

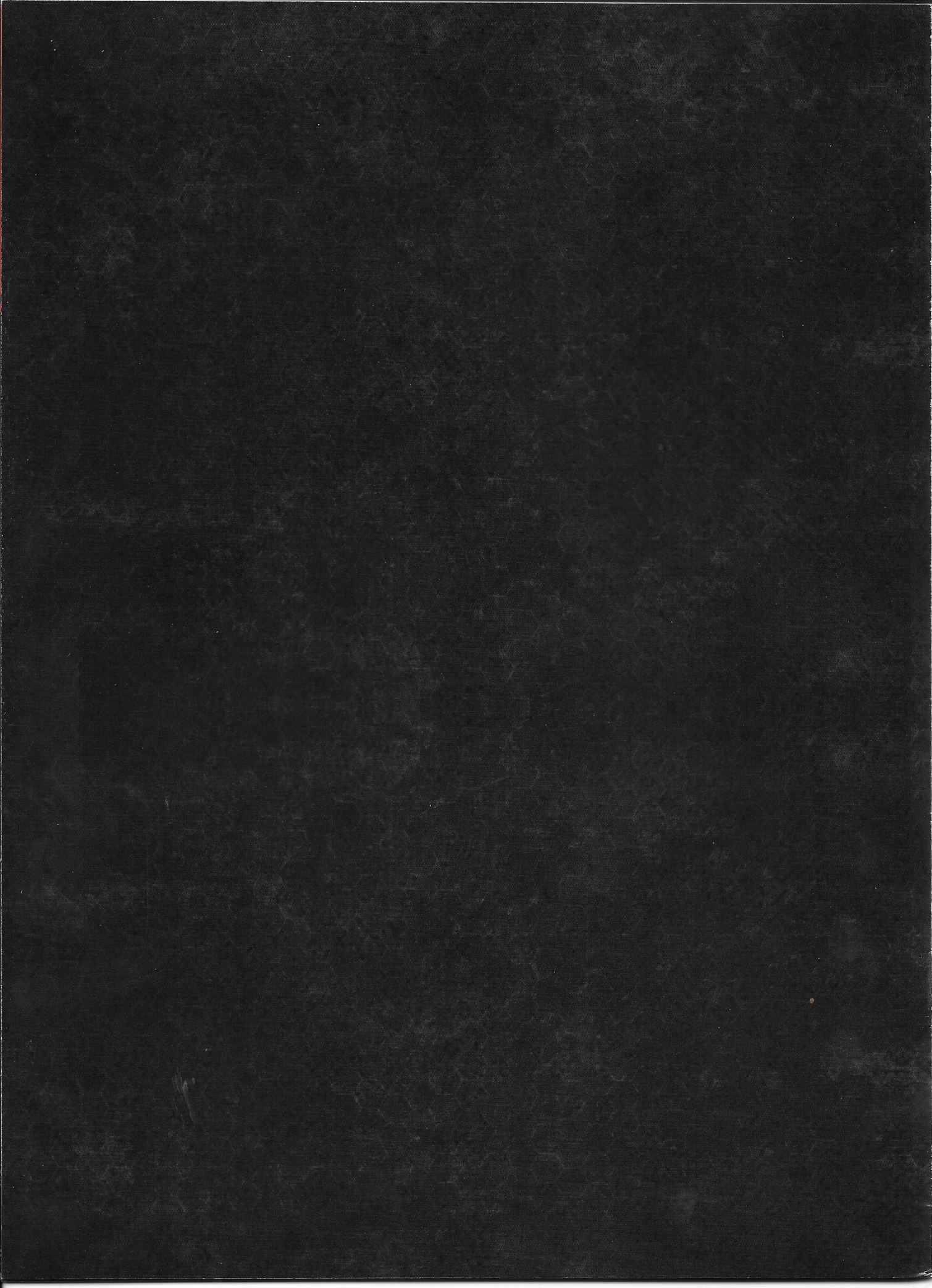
WARHAMMER
40,000

KILLTEAM™



DEATH WORLD FOREST

KILLZONE ENVIRONMENT



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the ultimate primer on the deadly environments known as death world forests. From Catachan to Pardaxia Prime, Miral and Jegga to the verdant horror of Syren XVII, these flesh-eating arboreal hellscape have been the sites of countless kill team engagements. Read on to learn more...

