

# American Megafauna

## Introductory Two-Player Game

### Marsupials versus Horror Birds

Second Edition

By Philip Eklund

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Living Rules: 9 June 2008

#### Background

The Intro Game takes place during the Cenozoic Era. Although the K/T event destroyed the dinosaurs, the surviving marsupials and birds were hardly affected. Each radiated into a large variety of forms to fill the vacant eco-niches, in competition with each other.

**a. Birds.** One of the survivor groups from the **dinosaur** dynasty were the gruiformes birds, represented today by cranes and coots. Flightless ground gruiformes called Diatrymids seized the top predator role in the Paleocene, other smaller thing gruiformes were fish-eaters, scavengers, and herbivores.

**b. Marsupials.** From the mammal dynasty were the didelphid marsupials, the most primitive of the pouched mammals. Although surviving today chiefly in Australia, the earliest marsupials originated in North America and diversified into a variety of ecomorphs, including marsupial bears, tigers, and sloths. Although the marsupials went extinct in America, one hardy genus, the Virginia Opossum, re-invaded from South America via the Cocos land bridge 2 million years ago.

#### Objective

One player is the pouched marsupials, the other the birds. The winner is the player with the most population tents by the time of the last epoch card.

#### Notes:

1. One does not have to read the main rules to play the Intro game, which is designed to get players playing right away.

2. About 35 markers (such as coins or pennies) are needed to play.

#### Map Setup

**a. Arctic Setup.** Find the starburst card labeled "Fern Understory" [#166] and put it into the west slot in the "Greenland" hex. Find the starburst card labeled "Lichen Tundra" [#177] and put it into the

west slot in the "Beringia" hex. The remaining starburst cards are put aside, as they are not used.

**b. DNA Deck Creation.** The remaining (epoch) cards are shuffled and put face-down. One person reveals the top card. If it is a DNA card, place it in a separate stack. If it is a genotype, catastrophe, or immigrant card, put into a discard pile. If it is a biome card, put it into an empty slot on the map per the next paragraph. Then the next card is turned over, and treated the same way. Stop drawing cards when the map is full (there are no more empty slots).

**c. Latitude.** Biome cards are placed onto the map according to the latitude (hex row) specified in the upper right corner of the card.

**Note (Cosmopolitan Biomes):** Certain biomes are labeled "any" instead of specifying a latitude. These are put into the first available slot, as defined in "Slots" below.

**d. Slots.** There are 22 slots in 11 hexes. The borderlands are not used. Biome cards are placed into the first empty slot, starting with the furthest south, and reading left to right (west to east). If all the slots are filled within a latitude, then discard that biome.

Note: Marine biomes (blue) are blocked from being placed in mountain-building slots. Orogeny biomes (dark brown) are blocked from being placed in slots other than mountain-building slots.

**e. Timeline.** From the remaining pile of unused epoch cards, deal out 14 cards, face down, in a pile. *These represent the 14 epochs of the Cenozoic era, from 66 million years ago to today.*

#### Physiology Sheet Setup

**a.** The marsupial player gets the Physiology Sheet labeled "Opossum". He puts a population tent (with the letters "mmm" on it) on the number one size of the top row. The "Horror Bird" player does the same with a "rm" tent.

**Note:** If a biome has NO requirements (i.e., the corners say "NONE"), then either player (or both) can place population tents there.

**b.** Give each player five markers: these represent genes and are put somewhere on their Physiology Sheet.

**c.** The marsupial player examines the pile of DNA cards created during map setup. He selects one to put on his Physiology Sheet, in the left column, according to the location specified on the card, either head (oval), guts (triangle), or limbs (diamond).

**Note:** Only DNA cards that have a "size" that includes 1 or 2 may be selected. For instance, the "trunk" DNA shown in the card diagram has a size range of 2-4.

**d.** The bird player selects two DNA cards, and places both the same way the marsupial did.

**Note:** Each DNA card is encoded with one or more letters listed in its upper right corner. The card(s) chosen should have a letter or letters that match or exceed the **requirement** letter on one or more biome cards on the map. Ignore the letters H, W, a, or sex on DNA cards.

**e.** Each player, starting with the marsupial takes another population tent and puts it on one of the biome cards on the map whose **requirement** letter matches the DNA card he has selected (See "card diagram" on the Possum or Bird Sheets).

