

HUMBLEWOOD™

Humblewood 2 Playtest

THE FROZEN NORTH

OCTOBER 2024



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Got feedback?
We'd love to hear it!

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Got questions?
Join our Discord and chat with us!

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This month, in Part 1 of the playtest we're exploring the last of the regions that will be detailed in *Humblewood 2*. The Frozen North is made up of the Frostcaps, the northernmost reaches of Wesden, and the mysterious icy archipelago called the Crystal Expanse.

Part 2 of the playtest introduces five new spells. Since spells need to be balanced so carefully to be fun but not game-breaking, we'd really like to know what you think! Please break our spells so we can fix them!

This is the link to the feedback form: <https://forms.gle/Nmvi9THFTweBZLPE7> We're so grateful for everyone's time and effort in responding to the playtest so far. You're helping make *Humblewood 2* better!

Part 1: Welcome to The Frozen North

W E L C O M E T O T H E F R O Z E N N O R T H

A fast-flowing river adds the sound of water to the stillness of the mountain air. Ice is already starting to extend over its surface, heralding the end of the brief summer. In the shadow of the mountains, the valley is cold, and your breath turns to vapor in the air.

THE LANDSCAPE OF THE FROSTCAPS

At the northern end of the continent of Wesden, the Horned Ridge gives way to the Frostcaps. A heavy layer of snow and ice that covers these mountains year-round. Deep, fast rivers wind between the peaks and feed deep, icy-cold lakes of clear water. The Frostcaps may be dangerous and tough, but they also contain wide, untouched expanses, the smell of pine, deep stillness, and spectacular views.

Map of the Frozen North



Fizzar Past. There are rumors that the ruins of ancient cities were once sites of great power where demon-wizards reshaped living creatures and performed world-shaking magic. To this day, folk still hear the mountain spires humming with residual magic. In truth, Fizzars once lived in these lands, performing their arcane experiments and draining elementals of their power.

Life in the Frostcaps. Settlements in the Frostcaps are few and far between, and those who choose a life in the remote peaks tend to have a fiercely independent streak and a love for the quiet of being miles from the nearest crowd. As the frozen ground is unsuitable for farming, hunting and fishing are essential skills to feed a family.

Altumaroo. Altumaroo is the closest thing in the Frostcaps to a major settlement. Around 500 folk live in this town that is nestled at the head of the Songside River Valley on Lake Maroo. Altumaroo is built on and from the ruins of a pre-Shattering settlement. Long ago, an enormous, bustling city here was a hub of magic, science, and power. Today, all that remains of the original metropolis is a massive disc of crumbled ruins that projects into Lake Maroo, which the modern town is built on top of. A few standing buildings have been reused, but most of the town was built from the rubble of the previous city. Walls often incorporate ancient carvings, and the most common are representations of the Amaranthine of Innovation, Gesme.

THE LANDSCAPE OF THE CRYSTAL EXPANSE

A blizzard paints the world white. Wind tears at you, threatening to push you over on the slippery ice and snow beneath your feet. Yet up ahead, you can see glowing blue light, bright enough to shine through the whiteout. A spire of crystal juts from the frozen ground, its origin or purpose a mystery.

The Crystal Expanse is a wide archipelago that lies to the north of Wesden across the Bladesea. The land and sea are covered with ice year-round. The eastern region, called Bitterland, is largely unexplored. The central area, Endridge, has the most settlements and research stations. It is dominated by massive glaciers. To the northwest, the chain of islands called The Crystal Wastes are the most dangerous and coldest part of the Crystal Expanse.

The Shattering. The Crystal Expanse was not always such a cold and forbidding place. 1,600 years ago, it was connected to Wesden and had a climate similar to the Frost Caps. However, when a world-shattering Fizzar experiment attempting to control the power of the Aspect of Water failed, the magical blowback shattered the continent. The islands

The Crystal Expanse



of the Crystal Expanse were formed, and the region became locked under a blanket of ice. The Aspect's frigid power infuses the landscape and the creatures here, though there has been no sign of the primordial elemental itself since the Shattering.

Crystal Spires. Among all the extraordinary sights in the Crystal Expanse, the crystal spires that gave the region its name are among the most beautiful and mysterious. These massive blue spikes emanate a gentle pulsing light. When the aurora overhead is at its brightest, it appears to connect to the spires. All attempts at taking a sample to discover what they are made of have failed as their surface is impenetrable. Some believe the spires are magically infused ice, while others think they are arcane stones crafted by those who lived here before the shattering. Newcomers to the Crystal Expanse are warned not to touch the spires, as doing so produces visions of being plunged into an endless, tumultuous expanse of water. Folk living in encampments near a spire watch out for those who have become lost in this watery reverie despite the warnings.