Many planets play host to seething expanses of lethal jungle or forests, whose depths conceal vital supply caches, listening posts and secret bunkers. Squads of elite scouts and camo-painted killers stalk through the undergrowth, alert to the slightest movement or sound. They watch intently for the telltale stirring of plant life that betrays their enemies' position, and ferocious firefights erupt at point-blank range as highly strung warriors open up on shadows and slinking fauna. Only the true veterans can keep their heads as the bullets and las-blasts start flying, enough to watch for the predatory flora poised to snatch and devour the unwary...

Within this booklet, you will find all the information you could require on the nature of the various death world forests and carnivorous jungles that blanket the battlefields of the 41st Millennium. From descriptions of the more terrifying plants encountered by kill team warriors, to a rundown of the hazards that terrain like shardwrack spines, barbed venomgorse, Catachan mantraps and grapple weed impose upon those fighting amongst them, you will learn more than any sane general ever wanted to know about the arboreal horrors of the 41st Millennium. You will further find an account

of some of the most infamous jungle- and forest-covered death worlds and war zones through which kill teams do battle, from Catachan – a planet where every native life form is out to make Humanity its prey – to the bioluminescent murder-groves of Aspykt.

Accompanying this information, you will find a beautifully shot showcase of Citadel Miniatures, including the various types of Death World Forest scenery that you can use to populate your tabletop battlefields, along with the eldritch ruins that loom amongst many of them.

As well as serving as a guide on how you might want to paint and incorporate your Death World Forest scenery on your tabletop battlefields, this booklet will act as a source of excitement and inspiration for the narrative in your Kill Team games. Whether you decide to battle over a hidden command bunker amongst the jungles of Chagradox, raid Ork encampments amidst the equatorial green hell of Armageddon, or stage an evacuation of the poisoned Midgardian wilds, you will find a wealth of material here to lend your games depth, narrative and excitement.



DEATH WORLD FORESTS

What greater terror can a warrior face than to engage in a conflict where not only the enemy, but the very battlefield itself is dead-set upon ensuring their swift demise? Predatory jungles of the death worlds are just such horrific killzones, and they are to be rightly feared.

The Imperium extends its reach across countless planets that boast myriad hazardous landscapes. Frozen expanses of wasteland stretch for thousands of miles. Noxious atmospheres poison, corrode or crush. Sprawling jungles and sucking swamplands swallow entire regiments of soldiery. Crystalline deserts blaze with such incredible temperatures that they can reduce a man to ashes. The list rolls on, interminable and ghastly.

The grinding advance of Mankind's ferrocrete civilisation crushes many such alien landscapes into submission, brutalising and scouring the natural environment until each planet is reduced to another seething cityscape that towers to the clouds and swarms with the oppressed masses of Humanity. Yet there are some worlds that resist. There are those planets that seem almost sentient in their hatred for Mankind. The landscapes of such places are so savage that the Imperium can secure only the most tenuous fingerholds upon their surfaces. These are the death worlds, and they are amongst the most inhospitable places in the galaxy.

A significant proportion of death worlds are densely covered in jungles, forests and bubbling swamps. Many also play host to ancient outcroppings of crumbled xenos architecture. Be it creeper-hung metallic pyramids, eerie geometric statues graven from bone, hovering islands of crystalline machinery, or countless other weird features, these architectural artefacts serve as memorials to whatever xenos species once ruled over these domains.

Death world forests and jungles are a contradiction in terms, for while they seethe with life, they are at the same time utterly inimical to any creature foolish enough to step beneath their eaves. In such terrain, there is but one rule by which all beasts and plants must abide: if you are not the predator, then you are the prey. To deploy forces into such ravenously lethal terrain without sufficient preparation is to provoke a horrifying feeding frenzy that can lose a war as surely as advancing blithely into the guns of the foe.

