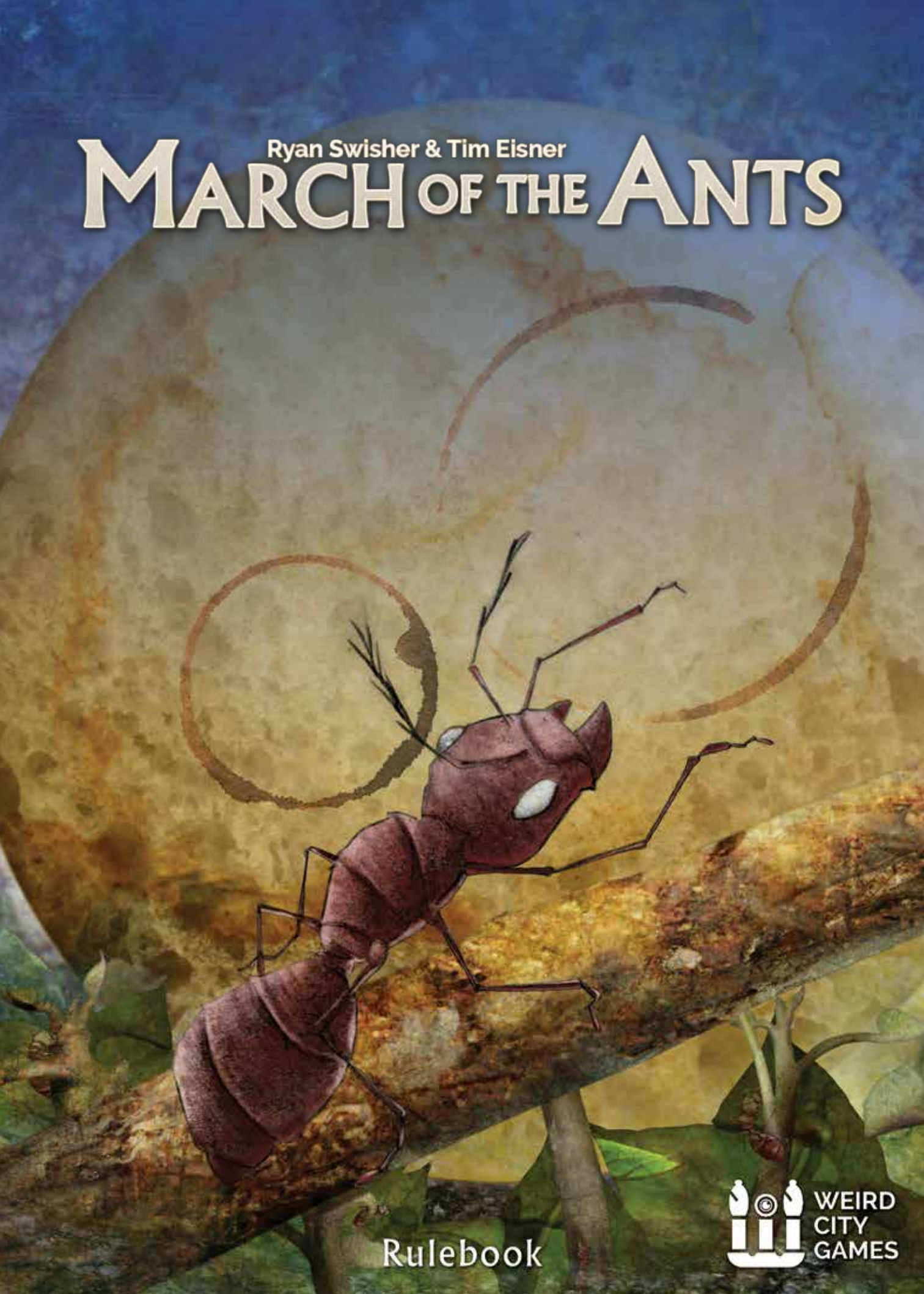
Ryan Swisher & Tim Eisner

March of the Ants



Rulebook

WEIRD CITY GAMES

As spring dawns, the great thaw begins. Deep beneath the lush meadow grasses, the queen stirs in her nest, and the colony comes to life. Soldiers venture forth, battling centipedes and clashing with opposing colonies for territory. Workers dig an ever-expanding network of tunnels in their tireless search for food. The first larvae hatch, and it is clear this generation will be different: the young ants rapidly evolve into a multitude of new forms. The ants march out to claim the meadow as their own.

GAME OVERVIEW

March of the Ants is played over several rounds that represent the passing seasons. Each round has three phases: the Worker Phase, in which the majority of actions are undertaken; the Soldier Phase, wherein battles in contested hexes are resolved; and the Queen Phase, where resources are collected, ants must be fed, the Royal Decree is given, and all the players Slumber.

At the end of the game, the player with the most colony points is the winner. Players acquire colony points by controlling the hexes that border The Great Tunnel, harvesting colony points from special hexes, evolving full ant bodies, winning battles, and completing the conditions mandated by unique Colony Goal cards.



GAME COMPONENTS:

- 1 Great Tunnel
- 25 Hex Tiles
  - 8 Starting Hexes (Gold borders)
  - 17 Standard Hexes (Brown borders)
- 66 Cards
- 5 Nest Mats
- 180 Cubes (egg/larva/ant) - 36 in each player color (Red, Yellow, Black, Blue, Purple)
- 5 Player Markers (one disc in each player color)
- 30 Food Tokens (Brown discs)
- 1 Score Track
- 15 Centipede/Wormhole Counters
- 1 Round Marker
- 1 Active Player Marker

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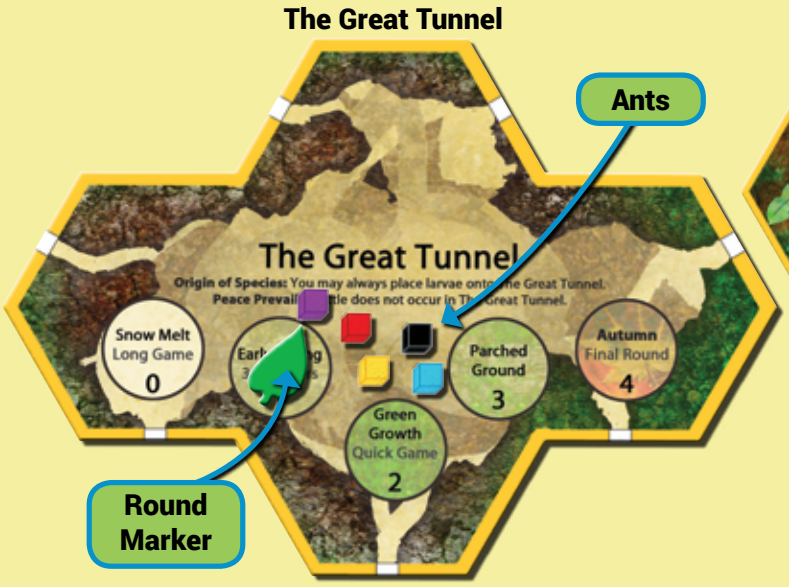
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GAME SET UP