Dangerous Beauty. Trekking through the Crystal Expanse is not an expedition to be taken lightly, but for those with immense determination, proper equipment, and warm enough coats, it is an unforgettable experience. The region has unparalleled beauty—the light reflecting through the crystals. Ice creates glittering landscapes that, at certain times of day, glow in a way that makes the glaciers themselves seem almost alive. If the adventurers are particularly lucky, they may witness the most spectacular natural phenomenon of the north: the aurora, a spectacular light show. And yet, the dangers of the area are immense—countless explorers have been lost to the sudden collapse of a glacier wall, or when a thundering, crystal-tusked mawlrus, nearly as tall as the largest spire, searching for a mate, tramples through the icy plateau.

Fire and Ice. Since the rise of the Aspect of Fire in Humblewood new ocean routes have formed between the major landmasses as some of the archipelago's ice has melted. This melting has begun to reveal the Crystal Expanse's secrets from their tomb of ice, drawing increasing numbers of researchers and adventurers.

THE FOLK OF THE NORTH

The Frostfolk. Despite treasuring their fierce independence, Frostfolk are incredibly hospitable to guests. Often, the kindness of a stranger is the only thing sparing a traveler from the elements, so a clean bed, a hot meal, and a friendly ear are easily found. However, overstaying this welcome or abusing that trust has a serious price—Frostfolk know how to defend themselves and aren't afraid of a fight.

Many folk from this region, including elurans, galluses, strigs, and vulpins, have white fur or feathers that help them blend into their snowy surroundings. Other folk tend to have thick fur or fluffy feathers to protect them from the cold. Folk originating from warmer climes, such as tilia and arma hedges, make do with warm protective clothing. Brightfang mustels are more common here than in other parts of the world.

Folk in the Crystal Expanse. Very few folk live in the Crystal Expanse year-round. Instead, the scattered settlements are home to explorers, researchers, and Tenders during the summer months. Most of the settlements are rough and tumble, filled with the kind of folk who seek adventure or something more esoteric in the white wilderness.

The Sunsworn Tenders. The Sunsworn branch of the Tenders, mages who work to preserve the balance of nature, split off from the Humblewood branch. While the Tenders of the Scorched Grove heal the damage caused by fires, the Sunsworn tenders face down a colder and slower threat. For hundreds of years, they have been monitoring the receding icy boundary of the Frozen North. Each year, the permafrost boundary retreats. The Sunsworn Tenders are concerned that whatever caused the Shattering long ago is becoming unstable once more and that it could make sea levels rise or plunge Wesden into an Ice Age should it awaken.

The Sunsworn Tenders are based in Altumaroo, but they can also be found across the Frozen North on research expeditions. They can be recognized from their dark blue robes, trimmed in white. Their headquarters is a tall building near the center of town. Its huge blocky blue-gray stones were reclaimed from the ruins of the previous city. Inside, lower-ranked Tenders organize the huge mass of records that are gathered by their colleagues across the region. The Sunsworn Tenders also keep the largest magical archive and library in the region. Most of the texts are concerned with nature and archaeology, but there are a few tomes containing other disciplines.

CREATURES OF THE FROZEN NORTH

The environmental impact of the Shattering transformed many of the species that live in the Crystal Expanse. Some, like the mawlrus have adapted to the icy conditions. Others, like the frostburned are linked directly to the the disaster.

FROSTBURNED

The forstburned are creatures that have been drained of their body heat and turned into mindless undead that only seek warmth. Ice grows from their bodies, giving them icicle-like claws. The frostburned shamle and shuffle slowly until they sense warmth. Then, they charge forward with surprising speed. Their attacks can spread the frostburned curse, turning other creatures into frostburned over time. Any living creature can become frostburned.

When they are killed, their bodies completely freeze, becoming unmelting statues. Unless they are transformed into their final ice statue form, frostburned can't die from natural causes. Shattering a fully frozen frostburned ensures that the creature will never be cured, should a cure be found at all.

FROSTBURNED

MEDIUM OR SMALL UNDEAD, NEUTRAL EVIL

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 22 (4d8 + 4)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	4 (-3)

Skills Perception + 2
Damage Resistances fire
Damage Immunities cold
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages —
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Clawed Thaw. When the frostburned takes fire damage, each creature within 5 feet of it takes 3 (1d6) cold damage, and the frostburned can use its reaction to move up to its speed and make one claw attack.