Coiling vines and creepers slither down from the dense canopy to wrap around throats, entangle limbs, and haul choking warriors to their deaths. Reefs of fungal life forms quiver as they release clouds of spores that render prey unconscious or trigger such severe respiratory

shock that it kills in seconds. Grapple weed snatches and crushes those who stray within its reach, while thickets of Barbed Venomgorse tear even armoured warriors to bloody pieces. Beautiful deathblooms spray sudden jets of digestive acids, spit out barbed tendrils that suck their victims' blood, or pulse in hypnotic patterns that entrance simple minds until the captive starves, expires, and rots down to be absorbed by the plants' roots. Countless kill teams have found themselves advancing upon the enemy's positions only to hear the hollow rattle of shardwrack spines spitting toxic needles into their vulnerable flesh. Others have been dragged screaming into the boles of huge carnivorous trees, their limbs entangled in thorned and prehensile roots, their weapons useless against the huge floral predators set upon devouring them. Even before one considers the monstrous animal life that thrives and hunts amongst such relentlessly aggressive forests, it is easy to see how death worlds get their name.

For all this, many death worlds have a strategic value that cannot be ignored. Some are rich in untapped natural resources; planets such as Nachoria or Diavades Prime, for example, harbour vast reserves of crude promethium beneath their surfaces, while the jungle-riddled hell of Persephone's Hope is shot through with seams of corvitanium and diaphonium that cannot be found anywhere else in the Segmentum Solar.

Others are useful for where they lie, dominating stable warp routes or lying close enough to settled worlds that they can be used as a base for launching raids or invasions. The very lethality of some death worlds makes them useful in their own right; the Imperium of Mankind is notorious for utilising death world conditions in live-fire training exercises, and for recruiting those who live on death worlds into especially hardy Astra Militarum regiments or Space Marine Chapters. The Adeptus Mechanicus, meanwhile, have hidden countless secret research outposts or repositories of sacred knowledge deep amongst the killer jungles of such death worlds.

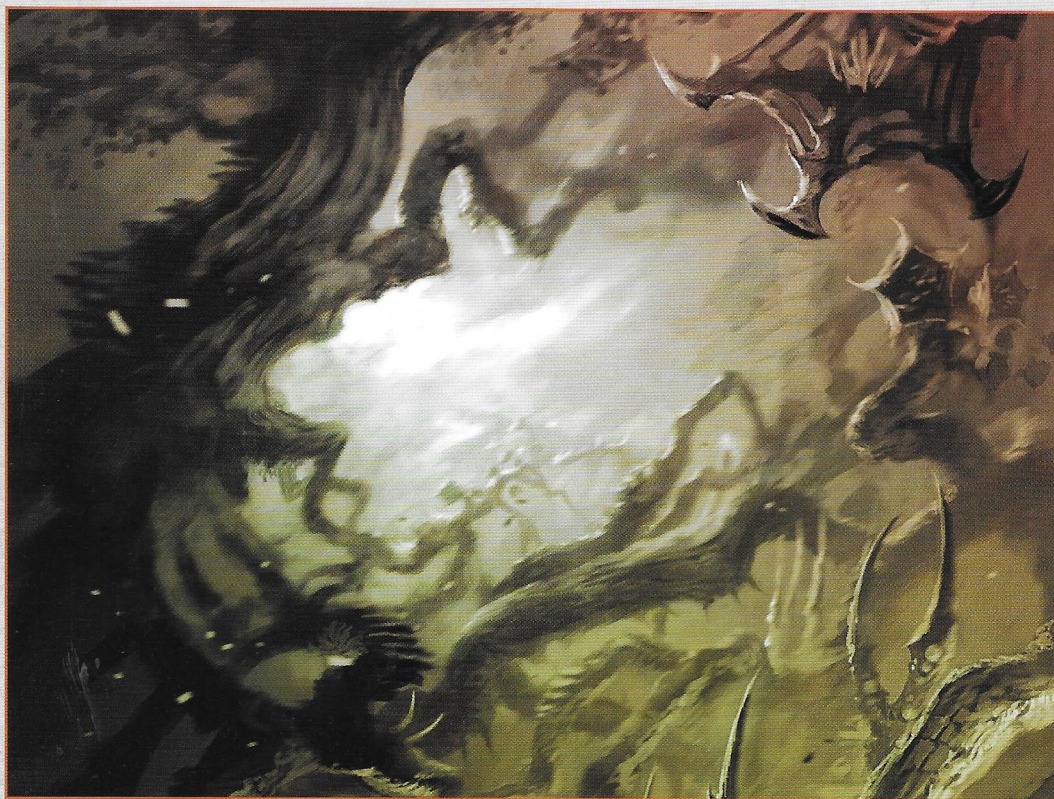
Other galactic factions also make use of the dangerous conditions of death worlds. Many warbands of Heretic Astartes establish bases on such planets, testing themselves constantly against the dangers that surround them while also relying upon the native flora to dissuade or destroy invading forces. Similarly, Drukhari pirate

