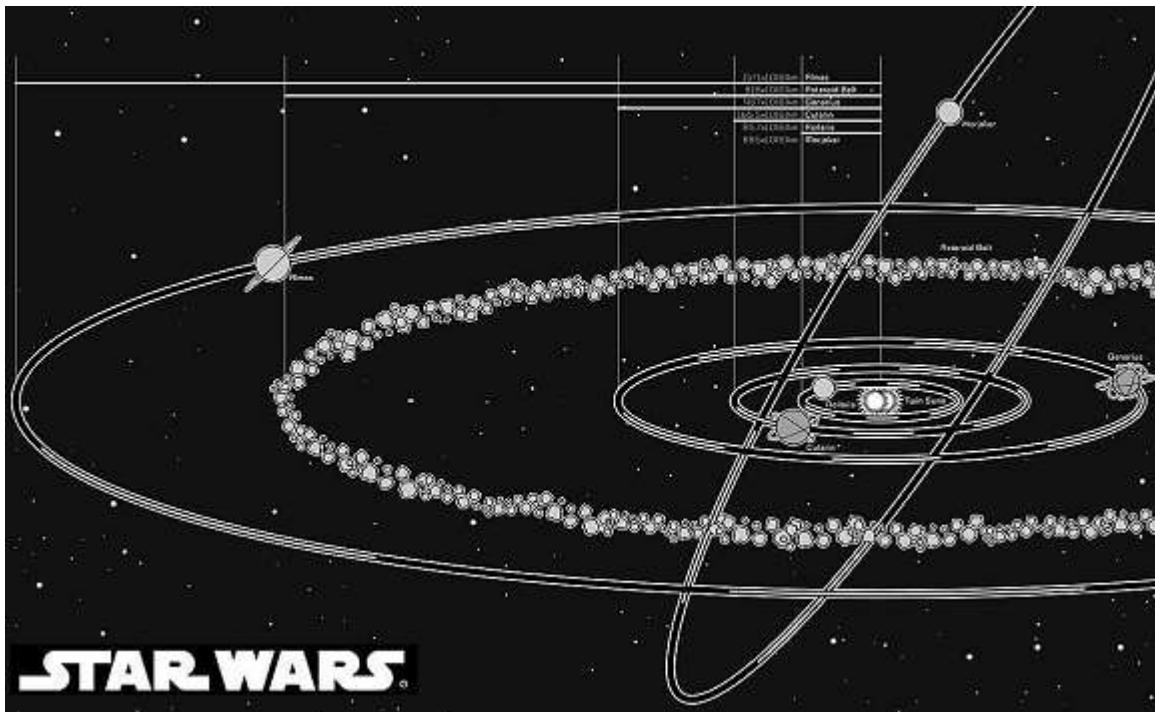


Cularin System



[Click here to enlarge image](#)

Upon arriving in-system, a visitor is first drawn to the two suns in mutual orbit. Morasil was the first star to form. The ancient yellow sun is perhaps as old as the galaxy itself, and it has shrunk in its long lifetime. Alone, it produces a cold, dim light that cannot reach the asteroid belt. Its partner, Termadus, is a white dwarf star. Much younger than Morasil, it has nonetheless sped through its solar lifetime. Now it draws gases from the corona of Morasil, creating a gaseous haze between the two stars. Together, they give the luminous equivalent of a single bright star, creating a gravitational hyperspace shadow much larger than the realspace area taken by their orbits.

Though the Cularian system has easy access to the Corellian Spine Trade Route, it has only recently attracted attention from the galaxy at large. The reason for this apparent isolation lies in the strange gravitational anomalies found there. First, the cores of three of the planets are extremely dense, resulting in larger hyperspace gravity reflections than the bodies would normally generate. The larger gravity wells overlap periodically in hyperspace, making the disturbance even worse. Making jumps into the Cularian system under these conditions is extremely difficult for normal nav computer programs, but it can be done.

