

KATMAI

THE BEARS OF BROOKS RIVER

The title 'KATMAI' is rendered in a large, bold, serif font. The letters are filled with a dark, textured pattern. Inside the letter 'A', there is a silhouette of a bear walking. Inside the letter 'M', there is a silhouette of a bear standing. Below the main title, the subtitle 'THE BEARS OF BROOKS RIVER' is written in a smaller, bold, sans-serif font. The entire title is set against a dark, textured background that looks like a torn piece of paper or a brushstroke.

A GAME BY PETER RIDGEWAY — ILLUSTRATED BY TOM LOPEZ

RULES OF PLAY

COMPONENTS



12 Sandy  bear cards



12 Cinnamon  bear cards



2 bear cub tokens
(1 per player)



24 bear meeple (beeples)
(12 per player)



48 salmon tokens
(24 per player)



1 initiative token



15 double-sided objective cards



7 double-sided river tiles

THE BEARS OF BROOKS RIVER

The long dark winter is approaching.

Twenty four brown bears are preparing for months of hibernation in the Alaskan wilderness.

Plan carefully to help your bears secure the best fishing spots along the Brooks River in order to catch the most salmon possible.

Each summer, in southwest Alaska, dozens of brown bears converge on the rushing currents of the Brooks River in one of the largest gatherings of bears anywhere in the world. These bears come for one reason: to fish. Hundreds of thousands of migrating salmon pour into the river from the North Pacific, providing the bears with an enormous feast.

And the salmon arrive just in time. By early summer, the bears have lost up to a third of their body weight and have an insatiable appetite. They must consume enough fish in just a few months to build up the body fat that will sustain them for the rest of the year. Many of the bears return to the river year after year and create an amazing social hierarchy. The biggest, most aggressive bears assert their dominance over the others, while the smaller, younger bears occasionally spar with one another to improve their position in the hierarchy.

Where the bears fish in the river is determined by their dominance and skill. The most dominant bears congregate at the best fishing spots, while the most skilled bears have perfected fishing techniques that allow them to take advantage of the special features of the river. Some bears post themselves

at the top of the waterfalls and catch salmon with their teeth as the fish leap over the falls. Other bears have learned how to dive for fish in deep pools or pounce on salmon from large rocks in the river. Some bears will even steal or beg for their next meal. Whatever tactics they use, the survival of every bear depends on their ability to consume enough salmon before the harsh winter months arrive.

In *Katmai*, you'll be playing bear cards from your hand and placing them next to river tiles until all of your bears have been played. Players with the most dominance against a tile will be able to place a beeples in an unoccupied space on that tile. This will repeat over rounds and spaces will soon disappear.

You want the placement of your beeples to match the objective cards at the end of the river to score salmon.

The player with the most salmon at the end of the game wins.



SETUP

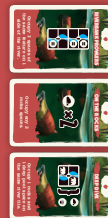
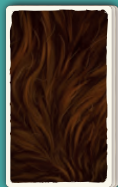
- 1 Arrange the river tiles in a single row between both players. The tiles should all follow the same direction of flow (◀◀◀) as indicated on each tile.
- 2 Each player takes one of the two bear decks, either *Cinnamon* 🐻 or *Sandy* 🐻, and places it in front of them.
- 3 Each player takes the 12 beeples, 24 salmon tokens and the bear cub token matching their deck.

- 4 Choose a challenge type: ◯ or ◊ .
◯ for a slightly lighter game.
◊ for a slightly more challenging game.

If ◯, select a letter between A and H, find all 4 objective cards that share that label, and arrange them face up in the area upstream of the river tiles.

If ◊, randomly select 3 ◊, 2 ◊◊ and 1 ◊◊◊◊ objective cards and arrange them face up in the area upstream of the river tiles.

- 5 Flip the initiative token like a coin. The other player calls “Paw” or “Naw”. Catch the token and reveal which image is face up - the paw or nothing (naw). If the image matches what the player called out, they take the initiative token. Otherwise the player who flipped the token takes it.



Now you're ready to play!

RIVER TILE SPOTLIGHT

Each river tile is divided into four spaces, each with a particular type of fishing feature, indicated by the following icons:



Deep pool



Shallows



Waterfall



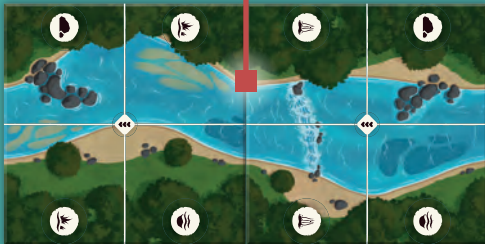
Eddy
(small whirlpool)



Rocks

NOTE: River tile spaces count as adjacent across tiles.

