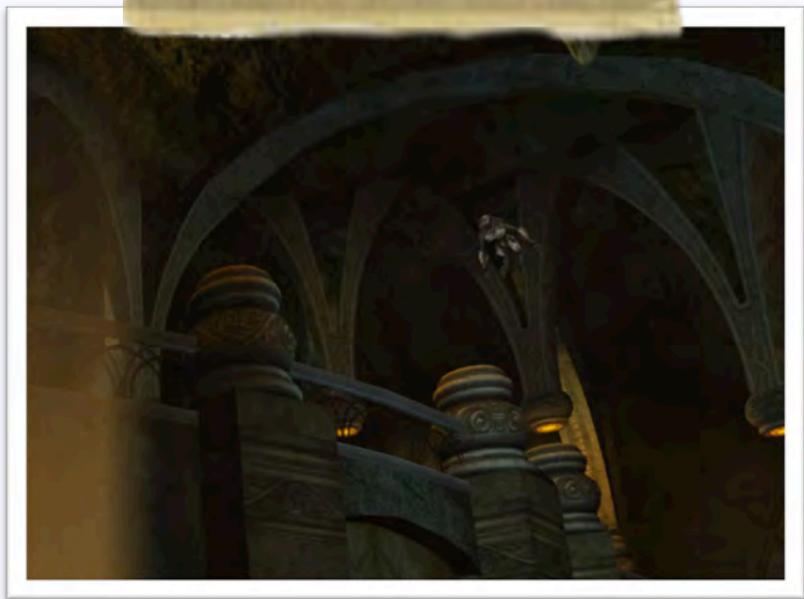
Farther down the hallway, more bats; I was afraid he would hit me but only felt the wind from his wings as he veered off at the last moment.

The next short hallway leads into the room I've always called the cathedral, where the three Bahro now are. I must be slow and cautious if I

want to avoid spooking them. Thus far, the Bahro have all been quite shy of human contact.



The Bahro on the left linked away just after I took this photo (apparently he didn't like the look of me); the one on the right followed his companion shortly after.



This fellow was either bolder than the others, or simply more curious about me. He remained in place throughout my short stay.

In scrolling through the photos of the bats, it does appear that they all are of the same species. One question from my list answered.

I'm not sure there's anywhere else to check for animal life here but I think I can spare another moment or two to enjoy the beauty of the soaring ceiling and colorful stone carvings...

Ok, I need to plan out the rest of my age exploration. I've been focusing on ages with documented animal life, making heavy use of the DZS records such as they are. Just to be thorough, I'll need to make short trips to the ages that I'm pretty sure have no animals. But in the meanwhile, I think I'll go to Ahmonay and document the Quabs. I don't think of it as a true age, but still, there are animals there.

* * * *

Back in Ahmonay. The Quabs still look silly and the "age" still is more a zoo than anything

else. Nevertheless, it remains the only place one can find Quabs, so it really is an important zoological locale. I suppose the Quabs should be considered an endangered species. I wonder what their true natural habitat was like?



Two Quabs going about their business.



He turns his head to better view me hunkered
down on the ground trying to take his portrait.

Ok, time to work through my short list of
remaining ages.

* * * *

Gahreesen. A forested age once used as a prison. There obviously are plenty of birds; there is constant birdsong outside, along with an occasional hoot from some unknown animal. The DZS reports that the native animals are dangerous (which would make it a perfect location for a prison). Even so, as I clamber around the cliffs outside the two rotating buildings, I can see no animals anywhere across the natural moat. There are none on the rocky prison island itself and no birds in flight in the skies above.

* * * *

Er'cana. As I'd expected, there is no wildlife anywhere. I was somewhat hopeful of the pond

beneath the broken harvester tracks, but find only water grasses there. Ah well.

* * * *

Minkata. It's just as I remembered, the wind and sand combining to create an impossible environment. Payiferen is a paradise compared to this place.

