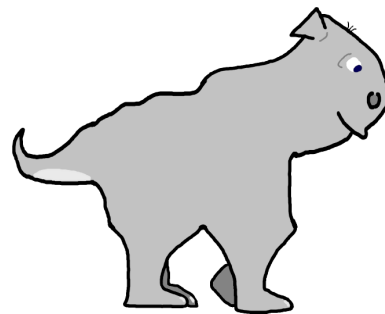


Galapagos

A Game of Evolution

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*"I have called this principle, by which each slight variation, if useful, is preserved, by the term Natural Selection."
-- Charles Darwin, The Origin of Species*

I. Introduction

Galapagos is a game for two to four players. Each player controls a single animal species and tries to make that species thrive and multiply. Players use cards to give their species new traits to make them better able to capture food and defend themselves against attack, and all players compete with each other to obtain prey. Sometimes, they may even prey on each other!

II. Object of the Game

The overall object of the game is to score the most points over one or more of play (see **Victory Conditions** below). A round of play consists of each player starting by constructing a species and then proceeding to hunt for food, adapt, and compete with other players' species until only one or fewer players remain in the game. During a given round, you score points by maintaining high populations of your organisms and by achieving certain goals (such as being the last species alive or achieving your Secret Goal for the round). A round can end when all players' species are extinct, when all but one player's species are extinct, or when one player reaches the population limit (30 organisms).

III. Victory Conditions

There are three ways to play Galapagos. These are:

One Round - Play a single round. The winner is the player with the highest score at the end. This will often be the player whose species was the only one to survive the game.

Total Score - Play until one or more players has reached a certain score after any round of play. For a reasonable length game of several rounds, 70 to 100 points works pretty well.

Rounds - Play for a specified number of rounds, and at the end, the player with the highest total score wins. For a reasonable length game, play three rounds.

You may also adjust the victory conditions as desired, or just play one round at a time - whatever your group desires.

IV. Game Parts

The following parts should be included in your Galapagos game:

- Four Playboards
- A deck of 160 Galapagos cards
- One Prey Board
- 8 Secret Goal cards
- Three ten-sided dice
- One hundred organism tokens






These parts are described below.

Playboards - The playboards provide an organized space for the player to play cards and manage herds of organisms. The board has spaces for six different types of body parts (Head, Mouth,

Forelimbs, Legs, Body, and Tail). It also provides spaces for six different herds of organisms with five members each.

The Playboard also contains helpful information about the five attributes of the players' organisms. Each attribute has a symbol with a characteristic shape and color. The attributes are as shown in the table at the right. Note that every player's species begins with a Body that gives two points toward

digging up tubers. To be more than a mediocre herbivore, however, you'll need to add body parts!

	Hunt Skinks	These attributes are used when trying to catch prey species. The higher the value, the more successful the species will be.
	Dig Tubers	
	Catch Fish	
	Attack	Used when attempting to feed on another player's
	Defense	Used when another player's organisms try to eat yours.

Galapagos Cards

There are several different types of Galapagos cards. These are described below.

- **Body Parts** - Most Galapagos cards show body parts that you may add to your organism as adaptations. These parts will give your organisms a better chance to feed or to defend themselves. Some body parts may offer a tradeoff, enhancing one attribute while diminishing another.
- **Bad Body Parts** - These cards are body parts that reduce an organism's ability to feed or defend itself. You normally play these parts on other players to hinder their progress.
- **More Prey** - These cards direct you to add more prey organisms to the Prey board. Most of them must be played immediately when you draw them and then replaced, but some of them you can hold on to and play at strategic times.
- **Special Cards** - These cards can do many different things. Some cause events to occur which change the course of the game. Some give your organism special traits or abilities.

Prey board

The Prey board provides a place to keep track of the number of prey organisms (skinks, tubers, and fish) which are available for the players' animals to eat. The organism tokens in each of the three spaces here represent the population of these prey species. When a prey organism is eaten, a token is removed. When there are no more tokens for a prey species, then no player can feed on them, because they're all gone (or if you want to get technical, they're *extirpated*). Some Galapagos cards will occasionally replenish the prey population.

Secret Goal Cards

During the game, each player will have a secret evolutionary goal for his or her species. If the player achieves this goal at any time during play, he or she immediately scores bonus points as indicated on the card.

Dice

The three dice are used to determine if feeding is successful and on several other occasions. Some Galapagos cards also call for die rolls to determine their effects. These dice have ten sides numbered 0-9, but following long-standing gamer tradition, the "0" side represents a value of 10.

Organism Tokens

The organism tokens are used to represent prey organisms on the Prey board and player organisms on the Playboards.

V. Setting up the Game

The game can be played with two to six players. To set up the game, do the following:

- Give each player a Playboard
- Give each player four organism tokens. Players should place these four tokens in their first herd.

- Place prey organisms, indicated by organism tokens, on the Prey board as shown at the right.

*Having more than four players requires additional Playboards, not included in this set.