DOWNSTREAM



UPSTREAM

◀◀◀ The direction the river flows.

BEAR CARD SPOTLIGHT

Each card shows a real-life Alaska brown bear that has been observed fishing along Brooks River.

ABILITY ICON

indicates this card's ability.

DOMINANCE

a bear's base dominance.

SOW ICON

indicates this bear is a sow (adult female bear).

NAME

this bear's name.

ABILITY

details this card's ability.



HOW TO PLAY

The game is played over a series of rounds.

Each round has four phases:

- 1 Prepare
- 2 Play cards
- 3 Place beeples and catch salmon
- 4 Clean up

The game ends if, at the end of a round, either player has two or fewer beeples in supply **OR** one player has played at least 4 more beeples than their opponent.

PHASE 1 - PREPARE

- 1 Each player shuffles their deck of 12 bear cards, places them face-down in front of them, and removes 2 from the top, setting them aside without looking at them. They won't be used this round.
- 2 Each player draws 2 cards from the top of their deck to form their hand.

INITIATIVE TOKEN SPOTLIGHT

The player with the initiative token is the starting player. The starting player must place their card first (see Phase 2 - Play Cards above).

Before choosing their card, the starting player can choose to give the initiative token to the other player, forcing the other player to become the starting player.



PHASE 2 - PLAY CARDS

- 1 Starting with the player with the initiative token, each player chooses one of the cards in their hand and plays it face down against one of the river tiles on their side of the river.

NOTE: A maximum of 3 cards from each player can be played against the same river tile during a round.

- 2 Players simultaneously flip over and reveal their played cards. Revealed cards will remain face-up until the end of the round.
- 3 If a card has an ability and is marked with a ⚡, that ability is resolved immediately, beginning with the player with the initiative token (see Bear Abilities on page 14).
- 4 Each player then draws a new card from the top of their respective decks.

This phase continues until players have placed all 10 cards and resolved all their ⚡ abilities.

When a player is given the initiative token, they cannot give it to the other player until their next turn, i.e. after they have drawn a new card.

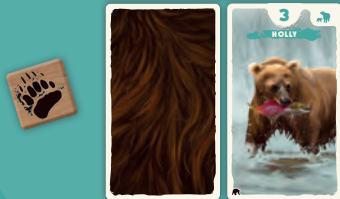
The initiative token also affects who can place a bear cub token first during Phase 3 as well as the order in which bear abilities resolve.

NOTE: Forcing the other player to play first can often give you an advantage. Choosing when to do this can end up being an important strategy to keep in mind.

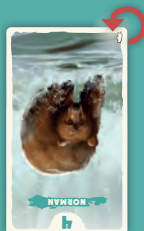
E.G.

PLAY CARDS EXAMPLE

- 1** *Cinnamon* 🐻 has previously played *Holly* against a tile. They have the initiative token, so they choose a card from their hand (*Milkshake*) and play it face down against an adjacent river tile. *Sandy* 🐻 decides to play *Norman* face down opposite *Milkshake* because they too want a fishing spot on that tile.



- 2** Players simultaneously flip their cards, revealing their bears. *Cinnamon* has the initiative token, so their card's ability triggers first.



- 3** Using *Milkshake*'s power, *Cinnamon* moves *Holly* across from the right on top of *Milkshake* to boost their dominance at this tile to 5, currently higher than *Norman*'s 4. *Sandy*'s *Norman* doesn't have an ability.




Both *Cinnamon* and *Sandy* draw another card from the top of their decks and keep playing.

PHASE 3 - PLACE BEEPLES

- 1 Starting with the river tile that is furthest upstream, players add up the dominance value of all their cards played against that river tile, factoring in any abilities affecting dominance values.
- 2 The player whose cards have the highest total dominance against a river tile may place one of their beeples on that tile in any unoccupied space, as long as they have beeples remaining.
- 3 Check to see if the beeples meet any of the objectives at the head of the river (see Catch Salmon on page 9).
- 4 Moving downstream, repeat this for each river tile until you reach the end of the river.

