

Garden Guests

Beetles have entered the garden! These curious guests will spread out across this flowery oasis, traveling over a pathway of stones and building colonies atop marble pedestals. In *Garden Guests*, you'll race to construct an unbroken line of stones and colonies that connect two sides of the board, but there's a catch: the beetles love their peace and quiet. When playing with teammates, you are not allowed to communicate strategy and tactics with one another, making the task that much more challenging. The first team to construct an unbroken path will be victorious, allowing their guests to triumphantly march across the garden!

Components

✿ 1 Game Board



✿ 16 Pedestal markers



✿ 1 Rulebook (this book) ✿ 105 Stones (35 per team)

✿ 45 Guests (15 per team)



✿ 156 Flower cards (52 per team)



✿ 6 Collection cards (2 per team)



A Note on Teams

For simplicity's sake we have chosen to use the term **team** throughout the rulebook. While a team usually consists of multiple people, when playing the game with 2 or 3 players a team will only have a single person, and when playing the game with 5 players there will be two teams of 2 and one team of 1.

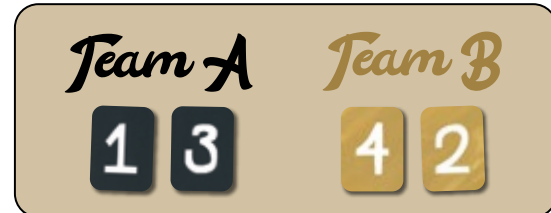


Setup

1. Place the board on the table in between all of the players.
2. The team with a player who last worked in a garden goes first (or just choose the starting team using any method you prefer). The starting team is referred to below as Team A, the second Team B, etc.
3. If playing with 4, 5, or 6 players, everyone should arrange themselves around the table so that they alternate teams. Players should be sitting across from their teammate and adjacent to their opponents (in a 5-player game, the single player on Team C will not have a teammate to sit across from).
4. A player from each team takes a set of Stones and Guests in their color.
5. Each team takes a set of Flower cards and Collection cards in their color. It may be helpful for one player on the team to manage the team's Flower deck and Collection cards (if your team only has one person simply place everything in front of yourself).
6. Shuffle each Flower deck. Then, each player draws 5 cards from their team's deck, keeping them secret (in a 5-player game, the single player on Team C will draw 7 cards).

