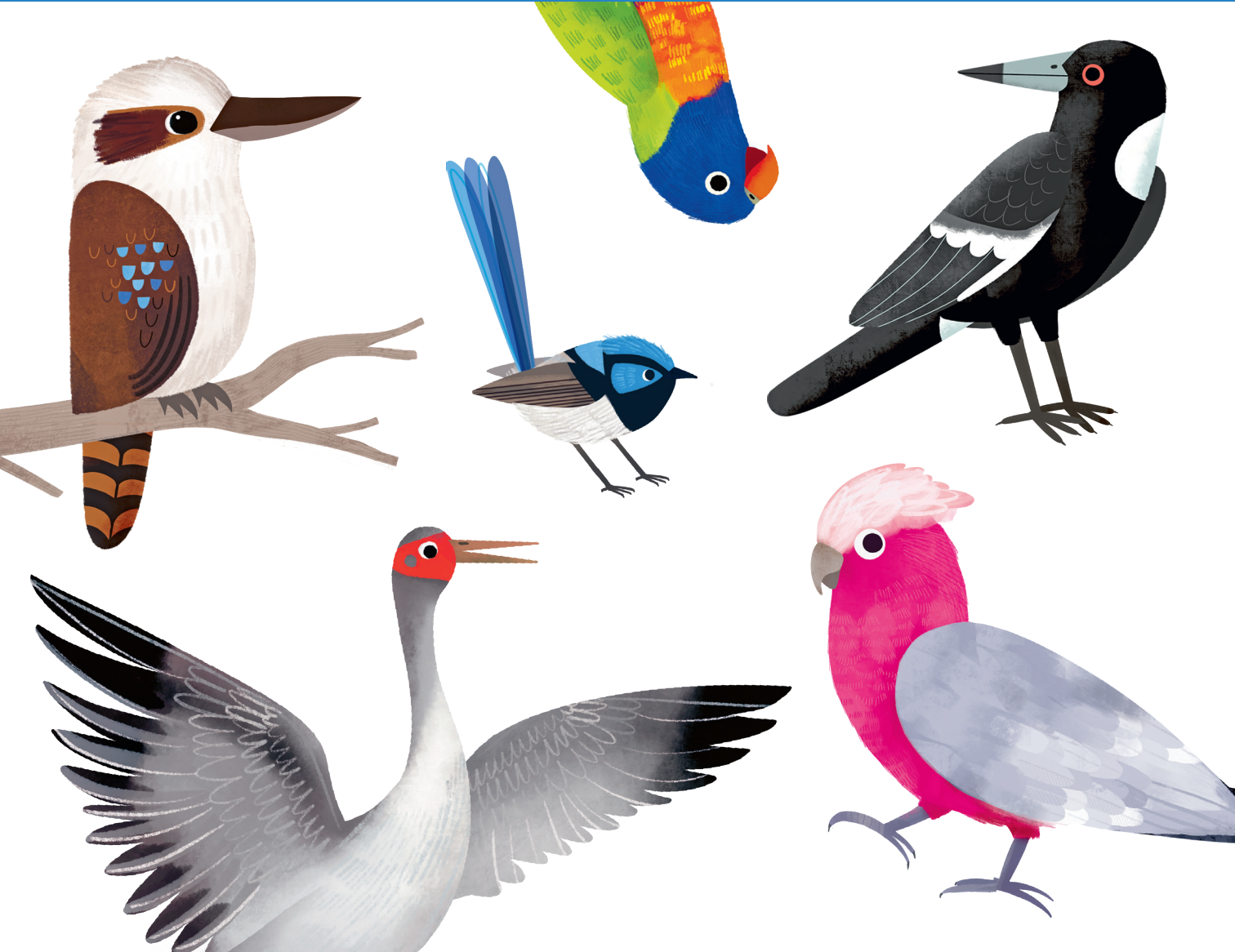# Busy Beaks
Rules of play

About Busy Beaks

2-4 players | Ages 8+ | 30 minutes

Get to know Australia's most fascinating birds in this colourful card game.