BEAR CUB TOKEN SPOTLIGHT



Bear cub tokens are used as dominance tiebreakers. When players work out their total dominance during the Place Beples phase, a player who has a card with a sow icon  against the river tile may place their bear cub token on that card to break the tie. This token cannot be used again until the next round.

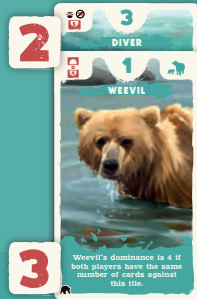
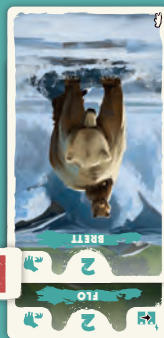
The player with the initiative token may place their bear cub token first, if at all. A player cannot place a bear cub token on a card if any of the other player's bears are on the opposite side of the river tile already has a bear cub token on it.

When a tie exists but no token is used to break the tie, neither player places a beeples on the tile.

E.G.


PLACE BEEPLES EXAMPLE

- 1 *Sandy*  has placed two cards (Flo and Brett), each with a dominance value of 2, against the river tile, for a total dominance of 4.
- 2 While *Cinnamon*'s  cards (Diver and Weevil) have dominance values of 3 and 1, they both have abilities that change them. Diver is against a river tile with an unoccupied deep pool, so his ability changes his dominance value to 5.
- 3 Weevil's dominance value changes to 4 because both players have the same number of cards played against this tile. This means *Cinnamon* has a total dominance of 9 against *Sandy*'s total dominance of 4.
- 4 Since *Cinnamon* has the highest total dominance, they get to place 1 beeples in any unoccupied space on the tile. They choose to add their beeples to the empty space with the eddy, as this will help them with one of the objectives in play.




PHASE 3 - CATCH SALMON

- 1 Each time you place a beeples, check the objective cards upstream to see if the placement means you satisfy any of the objective cards' requirements.
- 2 If a player satisfies the requirements shown on an objective card, they place salmon tokens of their color on the objective card, equal to the number indicated by that objective.

Objectives with the  icon have features that score bonus salmon. If a player satisfies the objective AND one of the beeples used occupies the bonus feature, that player places one additional salmon token on the relevant objective card.

Only 1 bonus salmon can be earned each time an objective card is satisfied.

- 3 A beeples may be used to satisfy more than one objective, but can never score for the same objective more than once.

NOTE: Objective cards marked with  are scored at the end of the game.

Already scored objectives can never be reversed or un-scored.

OBJECTIVE CARD SPOTLIGHT

Each objective card has a goal as well as a number of salmon tokens it is worth.


SALMON VALUE

VISUAL

NAME

REQUIREMENT



Beeples placements on  objective cards don't need to match the visuals exactly.

SPACE THAT MUST HAVE YOUR BEEPLE

SPACE THAT CANNOT HAVE ANY OF YOUR BEEPLES


OBJECTIVE GROUP

BONUS FEATURE: +1 SALMON TOKEN



E.G.

CATCH SALMON EXAMPLE 1

- 1** Cinnamon  places the circled beeples this round. They now occupy two rock spaces, satisfying the "On The Rocks" objective. Cinnamon therefore places 1 salmon token on it.

- 2** Cinnamon now also has beeples surrounding Sandy's beeples, satisfying the "Box In" objective card. Cinnamon therefore places 2 salmon tokens on it.

1




2

1



E.G.

CATCH SALMON EXAMPLE 2

1 Sandy  places the circled beeper this round.

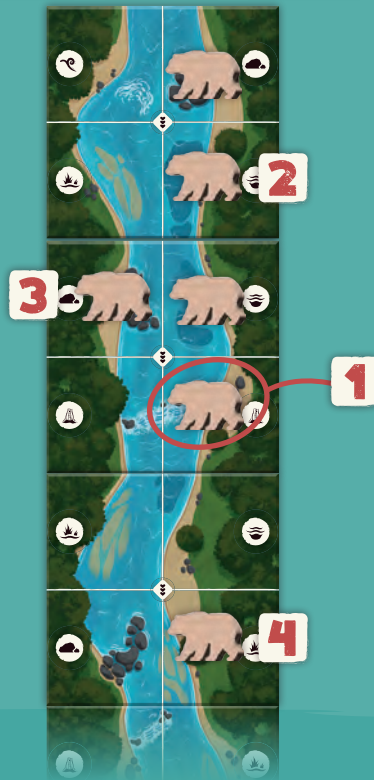
2 This means the placed beeper and the three running alongside it upstream satisfy the Parade objective card. Sandy places 3 salmon tokens on the objective card.

