

UNSTABLE GAMES™



# TWISTED CRYPTIDS™



RULE BOOK

## INTRODUCTION

It's so hard to feel seen as a Cryptid these days. In this easy-to-learn strategy game, you'll navigate your love-hate relationship with humans and outwit your fellow Cryptids to earn your status as a true legend. As hikers, hunters, and researchers scatter across the wilderness hoping to catch a glimpse of you, you'll stage elaborate hoaxes, plant perfect decoys, and lurk discretely in the shadows to build up your myth. You might even expose your true self once in a while, but be warned: vulnerability can come at a price.



## WHAT'S IN THE BOX



4 tarot-sized  
Cryptid cards



36 Sighting  
cards



12 double-sided  
Myth tokens



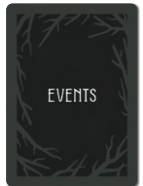
30 Human  
tokens



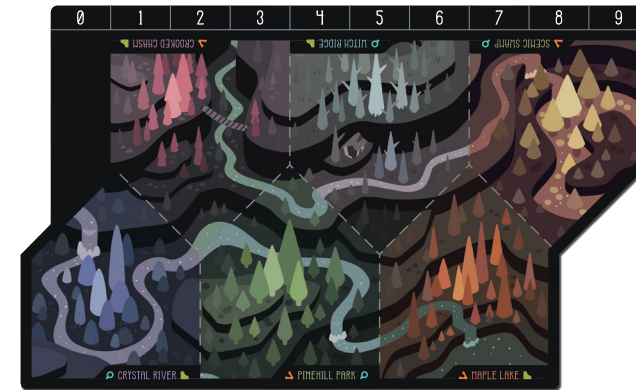
12 Hiding Spot  
tokens



52 Action  
cards



12 Event  
cards



The Wilderness board



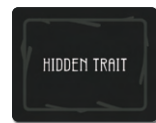
1 First Player  
token



4 Cryptid  
meeples



1 Sinkhole  
token



10 Hidden  
Trait cards

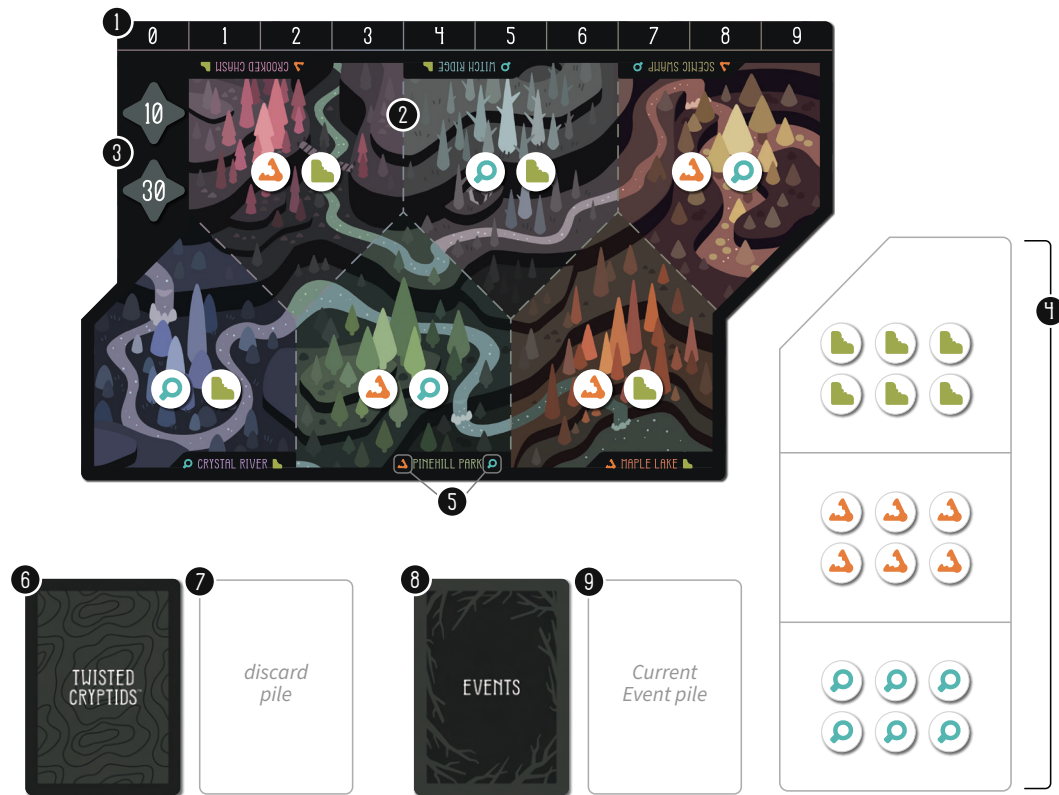


# SETUP

Start by removing the board from the game box, unfolding it, and placing it in the center of the play area within reach of all players. The board consists of the **Myth Track** ① and **The Wilderness** ② which is composed of 6 **Sites**. Next, place the **Myth tokens** ③ next to the Myth Track. Myth represents your score in the game, and you'll use the Myth Track and Myth tokens to track your score.