Each player collects bird cards and gathers them into flocks to score points. Whoever makes the most valuable flocks wins!

Each bird also has a special ability, like the Powerful Owl who lets you search the deck for the card you really need, or the mimicking Magpie who lets you copy another card. Choose which birds you want to use each game to make every play feel different.

Credits

Game design by Phil Walker-Harding

Illustrations ©2022 Sarah Allen
Adapted from *Busy Beaks* by Sarah Allen, published by Affirm Press

Reference card facts from *The Birds of Australia: A Book of Identification* by K. Simpson and N. Day

Special thanks to Chris Morphew, Kez Ashby, Nathanael van der Reyden, Cam Crew, Ana Crew, Brittany Arciniega, Elise Williams, Stu Williams and the Errington, McCorquodale, Morse and Smith families.

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Scan to watch a video that teaches you how to play!

1 tree board

The tree board is where the draw and discard piles are kept. It also indicates where the 3 rows of bird cards, called branches, will go on the table.

182 bird cards

There are 14 different birds in the game. There are 12 cards of each bird. There is also a reference card for each bird, which describes the bird's power on the front, and gives some facts about the bird on the back.

23 egg tokens

These tokens are used to keep score. Each egg icon is worth 1 point. There are 4x 5-egg tokens, 4x 4-egg tokens, 4x 3-egg tokens, 4x 2-egg tokens and 7x 1-egg tokens.

14 card storage envelopes

Each of these envelopes holds the 12 bird cards of 1 type and its reference card. They make it easier to store the cards between games and find the sets you want to use. Before your first game, you will need to fold together each envelope to construct it.

Connect the 2 pieces of the **tree board** and place it in the middle of the table.

Set up the **egg tokens** based on the number of players. For each player in the game, take 1x 5-egg token, 1x 4-egg token, 1x 3-egg token and 1x 2-egg token. Place them in a column to the left of the tree board, in descending order from 5 to 2 eggs. Return any unused 5, 4, 3, and 2-egg tokens to the box.
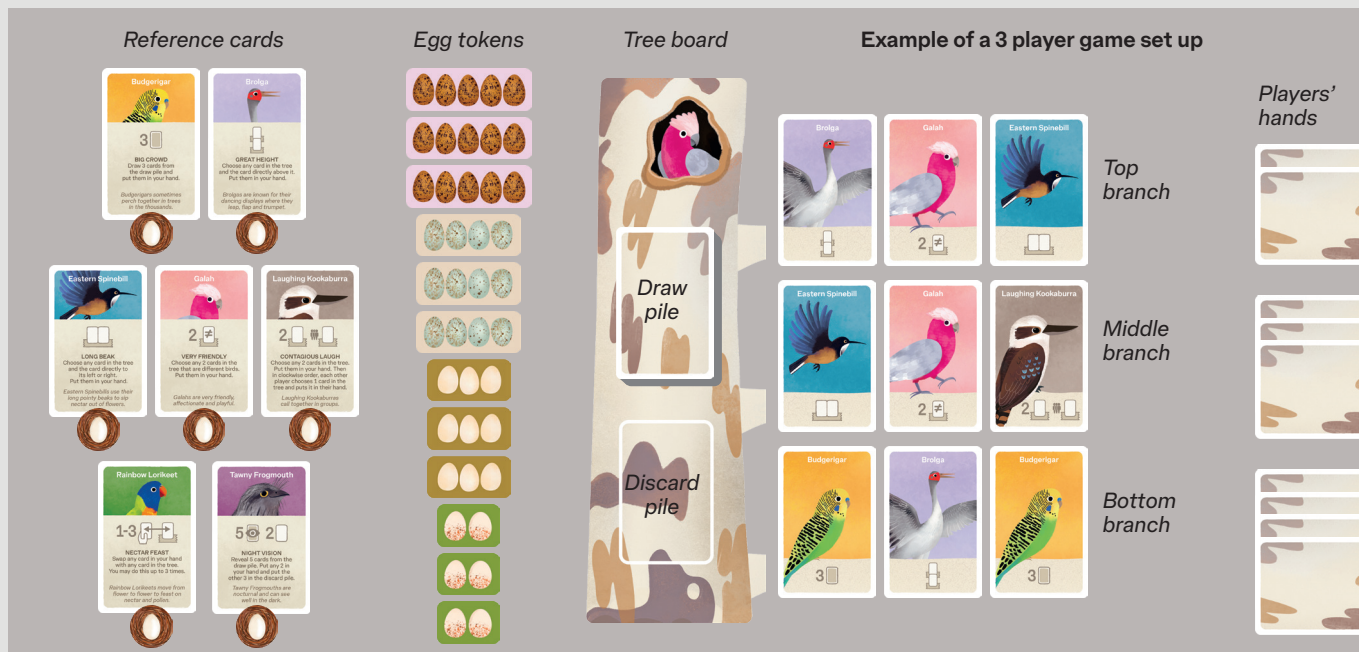
Choose the **7 types of bird cards** you'd like to use in the game. For your first play, use **Budgerigar, Brolga, Eastern Spinebill, Galah, Laughing Kookaburra, Rainbow Lorikeet** and **Tawny Frogmouth.**