7. Based on player count, each team should place their Collection cards so that the following numbers are faceup:

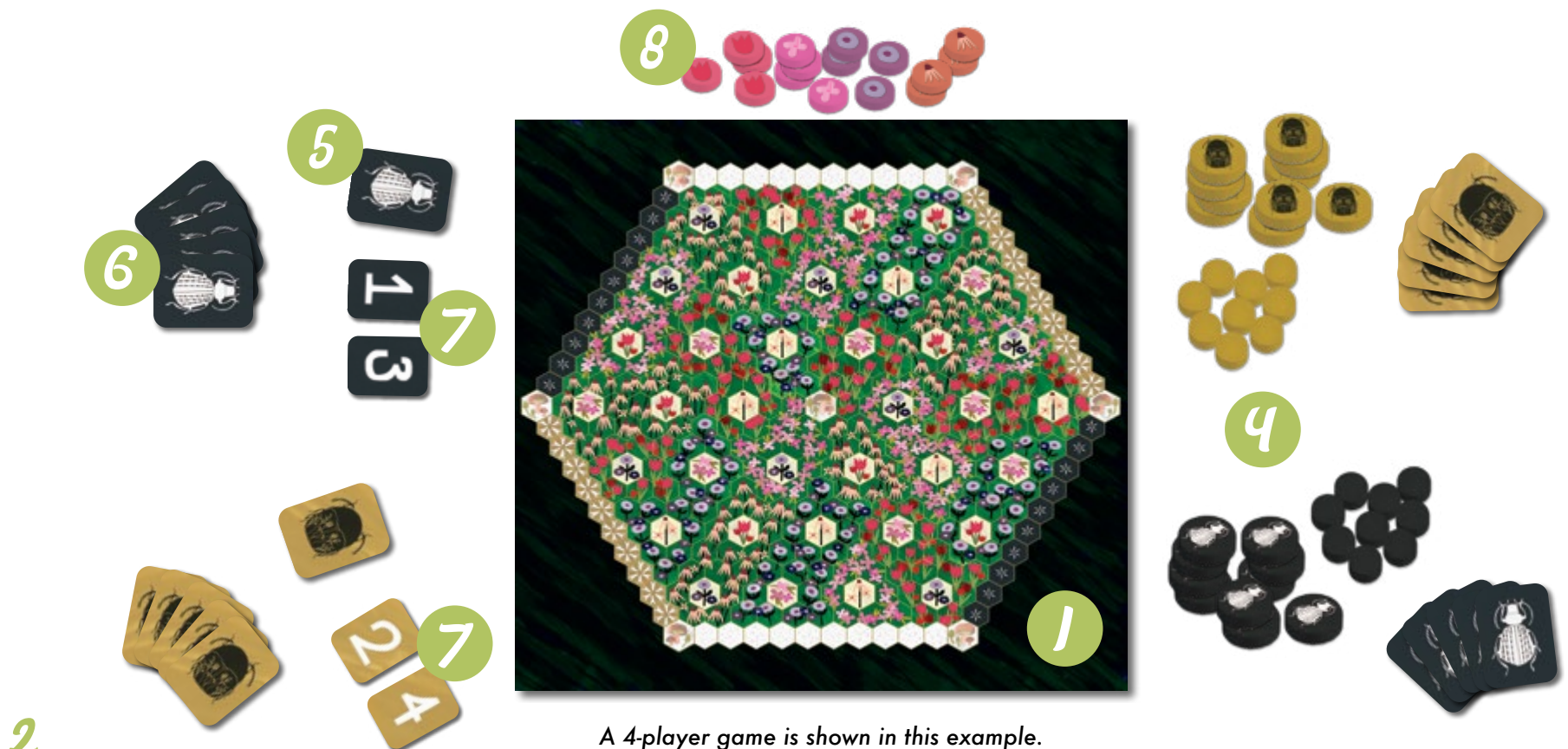
2, 4, & 6 Players (2 Teams)



3 & 5 Players (3 Teams)



8. Place the Pedestal markers next to the board. These do not belong to any one team and will be used by everyone.
9. You are now ready to play Garden Guests!



A 4-player game is shown in this example.