Place the **Human tokens** in 3 **Rest Areas** ④ (one corresponding to each Flavor of Human) next to The Wilderness, then place **Hiker tokens**, **Hunter tokens**, and **Researcher tokens** on each Site with a corresponding symbol ⑤.

Shuffle the **Action deck** ⑥ and place it face down within reach of all players, leaving space near it for a **discard pile** ⑦. Then shuffle the **Event deck** ⑧ and place it face down within reach of all players, leaving space near it for a **Current Event pile** ⑨.



Have each player choose a Cryptid and take the corresponding components: **1 Cryptid card** ⑩, **1 Cryptid meeple** ⑪, **9 Sighting cards** ⑫, and **3 Hiding Spot tokens** ⑬.



After choosing your Cryptid, place your Cryptid card face up in front of you, then place your Cryptid meeple on the Myth Track at 5 Myth (which represents your starting score). Return any remaining Cryptids (with their corresponding components) to the game box.

Next, shuffle the **Hidden Trait cards** and deal two to each player. Have each player choose one of them and place it face down above their Cryptid card ⑭, then return any remaining Hidden Trait cards to the game box.

Now you are ready to form your **3 Stacks**. To create a Stack, secretly choose three of your Sighting cards and place them face down in a pile in the order you choose, then repeat this process with your remaining Sighting cards until you have formed all three of your Stacks (each with 3 Sighting cards). *Note: The top face-down Sighting card on each Stack will be the first one revealed from that Stack.*

After you have formed your Stacks, place each Stack in a row to the right of your Cryptid card ⑮. Each Stack will correspond to one of your numbered Hiding Spot tokens: the left Stack being Hiding Spot token number 1, the middle Stack Hiding Spot token number 2, and the right Stack Hiding Spot token number 3.

Give the **First Player token** ⑯ to the player who last visited a park. They start the game as the First Player.