1. Place The Great Tunnel in the center of the table.
2. Place the Score Track on one side of the play area.
3. Give each player all cubes of their desired color and one Nest Mat.
4. Each player places five cubes of their chosen color in their Larvae Chamber, one cube in The Great Tunnel, and their Player Marker on the start square of the Score Track. Each player places their remaining cubes to the side of their Nest Mat.
5. Each player places two food into their Food Stores.
6. Shuffle the cards and deal two cards to each player. Place the deck next to the play area.
7. Shuffle the ***standard*** hex tiles. Place them face down in a stack next to The Great Tunnel. *For your first game, it is recommended to remove all Beyond the Meadow hexes (#21-25) from the game.*
8. Randomly select two ***starting*** hexes per player, shuffle and place them face down on top of the standard hex pile. Return any unused starting hex tiles to the game box.
9. Place food and centipede/wormhole tokens next to the play area.
10. Place the Round Marker on The Great Tunnel on Round One (Early Spring).
11. Randomly select the starting player and give that player the Active Player Marker.



The Great Tunnel



Starting Hex

Standard Hex



Centipede Tokens



Wormhole Tokens



Food Tokens



Player Markers

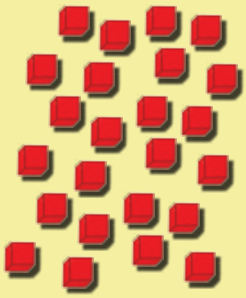
Score Track



In *March of the Ants*, the game board is called the Meadow and is made up of The Great Tunnel and the hex tiles. The Meadow expands during the game as players Explore and place new hex tiles.



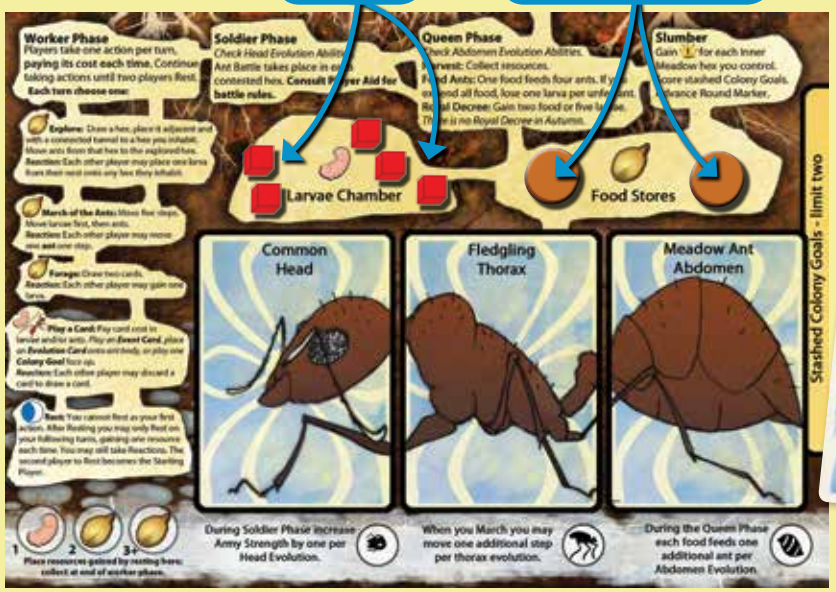
Active Player Marker



Nest Mat

Larvae

Food in Stores



Cards



HEXES

THE GREAT TUNNEL

The Great Tunnel is the center of the Meadow and place of origin of all of the ant colonies. The Great Tunnel counts as a hex. Players may always place larvae into The Great Tunnel as the result of an Explore Reaction, a March action, or a card effect. The Great Tunnel can never be contested, and battles will never take place there.

The Great Tunnel features the Round Track. At the end of each round, advance the Round Marker one space. At the end of the final round, the game ends.

ANATOMY OF A HEX



ICON KEY

COLLECTION SITE - Collect resources during Queen Phase.

CONTROL (COLLECTION) SITE - Indicates control of the hex. Wins ties in battle. Gain one colony point in Slumber if adjacent to the Great Tunnel.

FOOD

CARD

SINGLE LARVA

COLONY POINT

DOUBLE LARVAE

WORMHOLE - Ants may move from a hex that contains a wormhole to any other hex that contains a wormhole with one step.

CENTIPEDE - When a hex containing a Centipede is revealed, place a centipede token into that hex. Ants in that hex must battle the Centipede during the Soldier Phase.

PLACING LARVAE - When larvae are placed in, or moved to, the Meadow they immediately become ants.

INHABITING COLLECTION SITES - When an ant is moved into a hex, it immediately inhabits any empty collection site. If multiple collection sites are empty, the player may choose which site to inhabit. Ants do not have to inhabit the control site first. If no collection sites are empty, the ant is placed in the outskirts of that hex.

INHABITING HEXES - To inhabit a hex, a player must have at least one ant in that hex that inhabits a collection site. Players may not move larvae into hexes that they do not inhabit. Players may place larvae into uninhabited sites as a result of certain card effects.

OUTSKIRTS - The outskirts are anywhere in the hex that is not a collection site. Ants in the outskirts do not inhabit the hex and do not collect resources.

VACATED COLLECTION SITES - If, at any time after resolving any action, Reaction, battle, or card effect, a hex has a vacant collection site and one or more ants in the outskirts, an ant in the outskirts of that hex will immediately inhabit that site. If ants from two or more players are in the outskirts of that hex, players move all of their available ants to inhabit vacant sites, beginning with the Active Player and proceeding in clockwise order. In the Soldier Phase and Queen Phase, ants will inhabit vacated collection sites in clockwise order beginning with the winner of a battle or with the player with the Active Player Marker.

CONTESTED HEXES - If two or more players have ants in the same hex and there are ants in the outskirts, the hex is considered contested. An ant battle will take place during the Soldier Phase in every contested hex. The Great Tunnel can never be contested, and battles will never take place there.

SHARED HEX - A hex is shared when two or more players' ants inhabit sites in that hex, and there are no ants in the outskirts. Ant battles will not take place in a hex if there are no ants in the outskirts. The Great Tunnel does not count as a shared hex.

WORKER PHASE

During the Worker Phase, players take turns in clockwise order, beginning with the player with the Active Player Marker, who turns it sun face up at the beginning of the phase.

Each turn, the player with the Active Player Marker takes one action: Explore, March, Forage, Play a Card, or Rest. When a player takes an action other than Rest, each other player may perform an associated Reaction. Reactions have no cost and are performed in clockwise order to the left of the Active Player.