bands delight in the riot of hunger and pain that such worlds offer, either plunging into their depths to pick off those attempting to survive there, or else using them as staging posts for attacks upon more civilised planets. More than one Necron tomb complex has stirred into wakefulness only to find that the sterile world they once inhabited now teems with deadly plant life; in many cases, this results in a swift and merciless bio-purge by the awakened androids, though some Overlords have the foresight to see the strategic value of such a living shield above their tombs. Most notable of these is H'kemnet the Mandrakine Queen, who set her Crypteks to harnessing the jungles of Aspykt and now tends her lethal garden with an obsessive care.

Tyranids are drawn to death worlds by their immense bounty of biomass, while Genestealer Cults spread quickly through the desperate and isolated peoples of death world colonies. The Asuryani of the craftworlds may claim ancient rites of dominion over maiden worlds turned to madness, and will seldom give warning to interlopers before putting them to the sword. Ork warbands delight in plunging headlong into such hazardous terrain, deriving endless enjoyment from fighting against an entire planet. The T'au Empire, meanwhile, have been known to site secret installations upon forested death worlds, or else engage in long-winded terraforming operations to transform them into habitable colonies.

So it is that the races of the galaxy soon come to blows over even such apparently undesirable worlds as these, and amongst the deadly terrain there is no better weapon for a force to deploy than the kill team. Regiments of war engines may founder and become entangled in the hostile terrain, while massed formations of infantry are likely to lose coherency and be rapidly picked apart by the horrific plant life that surrounds them. Aircraft can at least soar in relative safety above the canopy, but the tangled density of the flora reduces their visibility and limits them to dogfighting and launching occasional, opportunistic air strikes.

By comparison, a select force of specialist troopers – equipped, trained and experienced enough to use the lethal terrain to their advantage – can slip through regions of death world forest that would destroy larger forces, strike from unexpected directions against their targets, and vanish again like ghosts before reprisals can land. Warrior bands of this sort are equally adept at patrolling the deep jungle, concealing themselves in ambush along critical supply routes or setting up defensive cordons around vital facilities and slaughtering any foe foolish enough to stray into their sights. Death world forests are truly dangerous places, amongst the most lethal in a dark and terrible galaxy, yet for the kill teams they are just another theatre of war within which to hunt their enemies.



GREEN HELLS

Although there are many death worlds within the bounds of the Imperium, there are a few whose names resound through the annals of the Administratum and popular folklore alike, planets so deadly that people living whole sectors away whisper their names with fascinated dread...

CATACHAN

Few Imperial death worlds rival the infamy of Catachan. Every life form is inimical to human survival, from the shambling mamorphs and terrifying Catachan devils to the mind-controlling brainleaf, the shardwrack spiker plant, and the looming terror of the native mantraps. The colonists who survive on this world do so in a state of constant siege, their fortified settlements echoing day and night to the sounds of wall-mounted guns and handheld flamers. So ferociously rampant are Catachan's jungles that, if those weapons were to fall silent, the Imperial settlements would be wholly reclaimed within a day. Such adverse conditions breed hardy stock, and thus the Imperium retains its tenuous hold upon Catachan so as to recruit some of the finest Astra Militarum regiments in the galaxy.