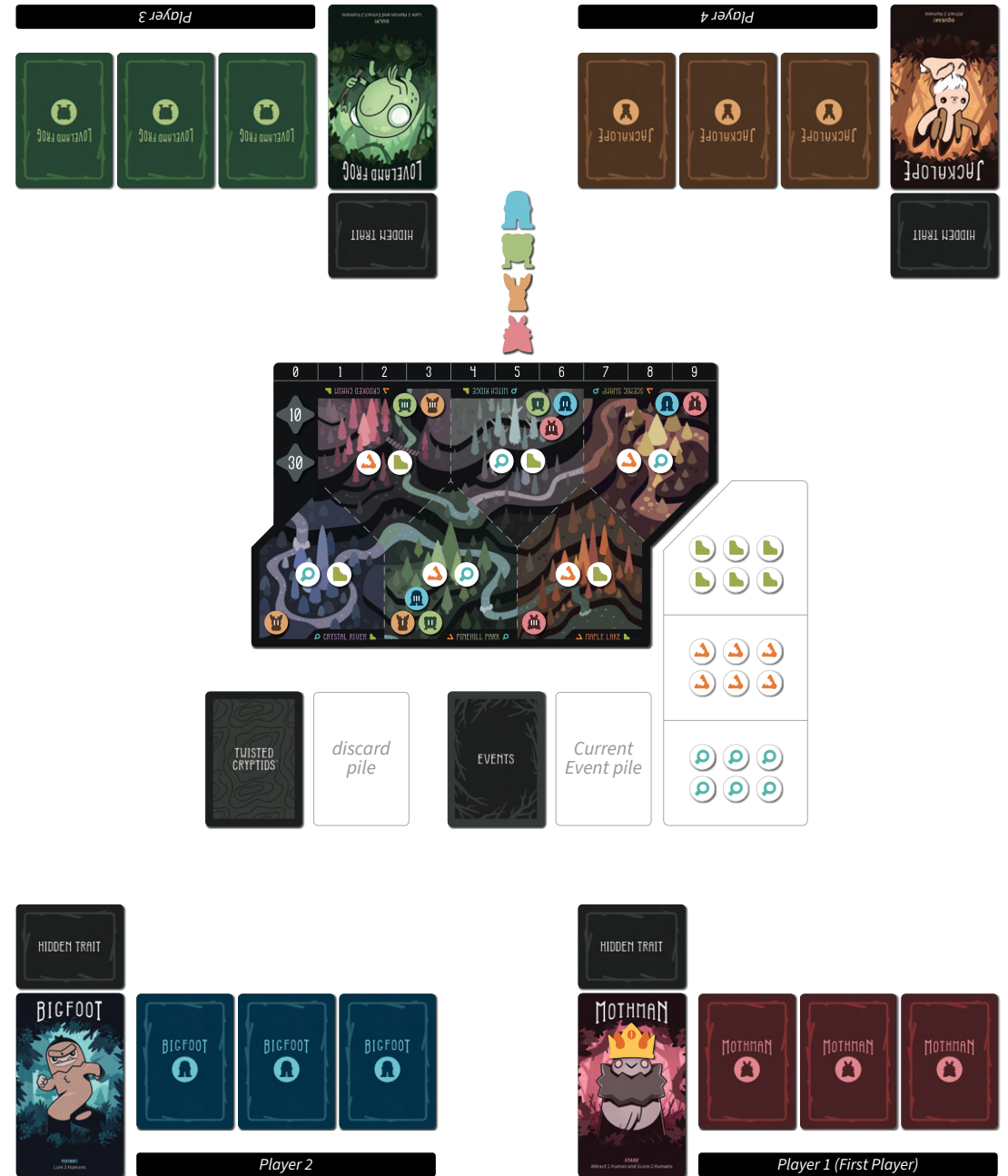
In player order (starting with the First Player and proceeding *clockwise*), place one of your Hiding Spot tokens on a Site in The Wilderness. Once all players have placed a Hiding Spot token, the First Player will pass the First Player token to the player on their left. Then, in player order (starting with the new First Player), place a second Hiding Spot token. After each player has placed their second Hiding Spot token, the First Player will pass the First Player token to the player on their left. One final time, in player order, place your last Hiding Spot token. After each player has placed all of their Hiding Spot tokens, the First Player will pass the First Player token to the player on their left.

Here are a couple of things to keep in mind when placing your Hiding Spot tokens:

- You may not place a Hiding Spot token on a Site that already has one of your Hiding Spot tokens.
- When playing with 4 players, no more than 3 players may have a Hiding Spot token at any one Site.

Finally, deal 5 cards from the Action deck to each player. These cards will form your hand. Now you are ready to play! Gameplay starts with the First Player and proceeds in player order.

Once you have completed setup, the play area should look something like this:



# GAMEPLAY

You will play Twisted Cryptids over 5 rounds, and each round is divided into 4 phases: Dawn, Day, Dusk, and Night.

## 1 DAWN PHASE

At Dawn, Humans will leave from, arrive to, and move about The Wilderness of their own accord.

At the start of the round, the First Player will flip the top card of the Event deck, add it face up to the Current Event pile, and resolve the listed effects from top to bottom (see page 13 for more details about Events).

*Note: If you are ever unable to perform the full effect on a card—for example, if there are no Researchers in The Wilderness to Extract, only one Hunter in the Rest Area to Attract, or only two Hikers on a Site when the effect says to move three—partially resolve that effect to the extent you are able. This also applies to cards you play during the Day and Sightings you reveal at Dusk.*

The round will then continue to the Day.

## 2 DAY PHASE

During the Day, you will use your Cryptid charm to move Humans around The Wilderness in an attempt to increase your Myth.

In player order, on your turn you will take one of the following Actions:

- Play an Action card from your hand (see page 12 for more details about Action cards).
- Discard an Action card to use your Cryptid Power. You only may do this once per round (see page 10 for more details about Cryptid Powers).
- Pass the turn to the next player.

