

# Queen Mica's Scintillant Palace:

## North Wing, Level 4

These notes concern details for the locations in the fourth subterranean Level of the North Wing to Queen Mica's Scintillant Palace. Information regarding the Palace as a whole, including aspects of its physical features and the overall map layout and creation mechanisms not discussed here, can be found in the notes with the Queen Mica's Scintillant Palace Level 1 map elsewhere in the Atlas.

The passages and most chambers of both these Levels can be assumed as roughly 10 feet, 3 metres, high, with floors and ceilings of similarly irregular character to the mapped walls, where not noted otherwise. The passages can be considered as loosely circular in cross-section, so about as high as they are wide, where that may be important. Each level in the Palace complex is vertically separated from the next by an average of 50 ft, 15 m, from the floor of the higher level to the ceiling of the lower, where not noted otherwise. The angles shown on the maps for tunnels that connect between levels are based on this assumed separation distance, and are approximate only, especially given the irregular form of all the interior surfaces. Chambers on a given level are not all at the same depth as one another. Areas with pooled water will tend to be somewhat lower - or the chamber floor may slope down towards such pools. Places with warmer air will often be higher than the average, and cooler places somewhat lower, for instance.

GMs wishing to continue the illusory nature of the Palace complex as outlined in the main Palace Level 1 discussions, where the whole is a hilltop Faerie castle with high towers, should continue to invert the general nature of the floorplan here - so this Level would be far above ground-level, with appropriate window and balcony views out over the surrounding countryside north of the Palace's hilltop site and parts of the neighbouring Palace - and adapt the content of the chambers accordingly, much as was done among the Level 1 "Illusory" comments.

The four Palace Wings are each separate complexes to the main Palace, which is central to all. Only Level 1 of the North Wing connects directly with the main Palace.

Most of the Wings are not used regularly by the colony, although sometimes a large part of the colony's activities may be moved into one or other Wing for a time (usually a season or so). Consequently, there is often less likelihood of meeting any of the colony's inhabitants in such little-used Wings, for which very few notes have been added on the potential uses the chambers may be put to.

Regarding the North Wing particularly, the layout here is very vertical across five separate Levels, much like the main Palace itself, so if retaining part of the illusory nature of the Palace, this Wing might be best imagined as containing some of the tallest towers in the whole complex.

### Features of Level N4

\* **Chamber N4.1:** Tunnel N3.5 leads steeply down (75°) into the eastern side of this Chamber. Its western third slopes down further into a deep pool, beyond which a tunnel rises somewhat, leading west into Chamber N4.4. There is a significant northern lobe off this Chamber (N4.2), and the floor rises towards it. To the south is a short tunnel into N4.3. The air here has a scent of fresh wound dressings.

- \* **Chamber N4.2:** Really an extension on its northern end of Chamber N4.1, this area does though have a different character, with a very rough, uneven floor and a substantial, if quite low-lying splattermite, roughly in the middle of the entryway from N4.1. The floor also slopes up gently from south to north across this Chamber.
  
- \* **Chamber N4.3:** A rather rectilinear, tri-lobed chamber, with an extremely rough floor, and a greasy taste to the air. It is at a somewhat lower level than N4.1, to which its short northern tunnel leads, while its western tunnel also slopes up gently, following around a right-angle bend from west to north towards N4.4. There are several quite regular, circular ring-depressions on the floor, suggesting something heavy, perhaps like tubes or barrels, were once stored here, and for quite a long period to have left this kind of indentation. Each circle is about 3 ft, 90 centimetres, in diameter, with the depressed ring line around this circumference some 2 inches, 5 cm, wide. There is nothing like that here now.
  
- \* **Chamber N4.4:** An irregular chamber with two main lobes, and tunnels leading south, then east to N4.3, and east to the pool in N4.1. Both these passages slope down from here a little. Much of the floor area within this Chamber is covered with shelfstones, sometimes called “lily-pads” - large, rounded, slightly dished, flattened water-solution features. The spaces between them are quite smooth, thanks to long-term overspilling of water from the pads, dripping down from the ceiling. There are definite indications of water having run-off into the pool over the western half of N4.1 over a similarly long interval.
  
- \* **Chamber N4.5:** The passage down from N3.6 enters the southern end of this linear Chamber quite steeply (50°), although the floor once here is more level, if scattered over with some rocks and debris in places. The air has a scent of fresh wound dressings. Two tunnels lead out from its northeastern part, northeast to N4.6 and east to N4.9.
  