Gravity reflections within the system are not the only problem. The whole system is surrounded by a dense cloud of comets, remnants from the system's formation. Most have dense cores similar to the heavier planets in the system, and as they pursue their erratic courses, they interact with each other. Occasionally they collide, showering frozen debris and creating smaller comets that take their place in the strange cosmic dance.

Because of these two dangers, the safest way to travel to the system is to arrive at a point just outside the comet cloud, read the current behavior of the comets, and then make the calculations for a second jump into the system itself. Larger ships arrive at the outside edge of the asteroid belt and proceed with sublight engines to their final destinations.

Acilaris



The closest planet to the suns, Acilaris could be mistaken by some for a large asteroid, but definitely warrants planetary status. Barely.

Acilaris has enough gravity to hold an atmosphere, but that atmosphere is composed of light gases, mostly hydrogen but including traces of sulfur, carbon, and boron. Survival gear is definitely required.

Because of its proximity to the suns, Acilaris has a very hot surface temperature. The surface is much too hot for ships to land safely, and thus no one has been able to visit the planet. Sensor scans of its emissions show a variety of rare minerals, and even some crystals.

The presence of these minerals in other planets of the system has kept any mining interests from attempting an expedition to Acilaris, though unconfirmed reports say that at least one company has contracted with the droids of Uffel to produce some special droids that could withstand the conditions and begin mining.

Almas



Orbiting far from the suns of the Cularin system, the small planet of Almas would be unremarkable except for its importance in the history of the Jedi. The planet itself is an anomaly in space; a molten terrestrial world orbiting beyond the usual range for such planets. The core is hot, but the surface should be ice covered and uninhabitable. The planet's original atmosphere contained methane, phosphorus, and other heavy gases, all of them poisonous. That did not deter a Sith Lord named Darth Rivan from choosing the planet as his home. Darth Rivan built a fortress partly underground, and enclosed the whole in a dome.

But Rivan, like most Sith, was not content to leave nature to its own devices. He possessed some expertise in biology, and over a period lasting but a single revolution of Almas about its suns, used the Force and his knowledge to develop a new species of plant he called

kaluthin. Kaluthin is a wavy, grasslike plant that is green on the edges and deeply purple in the centers of the leaves. The stalks are generally greenish, but contain also white areas that mark phosphorus deposits. Kaluthin's unique properties include the ability to synthesize methane from the air and create oxygen, and a taproot that reaches miles into the crust of the planet. He spread the kaluthin across the surface of Almas, and they slowly changed the planet. The taproots brought heat from the center of the planet, and the methane processing turned the atmosphere. As the plants processed the phosphorus in the air, the mineral accumulated in the plants' structure, and they began to glow. Before he was slain, his creations had begun to terraform the planet from an uninhabitable nightmare into the gardenlike world it is today.

Darth Rivan was driven from Almas by the Jedi during the Sith Wars, and his dome-like home blasted into pieces. The central fortress remained, somehow impervious to blaster fire. The Jedi, thinking that the fortress was not worth the continued effort, decided to leave it. Centuries passed, and the kaluthin continued to prosper. They spread across the whole planet, and by the time Reidi Artom came to Cularin the planet supported an oxygen atmosphere a little richer than humans considered normal. Trace elements of methane and phosphorus make the air slightly poisonous as well, but adverse health conditions don't manifest for a few months after one starts breathing the air here. Breath masks are strongly recommended. Though the planet is far from the suns, and therefore receives little light, the surface is always lit as if by the moonlight of Cularin. The kaluthin, glowing with phosphorus, are responsible for the light, and it can be a little unsettling

to visitors to see the light coming from the planet rather than the sky. Materially, the planet remains nonviable. The expense of mining does not outweigh the value of the small mineral deposits in the planet's crust, and removing the kaluthin would cause the planet's atmosphere to become unstable. Thus, the planet is more like a living plant than anything else, as the roots of the kaluthin bind the soil together.