An Overview of the Board

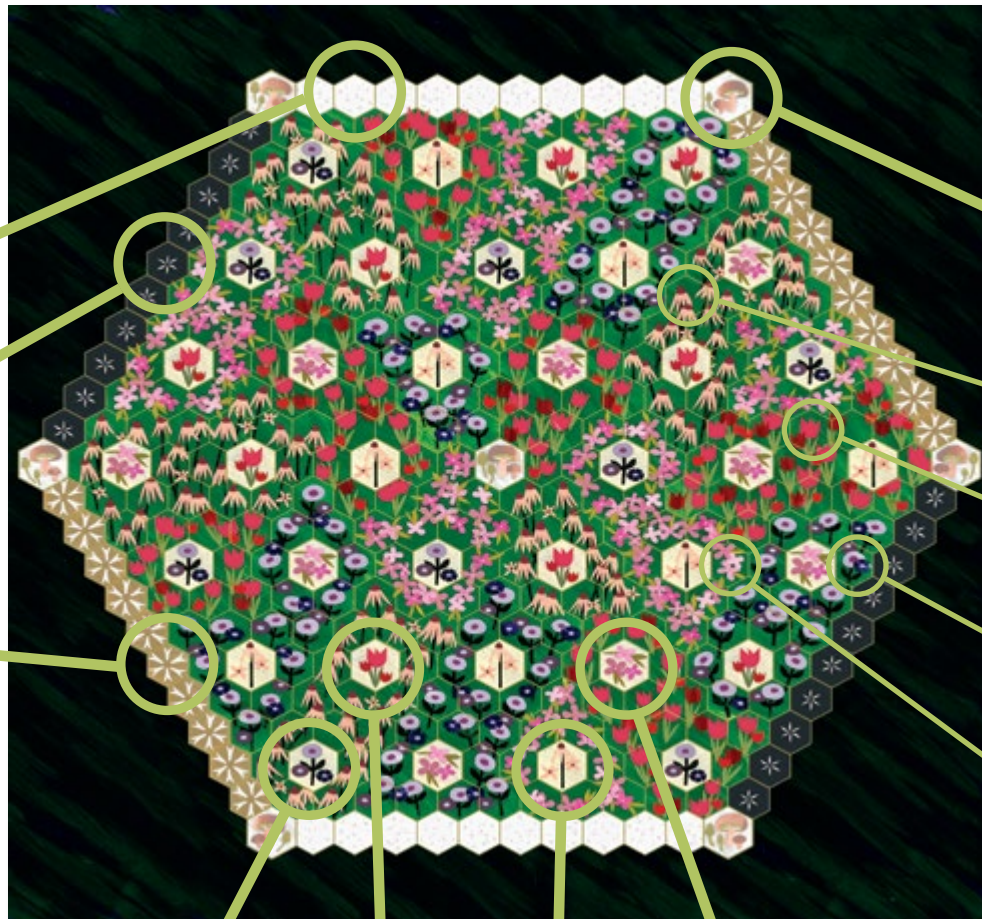
Home Tiles

These spaces form a team's Home. In order to win, a team must connect an unbroken path between their Home tiles on both sides of the board.



Mushrooms

These spaces are unplayable for everyone. Beetles don't like mushrooms!



Pedestals

These spaces are where Guests are placed, forming Colonies (see page 4). Each Pedestal corresponds to a specific flower.



Flowers

These spaces form patches of flowers and are where Stones are played to lay Paths. There are four different types of flowers.

An Overview of the Game

Teams will alternate with each player taking a single action, either drawing or playing cards. Teams will use their Collection cards to draw Flower cards from their decks (the higher the number, the more cards can be drawn!) and then play those Flower cards to control the board, either by building Colonies of Guests or laying Paths of Stones. They will jockey for position, lock down strategic Pedestals, and cut off their opponents with well laid Paths... and they will do this without communicating with their teammates! The game ends when

one team has built an unbroken path of Stones and Colonies from one side of the board to the other, connecting both of their team's Homes and making it impossible for their opponents to do the same.



How to Play

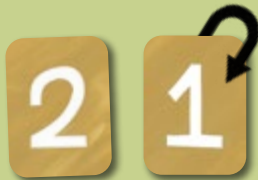
On your turn you must take one of the following four actions.

- ✿ Collect Flowers
- ✿ Build a Colony (with your Guests)
- ✿ Lay a Path
- ✿ Pass Flowers (to another teammate)

✿ Collect Flowers

Each team has two double-sided Collection cards. One card has a **1** on one side and a **4** on the other. The second card has a **2** on one side and a **3** on the other. Choose one of the two Collection cards and draw Flower cards from your team's deck equal to the number on the faceup side of the card. Then, flip that Collection card to its opposite side.

Julie is low on Flower cards so she chooses to Collect Flowers on her turn. Her team's Collection cards show a **2** and a **4**. She decides to draw 4 cards from the deck.



After drawing her cards, she then flips the **4** over, revealing the **1** on the opposite side. The next time Julie or one of her teammates wants to draw cards, they unfortunately won't be able to draw as many.

IMPORTANT! A player cannot have more than **15** Flower cards in their hand. If they choose a Collection card that causes them to have more than 15 cards in their hand, they must immediately discard down to 15. Also, upon request a player must reveal the number of cards in their hand.

If a team's Flower deck is exhausted, shuffle the discard pile and form a new deck.