Icy Death. When the frostburned drops to 0 hit points, it fully freezes into a solid ice statue. While frozen in this way, the frostburned is unconscious, and it can't be unfrozen by any means.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The frostburned makes two attacks with its claws.

Icy Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) plus 3 (1d6) cold damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or gain one frostbitten level.



CONDITION: FROSTBITTEN

The frostbitten condition is measured in 4 levels. A creature suffers the effect of its current frostbitten level as well as all lower levels. Each frostbitten level has a different requirement for its removal.

Level	Effects	Removal Condition
1	The creature's speed is reduced by 10 feet.	The creature spends at least 1 hour next to a fire or similar heat source.
2	The creature gains resistance to cold damage.	The creature takes fire damage equal to or greater than its level or its CR.
3	The creature gains the flaw, "You are always cold and must seek out sources of heat."	The creature is affected by the <i>greater restoration</i> spell.
4	The creature must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw each time it finishes a short or long rest. On a failure, it becomes a frostburned , and the Frostburned Template is applied to it. If the creature is a player character, it is now controlled by the GM.	The creature is affected by the <i>heal</i> spell.

FROSTBURNED TEMPLATE

When a creature becomes a frostburned, it gains the following traits:

- ♣ **Resistances.** The frostburned is resistant to fire damage.
- ♣ **Immunities.** The frostburned is immune to cold damage as well as the charmed and frightened conditions.
- ♣ **Frostbiter.** When the frostburned hits a creature with a melee, the target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or gain one frostbitten level.
- ♣ **Frozen Mind.** The frostburned's Intelligence score becomes 3 and its Charisma score becomes 4. It remembers nothing from its previous life and acts only to seek out heat from other creatures.
- ♣ **Icy Death.** When the frostburned drops to 0 hit points, it fully freezes into a solid ice statue. While frozen in this way, the frostburned is unconscious, and it can't be unfrozen by any means.
- ♣ **Iced Out.** The frostburned loses any class features, languages, and spellcasting abilities.
- ♣ **Icy Weapons.** The frostburned deals an extra 1d6 cold damage on an unarmed strike or with its natural weapons.

MAWLURUS

Mawlruses are some of Everden's giants, massive creatures deeply linked to the elemental rhythm of the world. They live in the icy north of the Crystal Expanse and the distant continent of Norden. Their mountainous bodies are strong and perfectly adapted to their icy home. Though their eyesight is poor, an array of needle-like whiskers gives mawlruses a clear view of the world through touch, allowing them to hunt for their favored shellfish in sea and lake beds. Massive, icicle-like tusks and their prodigious size are a mawlrus' main defenses. Adult mawlruses are highly territorial and will chase off creatures that they feel threatened by, even if they pose little threat to the mighty giant.

MAWLURUS

HUGE GIANT, UNALIGNED

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 112 (9d12 + 54)
Speed 30 ft. swim 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	12 (+1)	22 (+6)	6 (-2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +11, Wis +5

Skills Athletics +11, Intimidation +5

Damage Resistances

nonmagical piercing and slashing damage

Damage Immunities cold

Senses tremorsense 10 ft. passive Perception 12

Languages Mawlrus, understands Aquan but can't speak it

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Hold Breath. The mawlrus can hold its breath for 30 minutes.

Ice Walk. The mawlrus can move across and climb icy surfaces without needing to make an ability check. Additionally, difficult terrain composed of ice or snow doesn't cost it extra movement.

Legendary Resistance (2/Day). If the mawlrus fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Siege Monster. The mawlrus deals double damage to objects and structures.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The mawlrus makes two attacks, one with its slam and one with its ice tusk.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (2d12 + 7) bludgeoning damage and the target is knocked prone. On a hit or a miss, every other creature within 10 feet of the target must succeed on a DC 19 Strength saving throw or be pushed back 15 and knocked prone.

Ice Tusk. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d10 + 7) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) cold damage.

LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the mawlrus can take a lair action to cause one of the following effects, but can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

Breathing Room. The mawlrus breaks a hole in the ice and dives down. It can then move up to its swim speed.

Ice Breaker. While swimming, the mawlrus dives bashes through the surface of the ice with its hard head. Each creature in a 30-foot radius of the point the mawlrus emerges from must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or fall into the icy water, taking 7 (3d4) cold damage from the shock.