- \* **Chamber N4.6:** A large chamber with moderately regular, polygonal walls, ceiling and floor. In use, it would likely serve as a place to store pupating ant larvae in sealed niches in the walls and floor. At present, there is no evidence for that, only the curious smell of an alchemist’s waiting room. Tunnels from here lead southwest to N4.5, southeast to a tunnel junction between N4.9 and N4.11, and east to N4.7.
  
- \* **Chamber N4.7:** An irregularly-shaped chamber with a very rough floor, on which a careful inspection will reveal a few shards of old egg-cases, suggesting the place has been used as a nursery for newly-hatched larvae previously. The air here is very dry. Short passageways lead west to N4.6, south to N4.11 and east to N4.14, while a narrowing of its northwestern lobe, not substantial enough to really call a “tunnel”, leads north into N4.8.
  
- \* **Chamber N4.8:** Reached by a narrowing in the northwestern part of Chamber N4.7 to its south, this chamber has fairly regularly-angled walls of a hexagonal form. When in use, it would probably be somewhere for niches to be cut for holding pupating larvae in its walls and floor. Its air has a greasy taste.
  
- \* **Chamber N4.9:** Scratching noises can be heard in here from an unidentified source from time to time. It is of an irregularly oval shape, with a very uneven, rough floor. Passageways lead out from it to N4.5 to the west, N4.6 and N4.11 to the northeast and N4.10 to the south. The latter tunnel slopes down slightly from this Chamber.

\* **Chamber N4.10:** Its access-tunnel from N4.9 to its north slopes down somewhat into the Chamber itself, and the floor here continues to slope down further towards the pool across its southeastern half. There is a spicy smell in the air.

\* **Chamber N4.11:** The floor here is lower than in any of the tunnels leading into it, although its ceiling retains the same level as normal, meaning the floor-ceiling separation is closer to 13 ft, 4 m, than the more typical *circa* 10 ft, 3 m, elsewhere. There are numerous stony lumps scattered over the floor, which is further punctuated by several fairly shallow, caustic pools. Each has a dark crust of crystals around its rim, and in places it is clear the stony floor blocks have been partly dissolved by the action of the pool chemicals. The pool liquid is very dangerous to unprotected flesh. Tunnels lead out north to N4.7, northeast to the passage junction between Chambers N4.13 and N4.14, south into N4.12 and southwest to another passage junction leading to Chambers N4.6 and N4.9.

\* **Chamber N4.12:** Accessible only by the short tunnel from N4.11 to the north, a light breeze flows through here towards this exit, although where from is hard to determine. The chamber is irregular in form, with two narrower southern lobes, and a very rough floor.

\* **Chamber N4.13:** A triangular, tri-lobed chamber with several rock and earth clumps scattered over its floor, and in which the air is very cold. It can be reached from the north by a tunnel that slopes down towards this Chamber from its junction with a second tunnel leading west to N4.11. The passage continues north into N4.14 as well.

\* **Chamber N4.14:** A remarkable place, elongated along a roughly east-west axis, with a northern lobe that is flooded by a deep pool from water trickling down the northern wall above the pool. What is most notable about the Chamber though is a localised glow in about the middle of the area just south of the pool, in mid-air. There is no obvious source for this, albeit it appears not to be magical. The light it sheds is quite weak and pale yellow-white in colour. Passages lead out from here west to N4.7, east around a sharp bend and slightly down to N4.15, and south to a junction with one passage leading further south and downwards to N4.13, the other branching off westwards at the same level as the northern part of this tunnel, to N4.11.

\* **Chamber N4.15:** The remainder of this Level through to Chamber N4.16, has an extremely ragged, uneven flooring. This Chamber is rounded in an irregular manner, especially on its western side, and in its western floor is a north-south elongated oval vertical tunnel opening, that leads down to N5.1 below. There is a bitter taste in the air. The northern passage out of here turns a sharp bend to the west into N4.14, while the southern tunnel leads to N4.16.

\* **Chamber N4.16:** Reached by a tunnel south from N4.15, this Chamber seems very roughly cut and unfinished. Like N4.15 and the tunnel between them, its floor is very uneven. It is also set here with patches of large, low-growing mushrooms that emit mostly ultraviolet light. As noted previously (see the Queen Mica's Palace Level 3, Chamber 9 notes), the ants do not use this fungus for food, but they do seem to revere and protect it, making this place too something akin to a temple, for all this Chamber seems very little-used.