TYPICAL SHALLOWS ENCOUNTER

Encounter Level 9 (2,300 XP)

Setup

1 troglodyte deepscourge (T)
3 troglodyte savages (S)
1 deathcap hazard (D)

A small, elite troglodyte raiding party from the Bloodscale tribe sneaks through the Shallows searching for warriors from a rival tribe (the Darkgrubbers) that have recently claimed a nearby network of caves. The troglodytes plan to capture and sacrifice any rivals they find to their patron, Torog. Minutes before the adventurers approach this cavern, the troglodytes enter and identify the deathcap. Alerted by the adventurers’ light or by the sounds of movement down the passage, the troglodytes lay a hasty ambush.

When the adventurers enter this area, read:

Stalagmites choked much of the entrance to this chamber, and a pit pierces the floor at the chamber’s center. Two reptilian humanoids lurk behind a field of stalagmites against the far wall. A rockslide conceals part of the wall to the north.

When an adventurer looks at the ground next to the pit, read:

Mushrooms and other fungi carpet the bottom of the pit, climb up its side, and spread around the top. One particularly large specimen on top has a thick trunk with sickly yellow spots on its wide, red cap.

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Tactics

Initially, the troglodyte savages use the stalagmites for cover and hurl javelins at their enemies, trying to goad them into charging past the pit. Once one or more enemies move past the pit (and the deathcap attacks; see below), the savages leap into battle, using bull rush attacks to contain their foes in the area affected by the deathcap’s poisonous burst.

The troglodyte deepscourge hangs back from melee, using debilitating ray to aid his companions. If his companions are killed, he retreats to the nearest field of stalagmites and makes his final stand there.

The troglodytes make every effort to stay away from the deathcap, because they fear its potent poison.

The deathcap is no ally of the troglodytes; it attacks as soon as any creature moves adjacent to it.

During the battle, the troglodytes insult the adventurers in Draconic, calling them “spawn of the Darkgrubbers” (the rival tribe) and other disparaging names. A DC 22 Dungeoneering check allows a character to understand that “Darkgrubber” is the name of a troglodyte tribe in the region. The insults make it clear that these troglodytes believe the adventurers are allied with their enemies.
**Deathcap (D)**

**Hazard**

The stem of this mushroom is as thick as a tree trunk, and its cap is wide and red, covered with lumpy yellow spots.

**Hazard:** A deathcap fills 1 square with difficult terrain. Any creature in the deathcap’s space gains cover.

**Perception**

No check is necessary to notice the deathcap.

**Additional Skill:** Nature

✦ DC 16: The character identifies the mushroom as a deathcap.

**Trigger**

When a creature enters the deathcap’s space or an adjacent square, one of the deathcap’s yellow spore pods ruptures, spewing toxic spores into the air.

**Attack**

Immediate Reaction  
Close burst 3

**Target:** Each creature in burst

**Attack:** +15 vs. Fortitude

**Hit:** 2d8 + 5 poison damage, and ongoing 10 poison damage (save ends).

**Miss:** Half damage.

**Countermeasures**

✦ A character who moves past a deathcap (but not into its space) can make a DC 22 Acrobatics check to avoid triggering the spores.

✦ A character can attack the deathcap (AC 5, other defenses 10; hp 70; resist 20 poison). Destroying the deathcap stops further spore pods from bursting.

**Upgrade to Elite (1,400 XP)**

✦ The deathcap’s attack becomes an opportunity action.

✦ Increase the deathcap’s damage by 1d8.

✦ Increase the Acrobatics DC by 2.

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**Features of the Area**

**Illumination:** Darkness; there is no source of light in this chamber.

**Ceiling:** The ceiling is 10 feet high.

**Pit:** A 10-foot-deep pit pierces the floor at the center of the chamber. A veritable sea of harmless fungi grows at the bottom, extends up the pit wall, and spills out onto the upper edge of the pit. Within the fungi at the top of the pit sprouts a deathcap. A character can climb the pit’s walls with a DC 15 Athletics check.

**Stalagmites:** These squares in the southeast part of the area are difficult terrain. Characters in a square containing stalagmites gain cover. Stalactites hang down above the stalagmites, providing cover for flying or climbing creatures.

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**Rockslide:** A rockslide borders the north wall of the chamber.

**Treasure:** A search of the rockslide and a DC 20 Perception check turn up the crushed body of a long-dead male human wearing ruined chainmail. A pouch on the dead man’s belt holds six gems worth a total of 1,400 gp. The character also notices something else buried beneath the rocks; see “Development” for details.

**Development**

If the adventurers spend the time to clear away the rockslide (an hour of work by five characters makes short work of the rubble), they discover a small chamber holding three dead members of a long-lost adventuring party from a town near the player characters’ home base on the surface. The relatives of the deceased adventurers will pay handsomely for news of their loved ones’ fate.

**Quest XP:** 400 XP (minor quest) plus 400 gp for delivering news of the fallen adventurers to their relatives.

Knowledge that two troglodyte tribes are at war with each other might be of use to the adventurers later on in their explorations. Bringing proof to the Darkgrubbers that the adventurers have defeated a Bloodscale raiding party gives the adventurers a +2 bonus to Diplomacy checks to sway the Darkgrubbers’ attitude in all future dealings.