Evolve!

The Game of Unnatural Selection

A card game by Andrew Rader & Ryan Consell

Summary

The aim of **Evolve!** is to become the dominant species on the planet. In doing this, you'll create and mutate creatures to compete for supremacy throughout shifting environments over the course of the game.

In the Box

- 72 *Creature* cards.
- 21 *Challenge* cards.
- 15 *Biome* cards.
- 6 Creature sheets ~ one for each player.
- 30 colored blocks ~ 5 for each player: 4 to mark attribute tracks on creature sheets, 1 to mark dominance points on dominance track.
- 1 Dominance track.

Creatures

Each player controls one creature which is depicted on their Creature Sheet. Creatures are rated in four attributes: *Aggression*, *Resilience*, *Allure*, and *Gathering*. They may also have special abilities, for example **Flying**, **Swimming**, **Climbing**, or **Camouflage**.

[Insert Example creature card]

Each player begins with the same basic creature, the primordial ancestor, with attributes all equal to zero and no special abilities. Throughout the game, you'll play creature cards (heads ~ yellow, bodies ~ blue, tails ~ green, and adaptations ~ red) on your creature sheet to modify your creature's attributes and special abilities. You can only ever have one of each type of creature card in play, but you can replace a card on your creature, discarding the old card.

Attributes

Attribute values are used to win Challenges. Your attribute tracks indicate your creature's current attributes, i.e., the sum of attributes contributed by the creature cards on your creature. Note that some attributes can be negative. The maximum value of any attribute is 10, and the minimum value is -2.

Special Abilities

In addition to the four attributes, a creature may have special abilities. These sometimes play a role in challenges (i.e., modifying your attribute score), but mainly they are used to score dominance points for Biome. Additionally, the special ability **Flying** breaks all scoring ties.

Adaptations

Adaptations are played in the top right of your creature sheet. These work exactly like body parts, except that some allow their controlling player to do special things outside the normal rules of the game when part of a creature.

Game Setup

1. Give each player a creature sheet 5 colored blocks, and deal each 8 random creature cards which players will keep hidden in their

hand. Place the remaining creature cards face-down in a deck.

2. Set all creature attributes to zero, and place one of the colored blocks for each player in the '0' slot of the Dominance Track.
3. Shuffle the Challenge cards and place them face-down in a deck.
4. Remove the **Dying Sun** Biome card. Separate the remaining Biome cards into 3 random sets: two sets of 5 and a set of 4. Shuffle the **Dying Sun** card into the set of 4 cards and place one set of 5 cards above it, and one set of 5 cards below it, face-down. This means that the **Dying Sun** Biome card should be somewhere in the middle of the Biome deck.

Sequence of Play

The game is played in a series of rounds. In each round, there will be one Biome and one Challenge. The game ends after the **Dying Sun** Biome is resolved. Each round consists of the following steps:

1. Reveal Biome
2. Select Challenge
3. Mutate Creatures
4. Score Dominance Points & Collect Cards

Reveal Biome

For the first round, simply reveal the top card from the Biome deck. When you do this, also turn over the next Biome card and place it face-up on top of the Biome deck. Do this on all future rounds (except the last), so that players always have a preview of what the next Biome will be.

[Insert Example Biome]

Select Challenge

Once the Biome has been revealed, select the Challenge for this round (unless the Biome is **Dying Sun** for which there is no Challenge card). On the first round, simply reveal the first Challenge card. As with Biome, turn the next Challenge card face-up on the top of the Challenge deck, so that players always have a preview of what the next Challenge will be.

On game rounds except the first and last, the player with the least expensive creature (if any) selects the Challenge by picking up the revealed Challenge card for the round and also the next unrevealed card, and deciding which to use for this round. The other card is discarded. This means that the Challenge actually played may not be the one which was previewed. If two are more players are tied for the least expensive creature, no one selects the Challenge, and you just play the one which was previewed.

If a Challenge indicates an action to be performed before scoring (for example, for *Crossbreeding*, for each player to draw a creature card and add it to the creature owned by the player to their right if they wish), this action is resolved immediately upon selecting a Challenge.

[Insert Example Challenge]

Mutating Creatures

After revealing the Biome and selecting the Challenge, each player may play one (and only one) creature card if they wish. The cost to play a creature card is indicated on the top right of the card, next to the DNA symbol. You pay this cost by discarding other cards from your hand. For example, to play a creature card with a cost of '5', you must discard 5 other cards from your hand (reshuffle the creature card deck when you run out of cards).

You can't remove a card from your creature. You can replace a card of the same type (e.g., head) on your creature, but you must discard the old card (and can't use it to pay the cost of playing a creature card).

Score Dominance Points & Collect Cards

For Biomes, you score 1 dominance point for each special ability you match with abilities listed at the top of the Biome Card. For example, in desert, you score one point if you have **Survival** and 1 point if you have **Burrowing**, or 2 points if you have both. You never score more than 1 point per ability, even if two of your body parts have the same ability.

You lose 1 dominance point if you have the ability listed at the bottom of the Biome card. For example, in desert, creatures with **Swimming** lose 1 point. However, if you lose a point, you also draw a creature card (creatures which are poorly adapted to their environment face more evolutionary pressure.

Next, score and draw cards for Challenges. Special Challenges are indicated with an asterisk (*****). For these Challenges, resolve dominance point scoring as indicated on the card, and all players draw two creature cards. Note that **Flying** beats ties. For example, for *Circle of Life*, an aggression score of 2 would be considered higher than a resilience score of 2 only if the aggressor had **Flying** (and not if the hunted player also had **Flying**).

Other non-asterisk (*****) Challenges have criteria for "winning", which is often the sum or difference of attribute scores. For example, *Nesting* indicates that the creature with the highest allure plus gathering (i.e., added together) "wins". For these Challenges, compare the scores of all creatures on the indicated criteria, and award points and cards as follows:

- First place: 3 points & 1 creature card
- Second place: 2 points & 2 creature cards
- Third place: 1 point & 3 creature cards
- Fourth+ place: no points but 4 creature cards

If two or more players are tied, they all score the same number of dominance points and earn the same number of cards, and the next highest score would be considered the next place. For example for *Mating Frenzy* (highest allure wins), if players had allures of 6, 6, 5, 5, & 1, the players with 6 allure would earn 3 points and draw one card, the players with 5 allure would earn 2 points and draw two cards, and the player with 1 allure would earn 1 point and draw three cards.

Note that **Flying** beats ties for scoring. In the above example, if one of the players with an allure of 5 had **Flying**, the players with 6 allure would earn 3 points and draw one card, the player with 5 allure and **Flying** would earn 2 points and draw two cards, the other player with 5 allure would earn 1 point and draw three cards, and the player with 1 allure would earn no points but draw four cards.

End of Round

At the end of each round, players must discard any cards in excess of 10 in their hand. Then move on to the next round of the game, except if the Biome was **Dying Sun**.

Dying Sun & End of the Game

If the Biome is **Dying Sun**, there is no Challenge card. Instead, after mutating creatures, play out one sub-challenge on each attribute score. I.e., players can earn up to 3 dominance points for each of:

- Highest aggression
- Highest resilience
- Highest allure
- Highest gathering

This means that on the last round of the game, players could potentially earn up to 12 dominance points.

After all scoring is complete, the player with the highest dominance score wins.