

Embra Enclosed Places of Interest 1:

Freed Haven Floral Garden

First among the Enclosed Places of Interest is Embra's great floral garden, Freed Haven, a substantial area, loosely eye-shaped, bounded by the River Clack on its southern side, and by a heavy, if straggling, tree and shrubby vegetation "hedge" around the rest of its perimeter. There are many winding dirt or paved pathways within it. There are also a great many wonderful flowers in bloom at all times of year. Notes on some of the sights and scents follow, along with comments on all the named places. First though, some more general points.

The misty edge to the mapped area is because, like all the Embra Places maps, Freed Haven does not link directly to any other specific location in the city. Instead when leaving the mapped zone (or sometimes only when passing the Garden's border, or even crossing some form of threshold within the Garden - GM's choice), the party can return either to the Enclosed 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.

Similarly, the featured text also beside the map can be used to add extra flavour to Freed Haven, or ignored, just as the GM wishes.

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 Freed Haven Floral Garden

There are many kinds of predominantly yellow flowers growing among the grass of the more open, outer, areas, and the glades within the woodier places, sometimes even twining up the trunks of trees and bushes. Many of these give off a variety of pleasing scents, along with the other floral wonders across Freed Haven, making the place very pleasant to visit by day or night for those who delight in such things. While not essential to use, the featured text does allow for some additionally unusual elements to be encountered: "Tortoises up to giant size, with shells that sprout living plants and flowers, add slow motion to Embra's great floral garden."

Smaller features, including seats, low-stone "Japanese garden"-style lanterns, a small, golden-domed shrine, and a few other low, stone-built structures, can be discovered among the flowers by making a close inspection of the map, although these are not labelled or otherwise highlighted. A line of wooden seats runs along the curving tree-lined pathway that faces towards the southern part of Woodwose Meadow, for instance, while the shrine and two of the stone lanterns can be found in a path angle a little way

southeast of the southernmost point of the wall of Kei's Garden. Other items can be found in and near Rowena's Bower (two more stone lanterns) and between the "Ushna Stones" and "Giant Flower Parade" labels (a dry, flower-covered sculpted fountain, a blue stone lantern, and a circular paved area with a small stone hut on its southwest edge, the centre of the ring filled with pink and white flowers). Look out too for the flower-filled wooden sailboat on its tiny "D"-shaped "ocean" of blue and white flowers just east of the "Ushna Stones" label.

* **Cellach Woods:** Two areas of denser and more scattered woodlands on the south bank of the Clack from the Garden. The name is said to mean "Bright-Headed" (i.e. radiant).

* **Eblenn Hill:** The massive hill on which the entire Floral Garden is set, extending off the map to its north. Named after an ancient Faerie queen, whose name supposedly meant "Beautiful Sheen". Note that this hill name recurs on the Crimson Rose Well (Watery Place 4) map for Embra too. Whether the two are identical or not is left for GMs to determine.

* **Giant Flower Parade:** Multicoloured tree-sized individual flowers line part of the walkway - the Parade - that runs through Freed Haven along the Clack's north bank. Their true beauty can be appreciated only from the air, although the light shining through their petals onto the ground below them makes this always an especially colourful place. The Parade is the only route that allows easy entry or exit from the Garden. Passing through the tree barrier elsewhere around its periphery is usually slow, difficult and painful for non-Faerie folk of typical adult human size.

* **Goewin's Tower:** A large, circular, stone structure supported from below on eight thick cylindrical stone pillars. While this may look like the top of a castellated tower on the map, it is really just something like the separated top of one, as below it is largely open and planted with flowering vegetation, which twines up the supporting pillars as well. This is the tallest constructed feature in Freed Haven, taller than the adjoining walls of Kei's Garden. Its crenelated open top can be reached by flying, or using a magically levitating platform set in one of the pillars. The top has a central fountain pool of freshwater. Many flowers grow directly from the stone of the lower parts of the crenelations, and from the flat stone surface of the top floor, as well as around the pool, and surrounding its central fountain column. Goewin was said to be the fairest maiden in all the lands of her time.

* **Kei's Garden:** Another large, apparently "fortified" structure, if lower than the upper part of Goewin's Tower. It has solid stone walls with gates in them on its northeast and southwest sides, and a path running straight through between them. Huge numbers of flowering shrubs and plants crowd into its centre, set in rising banks to each side of the path, so it is easy to appreciate all their wonders from there. A fountain pool plays in its middle, on the southeast side of the path. The upper walkway on the crenelated "parapet" can be accessed either by the levitating pillar platform in Goewin's Tower, which opens onto it, as well as continuing to the Tower's top, or by flying. It allows views out across the adjoining floral meadow to the northwest, and other nearby parts of the Garden. Flowering plants and even a few small trees grow directly from the stone of this upper walkway, and its indented crenelations, with more flowering vegetation growing up the walls both inside and outside the structure.

* **River Clack:** The Clack often appears variable in size and nature from the different Places maps on which it features, but it is always the same river that names the vale in which Embra lies. Here it is apparently quite broad, and has no crossing point. It usually flows east to west, right to left when viewing the map.

* **Rowena's Bower:** A large area containing a range of wonderfully colourful flowering shrubs, somewhat like rhododendrons, but with large, showy blossoms that have the strong, sweet scent of azaleas. Most of the shrubs are the size of small trees when fully grown, shading the numerous winding pathways here with flowered "walls".

* **Ushna Stones:** Two standing stone monuments are set in secluded, hedged areas, with low-growing grass and flowers surrounding them, the grass cut into neat lawns. Only a single path separates the two monuments, with all the other nearby paths winding around beyond the hedges. This central pathway is flanked by eight tall trees with pale-purple-grey foliage, and red flowers, trees that have been trimmed to resemble huge monolithic stones in shape. The western monument consists of two groups of three upright standing stones each, supporting a larger, flat stone. Between these two groups, extending from the base of the more easterly one, are smaller stones of similar type, looking as if they are the broken remains of a larger slab, partly buried in the lawn. The eastern monument is an east-west elongated oval ring of eight rectangular standing slabs, each with a single spiral design cut lightly into its inward face. In the centre of the ring is a horizontal rectangular slab supported by four tall, vertical slabs, in the form of a sealed box. The top of the central slab is on a level with the tops of the standing stones forming the ring. All the stones show signs of having been worked at a very ancient epoch. The Ushna Stones are considered the centre of the garden (spiritually, if not quite physically as mapped).

* **Woodwose Meadow:** The eastern part of the Garden, open of shrubs, trees and larger plants, yet still scattered with many small, mostly yellow, flowers, among the grass. A Woodwose is a wild man of the woods, usually depicted as naked and very hairy.