After the action and Reactions are resolved, the Active Player Marker is passed to the left, and the next turn begins. Play continues until two players Rest.

The Explore, March and Forage actions all cost one food to perform. Playing a card does not cost food. Instead, it costs larvae and/or ants. Resting has no cost.

EXPLORE / *COST: 1 FOOD*

ACTION: Draw and place one hex adjacent to a hex where you have an ant. The hex must be placed with at least one tunnel connected to a tunnel of the hex you are exploring from. You must move one or more of your ants from a single adjacent hex into the explored hex.

Players first draw a hex, then choose which hex they would like to explore from, and then choose which tunnel they will connect it to. Ants can explore from collection sites or from the outskirts.

REACTION: Each other player may place one larva from their Larvae Chamber onto any hex they inhabit or into The Great Tunnel.

A player with no larvae in their Larvae Chamber may not perform this Reaction.



EXPLORE DIAGRAM

1. The red player has at least one ant in Fungalreach, so they can explore through any open tunnels in that hex.
2. The red player cannot explore where there is no tunnel.
3. The red player cannot explore through the open tunnels of Water's Edge because the red player has no ants in that hex.
4. The red player pays one food to Explore and draws a hex (Dry Seep) from the hex pile. The red player then chooses which tunnel in Fungalreach they would like it connected to. The red player places it with a tunnel connected to the bottom right tunnel of Fungalreach. The red player must move at least one ant from Fungalreach into the newly explored hex. The red player chooses to leave one ant behind in Fungalreach, but could move both ants into the newly explored hex. The red player chooses to inhabit the card collection site, but could inhabit either site.
5. The red player only needs to connect tunnels between Dry Seep and Fungalreach. It is permissable for there to be blocked tunnels between hexes.
6. The blue player takes the Reaction to red's Explore and places a larva into Water's Edge.



MARCH / *COST: 1 FOOD*

ACTION: Move up to five steps, moving larvae first and then ants.

A step consists of either moving a single larva from the Larvae Chamber to any hex that you inhabit (or into The Great Tunnel), or one ant from any hex to any adjacent hex that is connected by a tunnel, or from a hex with a wormhole to any other hex with a wormhole.

Any larvae you wish to move must be moved before ants are moved. When a larva is moved to the Meadow, it immediately becomes an ant.

When you choose the March action, move one additional step for each thorax evolution you have in play for the Worker caste bonus. The Worker caste bonus does not give extra steps for Reactions to the March action.

REACTION: Each other player may move one ***ant*** one step. (Cannot move larvae.)

MARCH DIAGRAM



1. The red player wants to move larvae into Water's Edge but cannot move larvae directly since the red player does not inhabit any of the collection sites in Water's Edge.
2. The red player pays one food to March and may take up to five steps. The red player moves three larvae into Soil using three steps. The larvae immediately become ants upon entering the Meadow.
3. The red player uses the two remaining steps to move two ants from Soil into Water's Edge, where they immediately inhabit the available collection sites.
4. There are no available sites in Soil, so the red ant remains in the outskirts. Soil is now a contested hex, since there are two types of ants, and more ants than collection sites. If it is contested during the Soldier Phase, battle will occur.
5. The black player takes the Reaction to the red player's March action and moves one ant one step from Soil into Dry Seep.
6. The red ant in the outskirts of Soil immediately inhabits the vacated collection site, and Soil is no longer contested.
7. The blue player takes the Reaction and moves into Dry Seep outskirts, making it contested.
8. The red ants in Water's Edge cannot move into the vacated food collection site since they already inhabit sites. The red player would need to use a step to move one of these ants.

FORAGE / *COST: 1 FOOD*

ACTION: Draw two cards.

REACTION: Each other player may gain one larva.

To gain a larva, a player takes a cube from the side of their Nest Mat and adds it to their Larvae Chamber. If a player has no cubes in their supply, they may not gain larvae.

If at any time a player would draw a card, and there are none left in the deck, all cards in the discard pile are shuffled and become the new deck. The player than draws from the new deck.

ANATOMY OF A CARD



COLONY GOAL



EVENT



1. **CARD TYPE**
2. **CARD COST** - can be paid with larvae and/or ants.
3. **CARD NAME**
4. **SCIENTIFIC NAME** - does not affect gameplay.
5. (1) **VALUE OF THE CARD** - used in battle.
6. **CARD TEXT** - decribes effects and abilities.
7. **FLAVOR TEXT** - does not affect gameplay.
8. **EVOLUTION BODY SECTION/CASTE BONUS SYMBOL**
9. **CENTIPEDE SYMBOL** - remove cards marked with this icon in the Solo and Co-op game.

PLAY A CARD / *COST: LARVAE/ANTS = COST*

ACTION: Play one card from your hand.

REACTION: Each other player may discard a card from their hand to draw a card.

Card Actions do not cost food, but instead have a cost that must be paid with larvae and/or ants. To play a card, a player pays an amount of their larvae and/or ants equal to the cost of the card. To pay larvae and/or ants, a player removes them from the Larvae Chamber or from the Meadow and returns them to the side of their nest mat.

In addition to the cost, each card has a ( ) number that is used in battle and by certain evolution cards.

There are three types of cards in *March of the Ants*:

EVENT – Events are one time effects that represent the actions of ants or natural forces. After an Event card is resolved, it is placed face up in the discard pile.

EVOLUTION - Evolutions are placed onto the ant body on a player's Nest Mat, granting a permanent upgrade to the nest. Each evolution offers a unique bonus to the player's ants. New evolutions are placed on top of any previously played evolutions on each body section.

Only the topmost evolution in each body section is active and grants its unique effect.

Caste Bonuses - Each evolution grants a caste bonus based on the body segment it occupies. Caste bonuses are counted for each evolution a player has in play.

Soldier – Head ( ): During the Soldier Phase, increase Army Strength by one per head evolution.

Worker – Thorax ( ): When you perform the March action, you may move one additional step per thorax evolution. *Does not give bonus for Reaction to March.*

Queen – Abdomen ( ): During the Queen Phase, each food feeds one additional ant per abdomen evolution.

Evolved Ant Body – Gain three colony points for each ant body that is complete. A complete body has a head, a thorax, and an abdomen. Players may complete and score multiple ant bodies, but each card may only be scored once.

COLONY GOAL – Colony Goals set unique objectives for players to achieve. They also grant a small bonus when played to help the player meet that objective. Each Slumber, colony points are awarded if the objective is met. Colony Goals are placed face up in the Stashed Colony Goals area when played. Colony Goals remain in play.

You may have a maximum of two Colony Goal cards in play. If you wish to play a third Colony Goal, you must first discard one from play.