One of those beeples is also occupying a space that has a rocks feature, satisfying the bonus feature and earning Sandy another 1 salmon token.

3 Sandy's placement also matches the "Steady Eddy" objective card, however, there is a beeper of theirs where there cannot be, preventing that objective from being satisfied.

4 Sandy's placed beeper and another beeper downstream satisfy the "Poolside" objective card. Sandy places 1 salmon token on that objective card.

Neither of the beeples is occupying a deep pool space, so the bonus is not satisfied.



PHASE 4 - CLEAN-UP

After scoring the last beeples in a round:


- Take back all bear cards and the bear cub token.
- Leave all beeples in place.
- Return the two set-aside bear cards to your deck.

END OF GAME

At the end of clean-up, check if the game has finished.

- At the end of a round, if you have at least 4 more beeples placed than your opponent, you win immediately.
- At the end of a round, if you have 0, 1 or 2 beeples left in your supply after the Catch Salmon Phase, the game ends immediately, and you move on to scoring.

SCORING

- 1 Check to see if the objective card marked with  is scored and assign salmon tokens accordingly.
- 2 Each player then adds up how many total salmon they have on all objective cards. The player with the highest number of salmon wins.
- 3 If there is a tie, the player with the most beeples placed along the river tiles wins. If there is still a tie, both players win!



E.G.

SCORING EXAMPLE

At the end of a claw-biting game:

Cinnamon 🐻 has **1** token on “Steady Eddy”,
3 tokens on “Pawsitive Vibes”, and **3** tokens on
“Parade”, giving them a total of **7**.

Sandy 🐶 has **1** token on “Steady Eddy”, **2** tokens
on “Pawsitive Vibes” and **3** tokens on “Parade”,
giving them a total of **6**.

Cinnamon wins with 7 salmon!



BEAR ABILITIES

Many of the bears of Brooks River have unique abilities that are reflected in the game. Abilities marked with a ⚡ trigger immediately (following initiative order) while those in red indicate dominance values that change depending on other factors.



DENT & MARGE

This card's ability affects only the least dominant of the cards that your opponent has played against the same river tile as it. That card's dominance is instead 0. If your opponent has two or more cards that are tied for least dominant, only one card is affected by this ability. You choose which card is affected. As more cards are played at the river tile, the newly played cards could become the least dominant. In this way, Dent and Marge's ability could affect different cards throughout the round. This ability always triggers after all other abilities.



DIVER & HEADBOB

This card's dominance is 5 when played against a tile with an unoccupied deep pool / waterfall. If that feature is not on the tile, or is occupied by a beeper of either player, this card's dominance is 3 when against that tile.



DIVOT & WEEVIL

This card's dominance is 4 if played against a tile where both players have played the same number of cards. If the number of cards played by each player against its tile is different, this card's dominance is 1.



FLO & MILKSHAKE

You may move one of your played cards onto this card. If you have the initiative token and your opponent also played a card with an ability, your opponent's ability would trigger only after you move one of your played cards (or decide not to move a card). The river tile's 3-card limit still applies, so if this is the third card played against the river tile, you cannot move a card onto it.



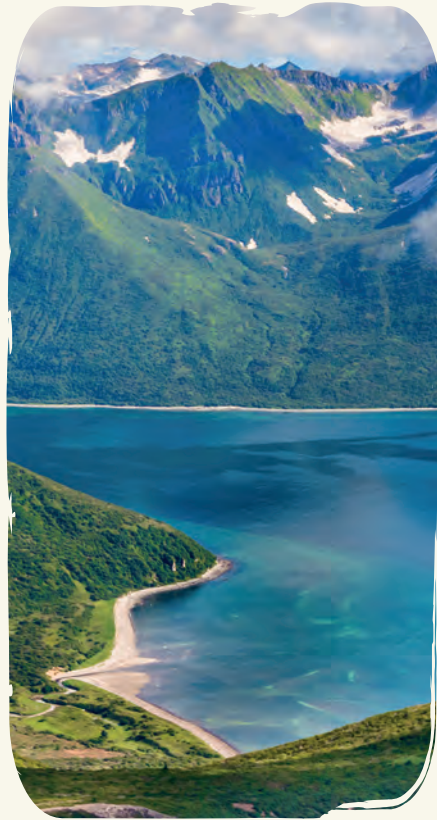
LEFTY & OTIS

This card's dominance is the same as the dominance of the card on top of it. If there is no card on top of it, this card has no dominance value. Because this card does not have its own dominance value, its dominance cannot be directly targeted by another bear's ability. However, if the dominance of the card on top of it is altered, its dominance is also altered. Neither Lefty nor Otis can win dominance on their own.