Shudder. The mawlrus slams its flippers down, forming a 20-foot-radius area of difficult terrain centered on itself.

Part 2: New Spells



EMOTIONAL DRAIN

3rd-level enchantment

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Components: V, S

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

You target a creature within range and attempt to siphon off its emotional energy. The target must make a Charisma saving throw. On a failure, you can choose one of the following effects:

- **Drain Anger.** The target becomes eerily calm. It can't use its action to attack or otherwise cause harmful effects.
- **Drain Fear.** The target loses all fear and sense of caution. The frightened condition ends for the creature, and it is immune to being frightened for the duration of the spell. The first attack a target makes on its turn has advantage, and the first attacks other creatures make against it on their turns are also made with advantage.
- **Drain Joy.** Happiness drains from the target as it suffers mental anguish. The target takes 2d8 psychic damage. Until the spell ends, you can use a bonus action on each of your subsequent turns to cause this damage again while you are within 30 feet.

An affected target can repeat its saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the spell on a successful save.

Added to the spell lists for Bard, Sorcerer, Wizard

GEBBO'S REVEL

3rd-level enchantment

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: 50 ft. sphere

Components: V, S, M (food worth 50 gp, which the spell consumes)

Duration: Instantaneous

You lead a celebratory rite and invite any number of creatures in range to join you in the revel.

When you cast the spell, choose one of the following following celebrations. Each willing creature that takes part in the revel for the full casting time gains the benefit of the celebration for the next 24 hours.

Celebration of Discovery. Creatures have advantage on all Intelligence and Wisdom checks. Additionally, the next time a target consumes a potion, its effects are doubled.

Celebration of Joy. Creatures have advantage on saving throws against being frightened or charmed and on Charisma checks. Additionally, each creature's base movement speed increases by 5 feet.

Celebration of Life. Targets have advantage on death saving throws and Constitution saving throws. Additionally, targets have advantage on the first attack they make against an undead creature.

Added to the spell lists for Bard, Cleric

RANZANG'S OATHBOND

3rd-level enchantment

Casting Time: 10 minutes (Ritual)

Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M

Duration: 30 days

You and up to five willing creatures hold hands and form a sacred oath. When you cast the spell, you determine the wording of the oath, but all participants must agree to it for the spell to be effective. The oath must relate to something you all swear to do or not to do within the next 30 days, and it must be of sufficient importance and difficulty to please the Amaranthine Ranzang. The GM determines if an oath is sufficient. Any attempts to cast this spell on a creature already affected by it fail. This spell can only be dispelled by a successful Divine Intervention.

While bound by this oath, creatures gain the following benefits:

- They can use the Help action to assist another creature bound by the oath as a bonus action.
- Once every 24 hours, while doing something related to fulfilling their oath, creatures can receive Ranzang's blessing, adding 1d8 to an attack roll, skill check, or saving throw.

Breaking the Oath. If a creature willingly or unwillingly breaks the oath, it takes 4d8 psychic damage, and all the other creatures that swore the oath learn that it broke it, regardless of distance.

Added to the spell lists for Bard, Cleric, Druid, Paladin, Ranger

STORMSLIP

4th-level evocation

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 120 ft. (20 ft. radius sphere)

Components: V, S, M (a chunk of amber worth 200 gp)

Duration: Instantaneous

You call down the sky's might to smite your foes and rescue your friends. A 20-foot-radius sphere centered on a point within range fills with rumbling potential energy. You can teleport a number of willing creatures in the area equal to your spellcasting modifier to unoccupied spaces on the ground within 20 feet of you. All other creatures remaining in the sphere must make a Constitution saving throw, taking 5d8 thunder damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one.

Added to the spell lists for Cleric, Druid, Sorcerer, Wizard

TRACK QUARRY

2nd-level divination

Casting Time: 1 bonus action

Range: Self

Components: S

Duration: Concentration (up to 1 hour)

As a bonus action, you heighten your senses to hunt down elusive prey. You make Perception checks that rely on smell with advantage and can make these checks as a bonus action.

Scenting. When you succeed on a Perception check to smell an invisible or hidden creature, your attack rolls against the creature do not have disadvantage. When you hit with an attack against a target you have discovered in this way, your attacks deal an extra 1d4 damage.

Tracking. You can distinguish and follow trails of scent left by creatures within the past 8 hours for the duration of the spell.

Added to the spell lists for Paladin, Ranger