**Example:** The "Sedge Tundra" biome has the requirement letter "G". If the bird player has chosen a "G" DNA card, then he may place his tent on this biome. If a biome says "BG ", then the bird needs both a B and a G.

#### **Turn One, Reveal Epoch Card**

The top card in the pile is turned over. It will be one of five kinds of cards:

**a. Biome Card.** Both players are awarded one gene marker, and the card is placed on the map in the **latitude** specified. Since there are no empty slots, find the eligible biome with the **LOWEST** climax number (the number in the circle; see card diagram). If this climax is lower than the new biome's card climax, replace it with the new biome. Otherwise, there is no effect; the new biome is extinct.

**b. DNA Card.** Perform an open **auction** to see which player is awarded this card. Use gene markers as currency during this auction, and the birds win any ties in bidding.

**Note:** A player may not bid unless his size is within the range specified on the DNA card. DNA cards with "a", "H", "W", or "sex" cannot be bid upon and are not in play.

**c. Genotype Card.** These cards are also not used. [For a more advanced game, they can be auctioned off like DNA cards, and expressed per Stage B2 in the rules.]

**d. Immigrant Card.** Treat these cards as "no event" as they are not used in this Intro Game.

**e. Catastrophe Card.** Give each player five markers. In this Intro Game, there is no further effect.

#### **Turn One, Express DNA Card**

Each DNA card purchased is placed upon the player's Physiology sheet in the location (head, guts or limbs) specified. A player is allowed to have only two DNA cards in each of the three locations (head, guts, limbs). If he buys a third card in a location, he must throw away one.

**Note:** Unlike the Basic Game, players hold no cards in their hand.

#### **Turn One, Size Adjust**

Each player (starting with the marsupial) may move their tent up or down one step on the size track of their Physiology Sheet. Size can vary from one to six. If this size is outside the "size" specified on any DNA cards he has, then discard those DNA cards.

#### **Turn One, Population Expansion**

Each player puts another population tent on each biome that he occupies.

**Note:** Each player has unlimited population tents.

#### **Turn One, Migration**

Each player (starting with the marsupial) may move any or all of his population tents to a biome card on an adjacent hex (in either slot), or up to 2 hexes if size 3 or more. (The "wings" DNA allows a range of 3 hexes.)

#### **Turn One, Cull**

Any population tents on the map that exceed the stacking of two tents per biome card, or do not meet the biome **requirements**, are removed. If birds and

marsupials are competing for the same biome, examine the **Niche** specified on the biome card (see card diagram). The player with the lesser amount of DNA of this sort is removed until only two tents are left.

Note: If the "Niche" is "size", then the smaller player is removed.

- a. The marsupials win all ties in niche competition.
- b. If a player loses all population tents, he goes extinct.

**Example:** There are two birds and one possum on the Fern Understory biome in Greenland. The niche is S, therefore if the bird has an S DNA card, and the possum does not, then the possum tent dies. But if neither have any S, or they both have the same S, then one of the bird tents is removed.

#### **Next Steps**

Go to the next turn, until all 14 cards are played. The winner is the player with the most population.

# Infraclass Metatheria OPPOSSUM Didelphid Marsupial

Uses **mmm** population tents.