SARA & AMELIA

You may move your opponent's topmost card opposite this card from this tile to a tile of your choice. If you have the initiative token and you move an opponent's card that has also been played this turn, the card's ability triggers only after you have moved it. This ability doesn't trigger again until a new round begins.



KATMAI

Katmai National Park and Preserve lies within a vast area of wilderness in southwest Alaska, made up of millions of acres of mountains, rivers, and forests. It's named after an active volcano, Mount Katmai, one of eighteen volcanoes within the Park and Preserve.

Katmai is famous for its population of brown bears and the Sockeye salmon they feast on. Many visitors to Katmai come to watch the bears catching salmon along Brooks River, which is home to one of the largest concentrations of brown bears found anywhere in the world. Brooks Falls is a popular fishing spot for brown bears, as it creates a natural barrier for the salmon swimming upstream, forcing them to leap out of the water, making them easy prey for the bears.

The names of the bears in Katmai: The Bears of Brooks River come from the names of real bears that lived and still live in Katmai National Park and Preserve.

The bears in Katmai are not tagged or marked, which can sometimes make them difficult to identify. The reason for this is to ensure they remain seen as wild animals for the protection and safety of both the bears and visitors. However, many bears have been nicknamed by rangers working in the park or by people observing them. Many of these names come from behaviors the bears exhibit, such as Diver, or from physical characteristics, such as Snaggletooth.

While the bears and salmon steal the spotlight, Katmai also provides a safe haven for populations of caribou, moose, lynx, otter, red fox, wolf, and many more. Even humpback whales can be spotted along its coast!



BROWN BEARS

Brown bears can be found in national parks all over the United States. They differ from American black bears by their pronounced shoulder hump and long claws they use to forage and catch prey.

Brown bears are omnivorous and feed on a wide variety of animals, fish, and insects. They also eat all kinds of plants, including seeds, nuts, berries, grasses, flowers, roots, and bulbs.

Katmai's brown bears are very large, the largest weighing between 800 and 1,500 pounds. As such, they require an enormous amount of food, eating between 80 and 90 pounds of food per day in preparation for hibernation. The striking red and green Sockeye salmon make up the majority of the bears' diet during this time.



SALMON

The Sockeye salmon is a species of salmon found in the North Pacific that can grow up to 2 ft 8 in and weigh up to 15 pounds. While some salmon populations spend their entire lives in freshwater, the majority begin their lives in rivers and migrate to the ocean as adults, returning only during mating season.

While living in the ocean, Sockeye salmon are blue and silver in color. However, when they return to their spawning grounds, they stop feeding, undergoing physiological changes that turn them deep red and vivid green.

The name Sockeye comes from "suk-kegh," meaning "red fish", its name in Halkomelem, the language of the First Nations people of coastal British Columbia.

MEET THE BEARS: SANDY



747

This massive bear boasts a jumbo jet-sized frame. He is often the biggest, fattest bear on the river, weighing up to 1,400 pounds in the fall.



AMELIA

Amelia often stands on her hind legs for long periods to scan the river for delicious salmon.



BACKPACK

Backpack was first spotted as a cub, riding on his mother's back. As an adult, this energetic bear can be seen play-fighting with other young bears.



BRETT

This attentive mama bear is sometimes seen giving her cubs a ride on her back as she fishes at the lower river.



DENT

Too small to compete for the best fishing spots, Dent learned to scavenge the leftovers of other bears.



DIVOT

Divot's nickname comes from her habit of digging holes, or divots, in the ground. She is also known to beg other bears for their salmon.



FLO

Flo kept her cubs with her for up to three and a half years - an unusually long time for brown bears. She is easily recognized by her distinctive white claws.



GRAZER

This mama bear is exceptionally protective of her cubs. She will chase off other females and even dominant males who get too close.



HEADBOB

Poised at the top of the falls, Headbob often bobs his head up and down, catching fish as they leap over the rushing water.