Place the **reference cards** for the 7 birds you are using to the left of the egg tokens, in any order. Place a **1-egg token** below each reference card.

Take the 12 bird cards of each of the 7 types you are using. Shuffle them all together to form the **draw pile**. Place it face-down on the upper space on the tree board. During the game, a face-up **discard pile** will form on the lower space.

Draw 3 cards from the draw pile and place them face-up to the right of each **branch** of the tree board: top, middle and bottom. All the cards in the 3 branches are called **the tree**.

Each player draws their **starting hand** of cards. The oldest player draws 2 cards from the draw pile into their hand. The player to their left draws 3 cards into their hand. In a 3 and 4 player game, the next player to the left draws 4 cards. In a 4 player game, the final player draws 5 cards into their hand. The players' hands are **kept secret** during the game.

Reference cards   *Egg tokens*   *Tree board*   Example of a 3 player game set up

Players' hands

Top branch

Middle branch

Bottom branch

Draw pile

Discard pile

On each turn of the game, the players will be collecting cards trying to make sets of 5 of the same bird, called **flocks**. A flock can be turned in for points, which are represented by egg tokens. When all the egg tokens run out, the game ends. Whoever has the most points wins!

The oldest player takes the **first turn**, and then play moves clockwise around the table.

On your turn, follow these steps in order:

1. **You may play 1 bird card**

2. **You may score 1 flock**

3. **You must draw 1 card**

4. **Fill the tree**

Here is how each step works in detail.

1. You may play 1 bird card

At the start of your turn you **may** play 1 bird card and use its **power**. To do this, choose any card from your hand and place it face-up at the **end of any branch**. The end of a branch means at the right-most end of 1 of the 3 branches of the tree.

After placing the card in the tree, you now use its **power**. A bird's power is depicted at the bottom of its card with a diagram, and is explained on its reference card. There is also a full description of each power on pages 8-10.


Example: You play a Budgerigar. You take it from your hand and place it at the end of a branch. You use the Budgerigar's power, which lets you draw 3 cards from the draw pile and add them to your hand.

2. You may score 1 flock

If you have **5 cards in your hand of the same type** you have made a flock and may score it. Simply place the 5 cards face-up on the **discard pile**.