Players	Skinks and Fish	Tubers
2	5 of each	10
3-4	8 of each	16
5-6*	6 of each	12

- Shuffle the Galapagos Cards and deal eight cards to each player. If any player has cards that add prey and must be played immediately (i.e. Add Skinks, Add Tubers, Add Fish), these cards should be played and their instructions followed. Any cards so played should be replaced so that all players will still have eight cards.
- Finally, shuffle the Secret Goal cards and give each player one Secret Goal. Players don't get to choose their Secret Goals, and they should be kept secret from other players (hence the name, *Secret Goal*).

VI. Primordial Soup Phase

The game starts with the players creating a species from the cards they have been dealt. Players each roll one die, and the player with the highest roll begins first. Roll again among high rollers if necessary to break ties - you know the drill.

Once you've determined who starts, the first player begins by playing any body part card in his or her hand or by passing. When the first player is done, the next player on the left may play a body part card or pass, and so on around the table. Once you have passed, you can't play any more body part cards during this phase of the game. Note - only one of each type of body part may be in play by each player at one time. Also, during this phase, players may NOT play any other type of card (e.g. Special Event, Bad Body Part).

After all players have played all desired cards and everybody has passed all around, each player must make sure to have no more than six cards remaining. If the player has more than six, he or she must choose cards to discard down to the limit of six. If the player has fewer than six cards, that's fine.

VII. Game Play

Once all players have created their initial species during the Primordial Soup phase, the game begins. The player who went first in the Primordial Soup phase gets to go first in the game. Each turn goes like this:

- **Draw two cards** - Draw two new cards from the deck. If you draw a card that says it must be played immediately, play it and follow its instructions. In regular game play, unlike the Primordial Soup Phase above, you do not get to draw again to replace cards you must play immediately.
- **Play body parts** - You may play any body part cards in your hand onto your Playboard, replacing any existing body part. NOTE - no more than one body part of each kind can be in play at any time for each player. If you play a second card of a type you already have (e.g. you play a body card and you already have a body) then you replace the old one with the new one and discard the old one. You may also play any Bad Body Part cards on any player's Playboard,

replacing existing body parts. You may play Bad Body Parts on your own Playboards, but that is normally not a good idea.

- **Play special cards** - You may play any special card you own, following the instructions on the card.
- **Forage** - You now attempt to feed all of your herds of animals. See **Foraging** below for an explanation of this process.
- **Reduce hand to six cards** - You must have no more than six cards at the end of your turn, and you must discard cards (of your choice) to reduce to six cards. If you have fewer than six cards, that's fine.
- **Score points for herds** - You get one point per herd of organisms that you have at the end of the turn. It is not important how many organisms are in the herd - a five-member herd is worth one point, and so is a one-member herd. Move your marker ahead on the scoring track by the number of points you've scored.
- **Hmm, am I extinct?** - If you have no organisms remaining at the end of your turn (or at any other time in the game), you are extinct and may no longer play in this round. Place the cards from your hand and Playboard on the discard pile and complain bitterly while the other players finish the round.

VIII. Foraging

When you are done playing body part and special event cards, it is time to feed your animals. You may choose to dine on one of the three prey species (skinks, tubers, or fish) or on one of the other players' organisms.

Eating prey - If you are foraging on one of the prey species, the sequence of events goes as follows:

- Choose one of your herds to forage. You can only pick a herd that has one or more members (i.e. don't forage with empty herds). Each herd must attempt to feed once and only once per turn - you can't skip herds, and you can't have a herd forage more than once. However, you can have your herds forage in any order you wish.
- Pick a prey species for your herd. You must pick a prey species that still exists (i.e., one that still has at least one organism token on the Prey board).
- Calculate your total strength against your prey species by adding up all of the points on the body part cards on your Playboard. For example, if you're trying to eat tubers, add up all the values in the green circles. This is your strength at digging tubers.
- Roll one die to see if you are successful. Remember that zero on the die stands for ten.
 - ➔ **Success** - If the die roll is *equal to or lower than* your strength against that prey species, then you successfully feed. When your herd feeds, it grows. Take one of the prey organism tokens from the prey board and place it in the herd that was trying to feed. If your herd already has five members, then it is full. In that case, you may either add the new organism to another existing herd that is not full, or you can use it to start a new herd.
 - ➔ **Failure** - If the die roll is *greater than* your strength against that prey species, then your herd is unsuccessful. Take one organism token from your herd and place it in the pile of unused organism tokens. If your herd has no more members, then the herd has died out, and you will not roll for it next turn.
- **Automatic success and failure** - Note that a roll of one ALWAYS succeeds, even if you have zero or lower skill against a particular prey type - sometimes, you get lucky, no matter how bad you are. Likewise, a roll of ten ALWAYS fails, even if you have more than ten skill - sometimes, you just get unlucky, no matter how great you are.