NORMAN

In his prime, Norman was the most dominant bear at the river. Due to his high status, he did not acknowledge other bears while fishing.



OTIS

Otis is a medium-large adult male with a blocky muzzle and a floppy right ear. He is missing two canine teeth but is still one of the most skilled fishers on the river.



SNAGGLETOOTH

Snaggletooth's protruding canine tooth is probably the result of a fight with another bear, and although it gives him a comical appearance, it doesn't seem to affect his ability to catch fish.

MEET THE BEARS: CINNAMON



CHUNK

As a dominant bear, Chunk can fish anywhere along the river. His nickname comes from his chunky hindquarters where he carries most of his fat.



DIVER

Diver uses a unique fishing technique where he dives completely underwater to find fish lurking in deep river pools.



GENGHIS

Genghis is one of the most dominant bears at the river. He is aggressive with other bears and regularly steals their fish.



HOLLY

Holly once adopted an abandoned cub. Such adoptions are extremely rare, and no one can be sure what prompted Holly's altruistic deed.



LEFTY

Born with a short left ear, Lefty is easy to recognize. He rarely challenges other bears but shows exceptional skill at fishing above the falls.



MARGE

Marge is timid and skittish when other bears are nearby.



MILKSHAKE

Milkshake raised unusually large litters of up to 4 cubs and expertly caught fish to feed her hungry clan.



NOSTRIL BEAR

Nostril Bear only occasionally fishes at Brooks River, likely having found another spot to fish. She is easily identified by her oddly shaped nostrils.



POPEYE

Popeye has thick, hairy forearms, just like the cartoon character his nickname comes from. This bully-ish bear will aggressively steal fish caught by smaller bears.



SARA

Sara doesn't show up at Brooks River every year, but when she does, she spends most of her time at the lower river.



SCARE D BEAR

Scare D Bear often keeps his distance from people and runs away if anyone approaches.



WEEVIL

Weevil has long, shaggy fur. She usually fishes at the lower river with the less dominant bears.

THE KATMAI CONSERVANCY



ABOUT THE PARK NOVARUPTA

Novarupta, the site of one of the most powerful volcanic eruptions of the 20th century, played a pivotal role in the creation of Katmai National Park and Preserve. The 1912 eruption dramatically altered the landscape, forming the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes and covering the area in ash and pumice. The aftermath of the eruption sparked scientific interest and led to the establishment of Katmai National Monument in 1918. This monument later expanded and became Katmai National Park and Preserve in 1980. Today, Novarupta serves as a reminder of the powerful forces of nature and is a key attraction for visitors to the park, offering a glimpse into the Earth's geological history.

CULTURAL HISTORY

Katmai National Park and Preserve boasts a rich cultural history that dates back thousands of years. The area is home to the indigenous Sugpiaq/Alutiiq, Dena'ina Athabascan, and Yupik people, who have maintained a deep connection with the land for generations. The park's cultural sites include ancient villages and artifacts, providing a glimpse into the history of these inhabitants.

FLORA AND FAUNA

Katmai National Park and Preserve is home to a diverse range of flora and fauna, thanks to its varied landscapes, including tundra, forests, lakes, and coastlines. The park is renowned for its abundant wildlife, including the famous brown bears that gather at Brooks Falls to catch salmon during the summer months. Visitors to Katmai can also spot moose, wolves, and a variety of bird species. The park's flora is equally impressive, with wildflowers blooming in the spring and summer with vibrant fall colors painting the landscape in autumn. Katmai's rich biodiversity makes it a paradise for nature lovers.