* * * *

Tetsonot. A nearly dead pod in the middle of an ocean somewhere. To this date, no one really knows if there's life outside the pod or not. I'm certainly not brave enough to find out either. For all I can tell, the pod has fallen to the depths of the ocean floor where no diving suit ever made could protect me from the suffocating pressure

outside. Nope, not interested in testing that possibility.

* * * *

Tahqira. I've always found this place fascinating with the Snow-bull Trees, but otherside utterly lifeless. It hasn't changed. And it's still much too cold here, even with its thermal source. I've had enough cold for this safari, so I'm outta here.

* * * *

Jalak Dador. A jungle age. With a force shield surrounding the link-in point that I have yet to defeat. It seems to have plenty of birds (you can certainly hear them well enough whenever you are here). But thus far, it has

been impossible to get close enough to see them, let alone study them.

* * * *

Releeshan. I've only been here once before and had found the dizzying height of the link-in point unconquerable. When I'd tried to descend the steep stairs carved into the mountainside, my Relto book kicked in automatically at about 50 feet down from the terrace, making it impossible to reach the valley and settlement far below. Just as I'd remembered, the valley is still unreachable.

* * * *

Out of the few ages left on my list, Ae'gura is the likeliest for animal life since the DZS

reports at least two species of fish can be found in the harbor area. So I'm heading back to the City.

* * * *

I've been hanging about the harbor for the better part of the afternoon and yet still find no fish, hear no splashing, see no suggestive rippling of the water. I need to accept defeat for now as I'm running short on time. But while I'm here, I'd like to follow in larryf58's footsteps and hunt the elusive Cavern Firefly.

Humph, I've covered all the public areas and nary a bug in sight. I should check out the neighborhoods next; larryf58 reported finding some there.

* * * *

larryf58 was right on the mark! I'm here in Bevin and immediately see a Firefly circling about a lamp. I need to check the rest of the 'hood to see if there are others.



This little guy was at the lamp where I linked in.



Another Cavern Firefly near the waterfall.

I found only two in Berin; I need to check
Kirel and Seret as well.

* * * *

As with Berin, I'm finding only two
Fireflies here in Kirel.



As with the others thus far, he flies alone.



This one was close to the Nexus book room.

* * * *

I'm in Seret and see a couple more Cavern Fireflies here. Thus far, they all are of the same species: round and yellow, solitary and attracted to light. There are some similarities to the

Direbo white Firefly, but it would take further study to see if there is any true relation between them.



Similar to the other neighborhoods, this fellow was near the link-in point.



This one was next to the stairway leading down to the canal.

Now that I really think about it, there are a good number of ages with Fireflies of one sort or another. I'd really like to document this better and see how many of them are unique, similar or even related. Happily, I can work on this

while finishing up my age list. Both Todelmer and Kadish Tolesa have been reported to have native Fireflies.

* * * *

It's been a long while since I've been in Todelmer and as before it startles me when leaving the linking bubble. The sky is so enormous and overwhelming, so grand in scale. I feel so lost and tiny... But I'm here for zoological research, so enough of that blather!

Here on the main observatory column, I have found five solitary Fireflies, each a brilliant green, each hovering about one of the lamps.



This fellow was a short distance from the linking bubble, on the spiral pathway heading up to the observatory.



