

Orléans Joue 2020 : 2nd
Hippodice 2020 : Finalist



Pollen Wars



**A game for bee lovers
that like to bug others!**



3 - 6



10+



55'



Game design
Axel Kremer

Introduction

Times are hard... Bees are dying and pollen is rare. As queen of your hive, you are in charge and the decisions you take will determine the destiny of your colony. Skills, focus, alliances and negotiation will help you through this journey.

Send your bees to the flower field and form the correct pattern to gather pollen. Block your opponents or let them do the harvesting for you and raid their hives. Is your colony infested? You may have to go on a mission to find a remedy... Or maybe you are a twisted queen and might decide to spread the infestation to your opponents to kill the competition...

Components

6 pollen markers



6 varroa destructor tokens



1 drifting bee dice



4 double-sided fungus tiles



1 double-sided flower tile



54 forager bee tokens



30 soldier bee tokens



6 hive boards



12 double-sided flower field tiles



6 ladybird cards



7 pattern cards



52 honey cards



28 royal jelly cards



1 rule book



Kid variant

When playing with kids, **ignore the infestation and raid rules.**

These rules are marked with the  icon so you can skip them and start playing faster.

Check the bottom of the honey and royal jelly cards and **remove** from the game the ones with the  icon.

When the kids feel comfortable, with experience or as they grow older, add the cards and rules relating to the raids, then those relating to the infestation.

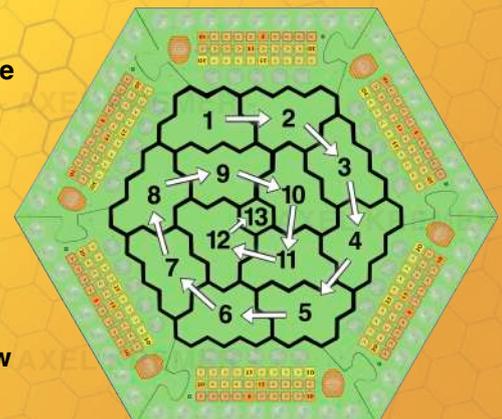
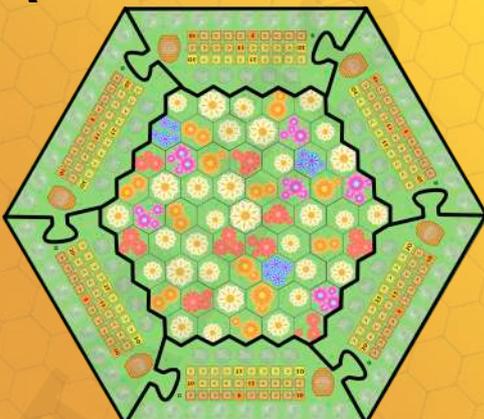
Set-up

Start by setting up the **6 hive boards** (left image).

Then place the flower field tiles in a **clockwise direction, starting with position 1 and ending with position 13** (right image).

The first time you play, try **not to make clusters of pink flowers** and leave enough space between the **blue flowers**. **Do not use** the side of the tiles that contain **rocks** or the tile with a hexagon with **7 yellow flowers**. These make the game harder (see the Expert variant page 11).

A



B

Each queen places themselves as follows:

Number of **soldier bees** available to send to the flower field,  to defend your hive or to raid another one.

 At the start, all the hives are infested! Place the **varroa destructor token** face up on your hive. If the infestation is eradicated, simply flip it face down.

Number of **forager bees** available to send to the flower field.

The position of the **pollen marker** indicates how many pollen grains are in your hive. When you have filled up your hive with **30 pollen grains**, you have won! Start with **5 pollen grains** for a game with **3 or 4 queens** and with **10 pollen grains** for a game with **5 or 6 queens**.



C

Deal, face down, **1 pattern card, 1 ladybird card, 1 honey card and 1 royal jelly card** to each queen. If any queen receives a blue card , replace it with another one from the same deck, then shuffle that deck. Put away any unnecessary ladybird cards and place the rest of the cards near the flower field.