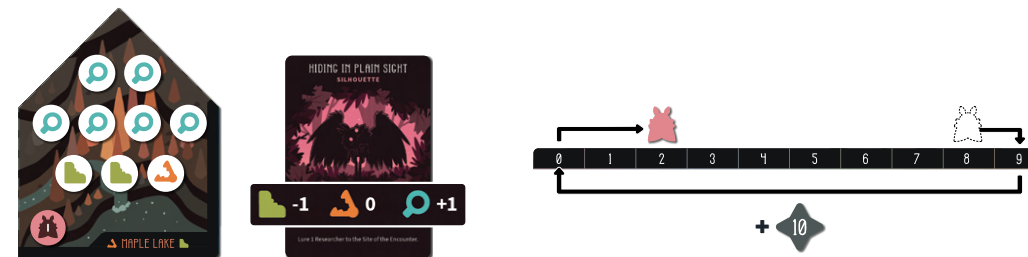
You will continue playing cards in this manner for three turns. Once each player has had three turns, the round will continue to Dusk.

## 3 DUSK PHASE

At Dusk, an Encounter will occur at a Site in The Wilderness, revealing what each Cryptid is (or isn't) doing at that Site. To determine where the Encounter occurs, find the Site with the most Humans that has at least one Hiding Spot. If multiple Sites tie for the most Humans, the First Player chooses at which of those Sites the Encounter occurs.

In player order, if you have a Hiding Spot at the Site of the Encounter you will reveal the top Sighting of your corresponding Stack.

When you reveal a Sighting, start by gaining (or losing) Myth depending on the distribution of Humans at the Site of the Encounter as specified on the Sighting card. Next, resolve the effect of that Sighting, then set it aside face up next to you. Finally, take your Hiding Spot from the Site of the Encounter and place it on its corresponding Stack, then the next player who has a Hiding Spot at the Site of the Encounter will reveal their Sighting.



-2 Myth for Hikers 0 Myth for Hunters +6 Myth for Researchers  
**Gain 4 Myth**

Example of gaining 4 Myth

If, during Dusk, you reveal the final Sighting in one of your Stacks and now that Stack is empty, return the corresponding Hiding Spot token to the game box. You will not use this Hiding Spot for the remainder of the game.

After all players with Hiding Spots at the Site of the Encounter have revealed their Sightings, the round will continue to the Night.

## 4 NIGHT PHASE

During the Night, you will begin scheming in preparation for the next day.

In player order, take the following steps:

- If you do not have a Hiding Spot token on one of your Stacks, you may move one of your Hiding Spots in The Wilderness, placing it on a new Site.
- If you have a Hiding Spot token on one of your Stacks from Dusk, place that Hiding Spot on a different Site than the Site at which the Encounter occurred.
- You may choose to discard any number of cards, then draw from the Action deck until you have 5 cards in your hand. (If you are in the fifth round, skip this step and discard any remaining cards in your hand.)

*Note: If there are not enough cards in the deck to draw until you have 5 cards in your hand, draw any remaining cards in the Action deck, then shuffle the discard pile and place it face down to form a new Action deck. Continue to draw until you have 5 cards in your hand.*

Once each player has drawn up to 5 cards, the First Player passes the First Player token to the player on their left, who now becomes the First Player for the next round.

# END GAME

Once you have completed 5 rounds, flip over the remaining Sightings in your Stacks and your Hidden Trait before determining the winner of the game.

- Gain 7 Myth for each Real Deal that was not revealed during the game.
- Gain bonus Myth based on your level of completion of the objective on your Hidden Trait.

The player with the greatest total Myth wins the game and is deemed the True Legend, while the others scurry home before the Humans catch them.

In the event of a tie, tally the number of Humans on the Sites where you have Hiding Spots. The tied player with the most Humans is the winner. If that does not resolve the tie, then high five because you are both legends this time around (but you should probably play again to determine who the **True** Legend is).

+2 Myth on Myth Track

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

30 +30 Myth from Myth tokens

**Sightings Not Revealed**

Runs Out Silhouette, Suspicious Bush Silhouette, What the Buck Hoax, Rabbit Rampage Real Deal, This is Miskland Real Deal

+7 Myth from each Real Deal not revealed

**Revealed Sightings**

Just a Coat Rack Decoy, Post-Nibble Nap Real Deal, Planted Planter Decoy, Somebody Else Hoax

You are Crafty

Do not reveal your Hoaxes or Silhouettes

Revealed Hoaxes and Silhouettes			
QUANTITY	2	1	0
BONUS MYTH	7	14	21

+14 Myth from Hidden Trait objective

**TOTAL: 32 + 7 + 7 + 14 = 60 MYTH**



# COMPONENTS

## CRYPTID CARDS

As a Cryptid you have a unique Cryptid Power that will help you during the Day. Once per round, you may discard a card to use that power on your turn.

