

sun from their faces and leather clothes. The adult cave elf is a dark green colour which enables it to hide in shadows as well as trees, hedgerows and tall grass. They often wear cloaks, sturdy boots and have long beards and pointed ears. However, juveniles are born with a yellowish tinge and red hair which they lose after their 100th birthday.

Cave elves are found in most mountain ranges and hills where there are plenty of hiding holes. Almost all cave elves live in large groups in underground caverns where they feel safest. However, a minority live as hermits. When out and about foraging for food, they will keep to the shadows and this makes them very difficult to identify. They live in harmony and train mice as their pets. The mice are treated in the same way that humans fuss over dogs or cats.

Whilst most elves are renowned for their magical abilities and precious stones, the cave elf shows no interest in gold, silver or any other valuable stones. They are only interested in playing chess and wiling away their time holding quiz shows and tending to their indoor pot plants. These shy and gentle creatures are vegetarians and grow their own fruit and vegetables on mountainsides close to the entrance to their dens. Cave elves present no danger to humans and several have made friends with shepherds who are often out at night tending to their flocks.

Our 'save the cave elf' campaign has been concerned for many years that these delightful creatures might be mistaken for other less pleasant types of elf and therefore be hunted. David Battenburg suggests that where their cave dwellings and caverns have been discovered, it is important to ensure that the location is kept secret. Our advice is that to preserve these mysterious and gentle creatures, all elf lovers living near caves should make sure that vegetable and fruit peelings are left out during snowy weather.