**START**  
**1**  
40 kg

**MIGRATE**  
**1 hex**

**SIZE**  
**2**  
200 kg

**MIGRATE**  
**1 hex**

**SIZE**  
**3**  
1 tonne

**MIGRATE**  
**2 hex**

**SIZE**  
**4**  
4 tonnes

**MIGRATE**  
**2 hex**

**SIZE**  
**5**  
16 tonnes

**MIGRATE**  
**2 hex**

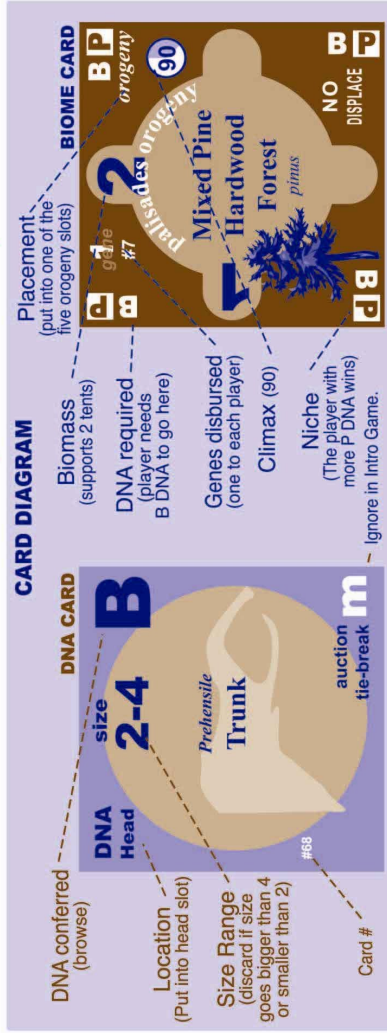
**SIZE**  
**6**  
60 tonnes

**MIGRATE**  
**2 hex**

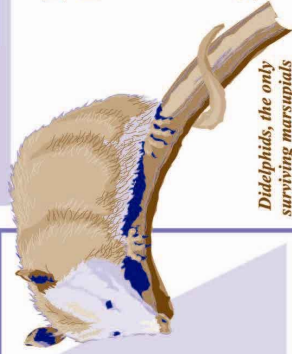
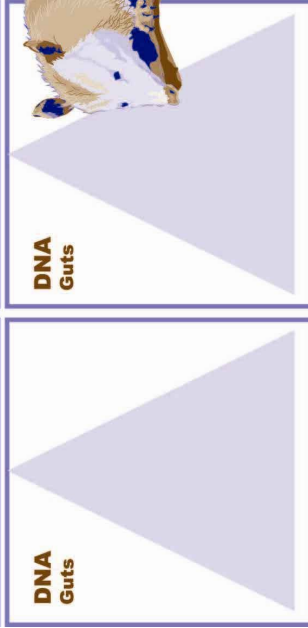
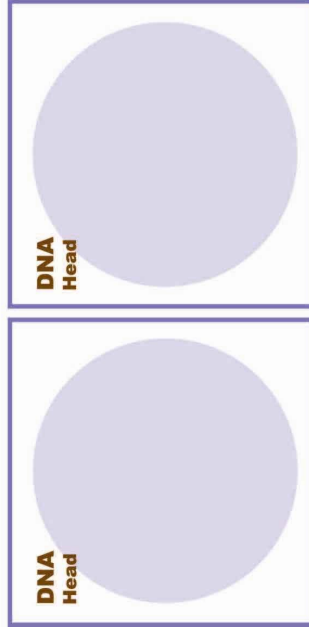
## INTRODUCTORY GAME PHYSIOLOGY SHEET



*Play this two-player INTRO GAME first to learn how to play American Megafauna. See separate "Intro 2 Player Game" Sheet.*



### DNA CARD LOCATIONS



### INTRODUCTORY GAME TURN SEQUENCE

- 1. Reveal card.** Turn over the top card. It will be one of 5 kinds:
  - a. Biome Card - Both players get a coin, & biome card is put on map per latitude.
  - b. DNA Card - Auction (horror bird wins bid ties)
  - c. Catastrophe Card - Both players get five coins.
  - d. Genotype or Immigrant Card - Ignore (go to next step).
- 2. Express DNA card.** If a player purchased a DNA card, it is put upon his sheet according to location, discard one if limit is reached.
  - a. Limit is two cards per location, discard one if limit is reached.
- 3. Adjust size.** Each player may adjust their size up or down one step.
- 4. Population expansion.** Each player may put another population tent on each biome card that he has any tents on.
- 5. Migration.** Marsupial goes first. Each player may move any or all of his population tents to a biome card on an adjacent hex, or up to two hexes if size three or more, or up to three hexes if have wings.
- 6. Cull.** If there is more than two tents on any biome, the excess is removed;
  - a. Niche. The player with the fewer DNA tents of the niche DNA is removed.
  - b. Ties. If the niche competition is a tie, it is the bird tents that are removed.

## Suborder Neornithes HORROR BIRD Gruiformes Diatrymid

Uses **rm** population tents.