*Note: If your Cryptid Power includes two effects separated by an **and**, resolve both of these effects individually. That means you may resolve them from the same or from different Hiding Spots.*



## HIDDEN TRAIT CARDS

Hidden Traits give you an objective that you'll try to achieve by the end of the game in order to score bonus Myth. Each one has three levels of completion; the higher your level of completion, the more Myth you will gain! You'll keep your Hidden Trait secret from other players until the end of the game, but you may look at it at any time.

YOU ARE TWISTED				
Reveal your Real Deals				
Revealed Real Deals				
QUANTITY	1	2	3	
BONUS MYTH	6	14	22	

YOU ARE HONEST				
Do not reveal your Hoaxes				
Revealed Hoaxes				
QUANTITY	2	1	0	
BONUS MYTH	0	6	13	

YOU ARE RELAXED				
Do not reveal your Decoys				
Revealed Decoys				
QUANTITY	2	1	0	
BONUS MYTH	0	6	13	

## SIGHTING CARDS

Sightings are kept in Stacks, hidden from other players, until they are revealed; however you may look at them at any time. At Dusk, you'll reveal Sightings from your Stacks. Sightings will cause you to either gain or lose Myth when revealed during an Encounter based on the distribution of Humans at the Site of the Encounter. Each Sighting card also lists an effect you'll resolve after it's revealed.

Sightings come in four types:

- **Decoys:** Decoys are objects arranged to look just like you! Use them to trick Hunters and earn Myth. *(Hah! That's just a pile of sticks, dummies.)*
- **Hoaxes:** Enlist the help of woodland creatures to devise Hoaxes and throw Humans off your trail. Reveal Hoaxes to Hikers to increase your Myth. *(Do they really think you look like three raccoons in a trench coat?)*
- **Silhouettes:** A little goes a long way! Let Humans catch a glimpse of what they're missing with Silhouettes. These shadowy outlines get Researchers excited, earning you Myth with each Encounter. *(Science journals are going to want to hear about you!)*
- **Real Deals:** Being a Cryptid is hard. Sometimes you want to lift the veil and show the world who you really are... even if there are consequences. Real Deal sightings are really you! Expose yourself attacking, sleeping, or engaged in your favorite activity to the right Humans and get rewarded with Myth for your bravery. But beware! Sometimes being vulnerable comes at a cost. *(You're not mean, just misunderstood... and maybe a little mean.)*



*Hint: The Real Deal Sightings are high risk, high reward; though you can gain a lot of Myth by revealing them, you could lose a lot of Myth if the wrong Humans are at the Site of the Encounter; however, each one you do not reveal will allow you to gain 7 Myth at the end of the game! Choose wisely when you arrange your Stacks during setup to keep your Real Deals close to the top or to bury them to remain hidden throughout the game.*

## ACTION CARDS

These cards make up your hand, and you'll play them during the Day. Each one specifies a number of Humans, a Flavor of Humans, and a specific Function which will allow you to change the distribution of Humans in The Wilderness. When you play an Action card, resolve the effect, then place it in the discard pile. Some cards have two effects separated by an OR; when you play an OR card, choose one of the effects to resolve.

*Note: You may only partially resolve an Action card's effect if it is not possible to fully resolve it. As an example, if you play a card that would have you Lure 2 Researchers, and there are 2 Researchers on an adjacent Site, you must Lure both of them; however, if there is only 1 Researcher on the adjacent Site, you may still play the card and only Lure the 1 Researcher.*



### Types of Functions

- **Lure:** Move a Human to the Site of one of your Hiding Spots from an adjacent Site. *(Must've been the melodic sound of your voice...)*
- **Scare:** Move a Human from the Site of one of your Hiding Spots to an adjacent Site. *(RAWRRRRRR!)*
- **Attract:** Take a Human from the corresponding Rest Area and place it on the Site of one of your Hiding Spots. *(You're so popular... you're drawing a crowd!)*
- **Extract:** Take a Human from the Site of one of your Hiding Spots or an adjacent Site and place it back in its corresponding Rest Area. *(Hey, sometimes a Cryptid gets hungry for a snack... no judgment.)*