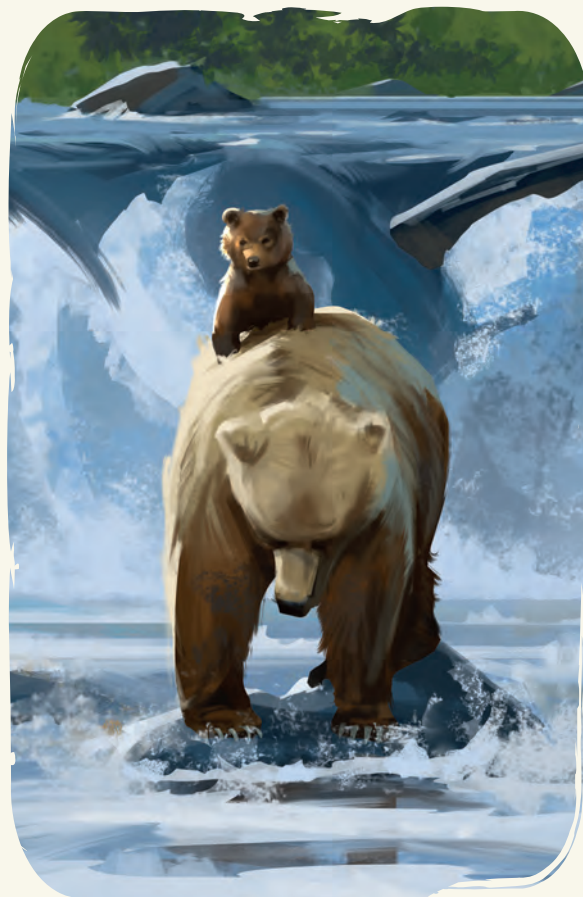
CONSERVATION

Funds raised through donations help Katmai Conservancy to support education and interpretation efforts within and beyond Katmai National Park and Preserve, fund vital research on Katmai's wildlife and human history, engage youth in local and online communities, promote environmental sustainability in Katmai's fragile ecosystems, and improve the park's infrastructure.

KATMAI CONSERVANCY

Katmai National Park and Preserve, with its 4 million acres, is the fourth largest park in the National Park system, and yet it's one of the least funded. With its amazing array of flora and fauna, coastal and river ecosystems, and majestic mountains and volcanoes, Katmai is a true national treasure deserving of protection. Katmai Conservancy supports the preservation of Katmai National Park and Preserve, its unique ecosystems, scenic character, and associated natural and cultural resources by promoting greater public interest, appreciation, and support through education, interpretation, and research. We work for the day when Katmai National Park and all public lands are understood and appreciated, preserved and conserved, and enjoyed by all.

Go to www.katmaiconservancy.org and join us in supporting and protecting Katmai's incredible bears!





GAME DESIGN

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ILLUSTRATION

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First published in Great Britain in 2025 by OSPREY GAMES

Bloomsbury Publishing Plc
Kemp House, Chawley Park, Cumnor Hill, Oxford OX2 9PH, UK
29 Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2, Ireland
1385 Broadway, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10018, USA

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ISBN: 9781472867353

25 26 27 28 29 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed in 2024 by Gameland

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KATMAI


THE BEARS OF BROOKS RIVER

QUICK REFERENCE



1 PREPARE

- Draw 2 cards from the top of your deck and set them aside without looking at them. They won't be used this round.
- Draw 2 cards from the top of your deck to your hand.

2 PLAY CARDS

- Starting with the player with initiative, choose one of the cards in your hand and place it face down against one of the river tiles.
- Simultaneously flip over and reveal your played cards.
- Resolve any card abilities with the  icon immediately, beginning with the player with initiative.
- Draw a new card from your respective decks.
- Continue with this phase until players have placed all their cards and resolved all their abilities.

3 PLACE BEEPLES / CATCH SALMON

- For each river tile, determine which player is dominant. That player can place a single beeples in an unoccupied space. To break ties, players may place their cub tokens on cards with a  icon.
- Each time you place a beeples, check the objective cards to see if the placement means you meet any of the objective cards' requirements.
- If you meet the requirements shown on an objective card, place salmon tokens of your color on the objective card, equal to the number indicated by that objective card.  objectives have features that score bonus salmon.

4 CLEAN-UP

- Take back all bear cards.
- Take back both bear cub tokens.
- Shuffle your 2 set-aside cards back into your decks and remove 2 new cards from the deck.
- Leave all beeples on the river tiles.
- Don't change the initiative holder.

! CARD ICONS



A card's dominance value.



Indicates that this bear can have a cub token placed on it.

! ABILITY ICONS



You may immediately move one of your played cards onto this card.



You may immediately move your opponent's topmost card against this tile to a tile of your choice.



Higher dominance is linked to a tile with a specific, unoccupied fishing spot.



This bear has a dominance of 4 if both players have the same number of cards played against this river tile.



Your opponent's least dominant bear has a dominance of 0 while opposite this one. If cards are tied for dominance, you choose one.



This bear's dominance is the same as the dominance of the card on top of it.

! RIVER TILE ICONS



Deep pool



Shallows



Waterfall



Eddy



Rocks