Under the kaluthin, the planet is largely spherical, with two mountain ranges each of about 200 km in length. The mountains are far from the settlements, and the kaluthin do not grow all the way to their tops. There is no surface water, but below the surface lie large underground lakes where the icy crust has melted. The kaluthin all nourish themselves from these underground lakes, and the settlers dig deep wells to mine the precious water.

From space, Almas looks like a planet of contrasting, and conflicting, environments. Over much of the surface, the kaluthin grow. Other plants have been introduced into the soil, and those that survive form a symbiotic relationship with the kaluthin. On one side, however, there is a desolate wasteland where even kaluthin cannot grow anymore. The center of this wasteland is the ancient Sith fortress. Slowly, the wasteland grows. Jedi have measured the growth rate at about a meter of increased radius per year. Within this area, the planet is cold and dead. The atmosphere is barely breathable even with breath masks. Scholars among the Jedi study the area and speculate on what is killing the planet.

Asteroid Belt



The asteroids are home to two separate predatory groups. Nirama and his criminal organization own the largest asteroid, and the smugglers work from several smaller bases among the floating rocks. Farther away from Riboga's old stronghold, pirate fleets hide among some of the larger asteroids. The pirates change base locations frequently to avoid detection by the military and Nirama, but the smuggler bases are small and protected by the crimelord.

The asteroid belt makes a perfect place to attack incoming freighters, as most of them have to stop and fly through the belt at sublight speeds, or go around. Pirates seemingly well informed of the ship's route converge on a freighter as soon as it emerges from hyperspace, pick it dry, and then disappear into the relative safety of the rocks. These attacks happen so quickly, the military has little or no time to respond. To counter the rapid attacks, Colonel Tramsig recently laid a trap by sending military cruisers instead of freighters on several trips. One cruiser engaged pirates and destroyed five pirate vessels. The pirates have become more cautious in their attacks.

Cularin



Cularin, the system's namesake planet, is covered in lush rain forests and jungles. Mountain ranges reach through the trees and almost touch the skies, forming plains and deep valleys between them. Thick trees cover the whole planet, except in a few places where logging companies have been active in years past. The climate is mild and humid, reaching uncomfortably high temperatures during the height of summer. At night, the inhabitants enjoy cool temperatures. Rain falls almost every day, though not strongly enough to disrupt activities or threaten lives.

Among the planet's many trees are a number of rare hardwoods and the mysterious ch'hala trees. Ch'hala trees are tall with thick drooping foliage. Their greenish-purple bark produces swirling color patterns across its surface. Some of the softer woods are highly prized, attracting great interest from various corporations.

Cularin is a world rich in lifeforms. Great lizards called kilassin occupy the top of the food chain. Of the many varieties of kilassin that live deep in the jungles, most are omnivorous, but some prefer live prey to plants. As settlements continue to appear, the lumbering beasts are driven farther from civilization. A few have been captured and domesticated. Corporations such as the Metatheran Cartel use them as labor beasts when they cannot take repulsorsleds into the jungles.

Much farther down the food chain, small creatures called mulissiki scavenge for food. Commonly seen around Tarasin settlements, these scavengers keep villages clean by devouring waste just about as fast as it is produced. Because they scurry away from any approaching creature, they do not really pose a problem to the Tarasin. In the cities, however, mulissiki are a nuisance. Once they get into the platform cities, they cannot escape. Instead, they make nests in whatever dark corners they can find.

The mountain ranges that cut through Cularin's jungles reach beyond the clouds. The lower ridges support Tarasin villages and other life, but the higher reaches are devoid of all creatures except mulissiki. One range, the Kiallquis, has a sheer face that is particularly suited to speeder racing and mountain climbing. In the past, the Tarasin used it to test the truth claims of suspected criminals (by lowering them over the edge), but in modern times, the ridge is used more for sponsored speeder races.