**START**  
**1**  
40 kg  
MIGRATE  
**1 hex**

**SIZE**  
**2**  
200 kg  
MIGRATE  
**1 hex**

**SIZE**  
**3**  
1 tonne  
MIGRATE  
**2 hex**

**SIZE**  
**4**  
4 tonnes  
MIGRATE  
**2 hex**

**SIZE**  
**5**  
16 tonnes  
MIGRATE  
**2 hex**

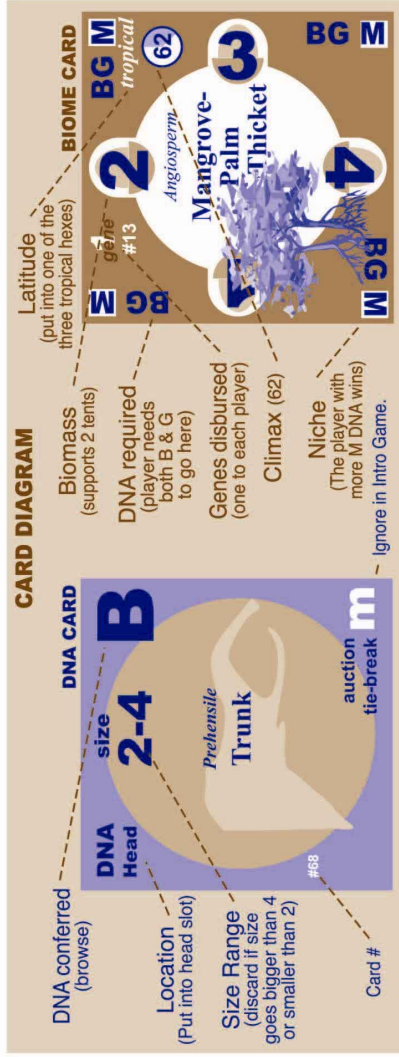
**SIZE**  
**6**  
60 tonnes  
MIGRATE  
**2 hex**



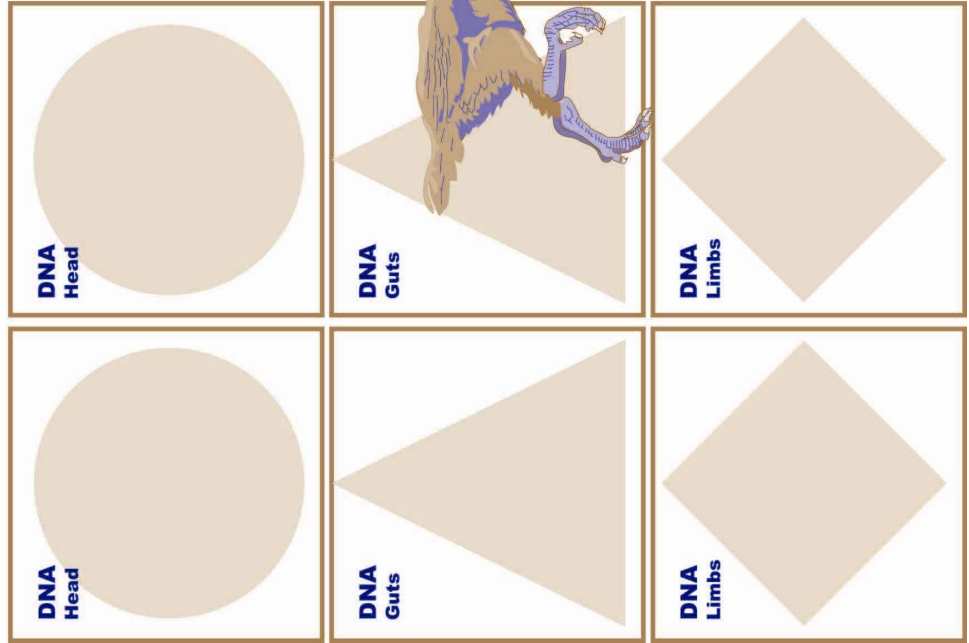
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**AMERICAN MEGAFUNA™**  
A wild contest between dinosaurs and mammals.  
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### DNA CARD LOCATIONS



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  - a. **Biome Card** - Both players get a coin, & biome card is put on map per latitude.
  - b. **DNA Card** - Auction (horror bird wins bid ties)
  - c. **Catastrophe Card** - Both players get five coins.
  - d. **Genotype or Immigrant Card** - Ignore (go to next step).
- 2. Express DNA card.** If a player purchased a DNA card, it is put upon his sheet according to location (head, guts, limbs).
  - a. Limit is two cards per location, discard one if limit is reached.
- 3. Adjust size.** Each player may adjust their size up or down one step.
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- 6. Cull.** If there is more than two tents on any biome, the excess is removed:
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