Now you receive points for your flock. First, take the **most valuable egg token** remaining from the column beside the tree. Then, if you were the first player to make a flock of a particular bird, you also take the **1-egg token** from below its reference card. Store your egg tokens on the table in front of you.
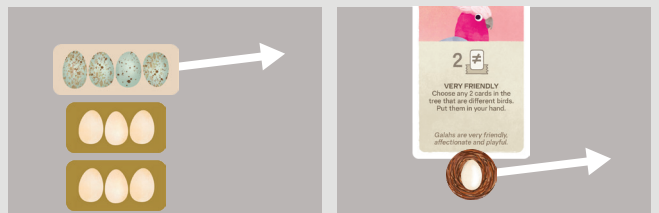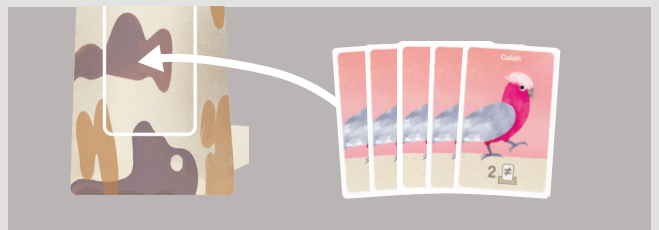
Example: You play a flock of 5 Galahs, placing them face-up on the discard pile. You then take the highest remaining egg token from the column. As you were the first player to make a flock of Galahs, you also take the 1-egg token from below the Galah reference card.
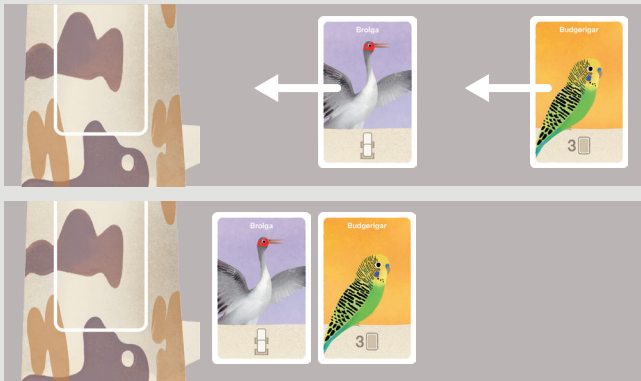
3. You must draw 1 card

Draw the **top card of the draw pile** and put it in your hand. There is no limit to the number of cards you may have in your hand at a time.
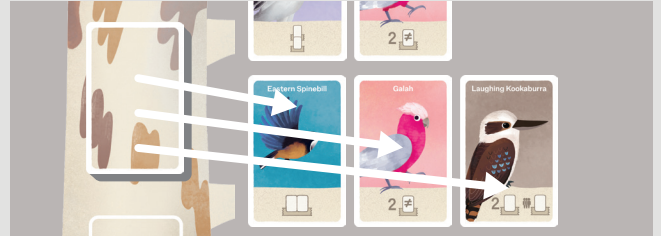
4. Fill the tree

To finish your turn, you must check to see if the tree requires filling, as follows:

If there are **gaps** in any branches due to missing cards, slide the cards in that branch to the left to fill in the gaps.

If any branch has **no cards** in it, draw 3 cards from the draw pile and place them face-up in that branch. You can't choose the order they go in, so draw and place them one at a time.

If any branch has **7 or more cards** in it, discard cards from the left-most end of the branch (near the tree board) until there are only 3 cards remainng in the branch. Then slide these 3 cards to the left to fill in the gap.
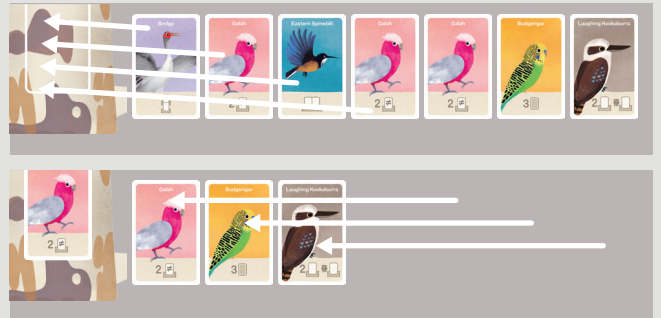
After this step, your turn is complete and play moves to the player on your left.

Important rules

If at any time the **draw pile is empty**, immediately shuffle all the cards in the discard pile and place them face-down on the draw pile space to create a new draw pile. Then continue play as normal.

There is no limit to the number of cards you may have in your hand at a time.

Remember, the first 2 steps of a turn are optional. So your turn may simply be to draw 1 card. Or your turn may be to play 1 card, score 1 flock and then draw 1 card.