EVOLUTION DIAGRAM

1. The black player gains the ability from the Tawny Crazy Head but not from the previously played head evolution. *When a new evolution is played, it must be placed on top of all other evolutions in that body segment.*
2. The black player has two head evolutions in play, so gains the Soldier caste bonus twice. The black player adds two to their Army Strength in each battle they fight.
3. The black player has one thorax evolution in play. They gain the ability from the Scouting Thorax, as well as the Worker caste bonus. When the black player takes the March action, they may march one additional step.
4. The black player does not have an abdomen evolution in play. They do not gain the Queen caste bonus. *If the black player plays an abdomen evolution, they would evolve a complete ant and would gain three colony points.*



REST

Players will Rest when they no longer have resources with which to take actions, or there are no actions they wish to take. Players may not choose to Rest as their first action each round.

The first time during each round that a player Rests, they place a larva on the Resting area of their Nest Mat. After Resting, that player must Rest on each subsequent turn. Each time a player Rests after the first, they place one food on their Resting area. Players who have Rested may still perform Reactions.

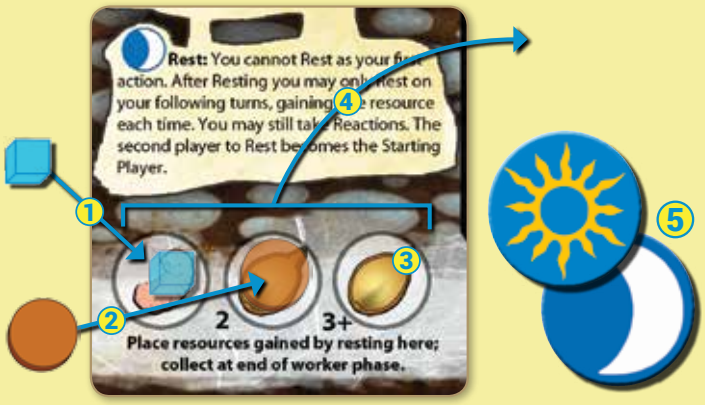
The Worker Phase ends immediately after two players have Rested. The second player to Rest keeps the Active Player Marker, flipping it to the Moon side to indicate that they will be the Starting Player in the next Worker Phase.

The second player to Rest gains one larva.

A player may Rest as their first action of a round only if they have no cards in hand and no food.

REST DIAGRAM

1. Place one larva from the supply here when you first Rest.
2. Place one food from the supply for each additional Rest.
3. Continue to stack food here for each Rest until the Worker Phase ends.
4. The Worker Phase ends immediately when a second player Rests. Move all resources collected in this area to the Larvae Chamber and Food Stores.
5. Pass the Active Player Marker in clockwise order after each player's turn. The second player to Rest flips the Active Player Marker to show the moon side, signifying that the Worker Phase is finished and that they will be the Starting Player in the next Worker Phase. At the start of the next Worker Phase, the Active Player Marker is flipped to reveal the sun.



SOLDIER PHASE

START OF SOLDIER PHASE: Resolve relevant head evolution bonuses in clockwise order beginning with the player who has the the Active Player Marker

Resolve battles by hex number starting with the lowest numbered hex. If a centipede battle and an ant battle would take place in the same hex, resolve the centipede battle first.

BATTLE RULES

Battle ensues in all contested hexes. Each individual battle is between two players. A hex is contested when there are two or more players present in the hex and there are more ants than collection sites. A hex containing a centipede is always considered contested. Battle never takes place in The Great Tunnel.

In each contested hex, the defending player is the player who inhabits the control site. The other player is the invader. If three or more players are present in a contested hex, the invading player is the player with the most ants in that hex, who is not the defending player. In case of a tie, the defender chooses which player is invading.

STAGES OF BATTLE

1. ARMY STRENGTH – Each player states the number of ants they have in the contested hex plus the number of head evolutions they have.

2. FEROCITY – Starting with the invader, each player who is battling may discard one card from their hand face down. After both players have selected a card or chosen not to, reveal the discarded cards.

3. OUTCOME – Each player adds their discarded card's (⚔) to their Army Strength. The player with the highest total is the winner. The defender wins ties.

4. CASUALTIES – The loser loses ants equal to the Army Strength of the winner. The winner loses ants equal to half the Army Strength of the loser (rounded down).

Lone Survivor - If all of the winner's ants would be lost, their last ant is not lost.

Players choose which of their ants will be lost in battle. The number of casualties is determined before either side loses ants.

STAGES OF BATTLE DIAGRAM

CONTESTED HEX – Water's Edge is contested because there are two players present and more ants than collection sites. The blue player is the defender because one of their ants inhabits the control site.

1. **ARMY STRENGTH** – (🦵 + 🐜) The red player has four ants plus one head evolution for a total of five. The blue player has three ants for a total of three.
2. **FEROCITY** – The red player discards a card with a (⚔) of three. The blue player discards a card with a (⚔) of three.
3. **OUTCOME** – The blue player's total is six. The red player wins with a total of eight.
4. **CASUALTIES** – The red player loses one ant (half of blue's Army Strength rounded down). Blue would lose five ants (red's total Army Strength). The blue player only has three ants and loses them all. *Ferocity does not affect casualties.*
5. **SPOILS** – The red player gains (👑1) and moves their ant from the outskirts into the contol site.



5. SPOILS – The winner gains one colony point and may move ants already present in the contested hex to inhabit any empty collection sites. If there are still vacant collection sites players with ants in that hex will inhabit those sites in clockwise order from the winner.

Two players will battle each other only once in each hex during each Soldier Phase, even if the hex continues to be contested after the battle is resolved.

After an ant battle is resolved in a hex, if there are ants present from a player who did not participate in the initial battle and the hex is still contested, another battle will take place. The player who did not participate in the initial battle will now battle the player who inhabits the control site. *If the player who did not participate in the initial battle is the one who inhabits the control site, that player will now battle whichever other player has the most ants in the hex.*

If the player who inhabits the control site has battled each other player in that hex, no other battles will occur there during that Soldier Phase.

CENTIPEDE BATTLE RULES

The centipede is always the invader.

To determine Army Strength, the centipede discards the top card of the deck. The centipede's base Army Strength is equal to the (1) of the discarded card.

The ants fighting the centipede may then discard a card to add Ferocity.

The centipede then discards a second card from the top of the deck, adding the (1) to its base Army Strength. If the ants win, the centipede is destroyed, and the centipede token is returned to the supply. The player who won gains one food and one colony point.

If the centipede loses, the player who battled it loses ants equal to half of the centipede's Army Strength (rounded down).

If the centipede wins, the player who it battled loses ants equal to its Army Strength *(the total (1) from both cards)*.

CENTIPEDE BATTLE WITH TWO OR MORE PLAYERS

In the event that two or more players have ants in a hex with a centipede, the centipede will first battle the player who inhabits the control site. If the centipede wins the first battle, it will then fight the player who now inhabits the control site. If no player inhabits the control site, the centipede will battle the player with the most ants first. If two players have an equal number of ants, the centipede will battle players in that hex in clockwise order beginning with the player who has the Active Player Marker. Each player will only battle the centipede one time in each hex each turn.

