

Embra Wooded Places of Interest 2:

Elfin Stone Ruins

This is a confusing place. It is as if the Ruins have been specially created, rather than having once been living places that have decayed after being abandoned. They are hard to find too, being buried away in some particularly dense woodland, through which just a single, definable trail meanders. Even that simply dead-ends, petering out into the Forest in the northwestern part of the map. There is also an area of woodland shortly before reaching the Ruins a little way northeast of the trail, which has its own name, “Elfin Copse”, despite having no distinguishing features to separate it from the rest of the Forest here, and the fact the name is commonly applied to an area substantially greater than most would think of as a “copse”.

Further notes on the labelled map features follow. First though, some more general points.

The misty edge to the mapped area is because, like all the Embra Places maps, Elfin Stone Ruins does not link directly to any other specific location in the city. Instead when leaving the mapped zone (or sometimes only when passing some form of threshold within it - GM’s choice), the party can return either to the Wooded Places map, or the Embra Official Guide map, from where the GM can select a new location for the players to visit.

While scales are provided alongside the map, accurate to the features as drawn, and directions in these notes refer to the standard pattern of north being towards the map’s top as viewed, east to its right-hand edge, and so on, none of these elements need be considered strongly fixed. Such things in the Faerie Realm can be quite fluid, to fit whatever the GM may prefer.

The featured text also beside the map could be used to enhance the experience of players encountering the Ruins, or ignored, as the GM might wish. It reads: “Ravens & swans. One of the Birdfolk with a raven-like face, wings and legs watches over the ruins. He bears a very long, thin, wooden-bladed sword, with a crook-like hilt, which is really a magical staff.”

For greater clarity, note that the FCW file has a toggle to allow the on-map labels to be turned-off, if desired.

Aspects of Elfin Stone Ruins

* **Bodmall Forest:** The dense woodlands entirely surrounding the Ruins, and filling most of this map. The name is that of an ancient female druid. Holly bushes and trees are unusually prevalent throughout, with very sharp leaf-spines.

* **Elfin Copse:** One area of the Forest east of The Road to Ruin and southeast of The Lost Castle. As noted in the introductory paragraph above however, there is nothing to separate it from the rest of the Forest, so its extent cannot be readily identified, other than

to Faerie natives of Embra, apparently. Holly is as common here as anywhere else in the mapped Bodmall Forest.

* **The Lost Castle of Elfinore:** The substantial ruins of a castle, hidden away in the woods east of the northern part of The Road to Ruin, and from which Road a similarly meandering pathway branches off towards. It is notable for its high standing walls in places, still with intact walkways on top, although much has been reduced to overgrown rubble, along with the identical walls around what remains of its three hexagonal, paved, courtyards. These appear never to have been roofed, so were probably not towers. There are also some low-wall remains of a few buildings in the inner courtyard. There is though no sign this was ever a real, inhabited castle. Particularly oddly, there seems never to have been a surface-level gateway, albeit the rubble makes this difficult to confirm, and despite the offshoot path from the Road leading directly up to - and disappearing beneath - the rubble where such a gateway might once have been, had it existed. This rubble seems too little to be the remnants of gate-towers. It also seems significantly older than the path whose end is buried beneath it. As noted earlier, Elfin Stone Ruins is a confusing place...

* **The Road to Ruin:** The narrow, meandering, sometimes hard-to-find, trail leading to both sets of Ruins through Bodmall Forest, and which later dead-ends deeper in the Forest on this map.

* **The Red Elfin Stone Maze:** A series of low, red sandstone wall remains, scattered through a less dense part of the Forest just west of The Road to Ruin, partly opposite the branching path that runs east to The Lost Castle of Elfinore. These ruins have a form and fashion which seems very like an overgrown, loosely-constructed, maze, where the trees and shrubs contribute to that impression as much as the walls. If these were ever full structures, there is no sign of that (there is no real rubble away from the more broken wall segments, for instance, so nothing suggesting previous features such as roofs that have fallen-in), and it is difficult to see how the surviving walls could be married-up to make buildings.