✿ Build a Colony

Colonies are built from Guests. A Colony can have a single Guest or they can have more than one (the larger a Colony is, the more difficult it is to knock it off of its Pedestal). Play one or more Flower cards from your hand that match the Pedestal's flower and place a stack of Guests on the pedestal equal to the number of cards played. Then place a Pedestal marker of the same flower on top. Your team now controls that Pedestal with its Colony.

Byron wants to build a Colony and is looking at two key Pedestals. He has 1 card that matches the left-most Pedestal and 2 cards that match the right-most one. He could build a Colony of exactly 1 Guest on the left-most Pedestal, but decides that a Colony of 2 on the other would be more secure.



He plays the 2 cards matching the right-most Pedestal and places 2 of his team's Guests on top of it, forming a Colony. Then he places a Pedestal marker with a matching flower on top and places the cards into the discard pile.

Empty Pedestals are always open to being played on. However, if a Pedestal is already occupied by another team's Colony, you may knock them off of it! In order to do this, you must be able to build a Colony on the Pedestal that has at least **one more** Guest than the Colony that is already there. For example, if the opposing team's Colony had 2 Guests, you would need to place at least 3 of your own Guests in order to knock them off (although you could place more than 3 if you wished).

Just like when the Pedestal was empty, you play a number of Flower cards matching the Pedestal's flower that will allow you to knock the Colony off of it (the Pedestal marker on top of the Colony will help you remember which Flower cards you need to play). Replace the opposing Guests on the Pedestal with your own and return the displaced Guests to the opposing team. Place the Pedestal marker back on top of your own Colony. Your team is now in control of that Pedestal.

Building a Colony on one of your Home tiles works exactly the same except that you can play any single Flower card and only need to place one Guest on the Home tile. These Home Colonies can never be knocked off; they are always considered safe.

After building a Colony, place any played cards into your team's discard pile.

IMPORTANT! Once your Colony is on the board you can never add Guests to it! In order to avoid Colonies that can be knocked off too easily, you can build Colonies with 2 or more Guests right from the start (as long as you have enough Flower cards to do so).

ALSO IMPORTANT! Once a Path of Stones is connected to a Colony (see the next page), remove the Pedestal marker and all your Guests except one. That Colony can no longer be cleared off of its Pedestal!

Wild Cards

When performing actions, you will be playing Flower cards that match either Pedestal or Flower spaces on the board. Often you may find you cannot take certain actions because you don't have the right Flower cards in hand. However, each Flower deck has **4** wild cards that can be used in place of any flower. If you end up with some in your hand, carefully choose when to play them!



NOTE: There's a wonderful full-page example on the following page of how these actions work, illustrating the back and forth between teams during a game of Garden Guests!!

Pass Flowers

This action is only available if you have a teammate.

Choose one of your team's two Collection cards. Then, pass that many Flower cards to your teammate. Finally, flip the Collection card to its opposite side just as if you had performed the Collect Flowers action.

This action is particularly helpful when you only have some of the cards necessary to make a crucial play. You can pass them to your teammate, hoping that they have the additional cards and can make the play on their turn.

IMPORTANT! Once again, the hand limit of 15 cards applies.

End of the Game

When one team has formed an unbroken line of Stones and Colonies, connecting a Home Colony on one side of their board to a Home Colony on the opposite side, they immediately win.

The Golden Rule of Silence

It is commonly known that beetles love peace and quiet, especially beetles that are taking a leisurely stroll through the garden! Because of this, players are not allowed to consult with their teammates during the game! They cannot discuss which Flower cards they have in their hands, which pedestals they should place Colonies on, or where they should lay Paths. Teams must use intuition and discernment to work together and connect their two sides of the board first!

Examples of things you **CANNOT** say to your teammate during the game:

- ❁ "I could really use some tulips right now!"
- ❁ "I've got two wild cards in my hand, so I'll be able to lay a path between our two Colonies on my next turn."
- ❁ "Let's start by locking down pedestals in the center of the board and then work our way out from there."
- ❁ "I think we should knock that team's Colony off before they connect a path to it and make it safe."

