

Lore

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WARNING: This page may contain spoilers and ruin the joy of adventure.

This page is not complete enough; please help if you can.
The topic needs: A lot of this information is outdated. Just a warning, this lore might not be canon.

Lore is often used to refer to the *backstory* of games and other settings. It is the collective history and events that create the setting for the world you play in.

History

Cataclysm DDA takes place in the New England region of the USA sometime in the decade of 2040 to 2049. The game begins by default five days after an event called the *Cataclysm*, changing the mundane routine of a civilized world to that of individual survival in a world without civilization. As it surged forth in a mist of government conspiracies and cover-ups, the few who saw the coming dangers prepared themselves for the end of the world.

See also:

- Timeline
- Newspaper page
- Flyer

Setting

The future government of America is sensationalist, reckless, and in many ways quite dystopian. However, the average person's life is pretty good, aside from the constant threat (or at least claims of a threat) of military attacks by some foreign power (usually China or Russia) that may or may not actually be plotting major military actions. The government has encouraged disaster preparedness among the population, and firearm restrictions are distinctly different than they are now. While not everyone can purchase and own a firearm, and firearm ownership is very closely tracked, it is also actively encouraged by the government to fight off any potential invaders, and higher caliber firearms and explosives are actually available on the civilian market.

The *evac shelters* were built as part of a government program to help improve both the morale of the populace at large (by convincing them the government was looking out for them) while also increasing the general sense of fear and danger (by convincing the populace such shelters were needed). They approved effective at these goals. The shelters were not, however, ever actually stocked - the funding fell out when the military realized both goals had been effectively accomplished, and no more money needed to be wasted on them. After all, in the event that the shelters would ever actually be needed, it is unlikely they would end up very useful - any major military attack was unlikely to leave many survivors. Standing as empty unstocked, relatively insecure buildings on the outskirts of the city reminding people of what could happen was the only service they were ever actually expected to provide.

Fungals actually play a vital role in the *triffid's* ecosystem, and are carried in small amounts on most triffids. It is sometimes used by triffids to prepare an area with rich fungal remains before the triffids move in. However, when it gets out of hand, the triffid's respond with variants specifically tailored to controlling and eliminating the fungus. The fungus also has an inhibitory effect on the ooze, fighting it for dominance - this is how it can take control of infected organisms, creating giant fungal bugs and fungal zombies. The fungus is mostly unthinking, but quite effective at converting both enemies and the landscape into allies.

The *Netherum* - whether *zombies*, *flaming eyes*, *kreks* or *Mi-go* - can best be seen as individual specialized cells in a larger organism, like a human being, sponge or (perhaps the best analogy) a slime mold. The ooze that infects zombies is akin to a kind of netherum stem cell, and can eventually take many forms. Like with stem cells turning into specialized cells, though, more advanced netherum creatures like the *Mi-go* no longer have the versatility of the basic slime and are locked into their form.

Every basic component of Netherum contains the information for every possible Netherum creature, but, just like with DNA, the information expressed depends on a variety of environmental stimulus - including the proximity of a sufficient amount of nearby Netherum creatures of different types.

This is not the first time the triffid's and the Netherum have encountered each other.

The Netherum can't survive exposure to our hostile environment. Larger nether creatures die quite quickly in our world if they stray far from the energies of a *portal* or *other subprime access point*. However, the more distributed version of the netherum has found it's niche living within the bodies of large native organisms, improving their odds of success in multiple passive ways, and taking full control if the organisms life ceases to restart the organism's basic functions under the Netherum's control. With a protective fleshy or carapacian shield between it and the environment, the Netherum is able to persist in our world far from the portals.

There is more than one subprime plane. The Netherum comes from a more distant plane than the triffids and fungals, and is part of why the triffids and fungals can survive in our reality more reliably than the Netherum.

The triffids, on the whole, are by far the most intelligent of the three major monstrous factions. They have more than one system of communication, and several complex languages. They also have a strict hierarchy composed of dozens if not hundreds of disparate and unrelated organisms that exist under the careful control of the triffid hearts. Triffid colonies are carefully managed gardens, with every creature in it's place contributing to the whole under the watchful eye of the gardener. If a triffid heart is killed, triffids will "go feral" and revert to their base instincts.

Factions

There are countless factions patrolling the wastes of the old world, from the relatively benign to the absolutely hostile and from Human to things that were never meant to exist in this world.

Human

Many of the humans that survived the Cataclysm went solo, caring only for them selves, however, many others joined (or were already part of) the major factions that have arisen in this new world. Several of them are:

- The Wasteland Scavengers
- The Old Guard
- Hell's Raiders
- The Free Merchants

XE037

XE037, or "the blob" as it is also known, is a diffuse, sentient extra-dimensional organism fist discovered by *XEDRA* researchers. Extremely adaptable, but finding Earth conditions to be hostile to its native form, it has adapted as best it can and is the most wide spread of all factions vying for dominance over Earth, but its victory is not guaranteed.

In their course of investigations, *XEDRA* scientists found out that the blob can alter the phenotype of individuals who it has parasitized. They used this knowledge to develop a wide range of *Mutagens*, many of which are no longer in their control.

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Various forms that XEo37 takes:

- Zombies
- Insectoids
- Blobs

Mycus

A vast collective fungal intelligence, the Mycus was a species wholly unknown to XEDRA scientists before the Cataclysm. Unlike the blob, the Mycus found Earth to be a relatively habitable planet and has rapidly spread out across the surface, sending its spores high into the atmosphere, determined to colonize and "terraform" the planet before it falls into the hands of any of its rivals.

- Fungi
- Marloss berry

Triffids

Triffids were another species wholly unknown to XEDRA when the Cataclysm hit. A faction of plant-like creatures, the Triffids are in fact a collection of several species all enthralled by the creatures known as triffid hearts. The Triffids have found Earth to be quite pleasant, just like the Mycus, which they have encountered before. Indeed, even the Mycus have been enslaved by Triffid hearts in the past, though the current "wild" group are considered nothing more than a weed to be exterminated.

While their presence may not be as obvious as the blob or the Mycus, they are no less of a threat. Their groves are rapidly spreading throughout the forest, co-opting and enslaving all they encounter. For those who would seek refuge in the wilderness, beware, for the trees are watching you.

- Plants

Nethereum

Not all species coming from the Nether are as successful or widespread. There are many "lesser" Nether creatures who are not as expansionistic or have found Earth to be a hostile environment, though make no mistake, they are anything but harmless.

Coming in all shapes and sizes (many of which don't exist in this dimension) they are powerful, varied and unpredictable. Many having powers and abilities unlike anything humanity has ever witnessed or in some cases, even comprehend.

- Unearthed horrors
- Netherworld inhabitants

Sources

- Official Canon thread on the forum (<https://discourse.cataclysmdda.org/t/official-canon-warning-serious-spoilers-within/3923>)
- C:DDA Design Outline (wiki copy)
- C:DDA Design Outline (google docs document) (https://docs.google.com/document/d/1LhNpXGXmkPOxp_cp0-c9G7xqniwApq-eZSa99exfcU/edit?pli=1)
- C:DDA Design Outline Forum thread (<https://discourse.cataclysmdda.org/t/c-dda-design-outline/5276>)

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