Royal jelly cards deck



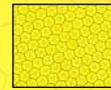
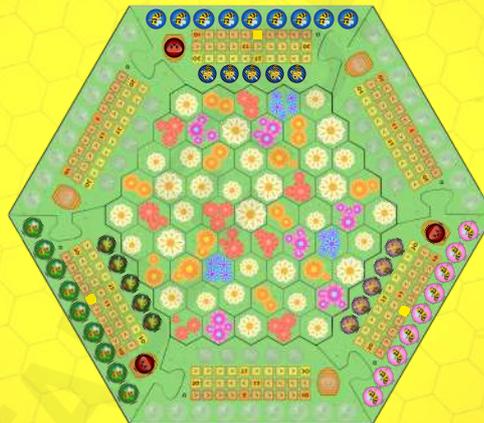
Royal jelly cards discard pile



Honey cards discard pile



Honey cards deck



Dormant pattern cards

D

The queen who has the card with the **ladybird with the most spots** on its back:

-  places the **fungus tiles** (fungus side up) wherever they want in the flower field.
- places the **drifting bee dice** on a hexagon containing **as many flowers as possible**.
- plays **first** and the other queens follow in a **clockwise direction**.



The **drifting bee** is a bee that **every queen can use to form their pattern**. It **cannot be moved** and **cannot be topped** by any other bee.



 Instead of sending bees on flowers, queens can send them on a **fungus** to retrieve a **remedy against the varroa destructor**. Use **3 fungi** for a game with **3 or 4 queens** and **4 fungi** for a game with **5 or 6 queens**.

Victory conditions

First possibility: if a queen fills their hive with **30 pollen grains** or more, the round instantly ends. If there are bees left in the flower field, they return to their hives with pollen. The queen with the most pollen wins.

Second possibility: if a queen lets **all their forager bees die**, the game ends. The queen with the most pollen and at least 1 forager bee alive wins. Queens with no living forager bees are eliminated and cannot win. In the rare event that no queen has a living forager bee, everyone loses!

In the case of a tie: the queen with the **most living forager bees** wins. If the tie persists, the queen with a hive that is **not infested** wins. If there still is a tie, those queens share the victory.

Basic principle of the game

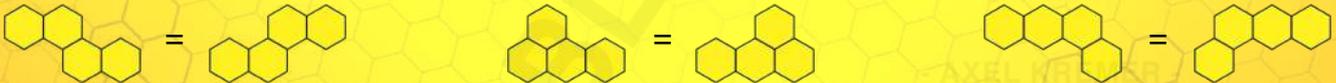
The main way to gather pollen in the flower field is to **form the pattern** shown in the center of your pattern card using your **forager AND / OR soldier bees**.

The number of flowers in a hexagon indicates the number of pollen grains available.



In the example above, the forager bees and the soldier bee collect **10 pollen grains**.

It is acceptable to form a **mirrored version** of your pattern.



The completion of a pattern instantly marks the end of a round and ALL the bees return to their hives. Queens must try to be the first to complete their pattern because bees that do not form a pattern will only collect a **single pollen grain** each, no matter the hexagon they occupy.

 **At the end of each round, infested hives will see 3 of their forager bees die (flip them face down) and 1 tree will be cut down (flip 1 fungus tile)!**

 A forager bee can **NEVER** go on top of any other bee.



 A soldier bee can **ONLY** go on top of an opposing **forager bee** or on one of the same hive.



 A forager bee topped by a soldier bee **cannot be moved** or considered to **form a pattern**.

 A bee on a fungus, rock or tree stump cannot be used to form a pattern.

On your turn

A Do 1 of the 5 possible actions:

1. Send 1 of your forager or soldier bees from your hive to the flower field (on a flower / fungus / stump / rock).
2. Move 1 of your forager or soldier bees to another part of the flower field (on a flower / fungus / stump / rock).
3. Bring 1 of your forager or soldier bees from the flower field back to your hive.
4.  Raid 1 opposing hive: - Announcement > Recall > Battle > Result.
- Possible spreading of the varroa destructor infestation.
5. Draw 1 royal jelly card.

B Draw 1 honey card

OR

Play **AS MANY** honey and royal jelly cards **AS YOU WANT**.

C Discard down to have maximum 3 honey and royal jelly cards in your hand.