Lay a Path

In order to secure your Colonies you need to connect Paths of Stones to them. Paths may only be laid between two of your own Colonies. While Paths will often be the shortest distance between two spaces, they can meander if necessary. First, map out the Path you want to lay. Then, play a Flower card from your hand that matches the flower in each space of the Path, placing a Stone on that space as you go.

You cannot place Stones on any of the mushroom patches. These are considered unplayable for all teams.



Once a Path is connecting two Colonies, those Colonies are immediately safe (see previous page). Stones in a path are permanent and never removed.

IMPORTANT! You must always build a complete Path that fully connects two of your Colonies; you can never lay a partial Path! You do **NOT** have to start on your home Tiles.

ALSO IMPORTANT! In the rare event you run out of stones, use other pieces as needed.

Now that Scott has two Colonies, he wants to lay a Path between them so they will be secure (nothing is worse than having another team knock your Colony off). Fortunately, he has the right Flower cards to do so.



He plays the 2 cards matching the flower spaces in between his Colonies and places the Stones there, laying a Path between them. Now that both Colonies are connected by a Path they are safe, so he removes both Pedestal markers and leaves one guest on each colony.

1. Kristena (the black team) is in trouble. She's established a number of Colonies but has not connected any of them with Paths. Stephen (the gold team) has two Colonies connected by Paths, making them both safe. In addition they are right on Kristena's doorstep! If he connects them both he will block Kristena off from connecting to the Colony on her Home tile!

Kristena

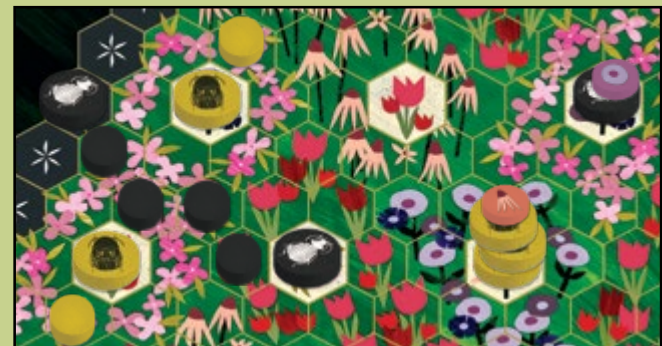


2. In order to keep her chances alive, Kristena lays a path of Stones from the Colony on her Home tile to a second Colony. She plays 4 Flower cards (one of which is a wild card) to lay the Path, placing the cards in her team's discard pile. The Colony is now safe, so she removes the Pedestal marker from on top.



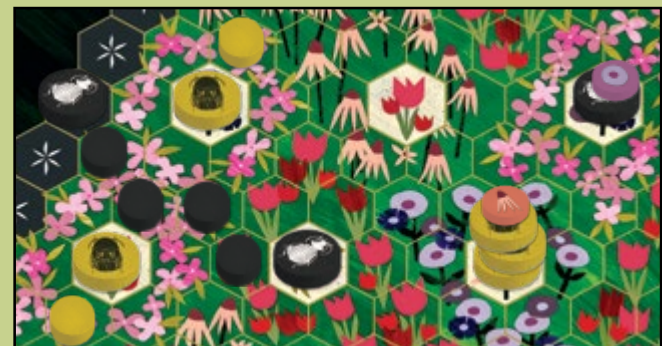
3. Stephen is disappointed his plan was thwarted, but he sees an opportunity. The next Colony that Kristena is likely to try and connect to only has 2 Guests. He has 3 of the matching Flower cards, which is just enough to knock her Colony off of the Pedestal. He replaces her Colony with his own, which is one stronger, and places the Pedestal marker back on top.