If the hex is still contested after centipede battle is resolved, an ant battle occurs.

CENTIPEDE BATTLE DIAGRAM

1. Any hex containing a centipede is considered contested.
2. The centipede discards the top card of the deck. The (1) of the discarded card (three) is the centipede's base Army Strength.
3. The red player chooses to discard a card from their hand to add the (1) of two to the four ants present in the hex for a total of six.
4. The centipede discards a second card from the top of the deck, adding the (1) of two to the previous card's (1) for a total Army Strength of five.
5. The ants win, and the centipede is destroyed. The centipede destroys ants equal to half of its total (five) rounded down (two). The red player gains one food and one colony point, and the centipede token is returned to the supply.

If the centipede wins a battle, it destroys ants equal to its Army Strength (the total (1) from both cards).



QUEEN PHASE

START OF QUEEN PHASE

Resolve abdomen evolution bonuses in clockwise order beginning with the player who has the the Active Player Marker.

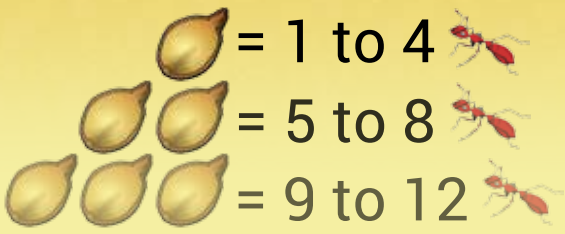
HARVEST

Each player collects resources from all collection sites that their ants inhabit. For each food or larva collected, take one token of that resource type, and place it in the corresponding spot on the player nest. For each card collected, draw one card from the deck. For each colony point collected, advance your player marker one space on the Score Track. Collection sites yield one resource unless indicated otherwise with a number in or next to the icon.

FEED ANTS

One food token feeds four ants. Larvae do not need to be fed. A player must use available food to feed their ants. If all of a player's food is consumed and ants remain unfed, that player must pay one larva to feed each unfed ant. If all larvae are consumed, the player must destroy any ants that have not been fed.

FEEDING DIAGRAM



Pay 1 food for every 4 ants

After all food is consumed, each unfed ant will eat one larva. If all larvae are consumed, each remaining unfed ant is destroyed. Larvae do not need to be fed. For each abdomen you have in play, each food will feed one additional ant.

QUEEN CASTE BONUS

Each food feeds one additional ant for each abdomen evolution in your ant body. *(A player with one abdomen evolution would be able to feed five ants with one food and up to ten ants with two food.)*

ROYAL DECREE

The Royal Decree is given after all ants have been fed. Each player decides if their queen will produce food or larvae.

Each player gains either two food or five larvae.

There is no Royal Decree in the final round.

The Royal Decree is resolved in clockwise order beginning with the player who has the Active Player Marker.

SLUMBER

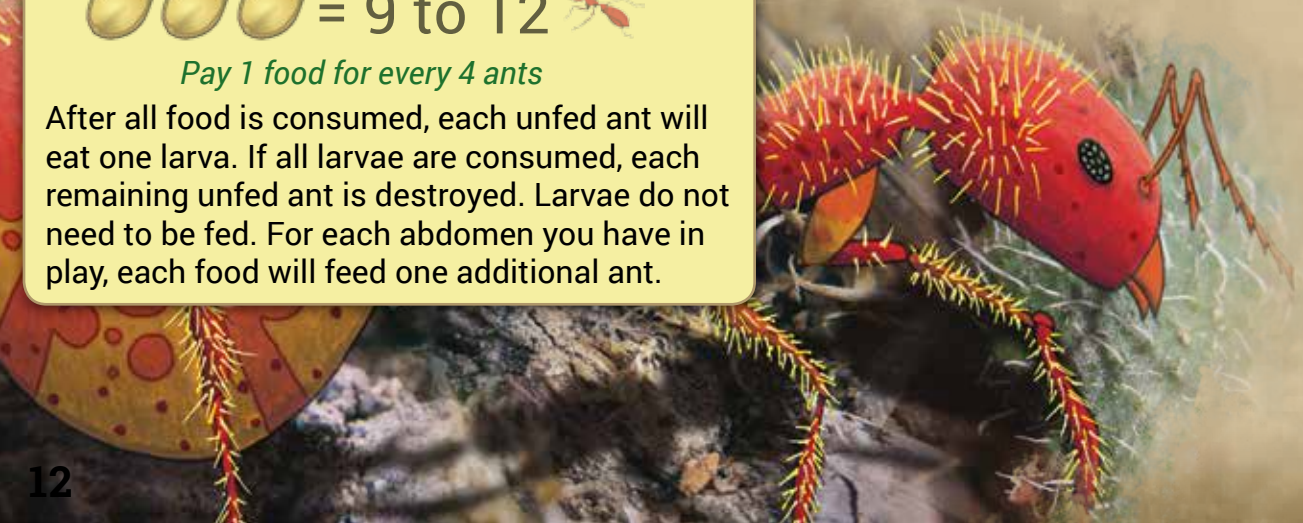
Each player gains one colony point for each Inner Meadow hex they control. All hexes that are adjacent to The Great Tunnel are part of the Inner Meadow. Although hexes must be adjacent to the Great Tunnel they do not need to be connected to it by tunnels to gain points.

Each player gains colony points for meeting the conditions of any Colony Goal cards they have in play.

Advance the Round Marker one space.

After Slumber the next Worker Phase begins. The player with the Active Player Marker (the second player to Rest in the Worker Phase) is the Starting Player.

If it is the final round, end game points are awarded and a victor is declared.



HARVEST

The red player collects two food, four larvae, one card, and one colony point.

The blue player collects two food and one larva.

The black player collects two food and seven larvae.

FEED ANTS

The red player's seven ants will need to eat two food.

The blue player's four ants will need to eat one food.

The black player has a total of nine ants, which normally would require three food. However, the black player has one abdomen evolution in play, so each food they use will feed one additional ant. The black ants only need to eat two food.

ROYAL DECREE

Each player chooses to gain two food or five larvae.

SLUMBER

Inner Meadow

The red player controls Bark and gains one colony point.

The black player controls Tall Sand, Soil, and Water's Edge and gains three colony points.

The blue player controls Loamy Tunnels and gains one colony point. The blue player controls Dry Seep as well, but it is not adjacent to The Great Tunnel and so yields no colony points.

Colony Goals

The red player gains two colony points for meeting the condition of Extensive Tunnel by inhabiting Soil, Bark and Dry Seep.

Advance the Round Marker one space.



Red Player's Card

During Queen Phase each food feeds one additional ant per Abdomen Evolution.

Example Game in Progress



ICON KEY

- FOOD
- SINGLE LARVA
- DOUBLE LARVAE
- CARD
- COLONY POINT

GAME END AND VICTORY

Each nest is vying for ecological dominance and must choose different evolutionary paths and strategies. The nest with the most colony points will live on, passing their genetic code down through the centuries, mothering countless generations of ants to come. The success of each nest is judged by the amount of colony points gathered. After Slumber in the final round, end game colony points are awarded, colony points are totaled, and the winner is declared.

SCORING COLONY POINTS:

Whenever a player gains colony points, they advance their Player Marker (disc of the same color) one space on the Score Track for each colony point gained. Colony points are gained at different stages of the game in the following ways:

DURING PLAY

BATTLES – Winner gains one colony point for each battle.

COLONY POINT COLLECTION SITES – Collect colony points each Harvest.

CARDS – Certain Event and Evolution cards award points during play.

EVOLVED ANT BODY – Gain three colony points for each ant body that is complete. A complete body has a head, a thorax, and an abdomen. Players may complete and score multiple ant bodies, but each card may only be scored in one ant body.

EACH SLUMBER

INNER MEADOW HEXES – Each player gains one colony point for each hex they control that is adjacent to The Great Tunnel.

COLONY GOALS - Each player gains colony points for meeting the conditions of Colony Goal cards that they have in play.

END OF GAME

LARGEST BROOD – Three colony points for the player with the most larvae.

GREATEST STORES – Three colony points for the player with the most food.

UNTOLD POTENTIAL – Three colony points for the player with the most cards in hand.

If two or more players tie for any of the end game rewards, each tied player gains one colony point.

The player with the most colony points wins! In case of a tie, the player with the most ants in the Meadow wins.

STRATEGY AND TACTICS

Players need to carefully manage their larvae and food, ensuring they have enough of each to perform actions, play cards, muster armies and feed their ants.

At the start of the game, it is essential to Explore to secure food collection sites, since food is what allows your nest to continue expanding and evolving. Players may pursue strategies that focus on expansion, evolution, collection, or war, and will likely need some combination of all to become the most successful player. Any player who wishes to pursue an aggressive strategy will need to first build a solid base of resources to be able to feed and populate their armies. In the Queen Phase, choose carefully whether your Royal Decree will produce larvae or food, since your colony will need the right balance of both to thrive.

LONG GAME VARIANT

A long game of *March of the Ants* is played over five rounds rather than four. During set up place the Round Marker on Round Zero. In rounds Three and Four, there is no Royal Decree.

BEYOND THE MEADOW

The Beyond the Meadow hexes (#21-25) introduce special hexes that have unique effects and abilities. Each hex tile has its effect written on it. The player who explores or places a Beyond the Meadow hex tile resolves any effect that it has. For your first game, it is recommended to remove all Beyond the Meadow hexes from the game. It is recommended to add 2-3 randomly selected Beyond the Meadow hexes per game. In a five player game, or a long game, include all five Beyond the Meadow hexes.

2 PLAYER GAME

For a two player game of *March of the Ants,* follow these additional rules:

SET UP

Play with the reverse side of The Great Tunnel.

1. Beginning with the Starting Player, each player takes two of the unused starting hexes at random. Each player chooses one hex and places it connected to The Great Tunnel.
2. Each player starts with three ants in the placed hex, and three larvae in their Larvae Chamber, and two food in their Food Stores, and two cards.

RESTING

After one player Rests, the other player gets one final turn before the Worker Phase ends.

The player may take any one action including Rest. That player keeps the Active Player Marker and will be the Starting Player in the next Worker Phase.

INNER MEADOW HEXES

Inner Meadow hexes must be connected to The Great Tunnel to be scored. Each player gains colony points only for hexes they control that are connected by tunnels to The Great Tunnel.

COLONY GOALS

Goals that compare resources to each neighbor compare only to the other player. If a player has more of that resource than the other player they meet the goal's objective and gain the points.

If player A has Epic Stores and has two food during Slumber, while player B has only one food. Player A would gain two colony points.

5 PLAYER GAME

For a five player game of *March of the Ants,* follow these rules:

SET UP

Include all 8 starting hex tiles.

REACTION

In a five player game only the immediate neighbors of the Active Player may take Reactions to that player's action.

If player C chooses to Explore, players B and D may both take the Reaction and place a larva in a hex they inhabit. Players A and E may not take the Reaction.

Card effects that target all players affect all players.

RESTING

In a five player game, play in the Worker Phase continues until three players Rest. The Worker Phase ends immediately when a third player chooses to Rest. The third player to Rest keeps the Active Player Marker and will be the Starting Player in the next Worker Phase.



ADVANCED VARIANT: PRIMITIVE SPECIES

The Primitive Species variant allows players to start a game of *March of the Ants* with unique abilities and drawbacks. Each primitive species encourages certain styles of play and rewards players for utilizing their powers.

PRIMITIVE COLONIES: Each primitive species has a reduced Royal Decree of two food or four larvae.

Randomly assign a Nest Mat to each player. Each player may then choose to play as the Common Meadow Ant or as the Primitive Species found on the backside of the Nest Mat.

The Primitive Species advanced variant is not recommended for solo, two player or five player games.

CRAZY ANT

DANCE OF CHAOS/ Cost: 1 Food

Discard cards from the deck until you discard an event card. You must play that card for free. Then, you may take steps equal to the (1) of the played event card.

REACTION – Each other player may gain one larva.

DRAWBACKS

FRENZY – You cannot rest if you have food or cards in hand.

DISTRACTED RANKS – *No Thorax Evolution Bonus*

NOMADIC ANT

JOURNEY OF 6000 STEPS/ Cost: 1 Food

Explore two hexes. They must both be placed adjacent to the hex you are exploring from with connected tunnels. You must move all ants from the hex you are exploring from into the newly explored hexes.

REACTION – Each other player may place one larva into a site they inhabit and then move one ant one step.

DRAWBACKS

INFERTILE QUEEN – During Harvest, you only collect one larva from each double larvae site you inhabit.

PATH OF PEACE – *No Head Evolution Bonus*

MUTANT ANT

DOUBLE SPLICED GENES/ Cost: 1 Food

Play one evolution. You may then play an evolution with equal or lower cost for free.

You must pay the cost of the first evolution that you play. You may play these evolutions either on top of or beneath previously played evolutions on your ant body.

REACTION – Each other player may play an evolution by paying its cost. The Mutant Ant gains larvae equal to the cost of any evolutions that are played as a Reaction.

DRAWBACKS

ENLIGHTENED COLONY – Lose one colony point each time you are involved in a battle.

MUTATION – At the start of the Soldier Phase, discard your hand. Draw cards equal to the number of cards discarded.