Send 1 bee to the flower field

1. Send 1 of your forager or soldier bees from your hive to the flower field (on a flower / fungus / stump / rock).

Forager bee on a flower



Soldier bee on an opposing forager bee (flower)



 Forager bee on a fungus



 Soldier bee on an opposing forager bee (fungus)



Move 1 bee to another part of the flower field

2. Move 1 of your forager or soldier bees to another part of the flower field (on a flower / fungus / stump / rock).

Forager bee from a flower to another one

Soldier bee from an opposing forager bee (flower) to a forager bee from the same hive (flower)



 Forager bee from a flower to a fungus

 Soldier bee from an opposing forager bee (flower) to an opposing forager bee (fungus)



Bring 1 bee back to your hive

3. Bring 1 of your forager or soldier bees from the flower field back to your hive.

Forager bee from a flower to its hive

Soldier bee from an opposing forager bee (flower) to its hive



In the 2 examples above, the bees return to their hive on their own and are not part of a pattern. They therefore each return with 1 pollen grain, regardless of the number of flowers present in the hexagon from which they return.

Forager bee from a fungus to its hive

Soldier bee from an opposing forager bee (fungus) to its hive



In the 2 examples above, the bees return from a fungus to their hive and therefore eradicate the varroa destructor infestation (flip it face down). Note: to eradicate the infestation striking its colony, a bee must go to and come back from a fungus before the round ends.

Reminder: at the end of each round, the infested hives will see 3 of their forager bees die (flip them face down) and 1 tree will be cut down (flip over 1 fungus tile)! The end of a round happens instantly as soon as a pattern is completed.



Raid 1 opposing hive

4. **Raid 1 opposing hive:** Announcement > Recall > Battle > Result. Possible spreading of the varroa destructor infestation.



Number of **soldier bees** available to **defend** your hive or to **raid** another one.

If the opposing **hive** or yours is **infested** and the **raid successful**, the **infestation will spread**. It can therefore serve as an attack weapon or a deterrent weapon!

This icon appears in the bottom left corner and gives you **+1 in attack** when you try to raid an opposing hive:

This icon appears in the bottom right corner and gives you **+1 in defence** when an opposing queen tries to raid you:

WHAT'S THE BEE? ?

Raid an opposing hive.

Attack +1

LOOKS LIKE YOU WERE AS SNUG AS A BUG! WHAT ABOUT NOW?

All the queens give their pattern card to the queen on their left.

Attack +2

BUG-LAR!

Steal 1 pollen grain from an opposing queen (no spreading of the infestation).

Defence +1

A

THE ANNOUNCEMENT:

A queen announces **who** they are raiding with the soldier bees present in their hive.

Example

You announce that you are raiding the **pink** queen using the **4** soldier bees present in your hive.

B

THE RECALL:

The **attacked queen** can instantly **recall** as many **soldier bees** to their hive as they wish. A soldier bee rushing back to its hive to defend it **returns empty-handed**. **If a pattern is unveiled** in this context, **the round ends** before the raid takes place.

Example

The **pink** queen has **2** soldier bees in their hive and decide to bring **1** back from the flower field. They now have **3** soldier bees to defend their hive.

C

THE BATTLE:

All the queens **count together out loud** and play cards at **the same time on the count of 3**.

In order to increase their score, **the attacking queen** can play cards with **attack icons** .

The attacked queen can play cards with **defence icons** .

Depending on interests and alliances, **other queens can influence the outcome of a raid** by playing cards at the exact same time as the attacking queen and the attacked queen.

The icons on the played cards determine who they help. Some royal jelly cards have both attack  AND defence icons . To avoid misunderstandings, queens who influence a raid **must always play** their cards **in the direction of the queen they want to help**. Any card clearly played late compared to the others will be discarded and not taken into account.

Example 1

You play 2 cards: attack +3
Pink plays 1 card: defence +1
Green plays 1 card: defence +1
(therefore helping pink).

Example 2

You play 1 card: attack +1
Pink plays 2 cards: defence +2
Green decides not to play cards.

Example 3

You play 1 card: attack +1
Pink plays 2 cards: defence +3
Green plays 1 card: defence +1
(therefore helping pink).

D

THE RESULT:

1. **Add** for each queen the **number of soldier bees** in their hive and the **number of attack OR defence points** they obtained from the cards.
2. **Subtract the score** of the queen who **defended** from the score of the queen who **attacked**.
3. **Discard** the cards used during the battle.

A positive result

indicates how many attacking soldier bees have entered the opposing hive. **Each bee stole 1 grain of pollen**. If one of the 2 hives is infested, **the infestation spreads!**

A result equal to 0

means that the attacking soldier bees were repelled by the opposing soldier bees, **nothing happens**. The infestation doesn't spread.