Stephen



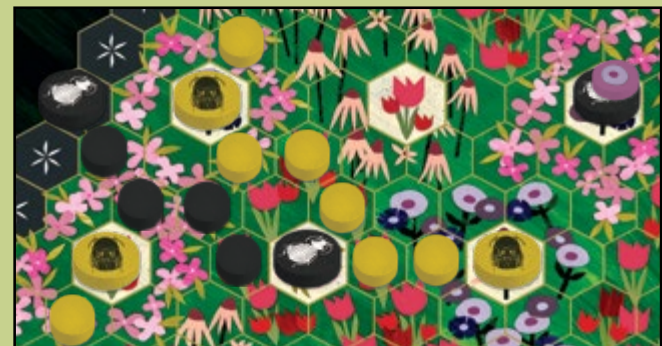
4. Kristena had the right cards to lay a path to her next Colony but Stephen ruined that plan when he knocked her Colony off and replaced it with one of his own. There's another Colony she could connect to but it's a bit farther and she doesn't have enough cards (she can't lay a partial Path). She decides to Collect Flowers, drawing 3 and flipping over her Collection card to the 2 side. Eureka! She got the right cards to lay the Path, but she'll have to wait until her next turn to play them.

Kristena



5. Unfortunately, Stephen happens to have exactly the right cards to lay a Path. He plays all five of his cards and lays a Path of Stones, connecting his two Colonies. Since his second Colony is now safe, he removes 2 guests and the Pedestal marker off the top of it leaving only 1 Guest. Kristena will have to find another way around, as Stephen has blocked this route off completely.

Stephen



Eliminating a Team

When there are three teams competing (in games with 3, 5, or possibly 6 players if using the 6-player Variant), it is possible that one team will be completely blocked. In other words, the other teams will have placed Stones in such a way that it is impossible for the blocked team to build an unbroken Path from one of their sides of the board to the other. When this happens the blocked team is immediately eliminated from play. Their Stones and Guests remain on the board but they can no longer take turns.

6 Player Variant

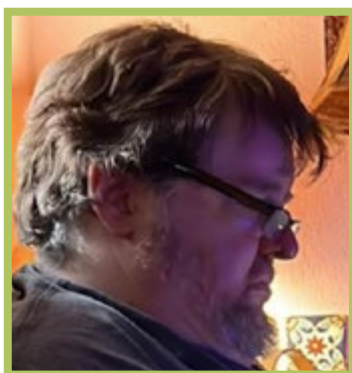
A 6 player game usually consists of two teams of 3, but you may play with three teams of 2 instead.



5 Player Games

There are a number of differences in a 5 player game, as teams A and B will have 2 players and team C will only have a single player.

- ❁ When sitting at the table, players should be arranged in this order: Team A, Team B, Team C, Team A, Team B
- ❁ During setup, both players on Teams A and B will each draw 5 Flower cards. The player on Team C will draw 7 cards.
- ❁ Turns should be taken in this order: First player on Team A, first player on Team B, lone player on Team C, second player on Team A, second player on Team B, lone player on Team C. In this way, each team will get 2 turns each.
- ❁ Teams A and B will be able to use the Trade Flowers action, but the lone player on Team C will not.



About the Designer

Stephen Glenn is the author over 15 games including *First & Goal*, *Rattlebones*, and *Balloon Cup*, an award-winning Spiel des Jahres Nominated two-player card game. He is known for crafting simple yet deep games with elegant, intuitive rules. He resides in Virginia Beach, VA, alongside his loving wife Suzanne, where he immerses himself in whatever his latest tabletop obsession is (last year: *Advanced Squad Leader*; this year: *Magic the Gathering*) while continuing to design fun, accessible, and memorable games.



About the Artist

Kristena Derrick is a prolific and versatile artist who is an illustrator, painter, jewelry maker, and mom. Most of her time is spent creating intricate earrings out of polymer clay, resin, and brass, which she sells through her company *Darling Derrick*, but she also finds time to illustrate children's books, consult as an interior designer, and create art for the odd board game. *Garden Guests* is her second credit as a board game artist.