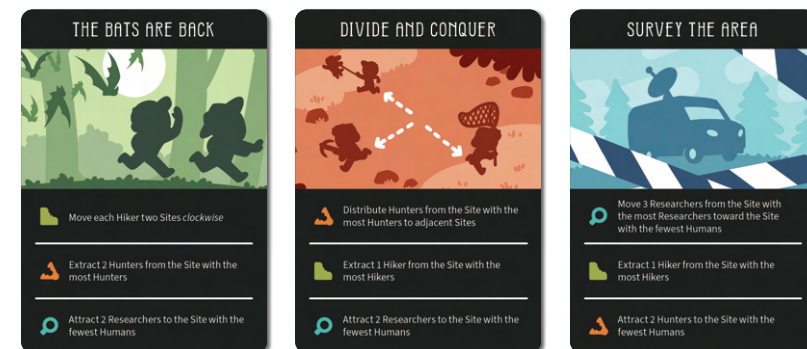


## EVENT CARDS

Each round at Dawn, a new Event will occur. These Events will result in Humans moving around The Wilderness.

Some effects may require you to move Humans "to" or "toward" a Site.

- **TO:** When moving a Human "to" a Site, you will move them directly onto that Site.
- **TOWARD:** When moving a Human "toward" a Site, you will move them in the direction of that Site to an adjacent Site. This can result in the Human either moving onto the Site or moving one location closer to the Site. If two adjacent Sites are equally close when moving "toward" a Site, choose which of those Sites to move the Human to.



*Note: When you resolve the effect on an Event, if multiple Sites fit the effect's requirements, choose one of those Sites and resolve the effect from that Site. If an effect would require you to select a Site with the fewest Humans, this may result in selecting a Site with zero Humans.*

Some effects may require you to "distribute Humans" to adjacent Sites. To do so, take all the specified Humans off their current Site, and place them on the adjacent Sites in as equal a distribution as possible. If you cannot distribute them equally, choose which of those Sites will get an extra Human.

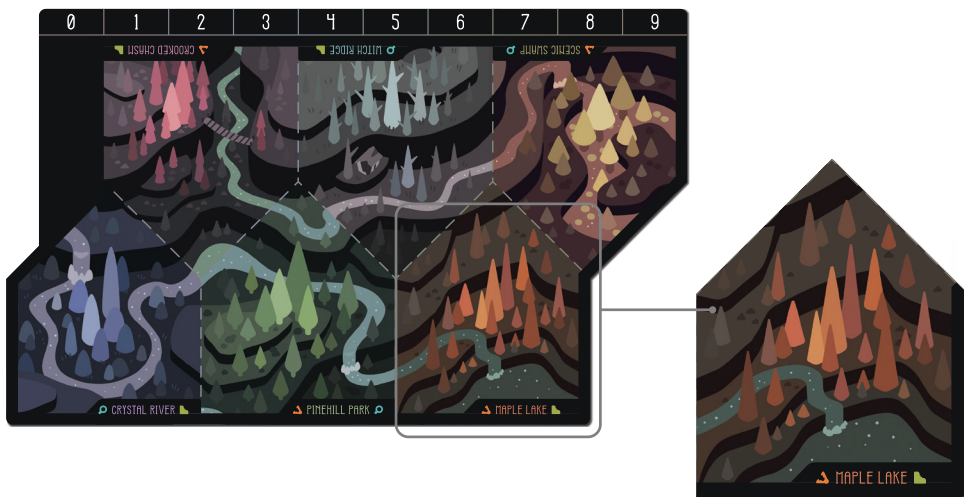
### HIDING SPOT TOKENS

You will place your Hiding Spots on Sites during setup, and you'll have the chance to move one of them each round during the Night. Each Hiding Spot corresponds to one of your Stacks.



## THE WILDERNESS

The Wilderness, which includes 6 different Sites, is the board on which you'll hide throughout the game. The board also features the Myth Track, which you'll use to keep track of your Myth.



## HUMAN TOKENS

Humans are the meat and potatoes in Twisted Cryptids. (*Delicious!*) Each round, you will lure them to certain Sites to increase your Myth or drive them away to prevent them from spotting you. Humans come in three different Flavors:




Hikers are your standard fare Humans; they aren't looking for you, but they might get curious if they happen upon you. At Dawn, you'll find them wandering through The Wilderness and seeing the sights. They are easily fooled by Hoaxes and will usually leave you alone if they come across you sleeping.



Hunters are crafty Humans who are on your trail. At Dawn, they tend to move in packs as they look for you, and they can move quite quickly. However, you can foil their plans with cleverly crafted Decoys, and they tend to be afraid when they see you ready to pounce and attack.



Researchers are the most learned of Humans who want to prove you exist and study you. At Dawn, they might slowly move between Sites, looking for you in less crowded areas. They are often excited by just a glimpse of your Silhouette, but they are elated when they catch you in the act of something silly or mundane.