After using a power that draws cards from the draw pile, remember you still get to draw 1 card at the end of your turn as usual.

On the very rare occasion that both the draw pile and discard pile are empty, skip any actions that require you to draw from the draw pile until there are cards in it again.

End of the game

As soon as the **last multi-egg token** is taken from the column beside the board, the game ends immediately. It does not matter if there are any 1-egg tokens left on reference cards.

The players now add up the **total number** of egg icons shown on all the egg tokens they have. Whoever has the most wins the game!

In the case of a tie, the tied player with the most cards remaining in their hand wins the game. If there is a still a tie, the tied players win together.

After your first play, you can choose any 7 birds to use in your game. We recommend always using at least 2 birds with powers that take cards from the tree. Find your favourite combination!

Here are a few sets of birds you can try:

Clever Polly

Plan ahead and strategise to score flocks.
Brolga, Eastern Rosella, Galah, Rainbow Lorikeet, Laughing Kookaburra, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Superb Fairy Wren.

Lucky Duck

Lots of drawing cards and lots of luck.
Australian Magpie, Budgerigar, Laughing Kookaburra, Palm Cockatoo, Powerful Owl, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Tawny Frogmouth.

Mean Beaks

Steal your way to the win.
Eastern Spinebill, Galah, Palm Cockatoo, Powerful Owl, Rainbow Lorikeet, Superb Fairy Wren, Wedge-tailed Eagle.

Australian Magpie

AMAZING MIMICRY: After you play an Australian Magpie, use the power of the card directly to its left.

If you play an Australian Magpie to the right of another Australian Magpie, then you use the power of the bird to the left of that second Australian Magpie.

Example: You play an Australian Magpie to the end of a branch, to the right of a Budgerigar. You use the Budgerigar's power to draw 3 cards from the draw pile and put them in your hand.
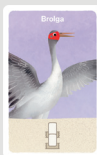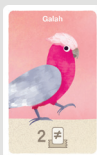
Brolga

GREAT HEIGHT: Choose any card in the tree. You may also choose the card directly above it. Put them in your hand.

You may not take the Brolga card that you played to use this power.

Example: You choose the third card in the middle branch and the third card in the top branch. You put them in your hand.
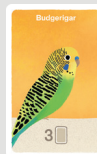
Galah

VERY FRIENDLY: Choose any 2 cards in the tree that are different birds. Put them in your hand.

You may not take the Galah card that you played to use this power.

Example: You choose a Brolga and a Tawny Frogmouth in the tree and put them in your hand.

Budgerigar

BIG CROWD: Draw 3 cards from the draw pile and put them in your hand.

Remember, you still get to draw 1 card at the end of your turn as usual.

Eastern Spinebill

LONG BEAK: Choose any card in the tree. You may also choose the card directly to its left or right. Put them in your hand.

You may not take the Eastern Spinebill card that you played to use this power.

Example: You choose the third card in the top branch and the fourth card in the top branch and put them in your hand.
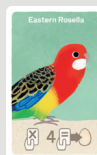
Eastern Rosella

COZY NEST: First, place any 1 card from your hand face-up on the discard pile. If you do not have a card to discard, you may not play a Rosella. Next, you perform the 'score 1 flock' step of your turn however, you only need to discard 4 cards of the same type to make the flock. Score egg tokens for this flock as usual. You may only ever score 1 flock on your turn.

Example: You discard 1 Brolga from your hand. Then you discard 4 Galahs from your hand to score a flock. You take the highest remaining egg token from the column beside the tree board. As you were the first player to make a flock of Galahs, you also take the 1-egg token from below the Galah reference card.

Laughing Kookaburra

CONTAGIOUS LAUGH: Choose any 2 cards in the tree and put them in your hand. Then in clockwise order, each other player chooses 1 card in the tree and puts it in their hand. After this, you continue your turn as usual.

You may not take the Kookaburra card that you played to use this power (although another player may take it).

Example: You take 2 Brolgas from the tree and put them in your hand. