

Summon the Swarm

As pesticides and a changing climate devastate bee populations around the world, evolution seizes on a powerful new mutation - intelligence! You lead a colony of bees making the most of their newfound strategic abilities. Still unable to overcome the fatal nature of your stings, you start to capture and co-opt the abilities of other insects instead. But it seems you're not the only leader vying for an evolutionary niche. Can your swarm grow in size and power fast enough to defeat the others?

Aim

Defeat all the other players by destroying their Hives or all their units. But since each player's Hive is protected by its Antechambers and a swarm of furious insects, this is not as simple as it may seem...

Components

- 4x Sets of Core Cards (12 cards) - The Hive, Left Antechamber, and Right Antechamber
- 28x Level One Cards
- 15x Level Two Cards
- 7x Level Three Cards
- 30x Single Unit Counters
- 20x Five Unit Counters
- 4x Player Level Markers

Setup

Remove all the Hive and Antechamber cards and set aside. Separate the remaining cards into four piles, grouped by the level value on the back of each card.

Give each player a Hive and the Left and Right Antechamber cards. Place these face-up in front of each player.

Create the Marketplace of face-up cards, in rows by level as shown:

L1 Deck	1st L1 Card	2nd L1 Card	3rd L1 Card
L2 Deck	1st L2 Card	2nd L2 Card	
L3 Deck	L3 Card		Discard Pile

Place each player's Player Level Marker beside the Level One deck. This is their swarm's starting level of intelligence, and indicates that only cards of this level or lower may be acquired.

Give each player five (5) units and place them on their Hive. The player who most recently squished an insect goes first (you monster!) and returns one unit from their Hive to the Supply.

The Core Cards

The three cards in front of each player the Hive and the Left and Right Antechambers. These are the Core Cards, and they are all Structure cards. Structures describe one or two actions which can be activated by placing a group of units of the required size on this card during a turn. These three Core Structures provide the main actions a player may perform in their turn:

- Playing a Structure or Event card from your hand. A newly played structure receives one free unit from the Supply.

- Breeding the Swarm in the Hive, which doubles the quantity of units on it and adds the new units directly into the Swarm where they can be used in that turn.
- Breeding the Swarm in any other Structure, which doubles the quantity of units on it, but with the new units left on that same Structure.
- Repairing a damaged Structure. (A structure card which has been turned sideways.)
- Evolving the Swarm to the next level of intelligence, which allows acquiring cards of the next level from the Marketplace.

The Core Cards are the home of the original swarm of bees, and as such have some additional rules compared to other Structures.

1. The Antechamber cards can be damaged but cannot be destroyed.
2. The Hive cannot be damaged or attacked unless both its Antechambers are. If the Hive is left empty at the end of its owner's turn it is damaged regardless - you should avoid doing that!
3. The Hive cannot be damaged and destroyed in a single turn.
4. The Hive cannot be repaired.

The combination of these rules means that the Hive is protected by its Antechambers. If both of these are either damaged or empty, then the Hive is vulnerable. And once the Hive itself is damaged, it will only take one more attack that removes all its units or one more action that damages it to eliminate this swarm forever.

Other Cards

The other two types of cards are Events and Reactions. Events are played and then give that player the right to immediately perform the action written on the card, before discarding the card to the Discard Pile. Reactions are held and played at no cost in response to an enemy action as per the description on the card. Events and Reactions both represent the coercion of another type of insects to do your bidding.

Structures represent the homes of other insects, now co-opted into your Swarm. These Structures can be damaged (shown by turning them sideways) and then damaged again, destroying them. A destroyed Structure is moved to the Discard Pile. Many cards have damage or destroy abilities, but any Structure left empty at the end of its player's turn is also damaged. An already damaged Structure that is left empty is destroyed.

Gameplay

Players take turns in clockwise order, continuing until only one player remains in the game. Until each player has taken a turn, no actions that would remove units from another player's Swarm are permitted.

On your turn, first Summon the Swarm: clear all units off all structures you have in play and place these in a pile in front of you. This is your Swarm, and you may now place groups of them onto your own structures, your opponent's structures, or face-up marketplace cards until there are no more units remaining to place. You may place additional groups after the first onto the same location, but beware doing this on an opponent's cards as the Swarm loses a unit whenever it lands on an occupied enemy structure.

Marketplace Cards

When you place a group onto a face-up marketplace card, if there are more units than the cost of the card, take that card into your hand.

Player Structures

When you place a group onto your own structure, if there are more units than some of the structure's actions require, you may choose to use any one action for which the group is sufficient. After using an action, tap the card (rotate it slightly) to indicate this. If a structure is already tapped, no more actions can be used even if another group is added.

- For example: a player's undamaged structure has an action that activates when three units are on it and another that activates when five units are on it. If at least three units are placed on this structure, the first action may be activated. If at least five units are placed on this structure, either action may be activated.

Opponent Structures

When you place a group onto an occupied opponent's structure, remove one unit from this group immediately as a penalty for landing in enemy territory. If this structure already has enemy units on it, you are attacking the structure, otherwise you are simply using it. When attacking a structure, remove equal numbers of units from your group and those on the structure until one team's units are all removed. Return all the removed units to the Supply. You may place an additional group onto this structure but must again remove one unit for doing so if it is still occupied.

If the enemy has no units left on the structure, and you now have more units on this structure than some of its actions require, you may choose to use any one action for which the group is sufficient. After using an action, tap the card (rotate it slightly) to indicate this. If a structure is already tapped, no more actions can be used even if another group is added.

- For example: an enemy structure has an action that activates when three units are on it, and five enemy units are currently on this structure. For the active player to use this structure they must place a group of nine units on the structure - one unit is removed for landing in enemy territory, five units are needed to defeat the five defending units, and another three to activate the action. Those final three units are also removed at the end of the turn.

Clean-up

At the end of a player's turn, do the following in order:

- Remove any enemy units from all structures, returning them to their respective supplies.
- Discard any damaged structure (except Antechambers) that is also empty.
- Damage any empty structure by turning its card sideways.
- Remove any excess units beyond a structure's capacity, for all players.
- Un-tap all tapped cards.
- Replenish the marketplace by drawing from the face-down decks as required. If the draw pile is empty, the marketplace no longer replenishes, but the game continues.