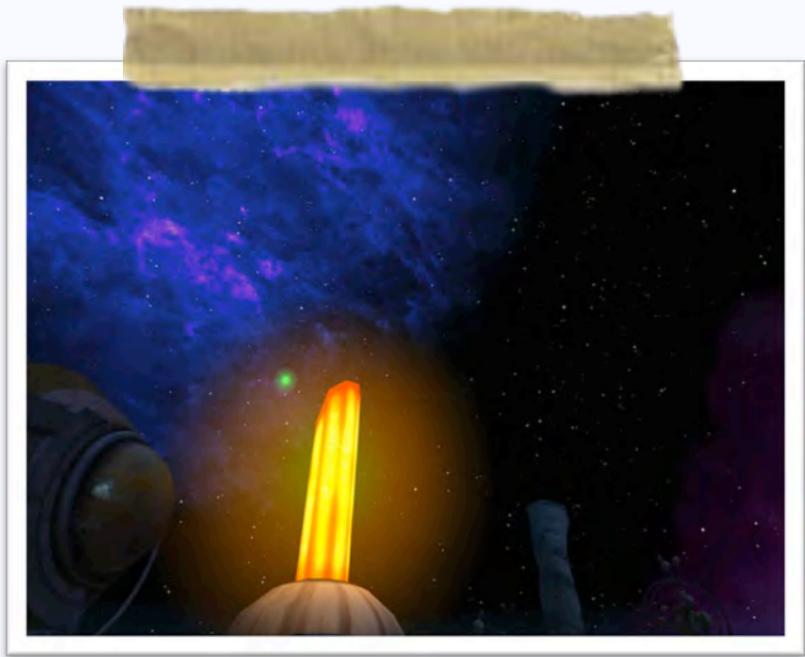
About a quarter of a circuit farther up near
the metal stairs, I found a second.



About halfway around again, there is a third.



This one is just before the final flight of stairs
leading to the observatory on top.



This one was on the top-level perimeter.

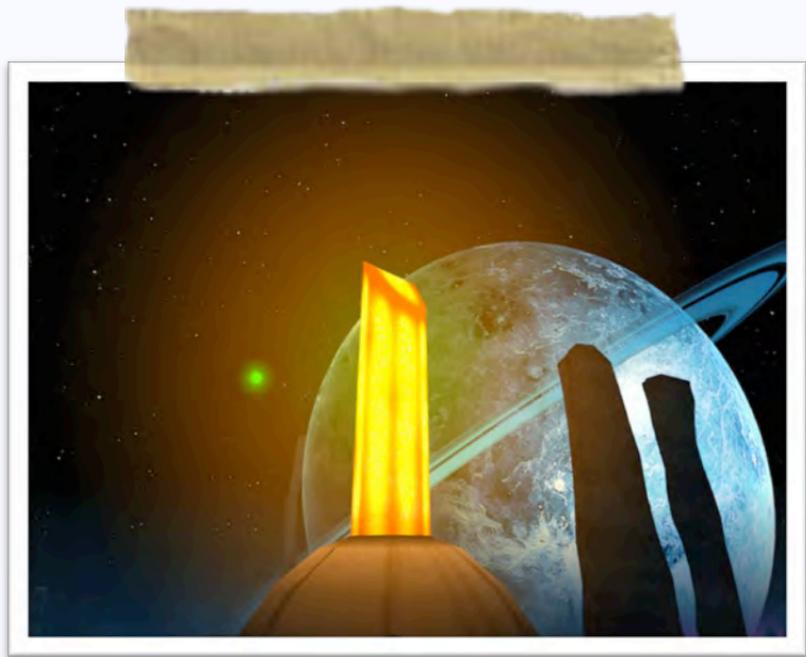
I need to check the smaller observatory on a neighboring stone column. Let's hope the shuttle still works.

* * * *

I'm here on the second observatory and have found three more Fireflies, all apparently the same species. Unfortunately, there is no discernible way down to the forested land far below, so I won't be able to discover if there are additional species (or members of this species) down there. But I wonder if they are more social down below, more plentiful...



This one was at the second observatory on the stairs leading up from the shuttle bay.



A seventh, at the stone column apex along the
perimeter.