*Note: Some effects do not specify a Flavor of Human. These effects utilize a  symbol instead of one of the three Human Flavors above. When resolving one of these effects, you may choose any Human.*



## CRYPTID MEEPLES

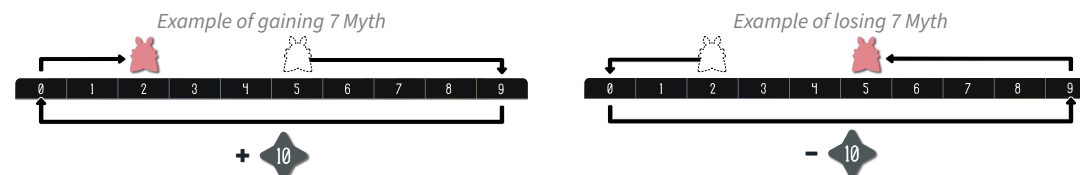
Your Cryptid meeple is used to note your score on the Myth Track. When you gain or lose Myth, you will move your Cryptid meeple along the Myth Track an appropriate number of spaces.





## MYTH TOKENS



To keep track of your current Myth you will use both the Myth Track and Myth tokens. At any time, if you would move your Cryptid meeple past 9 on the Myth Track while gaining Myth, take a  Myth token and continue on the Myth Track from 0. Similarly, if you would move past 0 while losing Myth, return a  Myth token (if you have any) and continue backwards on the Myth Track from 9. Your Myth cannot drop below 0.



Each Myth token is double-sided, with one side representing 10 Myth and the other representing 30 Myth. When you have three Myth tokens on the  side, return two of them and flip one to the  side.

## FIRST PLAYER TOKEN



This token denotes who the First Player is. At the end of each Night, the First Player token will be passed *clockwise*, changing who the First Player is in the next round. Player order always starts with the First Player and proceeds *clockwise*.

## SINKHOLE TOKEN (FOR 2-PLAYER ONLY)



When playing with 2 players, place the Sinkhole token on the Scenic Swamp at the beginning of setup. No Humans or Hiding Spots may be placed on or moved to this Site.

You did it! You read the rules, and now you know everything you need to play Twisted Cryptids. On the next two pages, you'll find a section summarizing phases and key terms that you can quickly reference while playing.

## QUICK REFERENCE

Player order begins with the First Player and proceeds *clockwise*.

### DAWN

First Player flips a new Event and resolves it from top to bottom.  
When finding the Site with the fewest Humans or Flavor, this will include Sites with zero.

### DAY

In player order, you will have 3 turns.

During your turn, you may take one of the following Actions:

- Play a card from your hand.
- Discard a card to use your Cryptid Power (once per round).
- Pass the turn to the next player.

### DUSK

The Encounter occurs at the Site that has the most Humans and at least one Hiding Spot.

In player order, if you have a Hiding Spot at the Encounter:

- Reveal the top Sighting of that Stack.
- Resolve it from top to bottom.
- Place your Hiding Spot on top of that Stack.