A negative result

(infrequent) indicates how many **attacking soldier bees** have been **injured** (flip them face down). A queen **cannot use** an injured soldier bee (no attack, no defence, no flower field) until the **end of their next turn**. The infestation doesn't spread.

Result example 1

You: $4 + 3 = 7$
Pink: $3 + 1 + 1 = 5$
Result: $7 - 5 = 2$
You steal 2 pollen grains from pink.

Result example 2

You: $4 + 1 = 5$
Pink: $3 + 2 = 5$
Result: $5 - 5 = 0$
It's a tie, nothing happens.

Result example 3

You: $4 + 1 = 5$
Pink: $3 + 3 + 1 = 7$
Result: $5 - 7 = -2$
2 of your soldier bees are injured.

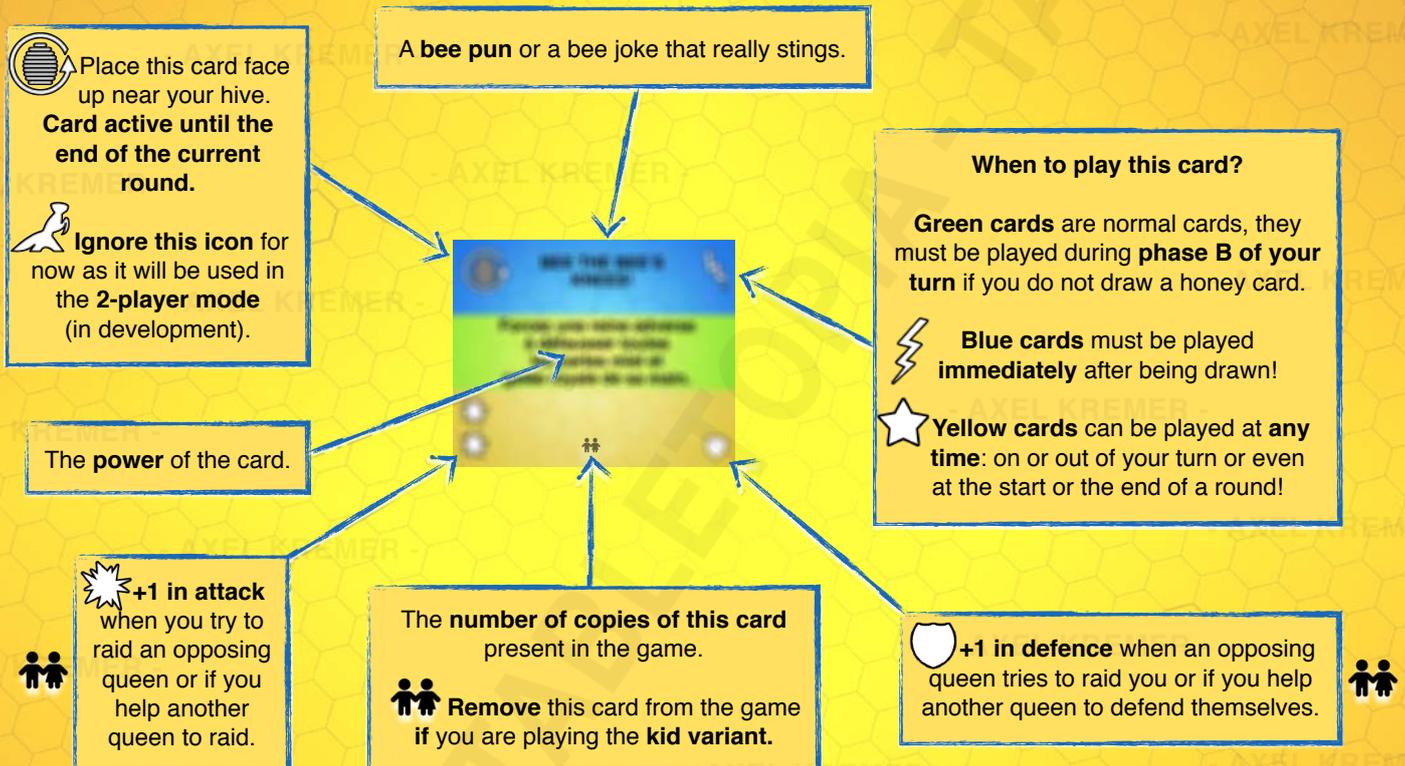
Draw 1 royal jelly card

5. Draw 1 royal jelly card.

Royal jelly cards are honey cards with **superpowers**. It **costs 1 action** to get 1, but they give you advantages that could make the difference!



