

THE PHYLOMON ECOSYSTEM GAME!

Age: 8 years old and up.

Number of players: 2 (possible with 3 and 4, although tricky with the rectangular card shape)

Minimal Deck Required: Each player needs a deck of at least 25 cards (1 home card + at least 24 others). You can download the starter deck, which has a pool of about 100 cards to work with. Note that players can use bigger decks, but that the 25 per person total is a reasonable size that won't crowd a small tabletop size (cards are played on a table top and take up space!). A general tip for constructing your own deck is to make sure you have at least 10 #FOODRANK=1 cards, as well as making sure that there aren't any terrains or climates that are super rare. As well, the more event cards you have, the more interesting (and strategic) the game can get!

Easy Instructions: (Note that detailed rules with diagrams can be found at phylogame.org/game-play).

There are 2 players sitting at a table across from each other. Before starting, the table will have two home cards placed next to each other, one for each player and also "facing" that player. Players will also each have their own deck of 24+ cards and their own discard pile. These player decks can be custom built, or shuffled randomly from a starter deck.

When players play a card, they will put down their cards so that they are facing them. This way, at the end of the game, each player will know which cards are theirs and which are their opponents. For each turn, a player gets to **pick up 1 card and can take 3 actions**. An action can include the following:

- Pass and do nothing.
- Move a card.
- Play an event card (limit once per turn)
- Discard one card to pick up 3 new ones
- Play a species card.

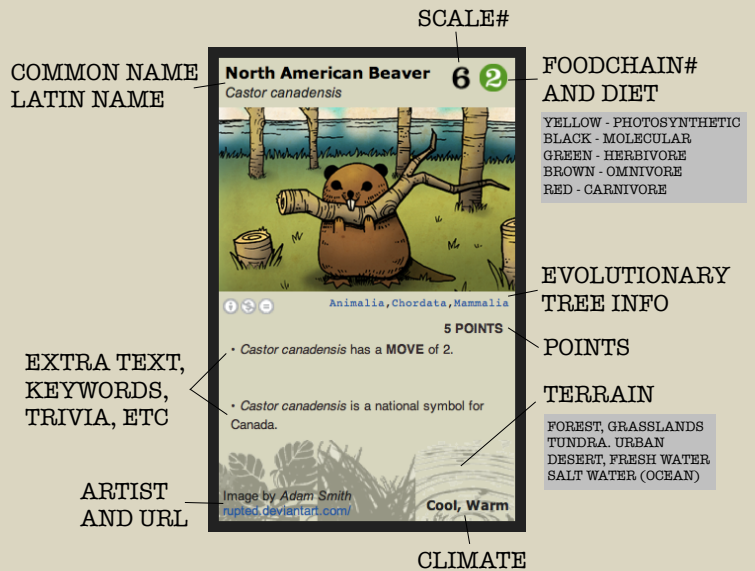
Rule #1: Home cards are considered wild cards with respect to terrain and climate. One always needs a plant or other autotroph played first (food chain rank = 1). Furthermore, for the rest of the game, because these cards make their own food, they can be played anywhere as long as the Terrain and Climate matches.

Rule #2: Once a plant is played, herbivores and omnivores can be played beside plants with matching Terrain and Climate, then matching carnivores can be played. Note that an animal must be larger in scale and of higher food chain number in order to eat their neighbouring prey (unless otherwise stated on the card). Together, these first two rules allow you to build food chain webs and create ecosystems.

Rule #3: You can build these food chain webs using only your own cards, or you can build them by playing your cards next to your opponent's cards. Both strategies work, but each has different advantages and disadvantages.

Rule #4: Event cards can be played as an action. These cards have specific instructions on them, but are often played on an opponent's species card, altering or removing them from the table. Be careful of the consequences as removal of cards can have far reaching effects...