Since the opening of the Great Rift, Catachan has come under repeated assault from both Chaos Space Marine and Ork forces. The former are drawn to prey upon the beleaguered populace in the hopes of cutting off another valuable supply of manpower from the Imperial war effort. The latter are simply opportunists, their craft vomited from the maws of warp storms and their warbands hurling themselves gleefully into the teeth of Catachan's jungles with fists swinging. The resultant cauldron of war has seen the Catachan Jungle Fighters prove their mettle time and again, battles such as the Thousand Barbs, Blood Gulch and the Defence of Steelfang Ridge demonstrating their expertise in launching devastating ambushes while using their planet's hazards to their advantage. Still more invaders reach Catachan's shores with every passing day, and fresh kill teams join the endless jungle battle.

HELIOKORA

The world of Heliokora plays host to a strange and sinister war. A planet of crawling forests and ancient Aeldari ruins, Heliokora is caught in a penumbral zone between its two suns and a scattering of shattered moons. As the planet turns, weird plays of light and shadow hundreds of miles across dance over its surface, broken and distorted by constant partial eclipse. The result is an arboreal hellscape where vast forests migrate constantly and battle one another for access to the belts of hard sunlight amidst the sweeping clouds of darkness, and where temperatures can plummet rapidly and unexpectedly.

The Drukhari of Commorragh have been drawn to the savagery and unsettling aesthetics of this world, establishing bases upon its surface and striking at neighbouring Imperial worlds with impunity. Stretched thin by attacks from Chaos raiders, those worlds have responded as best they can, but the invasion forces that dropped piecemeal into Heliokora's nightmare forests soon found themselves fighting less for victory, and more for survival. Preyed upon by cackling killers amidst the shuddering plays of light and shadow, those Imperial warriors that endure have been reduced to scavenging for abandoned supply caches and picking over the tangled remains of their fallen comrades just to keep the conflict going. In recent days, several kill teams of the vaunted Deathwatch have arrived on Heliokora, determined to turn the tide and expunge the xenos threat. Time will tell whether they will succeed, or become just more prey...

ASPYKT

Were any learned xenobiologist asked to imagine a Necron tomb world, they would be forgiven for picturing lifeless deserts of sand and windblown expanses of nothingness that stretched to the far horizons. Yet the tomb world of Aspykt could not be further from this image. Its glowing Necron ziggurats and looming weapons pylons rise from amidst endless seas of bioluminescent jungle that echo to the constant din of riotous life. Ruled over by H'kemnet – known to her android subjects as the Mandrakine Queen – the jungles of Aspykt have been enhanced in their lethality by the efforts of her Crypteks. Already-dangerous jungle plants now discharge bolts of emerald lightning from invasive circuitry that threads through their stems, while the barbs shot by this world's shardwrack spines are tipped with living metal. Scuttling constructs flow through the underbrush, and an oppressive sense of watchfulness hangs over the jungle like a shroud.

The true dangers of these conditions were discovered first hand by the Fire caste of the T'au Empire during the ill-fated Operation Dawning Wisdom. After unusual – and potentially useful – plants were identified on Aspykt's surface by T'au deep-space drones, a top-secret research and acquisition mission was launched from T'au Sept. Local hazards were assessed to consist of 'flora and fauna possessed of heightened aggression, along with scattered archeo-android remnants'. Given the

blessing of beloved Ethereal Aun'Lhor, several teams of elite Pathfinders dropped into the jungles at pre-selected locations. Their mission was to establish cordons within which Earth caste scientists could operate safely and without distraction to gather samples and study the local plant life in detail. What followed was a gruelling and hideous battle for survival. The moment the T'au dropped onto Aspykt, Necron defence systems began to come alive around them, while awakened Necron soldiery marched up from hidden tunnel networks to attack. The T'au further found themselves subjected to savage assault by the very plants they had come to study. Desperate rearguard actions were fought, and dozens of Pathfinders sacrificed themselves heroically for the Greater Good as they attempted to defend their Earth caste charges and evacuate them to safety. Despite their best efforts, not a single T'au made it off of Aspykt alive, and Operation Dawning Wisdom was deleted from all records in the name of morale. However, rumour amongst the Fire caste hierarchy of T'au Sept has it that a full-scale pacification of the planet is planned soon, and that fresh T'au kill teams may already be operating on Aspykt's surface in order to prepare the way...