The intelligent natives of Cularin are called Tarasin. These sentients are remotely related to the great kilassin. Both evolved from the same ancestors, but along different paths. Tarasin developed a tribal society, while the kilassin continued to migrate in herds. Tarasin tribes, called irstats, usually contain between thirty and fifty members. Larger tribes also exist. For instance, the Hiironi irstat contains more than three hundred members. However, most Tarasin prefer smaller tribes and simpler lives.

The Tarasin believe they maintain a symbiotic relationship with their world, a belief that motivates their religion. Through an attunement to the natural world, Tarasin can sense the Force naturally. Traditionally, their religious figures have become Force adepts, but their race did not fully understand the Force until Jedi came to the system. Their religion is based around a simple appreciation for nature. They sense life around them through their quills and value it too much to break the circle of symbiosis. Because of this spiritual closeness, Tarasin do not travel very far from Cularin for extended periods. In fact, they are fiercely protective of their world and its resources, violently protecting it from outsiders. This attitude has forced them into conflict with offworlders twice in their history.

Tarasin tribes elect the second eldest female as chief. She assumes the title of Irstat-Kes, which means "tribal leader." Their society is not matriarchal in the sense that females dominate. In Tarasin culture, females remain in the villages while male Tarasin hunt for resources. Thus, it makes sense that someone who is at the village should be the leader. The oldest female of each irstat becomes a wise woman whom the Tarasin call "Mother." Tarasin Mothers embody the best aspects of the Tarasin way of life, and all look up to them. Tarasin Irstat-Kes and Mothers are often Force adepts as well, although this is not required.

Cularin Moons

Rennokk

Rennokk, one of Cularin's two moons, is a molten wasteland. The surface is covered with lava, and the temperature rivals that of some older cold stars. Magnificent spires of rock emerge from the molten ocean and reach skyward. The tallest rise more than twenty thousand kilometers. The molten surface gives the whole moon a glow all its own, and it can be seen in the skies above Cularin even when blocked from the suns. The extreme heat of the surface makes the moon an undesirable place to visit. Apparently, kind of creature lives in its lava sea, though the only report of it is confusing. What it consumes, or whether there are more than one of the creatures in existence, no one knows.

Tilnes

Tilnes, Cularin's mining moon, hangs far above the surface of the planet. From a distance, the moon looks much the same as it does up close: brown, barren, and virtually devoid of life. Tilnes supports a livable atmosphere, but its orbit is such that two months out of every year, the moon swings close enough to

Morasil that the surface becomes unbearably hot, forcing anything that wants to stay alive deep underground. During those months, while it is possible to walk the surface of the planet, very few creatures do. The only vegetation that ever grows on Tilnes is a hardy brown grass. The only creatures that live on the moon are worms, which feed off rich minerals buried in its crust.

Still, mining companies have established many underground settlements beneath the surface of Tilnes because of the presence of several varieties of crystal, including the rare crystals used to focus energy through lightsabers to create their blades. Those crystals frequently form the centers of much larger arrays, fields made up primarily of less developed crystals. Some are used as power foci for the recently popularized T-32S light blaster, a favorite among smugglers for its compact size and powerful penetration.

Verga Mer Mining Company is the most successful mining operation beneath Tilnes. Its initial settlement below ground has expanded into an almost hivelike network of interconnected caverns. With the profits from the Tilnes operation, it has brought in state-of-the-art mining tools, but very few droids.

Genarius



Genarius is a bloated gas giant located just inside the asteroid belt. Since habitable cities were established in its thin atmosphere, Genarius has rapidly developed into a commerce and population center to rival many Outer Rim systems.

Over 5 million individuals live in the floating cities surrounded by Genarius's orange and blue-hued clouds. Citizens work in a multitude of professions, although some are more publicly accepted and acknowledged than others.