Rule #5: You can also move cards as an action. A species with the term "move" can only move in a horizontal or vertical way (up/down, sideways). Species with "flight" abilities can also move in diagonal directions. Don't forget that moving a species can sometimes disrupt food chain webs!



If a species card has the word “spread” on it, it means that if you have another of the same card in your hand, you can play it next to the original. This still requires a space on the table, but does not take up an action (spreading tends to be only possible with plant and microbe cards).

Rule #6: Your opponent will get one turn to react to the effects of an event card or to the effects a species card moving. This might involve moving species to a place on the table where they can still connect to a food chain web. (see detailed instructions for examples). As well, sometimes, there are event cards that can help out.

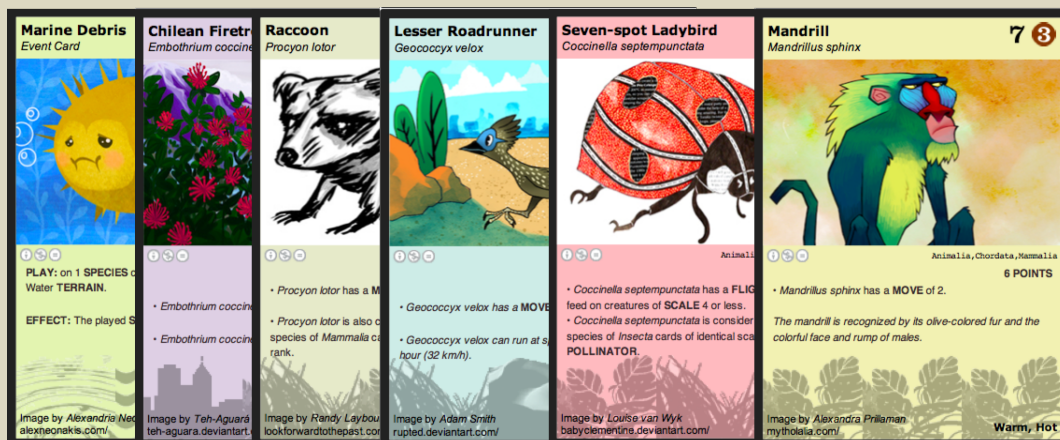
After this one turn, any cards which have lost their food chain connections (like a herbivore without a plant containing matching climate/terrain) will then be removed from the table and put in the discard pile. Do look at the table carefully: sometimes many cards will need to be removed (i.e. kind of like a domino effect where losing one card, means losing another, and etc, etc, etc).

Rule #7: Invasive species can be played on top to replace an opponent’s species card and gain you points. Parasite cards are played underneath another species card and don’t kill the species, although still gain you points at the end of the game.

Rule #8: Continue playing until no more cards can be played. At that point, each player will count up their points on the table. The player with the most points is the winner!

Optional Rule: Sometimes, two cards will be played next to each other where it works according to the game’s rules, but would never actually happen in real life. This might be because the two species don’t actually live in the same country, despite sharing compatible terrains and climates. Or it might happen because according to scientific study, a species diet might be quite special and limited to certain types of things, so that whilst a card might “fit” as food (according to the rules), it wouldn’t actually be eaten in real life.

Because of this, you can play the game where you agree not to worry about such things, **or** you can play the game where you include a “call your bluff” rule. Here, in a way similar to the game Scrabble, a player can challenge these strange connections by using Wikipedia or the Encyclopaedia of Life to check for something that may be inaccurate. Whoever wins this “call your bluff” gets to remove **any** card from the table with **immediate** consequences (i.e. no giving a player a turn to react). Note that sometimes, this will be hard to check. To help, some future decks may provide a food web key to help.



THERE’S ALSO HUNDREDS OF MORE CARDS AVAILABLE FOR FREE PRINTING AT <http://phylogame.org>

PLUS, KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR SPECIAL MUSEUM DECKS SOON TO BE AVAILABLE AT PARTICIPATING MUSEUMS!

PHYLO: THE TRADING CARD GAME