Explanation of the honey and royal jelly cards



Special card: Mutiny!

Place this card near an **opposing hive** to create a **mutiny** in it.

The soldier bees in that hive will not agree to raid another one as long as the mutiny is taking place. However, they continue to defend their hive and can still be used in the flower field.



A mutiny **ends** when a **new mutiny card is drawn and played** or at the **end of a round**, whichever occurs first.

There can only be **one mutiny at a time**, and a mutiny **cannot strike the same hive twice in a row**.

List of the honey cards

- Mutiny! Place this card near an opposing hive to create a mutiny in it. (6) 
- You can now finish your turns with 4 cards in your hand instead of 3! (1)
- Force 2 opposing queens to swap their pattern cards. (1)
- Force an opposing queen to raid a queen of your choice (works even in case of a mutiny). (3) 
- Replace the pattern card of an opposing queen with 1 of the dormant pattern cards! (1)
- Resurrect 1 dead forager bee for 2 pollen grains. (2) 
- Steal 1 pollen grain from an opposing queen (no spreading of the infestation). (6)
- Steal 2 pollen grains from an opposing queen and give them to another opposing queen (no spreading of the infestation). (3)
- Steal 1 random card from the hand of an opposing queen. (3)
- Move the drifting bee 2 hexagones from its current position. (1)
- Move an opposing forager bee 2 hexagones from its current position. (2)
- Move 1 of your forager bees 2 hexagones from its current position. (2)
- If 1 of your soldier bees tops 1 of your forager bees, bring them both back to your hive with 1 pollen grain per flower in the occupied hexagone. (6)
- Look at the hand of an opposing queen. (3)
- Look at the pattern card of an opposing queen. (6)
- Look at 1 of the dormant pattern cards. (4)
- Raid an opposing hive. (2) 

List of the royal jelly cards

- Move the drifting bee to another part of the flower field. (1)
- Move an opposing forager bee to another part of the flower field. (2)
- Move an opposing soldier bee to another part of the flower field. (2)
- +1 in attack. (3) 
- +1 in defence. (2) 
- The varroa destructor infestation that was striking your hive is now eradicated! (2) 
- Bring 1 of your forager bees back to your hive with 1 pollen grain per flower in the occupied hexagon. (1)
- Bring 1 of your soldier bees back to your hive with 1 pollen grain per flower in the occupied hexagon. (1)
- Block 1 honey card, 1 royal jelly card or 1 raid. (2)
- Draw 3 honey cards. (1)
- Resurrect 1 dead forager bee for free. (1) 
- All the queens give their pattern card to the queen on their left. (1)
- Swap your pattern card with an opposing queen's pattern card or with 1 of the dormant pattern cards! (1)
- Steal 3 pollen grains from an opposing queen (no spreading of the infestation). (1)
- Force an opposing queen to discard their hand. (1)
- Force an opposing soldier bee to return empty handed from the flower field to its hive! (2)
- Force an opposing queen to swap their hand with that of a queen of your choice. (1)
- If your hive is infested, infest an opposing hive. (3) 

End of a round

The end of a round is instantly triggered as soon as a queen forms their pattern.

1. The bees forming the pattern return to their hive with the number of pollen grains corresponding to the number of flowers in the hexagons they occupied.
2. It is possible that new patterns are unveiled once the bees forming the first pattern return to their hive. If this happens, the bees forming the pattern that was just unveiled also return to their hive with the number of pollen grains corresponding to the number of flowers in the hexagons they occupied.
3. Repeat step 2 until no more patterns can be unveiled this way.
4. All the bees still present in the flower field **simultaneously** return to their hives with 1 pollen grain each (no new pattern can therefore be unveiled). A bee that returns from a fungus at the end of a round returns empty-handed, with no pollen or remedy against the varroa destructor.



In the example above, blue collects 10 pollen grains (1) and unveils the pattern of orange who then collects 6 pollen grains (2). Since there are no more patterns, the queens therefore collect 1 pollen grain per bee of their colour still present in the flower field. Blue and orange each collect 1 additional pollen grain. Green collects 5 pollen grains. The drifting bee stays where it is because no queen has used it to form their pattern.