ARMAGEDDON

Not all deadly forests cover entire planets. Some do not even extend across continents, merely forming parts of a more varied landscape. The equatorial jungles of the hive world of Armageddon are a good example of this. For many years, Armageddon has shuddered in the fires of war; Orks in the millions have invaded the world, first at the behest of Ghazghkull Thraka, and later in successive

waves drawn by word of one of the best fights in the galaxy. Imperial forces have pushed back against the xenos invaders through such varied theatres as tangled hive cities, macro-industrial refineries and sweeping dust-plains. Yet some of the most savage encounters of the Third Armageddon War have occurred in the jungles that band the planet's equator. Here, regiments of Astra Militarum Ork Hunters have fought a seemingly endless guerrilla war against tribes of feral Orks and greenskin Kommandos united under Boss Snikrot.

The jungles already seethed with hazards, from chemical rainfall and lashtongue plants to decades' worth of forgotten booby traps. Once more, however, Chaos has come to Armageddon, and the war has taken a still darker turn. Even as a daemonic rift tries to consume the northern pole of the planet, Chaos cults have risen up amongst Armageddon's populace and its defending regiments. Chaos Space Marines have been reported haunting the planet's jungles, clad in the raiment of the Word Bearers and Alpha Legion, amongst others. It appears that these warbands are attempting to raise shrines to their gods, sacrificing captives upon their altars in order to spread the mutative power of Chaos through the jungles and render them ever more deadly. Faced by trees that gnash hungry fangs, blood-drinking vines studded with crystal thorns and crawling spawn-plants of ghastly aspect, both Imperial and Ork forces have struck back as best they can, rescuing high-ranking victims from the altars of Chaos and hurling down the dark shrines wherever they find them. Yet still the slow spread of Chaos taint continues, and some question how long it will be before the jungles themselves must burn...