Eating another player - If you decide to prey on another player's organisms, the sequence is the same as above with the following exceptions:

- To calculate your strength against the other player, add up your attack attributes (red triangles pointing down) and subtract the other player's defense attributes (yellow hexagons). The difference is your strength against the other player. For example, suppose you have a total of eight points of attack from your various body parts, and the other player has a total of three points of defense from his or her body parts. Your strength is eight attack minus three defense, or five. If you roll five or less, you succeed; if you roll six or higher, you fail. Note that the same automatic success and failure rule described above also applies when feeding on other players.
- If you successfully feed, you get one of the other player's organism tokens. The other player gets to choose which organism you ate. Take this organism token and place it on your board as directed above under *Success*.

Foraging Notes:

Simultaneous rolls - In many cases, you will want most or all of your herds to feed on the same prey species. In this case, you can roll for multiple herds at once. To facilitate this, three dice are provided. You should only roll multiple dice at once if there are enough prey organisms to feed all the herds (i.e. don't roll three dice for fish if there's only one fish token left on the prey board). You are not required to roll multiple dice at once if you prefer to roll for one herd at a time - it just saves time. No matter how you roll the dice, you need to forage once for each herd.

Special cards - Some body parts and events may change how foraging works, allowing multiple rolls or causing some other unusual effect. If this is the case, the instructions on the card supersede the general rules here. See the **Card Notes** section below for any additional information and clarification.

Population Limit - You may never have more than six herds, so you can't start a seventh herd even if a full herd produces a new organism. If you fill up your Playboard and get to more than thirty organisms, keep the extra ones to the side and finish out your turn, adding in the extra ones if spaces become available on your Playboard. If you have thirty or more organisms at the end of your turn, you get your six herd points and the round ends (see **End of Round** below).

IX. Extinction

If at any time a player has no remaining organism tokens (i.e. all herds are empty), that player is extinct. He or she must return all cards to the discard pile and is then free to rail against fate's cruel machinations. A player may go extinct by starving to death, by being eaten by other players, by losing organisms through special cards, by mass extinction cards (Ice Age and Asteroid Strike), or in other ways.

X. End of Round

The round ends when *any* of the following three conditions are met:

- **At the end of any player's turn, only one player's species remains alive.** In this case, the surviving player gets the Survival of the Fittest bonus of ten points. Note that this means that if the last surviving player eliminates all others on his or her own turn, he or she gets score for surviving herds in addition to the survival bonus. This might happen if the last player eats the last opponent's last organism, or if the last player plays a mass extinction card and survives while all other players go extinct.
- **At the end of any player's turn, all players are extinct.** In this case, no player gets the Survival of the Fittest bonus.

- **At the end of any player's turn, a player has 30 or more organisms** (i.e. all herds are full). All players not extinct at this time get a 5-point survival bonus.

XI. Scoring

Players receive points in several different ways:

Herds - As described above, players score points based on how many herds with at least one organism they have at the end of each turn.

Survival of the Fittest - The last player who still has living organisms receives a bonus of ten points. If all players go extinct at once (e.g. through Ice Age or Asteroid Strike) no player gets this bonus. If the round ends because one player reaches thirty organisms, all players still alive at the end of the round get a reduced five point bonus.

Secret Goals - Each secret goal has a score value. If player achieves this secret goal at any time in a round of play, he or she reveals the secret goal and claims the bonus points immediately. The secret goals can be fairly difficult to achieve, so in some games no player will manage to score a secret goal.

XII. Other Stuff

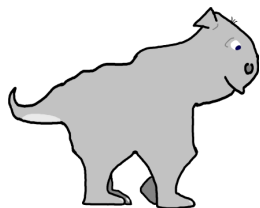
Losing organisms - Any time a player loses organisms by being eaten or by the effects of a card, he or she may decide which ones to lose. If a player loses organisms by failing to forage, he or she must lose an organism from the particular herd that was foraging.

Rule conflicts - Sometimes, rules on specific cards will modify or contradict the general set of rules here. In that case, the rules on the cards should be followed.

XIII. Comments on Realism

Galapagos serves as a somewhat whimsical simulation of an ecosystem. Some of Galapagos is realistic. For example, when one prey species runs out, the organisms in the game must adapt to eating other prey or go extinct. Also, when one species becomes strong enough to eat other player species, then the players must develop defensive adaptations or perish. There is an element of chance in the game, and species may succeed or fail based on luck rather than ideal adaptations or structures. This also happens in real life. There are some rare mass-extinction events which wipe out most or all species at the same time, although some lucky species may survive them.

Much of Galapagos is unrealistic. For example, in the real world, adaptations come from natural selection acting on traits derived from genetic material. They arise slowly and gradually, not all at once in fully-developed form as they do in the game. They are also limited by an organism's genetic coding, existing skeletal and muscular structure, and organs. Organisms also adapt in many more ways than merely to pursue prey or defend against predators, for example, for reproductive success. In the real world, a "bad" trait would not normally replace a "good" one, but this process makes the game more fun. Most importantly, adaptation in the real world is not directed by anybody; it arises from the pressures and challenges of the environment coupled with variations in the genetic code.



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Galapagos is available for purchase at

<http://www.thegamecrafter.com/games/galapagos>

**With suggestions, questions, or comments, please contact
the author at dave@planktongames.com**