RAIDING ANT

RAIDING PARTY/ Cost: 1 Food

Take 3 steps (+1 for each thorax). Immediately start an ant battle with one player who has ants in a contested hex where you have an ant. You are always the Invader during the Raiding Party action. *Any larvae you wish to move must be moved before ants are moved.*

REACTION – The player that you battled gains one card.

DRAWBACKS

ONE TRACK MIND – Start the game with only one card in hand.

WAR RATIONS - *No Abdomen Evolution Bonus*





SOLO/COOP VARIANT: RISE OF THE CENTIPEDES

Rise of the Centipedes creates a solitaire or cooperative game where the ants battle an invading Centipede Horde. The centipedes are overrunning the Meadow, and the ants must defend The Great Tunnel.

Rise of the Centipedes is played with the standard *March of the Ants* rules, with these changes and additions. The Centipede Mat is on the reverse side of the fifth player Nest Mat and outlines the rules.

Remove the cards marked with a centipede icon from the deck. Shuffle them and place them next to the Centipede Mat to create the Centipede Deck. Shuffle the remaining cards and set them next to the play area as the player deck.

CENTIPEDE ACTIONS

The centipedes' actions are determined by revealing cards from the Centipede Deck. During the Worker Phase, after each player's turn, a card is revealed from the Centipede Deck and placed onto the Centipede Mat. Depending on which card type the centipedes reveal, they take the following action:

INVADE – Evolution Card: Add a centipede to the Meadow. Place the centipede in the highest numbered hex that does not already contain a centipede. If all the regular hexes are full the centipede is placed directly into The Great Tunnel.

ADVANCE – Event Card: The centipede on the lowest numbered hex moves a number of jumps equal to (1) of the card. With each jump, the centipede moves into the next available hex with a lower number. If there are no hexes with lower numbers the centipede enters The Great Tunnel.

Whenever a centipede enters The Great Tunnel, the Centipede Horde gains colony points equal to the number of players.

RAMPAGE – Colony Goal: A Centipede Battle happens in each hex that is inhabited by ants where there is a centipede token.

During Centipede Rampage, each centipede gains +1 Army Strength.

ADVANCE CENTIPEDE SENTRY– If the centipede reveals an Event card and there are no Centipedes to move, then it will explore a hex. Reveal and place a hex anywhere in the Meadow. Place a centipede token on that hex. If that hex contains a centipede icon, reveal and resolve another centipede card.

MARCH TO BATTLE

After taking a March action a player may initiate a centipede battle in one hex.

CENTIPEDE ARMY STRENGTH

Centipedes discard cards for Army Strength from the Centipede deck.

Centipedes that enter The Great Tunnel will remain there and gain points for the horde each Slumber. There is no limit to the number of centipedes in The Great Tunnel. Centipedes in The Great Tunnel cannot be battled.

GAME END

At the end of the game, if the Centipede Horde's colony point total is greater than any player's colony point score, the Centipede Horde wins and all players lose.

CENTIPEDES SCORING

The Centipede Horde gains (1) during Slumber for each centipede in the Meadow. (In hexes and The Great Tunnel.)

The Centipede Horde gains (1) each time a centipede wins a battle.

The Centipede Horde gains (1) per player each time a centipede enters The Great Tunnel.

Keep track of the Centipede Horde's score on the Score Track by using an unused Player Marker.

NO END OF GAME POINTS

Players do not score end game points for having the most food, larvae or cards in hand.

SOLO GAME ADDITIONAL RULES

Play with the reverse side of The Great Tunnel.

Begin the game with one randomly selected starting hex containing three ants, three larvae in your Larvae Chamber, two food and four cards in hand.

After the solo player passes, the Centipede reveals one Centipede card and the Worker Phase ends.

DIFFICULTY LEVELS - Easy: Start with three additional larvae in your Larvae Chamber.

Hard: Start with only two cards in your hand.

CARD AND HEX DETAILS

EVENT CARDS

A QUEEN'S JOURNEY – The hex that is placed must be adjacent to at least one other hex. It does not need to be connected by tunnels.

ADAPTIVE RADIATION – If this card causes a player to lose and then complete an ant body, they do not lose points or score points as a result.

CULTURAL THEFT – A player may choose not to play any of the discarded cards, in which case they are all discarded.

EARLY HARVEST – Collect resources from one collection site only, not from one hex.

EGG STEALER – If a player does not have any larvae in their Larvae Chamber, they do not lose larvae.

FRENZIED ACTIVITY – A player may choose to Rest with the bonus actions granted by this card. Each other player may take Reactions to all actions you take, including playing this card.

FUNGAL OUTBREAK – The player who plays this card also loses ants in that hex. This card cannot target The Great Tunnel.

INTO THE UNKNOWN – The hex that is placed must be adjacent to at least one other hex. It does not need to be connected by tunnels. A player may only place as many larvae as they have in their Larvae Chamber.

MATING FLIGHT – A player may choose to exchange the location of any player's ant, including their own, with that of any other player's ant.

MYSTERIOUS HOLE – Hexes cannot contain more than one wormhole, or more than one centipede. If a player chooses to place a wormhole, placing a larva is optional.

RAPID MOBILIZATION – May move ants and/or larvae. All larvae that a player wishes to move must be moved before ants are moved.

ROYAL JELLY – Must choose both effects before resolving either.

SNEAK ATTACK – The player does not need to have an ant in that contested hex. In that case, battle will take place between whichever players are in that hex. Battle will resolve as it normally would in the Soldier Phase, including centipede battle, and battle with multiple players.

SPARROW ATTACK – A player must inhabit a collection site in that hex to play this card. The player who plays this card loses ants as well. This card can only be paid for with larvae.

SWARM – Ants may be moved from anywhere; they do not need to be connected by tunnels or adjacent to the hex. All the ants must move to a single hex.

EVOLUTION CARDS

ACROBAT HEAD – May only move ants, not larvae. This ability may cause a hex to become contested, in which case battle will occur there, or it may cause a hex to become uncontested, in which case no battle will occur.

AMAZON HEAD – If the player who has this evolution wins a battle, they gain two larvae even if an opponent does not lose two larvae.

ARMORED HEAD – This evolution does not prevent your last ant in a hex from being destroyed. It reduces the number of casualties by one. If a player would suffer four casualties, they would suffer only three.

ARMY HEAD – A player may use this ability if they have an ant in the outskirts of a hex or if they inhabit a collection site. Placed larvae must come from that player's Larvae Chamber. If returning ants to the Larvae Chamber causes the hex to become uncontested, no ant battle will take place.

BLAST HEAD – If a player uses this ability, they may destroy any player's ants that are present in that hex. When ants are destroyed, the player whose ants are destroyed decides which ants are lost. If this card's effect causes a hex to become uncontested, no battle will take place there.

CARPENTER ABDOMEN – May only move ants with this ability. May move ants into hexes where there are centipedes. If a hex becomes contested as a result of this move, battle does not occur until the following Soldier Phase.