From orbit, the appearance of swirling clouds made it seem as though horrible internal storms racked the planet, possibly supported by the strange glow that emanated from below. Further survey work

demonstrated conclusively that while storms were not uncommon within Genarius's atmosphere, the glow resulted from very deep, very intense nuclear reactions. The core of the planet, a mass of ultradense matter hot enough to nearly qualify it as a protostar, is in a continual state of low-grade fusion. This gives off heat, the strange glow that lights the clouds every hour of the day, and a good deal of energy that is harvested by wily entrepreneurs.

Different cities have implemented the necessary technology in different ways. Ipsus created an almost boxlike radiation shield, a cube of chromium-treated alloys that served as a barrier to the physical winds and the ravages of radiation. Tolea Biqua, on the other hand, has shields designed to use the radiation brought by the winds as a source of energy. They power the bright lights that mark the city's position among the clouds. There was no sense, the city's designers reasoned, to waste a perfectly good source of energy. The storms are now a boon to Tolea Biqua.

The mixture of gases on Genarius is unique in the galaxy. Most of them are unstable by nature, but in combination with one another and the radiation from the planet's core, they stabilize each other. Pockets of argon mix with heavy beskium and three distinct gaseous carbon isotopes to create strange swirls of orange and blue. Over 150 other elements are present in trace amounts (less than 50 parts per million).

Such a mixture of gases would normally prohibit life from developing. Not so on Genarius. A single species of creatures, the jellyfishlike cochlera, have evolved within the dense glowing clouds. Hardy and adaptable, cochlera have never been found elsewhere in the galaxy. This has led to speculation that they are creatures born from the strange mix of gases, organisms that cannot live without the precise conditions that developed

Genarius Moons

[Eskaron, the fourth moon](#)

[The dark moon Ostfrei](#)

[The moon of Uffel](#)

[Flat and rocky Ulbasca](#)

on Genarius. No cochlera taken from Genarius has ever lived more than a day.

Eskaron

Eskaron, the fourth moon of Genarius, was at one time habitable. The moon contained, in addition to the common minerals found in the other moons of Genarius, a rare metal of dubious value in construction. The metal served as the primary source of nutrients for a species of gigantic space worms. Eventually their tunneling and feeding led to the moon's destruction due to structural instability, and the worms moved on to other food sources.

The tunnels run through the diameter of the moon, crisscrossing and connecting many times. Riboga the Hutt began sponsoring starfighter races through the tunnels some 40 standard years ago. Nirama has continued the tradition. Teams have formed to compete in these races, and the sport has caught on. Visitors watch the races or observe practice sessions. Nirama takes a cut of most of the race revenue and bets heavily on the racers. While not officially owning the moon, Nirama maintains control of the activity there. No one questions his right to do so.

Ostfrei

A dark moon, Ostfrei is the counterpart to Ulbasca in the orbital scheme of Genarius. Whereas Ulbasca is always light, Ostfrei is nearly always dark. Its orbit is such that Genarius sits between it and the suns for all but two hours of its day. The atmosphere is composed of carbon monoxide and methane, with soot particles floating like great clouds. The gases refract the incoming light so that very little of reaches the surface. The moon is not habitable, and no natural lifeforms occur.

The moon itself is another rocky accumulation of the most common elements known. A few volcanoes, spaced far apart, spew soot and dust into the air, but rarely erupt with lava flows.

The only activity of note around the moon in recent times has been the presence of Republic cruisers in orbit.

Uffel

The moon of Uffel supports a thick atmosphere filled with numerous heavy and poisonous gases. The small moon rotates quickly around Genarius, spending equal time in light and darkness. Because of the faint light emitted by Genarius itself, it would never really be dark on the moon if it were not for the atmosphere. Thick gases dim the light as it travels toward the planet's surface, with the result that it is usually twilight or night. Days are never as bright as they are on Cularin or Genarius.

Though uninhabitable, the moon's potential mineral wealth was attractive enough to two Twi'leks that they mounted a survey expedition. When their ship hit the thick atmosphere, they lost control. The Twi'leks did not survive, but two astromech droids of the R4 series and QS-2D, a heavily modified humanoid administrative droid based on a protocol droid frame, did. 2D surveyed the situation and decided that because its owner was dead, it was independent.

