PRIMORDIAL PERIL

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE ENGSTROM EXPEDITION
SAFETY WARNING

Please be on your guard

The Engstrom Cave Complex can be a very dangerous place. Rock falls, slippery footing, and carnivorous megafauna all combine to make an environment where serious injury or death could always be only seconds away.

So far we’ve had no fatalities in the caves, and we’d like to keep it that way.

Stay alert. Stay safe.

It is our mission to tread lightly in the cave complex, and have as little impact on the microbiome as possible. Please be cautious not to disturb the flora or fauna, package up your waste to carry out with you, and remember that removing samples of specimens for personal use is absolutely against the terms of your contract.
DEAR RECRUIT

Welcome to the Engstrom Expedition!

As an active member of the Extremobiologist Society, you have joined the ranks of an exclusive body of explorers and biologists, and you have the great privilege to set foot in a world that few other human beings have ever seen – or will ever see.

This short guide should get you up to speed in what you need to know before arriving at Ice Base 1. Please read it carefully, for your own safety and comfort.

Thank you for helping us to learn more about this incredible view into ancient life. We look forward to your contributions.

- The Extremobiologist Society
GEOLOGY AND LIGHT

The Engstrom Cave Complex lies under the Arctic ice cap on an island in the far northeast of Canada. Hot springs buried deep in the ground have carved out a series of enormous interlocking chambers, ranging from closet-sized to so large you might feel you’re outdoors again.

In some cases, the cavern’s ceiling is thin enough that a substantial amount of sunlight makes it through. The microbiome’s wildlife have also evolved toward bioluminescent adaptations.

The springs make for a hot, humid atmosphere and plenty of mud on the ground. Wear light, breathable clothing, and be sure to bring extra socks with you.
Flora such as ferns can thrive in the caverns thanks to the sunlight and hot, humid atmosphere.
ABOUT THE DINOSAURS

While the creatures found in the Engstrom Cave Complex appear to be dinosaurs, and the jungle-like environment seems like a step into a primordial era, the truth is that these creatures are not true dinosaurs at all.

Their ancestors are almost certainly the T. rexes and triceratopses we are familiar with. At some point, these creatures must have slipped into the cave system and made their homes here.

But millions of years have passed, and in isolation, these creatures—while similar to the dinos we are familiar with!—have evolved to become something new and entirely unique.
A possible relative to the velociraptor
MAP OF CAVES

The Engstrom Cave Complex has not yet been fully explored. This rudimentary map shows some of the areas we’ve scanned so far, but there may be far more left to discover.
MICROBIOMES

Each cavern in the complex has its own microclimate, and an ecology adapted to it in perfect balance. Some caves have a jungle-like environment; others are filled with grass or geological features.

Following are briefs describing each of the caves we’ve explored in depth so far.

CAVERN 1

This cavern allows in a lot of light, and so the plant life is extraordinarily abundant: the ferns and palms grow up to fifteen feet high.

The most notable creatures living in this area are bright-feathered avians, which may be related to archaeopteryx. These shy creatures dine on 50-cm dragonflies, but spook at the slightest unfamiliar sound.
A possible relative to the archaeopteryx
CAVERN 2

The triceratopses are a herd animal, traveling in groups of a dozen or more. These herbivores graze on the thick, waist-high pampas grass that fills Cavern 2.

The triceratops won’t eat you, but they are highly territorial and likely to consider a hapless explorer a threat. Whatever you do, stay out of charging range.

Triceratops
CAVERN 3

The mighty T. rex is here, in Cavern 3. We’ve identified three nests around the cave perimeter, near an upwelling of the hot springs. Visibility in this cavern is low, as it’s littered with ice boulders and icicles, and there is less vegetation than elsewhere.

As you would expect, the enormous carnivores that live here are particularly dangerous to our explorers, and we urge you to steer well clear of them. But don’t worry – you’ll definitely hear them coming.

Tyrannosaurus Rex
SECURITY WARNING

The existence of the Engstrom Cave Complex is not yet known to the general public, and for good reason. Poachers and thrill-seekers would do irreparable harm to the microbiome if they knew of it.

Please help to preserve the secrecy and safety of this natural treasure. Don’t share information, photos, and especially the location of the cave complex with anyone.
JOIN
THE EXTREMOBIOLOGIST SOCIETY

We're always looking for more daring explorers to help us discover and preserve endangered and long-lost species. Keep your eyes open for our other expeditions, spanning the farthest reaches of the globe...

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BY
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