FLYING THORAX – The player who has this evolution must still move larvae to hexes that they inhabit. This does not allow a player to place an explored hex with no connecting tunnels.

GOLDEN FIRE HEAD – To use this ability, a player must discard both cards simultaneously before any player reveals cards.

HARVESTER THORAX – Collect one larva from each larva site you inhabit after exploring (single or double larvae sites both grant only one larva).

HONEYPOT ABDOMEN – Collect twice from one collection site, not from one hex.

LEAF CUTTER ABDOMEN – Collection sites that a player chooses to collect food from do not give that player their normal resource for that Harvest.

PARASITIC THORAX – If you Forage, you must discard the first card you draw (it is not an optional ability). Only gain larvae equal to the amount lost by the player who was targeted by this card.

PHAROAH ABDOMEN – Only collect extra larvae from single larva collection sites.

PROBOSCIS HEAD – This effect happens in all battles, even those that take place outside of the Soldier Phase.

SCOUTING THORAX – Do not show the unexplored hex to other players.

STINGING ABDOMEN – The player who is targeted by this effect decides which of their ants will be destroyed.

TAWNY CRAZY HEAD – This effect happens in all battles, even those that take place outside of the Soldier Phase.

THIEF ABDOMEN – This effect increases each other player's feeding total by one. For the player who played this card, it reduces their feeding total by one for each other player.

TRAITOROUS HEAD – At the end of each Soldier Phase, gain one colony point for all centipedes in the Meadow. If another player is in a hex controlled by the player with Traitorous head and there is a centipede in that hex, the centipede will battle the other player(s).

TRAPJAW HEAD – The player who has this evolution will gain only one colony point from this card for each hex they battle in, even if they battle more than once in the same hex.

TUNNELING THORAX – This effect allows a player to move ants between any two adjacent hexes, regardless of whether there are any connecting tunnels. A player may move in and out of the Great Tunnel in the same manner. This does not allow a player to place an explored hex with no connecting tunnels.

WEAVER THORAX – Other players may not move ants out of a hex that is inhabited by a player with the Weaver Thorax. They are trapped. They may move more ants into that hex. They may also use ants in that hex to pay for the cost of cards. This card has no effect on ants in The Great Tunnel.

COLONY GOAL CARDS

BOUND TO THE PAST – Do not gain points if tied for the most ants in The Great Tunnel.

EPIC STORES/GRAND EVOLUTION/ UNENDING BROOD – Neighbors are the players immediately to the left and right. Do not gain points if tied.

EYELESS OVERLORDS – There may only be one wormhole per hex.

OUTLANDER – You do not have to move an ant, it is an optional ability.

NURTURING HIVE – You do not have to move an ant, it is a may ability. Only counts ***single larva*** collection sites.

XENOPHOBIC TRIBE – Larvae must be placed from their Larvae Chamber. If a player has no larvae in the Larvae Chamber, they may not place larvae.

BEYOND THE MEADOW HEXES

ABANDONED SPIDER'S LAIR – The player who places this hex may choose not to play any of the revealed cards.

ANT LION DEN – Only discard cards for inhabited sites, not for the total number of ants in the hex.

NEST OF CENTIPEDES – There can only be one centipede in each hex at any time. If connected hexes already contain a centipede token, no centipede token is placed.

QUICK REFERENCE

SET UP – Each Player starts with one ant in The Great Tunnel, five larvae in their Larvae Chamber, two food in their Food Stores, and two cards. Place each Player Marker on the start space of the Score track. Place the Round Marker on Round One. Include two randomly chosen Starting Hexes per player on top of the hex pile. Randomly determine the Starting Player and give that player the Active Player Marker.

THE MEADOW – Consists of The Great Tunnel and the hex tiles. The Meadow expands during the game as new hex tiles are explored. All hexes must be placed adjacent to at least one other hex.

THE GREAT TUNNEL – Counts as a hex. Players may always place larvae into The Great Tunnel as the result of an Explore Reaction, a March action, or a card effect. The Great Tunnel can never be contested, and battles will never take place there.

PLACING LARVAE – All larvae that are placed in the Meadow, either as the result of an action or a card effect, must come from a player's Larvae Chamber. If a player has no larvae in their Chamber, then no larvae can be placed.

Larvae that are placed in the Meadow with an Explore Reaction or a March action may only be placed into a hex that is already inhabited by that player (or into Ther Great Tunnel).

INHABIT – A hex is considered inhabited by each player who has at least one ant in a collection site in that hex.

CONTROL – The player whose ant inhabits the control site controls the hex. That player wins ties in battle and gains points in Slumber if the hex is adjacent to The Great Tunnel.

OUTSKIRTS – If all collection sites in a hex are inhabited, any ant that enters that hex is placed in the outskirts (anywhere that is not a collection site.

CONTESTED HEXES – If two or more players have ants in the same hex, and there are ants in the outskirts, the hex is considered contested and an ant battle will take place during the Soldier Phase. If a card effect causes a hex to become uncontested at any point, even in the Soldier Phase, then no battle is fought.

SHARED HEXES – A hex is shared when two or more players' ants inhabit sites in that hex. The Great Tunnel is never considered a shared hex.

VACATED COLLECTION SITES - If, at any time after resolving any action, reaction, battle, or card effect, a hex has a vacant collection site and one or more ants in the outskirts, an ant in the outskirts of that hex will immediately inhabit that site.

DESTROYED/LOST – When a player's ants are destroyed by a card effect, or a player loses ants in battle, that player decides which of their ants will be destroyed or lost. Destroyed and lost are equivalent terms.

REACTIONS – Reactions are only taken in response to Actions – not card-triggered effects, unless they specifically grant Actions (Frenzied Activity).

WORMHOLES – Ants may not Explore through wormholes. Wormholes cannot be placed in The Great Tunnel.

CENTIPEDES – Any hex that contains ants and a centipede token is considered contested, and ants will battle the centipede in the Soldier Phase. A hex can only have one centipede token on it at a time.

ACTIVE PLAYER – The player who has the Active Player Marker.

PLAY PRIORITY – All questions of priority are resolved in clockwise order starting with the player who has the Active Player Marker.

HAND SIZE – The number of cards that each player has in hand is public knowledge.

ICON KEY


FOOD


SINGLE LARVA


DOUBLE LARVAE


COLONY POINT


CARD


WORMHOLE - Ants may move from a hex that contains a wormhole to any other hex that contains a wormhole with one step.


CENTIPEDE - When a hex containing a Centipede is revealed, place a centipede token into that hex. Ants in that hex must battle the Centipede during the Soldier Phase.


COLLECTION SITE - Collect resources during Queen Phase.


CONTROL (COLLECTION) SITE - Indicates control of the hex. Wins ties in battle. Gain one colony point in Slumber if adjacent to the Great Tunnel.