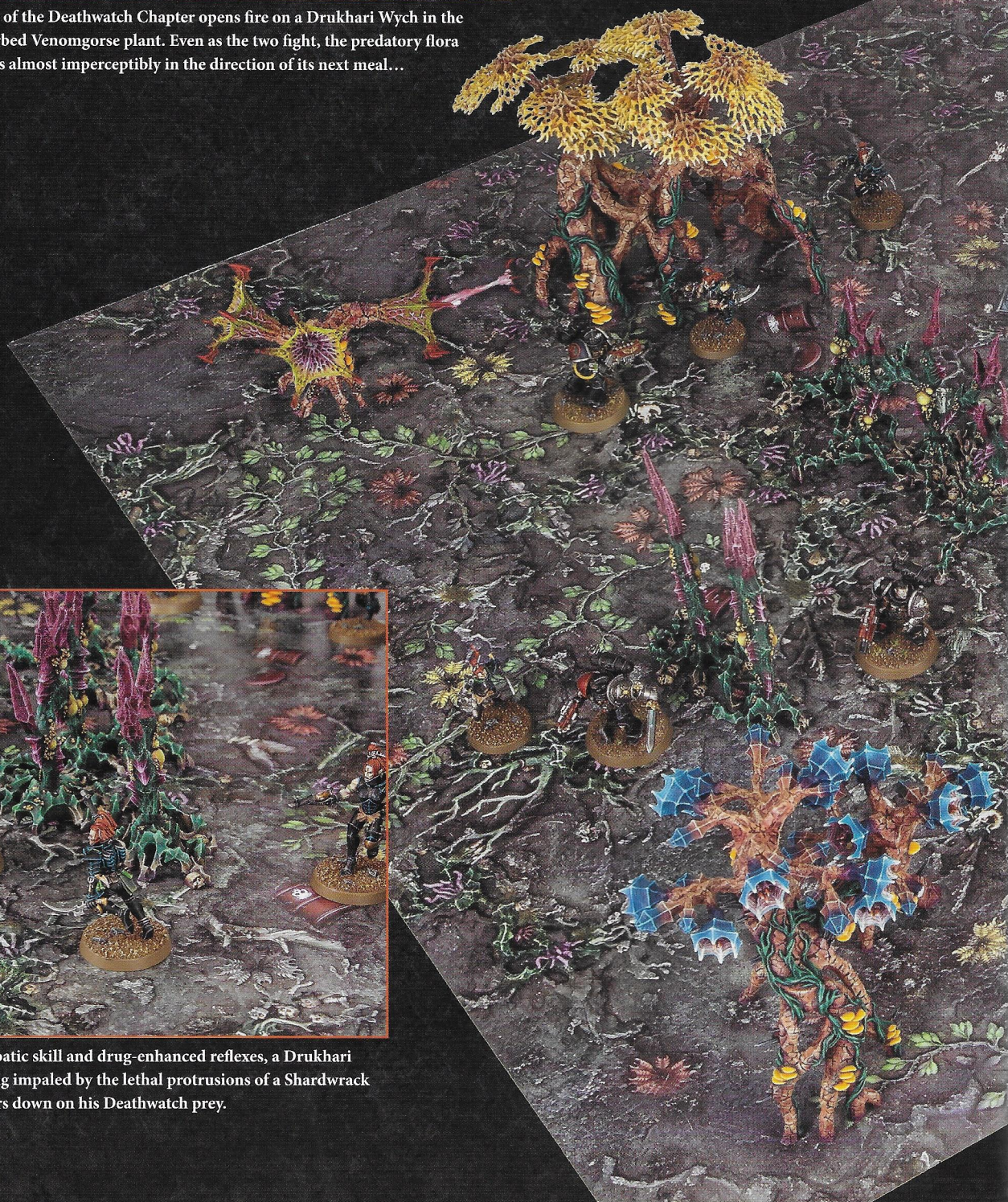




A Space Marine of the Deathwatch Chapter opens fire on a Drukhari Wych in the shadow of a Barbed Venomgorse plant. Even as the two fight, the predatory flora creaks and shifts almost imperceptibly in the direction of its next meal...



For all his acrobatic skill and drug-enhanced reflexes, a Drukhari Wych risks being impaled by the lethal protrusions of a Shardwrack Spine as he bears down on his Deathwatch prey.





The leaders of the two opposing kill teams meet in combat, but the risk of death lies not solely at the hands of their opponent, for their very surroundings are possessed of an equally bloodthirsty intent.



Xenos ruins rise amongst the undergrowth of many death world forests. They are eerie and unsettling, their sepulchral otherness starkly apparent despite the abundance of life that coils around them.



Barbed Venomgorse grows in many different strains and varieties. Looming above the jungle floor, its weird protrusions and deadly blooms present a riot of strange colours.



Shardwrack Spines are amongst the most alien-looking and dangerous of all death world forest flora. They stab up towards the canopy like accusing talons, and woe betide any who come into contact with their razor-sharp spars.

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Amidst these tangled expanses lie horrors as deadly as any invading army.

Death World Forests are amongst the most dangerous terrain in the galaxy. From spike-spitting shardwrack spines to seething grappleweed and barbed venomgorse, these deadly jungles boast hazards unnumbered. Elite kill teams stalk one another through these lethal groves, engaging in vicious firefights even as they battle to stave off the predatory attention of the forests themselves. This booklet describes in detail the dangers of the Death World Forests, and examines the conditions kill teams must fight through in such places and the reasons they would do so at all. It describes some of the most infamous jungle and forest death worlds in the galaxy, while providing a wealth of inspiration for setting your own Kill Team battles in such terrifying surroundings...

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