The clever QS-2D first ran a wholly droid-operated mining operation with the help of Riboga the Hutt. By the time the first mine began to run dry, 2D, which had been exploring new droid designs, had manufactured a prototype MSF droid, a variant on the MSE "mouse droid," that could perform minor mechanical repairs and carry messages. Furthermore, it could hover on tiny repulsorlift engines and work in extremely cramped conditions. The profits from the droid's manufacture allowed 2D to buy Riboga's interest in the mines just

before the crimelord lost the system to Nirama.

Today, Uffel houses more than a thousand droids under QS-2D's guidance. QS-2D maintains strict control over their routines, but their responsibilities are logical and predictable. The original mines no longer produce, but worker droids plunder new mines.

A large city, X2-4, houses the droids and their facilities. QS-2D sells some of the minerals and uses the rest to create new droids. Some droids from the factory join the colony, while others are sold offworld. A spaceport has been built in X2-4 that functions as perhaps the largest droid ever created: The whole space station is controlled by a single droid with multiple coprocessors.

QS-2D's greatest creation, an engineering droid named G-8Y5, develops new droids, makes modifications to existing droid models, and keeps the droids in the colony functioning. Defense is always a primary concern with QS-2D, because it would be easy for a predatory species to come in and assume control of the whole settlement. The droid facility has produced a highly skilled war droid to defend its base of operations. Living beings occasionally come to Uffel. QS-2D holds meetings with clients, buyers come to examine the droid facilities and test out new models, and wealthy people come to commission modifications to their own droids. Breath masks and pressure suits are required, because the droids do not build environmental controls into their structures. Near the spaceport a visitor can find accommodations suitable for living beings. Except during inspection tours, the spaceport is usually the only place one finds living beings on the moon. 2D believes that this increases the moon's security.

QS-2D is one of the more powerful corporate movers in the system, but it keeps the lowest profile. It still conducts business in the name of its dead master, so no one can really verify that the poor Twi'lek is dead.

Ulbasca

Ulbasca's terrain is flat and rocky, with little vegetation at all. The moon's mineral survey indicated a collection of the most common elements in the galaxy, with nothing of any real value. The atmosphere contains enough oxygen to support a variety of lifeforms, including Humans, but it also contains traces of gases poisonous to most of the races in the known galaxy. Breath masks are required if a being wants to spend more than a couple of hours on the surface. Small mountains and rocky canyons break the monotonous flatness of most of the surface. These canyons support the few lifeforms native to this place.

The strangest feature of this moon is its orbit around Genarius. Ulbasca marks a path through the heavens that keeps it constantly in the light of Cularin's suns. Because the dark side is bathed by light from Genarius itself, it is never truly night there at all. The darkest time is a short twilight period when one side faces away from the suns; this lasts for about nine hours.

Small reptiles existing on sulfurous plants predominate in the ecology of this world. The lizards come in various sizes and fill all ecological niches. These reptiles are, for the most part, like the snakes of other worlds, but some have short legs they use while climbing the rocky canyons. Larger snakes can be as long as 40 meters and can swallow a Human whole.

Morjakar



The planetoid of Morjakar does not really belong to the Cularin system. Morjakar's origins could be traced (if possible) to a very old system half a galaxy away. The sun of that system turned into a red giant and destroyed the planets. Morjakar was the farthest terrestrial planet from the sun, and instead of being consumed it was somehow thrown from the system.

Homeless, it wandered for thousands of years, eventually passing the fledgling Cularin system. The heavy gravity of the planets and two suns attracted it into an eccentric orbit, and there it has remained. While the rest of the planets have orbits that all lie in a plane, more or less, Morjakar's orbit lies at an angle of about 50 degrees relative to that plane. It travels far from the suns, then comes back and passes through the system's plane somewhere between the orbits of Acilaris and Cularin.