5.  Infested hives see 3 of their forager bees die (flip them face down) and remain infested to start the next round.
6.  If a queen no longer has a living forager bee OR if at least 1 queen has filled their hive with 30 pollen grains or more, the game is over. See the victory conditions on page 4 if necessary. If not, start a new round.

Start of a new round

1. All the queens keep their hands but discard the honey and royal jelly cards placed face up near their hives during the previous round.
2. All the pattern cards must be shuffled and re-dealt. Dormant pattern cards are placed next to each other by the flower field. See the setup on page 3 if necessary.
3. If no queen has used the drifting bee to form their pattern, it stays where it is to start this new round. If a queen brought it back to their hive when making their pattern, they place it back in the flower field on a hexagon containing as many flowers as possible.  If their hive is not infested, however, they roll the dice before placing it back in the flower field. If the roll shows a bee holding a sign with the peace symbol, they are safe! If it shows a bee holding a sign with the varroa destructor, they start this new round with an infested hive.
4. The queen with the least pollen in their hive cuts 1 tree down (flip 1 fungus tile) and plays first. In the event of a tie, the queen with the card with the ladybird with the most points on its back cuts 1 tree down and plays first.



This is war!

Alliances, manipulations, betrayals and trading are allowed. This is war after all!

If you see an opposing queen's cards, you have the right to tell other queens what those cards may contain, but you are **never allowed to prove it by showing them** the cards. Be convincing with words.

You are **allowed to manipulate** other queens but you are **not allowed to cheat**, hide or steal cards, pollen, tokens, etc.

You **can** and probably will have to **help each other**, but you **cannot share the victory**.

Depending on alliances and affinities, **cards and services can be exchanged** for other cards, services or pollen. Cards and services can also **be generously donated** in an attempt to seal alliances.



Expert variant

Out of the 12 flower field tiles, 11 have rocks instead of flowers on 1 of their 2 sides. Bees can occupy these hexagons, but they cannot be used to complete a pattern because they contain no flowers. **Add more rocks or tree stumps to make the game more difficult.** You can also use them to **reduce the space available** for games with **only 3 queens**.

The last of the 12 tiles has a hexagon containing 7 yellow flowers. This hexagon provides **7 pollen grains**. Use this side of the tile to play a **more aggressive game**.



5 common mistakes

- 1. Drawing a royal jelly card** during phase A of your turn **does not prevent you from playing phase B** of that same turn.
- 2. During phase B** of your turn, you can **EITHER draw 1 honey card OR play AS MANY cards AS YOU WANT**. You **cannot draw** a honey card, **then play green cards**. If you drew a **blue card** ⚡, however, you must **play it immediately**. You are also **allowed to play yellow cards** ★ at any time.
- 3. Playing a yellow card** ★ right **after phase A** of your turn **does NOT necessarily activate the phase B** of that same turn. You can, for example, send a bee to the flower field (phase A), then play a yellow card ★ (phase B not activated), then decide to draw a honey card (phase B) or to play more cards (phase B).
- 4. Only bees forming a pattern collect** the number of **pollen grains corresponding to the number of flowers** in the hexagons they occupy. The **other bees collect a single pollen grain each, even if they top or are topped by another bee**.
- 5. A soldier bee can only be placed on** an opposing **forager bee** or one of the same hive. It **cannot be placed on top of another soldier bee or on the drifting bee or directly on a flower**, fungus, rock or tree stump. A **soldier bee can also be used to form a pattern** as well as to collect pollen or to collect a remedy against the infestation of varroa destructor as long as it is placed on a forager bee which itself is placed on a flower or fungus.

Quick start

- A. Set up the flower field** by first placing the flower tiles **from the outside to the inside** in a **clockwise direction**.
- B. Each queen receives 5 soldier bees, 9 forager bees, 1 pollen marker** (to be placed on **5** for a game with **3 or 4** queens and on **10** for a game with **5 or 6** queens) 👤 and **1 varroa destructor** which they place face up on their hive.
- C. Deal, face down, 1 pattern card, 1 ladybird card, 1 honey card and 1 royal jelly card** to each queen.
- D. The queen who has the card with the ladybird with the most spots** on its back:
 - 1. 👤 places the fungus tiles** (3 for a game with **3 or 4** queens and **4** for a game with **5 or 6** queens).
 - 2. places the drifting bee dice** on a hexagon containing **as many flowers as possible**.
 - 3. plays first** and the other queens follow in a **clockwise direction**.