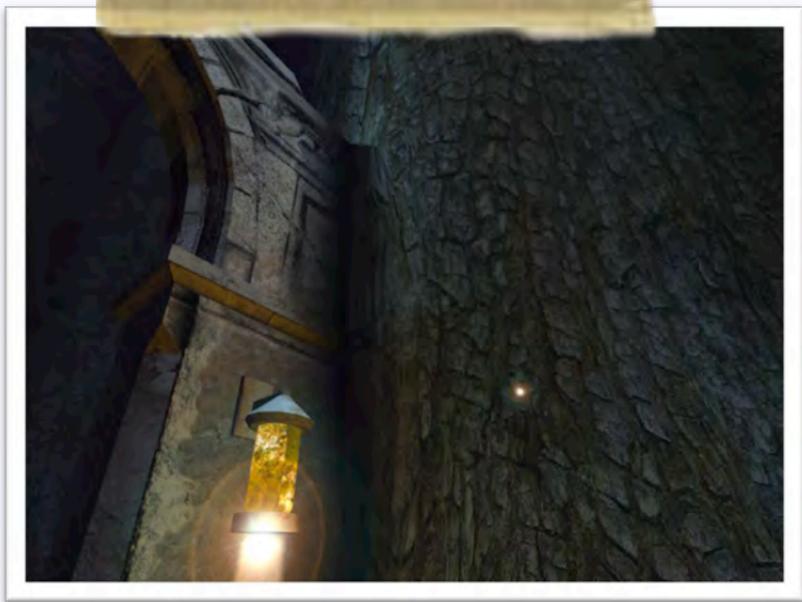
The eighth Firefly, also at the top of the second observatory.

Next stop, Kadish Tolesa. Not sure I'll be able to do much as those trees have always looked beyond my reach.

* * * *

I've linked in and can see that my earlier assumption was more or less correct. There is plentiful birdsong here at Kadish Tolesa but the canopy of these enormous trees is so high above, they are shrouded in mist. The trees themselves are massive and grow so thickly that the only way I can imagine to scale them would be with serious mountain climbing gear. Or perhaps to carve out some stairs. Either way, it's a big piece of work and at this point, I'm not up for it. Truthfully, this is a whirlwind tour and only a more serious expedition would have much hope for exploring the treetops here.

However, if Fireflies have been reported here, then I should be able to find them down below. I've never noticed them before, but all the same, it would be an exciting find.



This little guy was hovering around one of the
lamps along the forest path.



In contrast, this one was buzzing around in the shadows near the rotating tree trunk.



This one was near the exit from the forest; he's
blue while the others were white.



Another blue Firefly not far from the other,
near the steps leading to the pyramid.

This is very interesting. There are at least two types of Firefly here, and maybe even three. One type is blue and another is white. Of the two white, one clearly is attracted to light while the

other is not—pretty unusual if they are of the same species.

As far as the official records go, I've now visited all the ages known to contain Fireflies. There are an amazing variety of them, something I'd never really noticed before in my earlier explorations. I think I'll need to grid out the various characteristics of each one so I can understand them a bit better.

* * * *

Relto'd back to my house so I could use my computer and print out a table of my data.

Whew, I'm getting tired. But I can't cross Kadish Tolesa off the list just yet. I have yet to visit the Crimson Kadish in the vault.

Age	Species Name	Color	Shape	Social Behavior	Human Friendly	Habitat	Notes
Bevin	unknown	yellow	round	solitary	apathetic	land, light	attracted to light
Kirel	unknown	yellow	round	solitary	apathetic	land, light	attracted to light
Seret	unknown	yellow	round	solitary	apathetic	land, light	attracted to light
Direbo	unknown	white	round	solitary	apathetic	water, swamp	attracted to water
Direbo	unknown	yellow	oblong	swarm	apathetic	land	can see head and wings clearly up close
Cleft caldera	unkown	unknown	oblong	swarm	apathetic	land, water	can see head and wings clearly up close; unknown if they glow (have not been observed in low light conditions) but if so, may be same species as Direbo oblong variety
Cleft caldera	unknown	unknown	round	solitary	apathetic	land	unknown if it glows (has not been observed in low light conditions) but if so, may be same species as Direbo round variety
Negilahn	Kiri	yellow	fan	swarm	apathetic	water, swamp	unique fan shape
Eder Kemo	Chirtee'tahm	various yellows and greens	round	swarm	attracted	land, Trooms	averse to water and sudden movement, attracted to Troom pollen
Todelmer	unknown	green	round	solitary	apathetic	land, light	attracted to light
Kadish Tolesa	unknown	blue	round	solitary	apathetic	open land	found in airy, open spaces
Kadish Tolesa	unknown	white	round	solitary	apathetic	forested land	separate species from next?
Kadish Tolesa	unknown	white	round	solitary	apathetic	forested land, light	attracted to light

* * * *

I'm at the second vault, called the future vault by some. Its very existence still seems a paradox; and the presence of the Butterflies simply deepens the mystery.

