

Creatures 2



CyberLife has redesigned the Norms' world of Albia using prerendered graphics instead of the hand-drawn art of the original

The original *Creatures*, released last year, introduced Artificial Life to the masses in the form of Norms, an undeniably cute virtual species that could learn, grow, and breed new generations right on the computer screen. But as fun to play with as the Norms were (and are), there's always room for improvement. CyberLife's Toby Simpson explains: "One of the many things we've learned since the release of *Creatures 1* is that the plausibility and overall intelligence of the creatures are directly linked to how real and detailed the components that make them up are. In *Creatures 2*, we provide Norms with considerably more sensory input, more actions they can take, and improved brain dynamics."

Creatures 2 will feature new and improved Norms with an additional 150 genes and 40 chemicals in their organic structure. They will also, for the first time, have an internal organ structure. They're also smarter and able to communicate better, with a greater variety of facial expressions — they should even be able to form relatively complete, if simple, sentences.

The Norms' ecosystem is also getting an overhaul. This world is much larger than the original, with a new seasonal weather system. CyberLife has also added a greater variety of plants and animals, which now interact with each other as well as the Norms, giving Albia a functional food chain. Albia's antagonist species, the

Those adorable Norms are now smarter than ever — so how smart will we have to be to keep up?

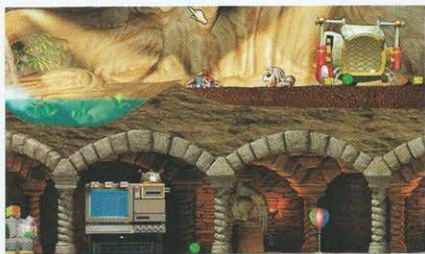
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|---------------|-----------|
| Format: | PC |
| Publisher: | Mindscape |
| Developer: | CyberLife |
| Release Date: | Q4 1998 |
| Origin: | U.K. |

Grendels, are "far more vicious and much more of a threat in *Creatures 2*," Simpson claims, although he adds, "Fortunately, the world is over twice the size as the one in *Creatures 1*, and there are lots of places to hide and make homes."

There is also a new, third species, the Ettin, a kind of underclass that scurries about, cleaning up and moving things around. "They're relatively harmless," Simpson jokes, "except when they're running off with lunch."

Devotees of the original *Creatures* have written a number of interesting hacks, including more sophisticated "teaching machines" for improving the Norms' vocabulary, extra toys for them to play with, and even "Grenorms," a cross-breed between Norms and Grendels. "In *Creatures 2*," Simpson says, "there is far, far more potential to develop genetically specified creatures. The possibility that someone could breed and/or genetically engineer new species rises."

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Creatures 2 also uses real-world physics. Norms can fall down or drop off cliffs — they're also smart enough to learn not to do it again



Besides Norms and Grendels, Albia has a new species, the Ettins