DESIGNER: Stephen Glenn

ARTIST: Kristena Derrick

DEVELOPMENT: Evan Derrick

GRAPHIC DESIGN: Evan Derrick

PLAYTESTING: A.J. Porfirio, Julie Ahern, Byron Jorjorian, Ryan Jorjorian, Scott Beavers, Brad Fuller, Matthan Heisalt, Floyd Sherrod, and the TAGS Game Group

The **Garden Guests** game and logo are Trademarks of Van Ryder Games. ©2023 Van Ryder Games. All rights reserved.

Setup Summary

2, 4, & 6 Players (2 Teams)

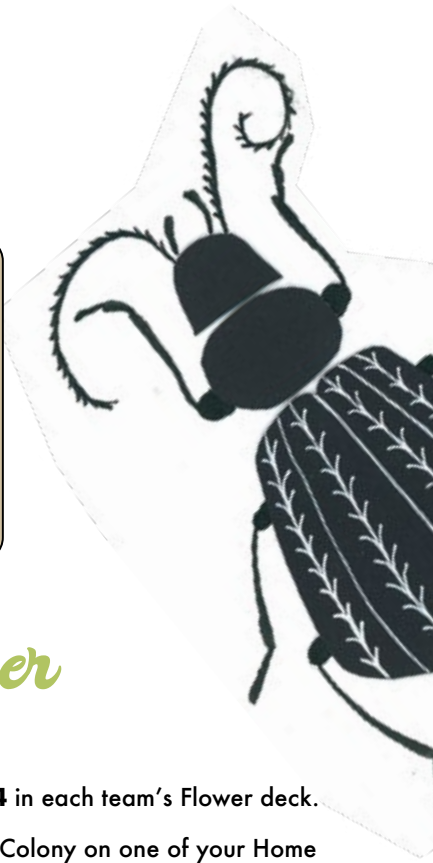
- Each player starts with **5 Flower** cards.
- Collection cards start with these numbers faceup:

Team A *Team B*
1 3 **4 2**

3 & 5 Players (3 Teams)

- Players on Team A and Team B each start with **5 Flower** cards. The lone player on Team C starts with **7 Flower** cards.
- Collection cards start with these numbers faceup:

Team A *Team B* *Team C*
1 2 **1 3** **4 2**



Actions Summary

- Collect Flowers:** Choose a Collection card, draw that many Flower cards, and flip the Collection card over.
- Build a Colony:** Play Flower cards matching the Pedestal, building a Colony with a number of Guests equal to cards played.
- Lay a Path:** Play Flower cards matching the spaces between two Colonies, placing a Stone in each space.
- Pass Flowers:** Choose a Collection card, pass that many Flower cards to your teammate, and flip the Collection card over.

Rules to Remember

- Your hand limit is **15** cards.
- Wild Flower** cards can be used in place of any flower. There are **4** in each team's Flower deck.
- You only need to play **1** Flower card (it can be any kind) to build a Colony on one of your Home tiles. Colonies on Home tiles are always safe and can never be knocked off.
- A Path of Stones must always fully connect two Colonies; you can never lay a partial Path.
- Once a Colony is connected to a Path, it is safe. You can quickly tell whether a Colony is safe by whether or not it has a Pedestal marker on top: safe Colonies **DO NOT** have a Pedestal marker on top, while vulnerable ones **DO** have a Pedestal marker on top.

The Hand Crafted World of Garden Guests

"Creating the art for Garden Guests was a special challenge! For this game, I painted paper and cut every flower individually from that paper, which was a lot of trial-and-error. Each piece was cut with great care and glued onto a painted background—I must have cut out hundreds of bits that didn't even make the cut (pun intended)! For example, I painstakingly glued dozens of flowers for a cover that I decided against using.

"My favorite part of making this art was designing the beetles. They are fictional species, despite my reverence for entomology, and their white floral tattoos hearken back to some of my older art."

Kristena Derrick