Hold on, I've never noticed this before; there are scattered bits of paper on the floor here. And in looking at them, I recognize the handwriting. Can it be??

It's Katran's handwriting. I remember it from reading her Riven journal many years ago now. But her words are puzzling... they sound more like Yeesha. And Yeesha's sign is on the papers... What in the world does this really mean??

Perhaps Yeesha and Katran are more similar than we realize. After all, there is little we know with certainty regarding Katran from the years after Yeesha's birth, and Yeesha herself has remained silent regarding her mother. Perhaps these scattered notes offer some insight. Or

simply present more paradoxes, more questions,
more mystery...

Back on topic, there is a good-sized flock of
the Butterflies filling the upper reaches of the
vault. I will have to use some patience since
they are so often up in the dimness.



The Butterflies are sailing away up into the vaulted ceiling.



This one nearly flew into my face while I was trying to photograph the others.

Time to head home and get some much-needed rest. It's been a very long day (days??) and I still need to post my findings on the forum.

* * * *

This journal has gotten so filled it won't close properly anymore. I'll have to rubber-band it shut. Time to start another one.

Note to self: Transcribe all the lists to the new journal.

Future Zoological Research Projects

1. Photograph the Laki'ahn Piranha Bird; find a nest or colony of them. Learn more about their habits and routine.
2. Study the bonding between Laki mothers and calves; how long do they remain close? Is there a point when the calf must separate from the mother or the pod?
3. Are Laki naturally aggressive? Are they relatively docile?
4. Research whether the Crimson Kadish can link like the Kemo Fireflies.
5. Does the Direbo white Firefly need the coolness or humidity of the water for survival? Is it territorial?
6. Identify the species names for the Direbo Firefly, Butterfly and Dragonfly.

7. ~~Return to Direbo and photograph the Direbo Nightjar. DONE 12/31/11~~
8. Study Shroomie's use of her forelegs; are they sensory organs?
9. ~~Write up an analysis of the different D'ni age Fireflies. DONE 12/31/11~~
10. Are the Negilahn Piranha Flowers parasitic? Do they actually move up the sides of the Stilt Trees? If not, how do they get there?
11. Does the Dereno Arctic Coral grow through the ice surface naturally during its life cycle? If so, what purpose does this serve?
12. Identify the Dereno flat green Coral.
13. Study the Kemo Keanulint colony-behavior, social relationships, life cycle, etc.
14. Look into a Kemo breeding program.

15. ~~Are the Great Shaft bats the same species as in New K'veer? DONE (yes they are) 12/31/11~~
16. Find out if there's a way to study the Quab's former natural habitat (probably not but it's worth looking into)
17. Is there any genetic relationship between the Cavern Firefly and the Direbo white Firefly?
18. Are the Todelmer Fireflies native only at the great heights of the column tops? Do they exist in the forests below and if so, is their social behavior different? Are there more of them there? What other animal species exist at the Todelmer surface?

Other Questions/Issues to Research

1. Did the Buggaro have an important role to the D'ni in Teledahn? Does it have a relationship with the mushrooms and spores? Why are the spore machine paddles modeled after Buggaro wings?
2. Was Kadish responsible for the butterflies migrating to the vault? Did this happen during the event of his death?
3. Was Kadish wounded by angry age natives? Is this why he retreated to his vault to die with his treasures?
4. Why does the butterfly color appear a deeper blue at The Cleft from Direbo? (suspect it's a light wavelength thing—need to consult a proper scientist)

5. Where do all the doorways in the New K'veer link-in room lead? Is it a nexus? For what or for where?
6. Is the writing in the future vault Katran's or Yeesha's? Or both? What is it saying about them both? And what do their words really mean?