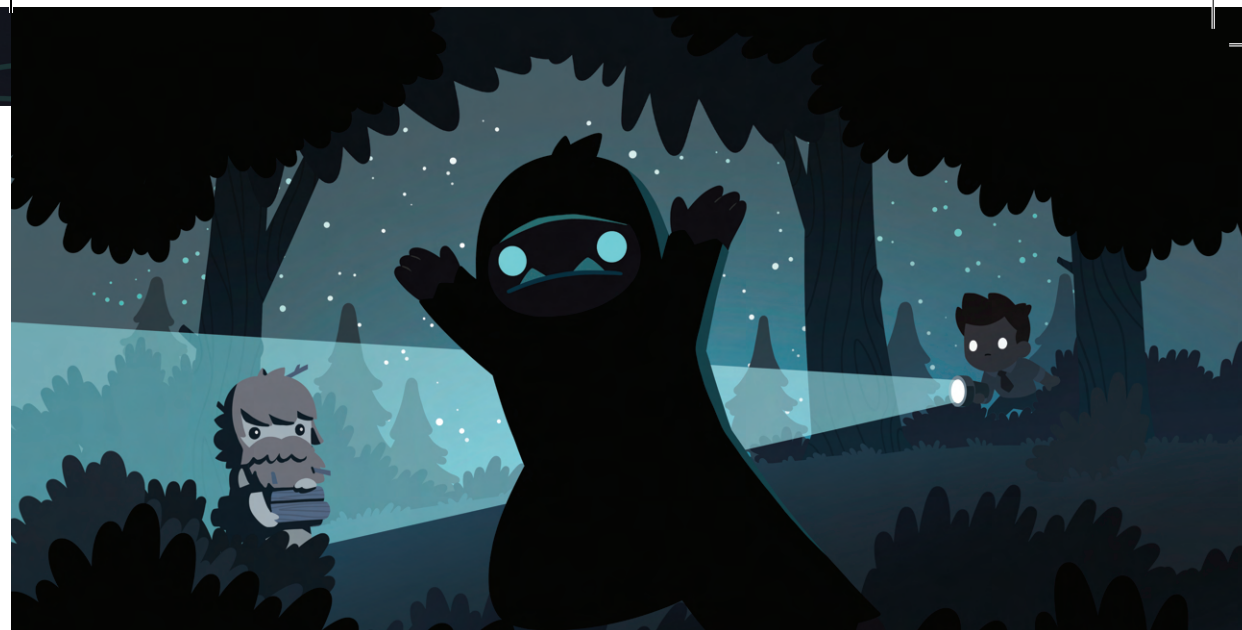
### NIGHT

In player order, take the following steps:

- If you don't have a Hiding Spot on a Stack, you may move a Hiding Spot.
- If you have a Hiding Spot on a Stack, place it on a Site (cannot be the Encounter).
- You may discard any cards in your hand, then draw back up to 5 cards (skip on Round 5).

Pass the First Player token *clockwise*, then start the next round.

The game will end after 5 rounds (see page 8 for scoring).



### RESOLVING EFFECTS:

If you are ever unable to perform the full effect on a card, partially resolve that effect to the extent you are able. If multiple Sites fit the effect's requirements, choose one of those Sites and resolve the effect from that Site.

### WHEN MOVING HUMANS:

“To” means you will move them directly onto a Site.  
“Toward” means you will move them one Site closer.

### FUNCTIONS:

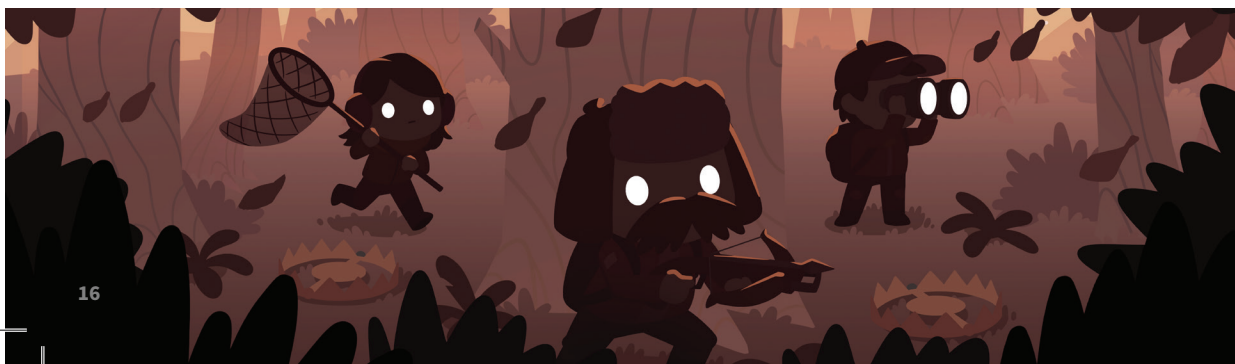
- **Lure:** From an adjacent Site to the Site of your Hiding Spot.
- **Scare:** From the Site of your Hiding Spot to an adjacent Site.
- **Attract:** From the corresponding Rest Area to the Site of your Hiding Spot.
- **Extract:** From the Site of your Hiding Spot or an adjacent Site to the corresponding Rest Area.

### MOVING YOUR HIDING SPOTS:

- You may not place a Hiding Spot token on a Site that already has one of your Hiding Spot tokens.
- For 4 players: No more than 3 players may have a Hiding Spot token at any one Site.

### REFRESHING THE ACTION DECK:

If at any time the Action deck runs out of cards, shuffle the discard pile and place it face down to form a new Action deck.



# TWISTED CRYPTIDS™



For additional resources, visit [unstablegames.com/twistedcryptids](https://unstablegames.com/twistedcryptids) where you can find a video tutorial, our ever-expanding Twisted Cryptids FAQ, and the latest Twisted Cryptids expansions and merch.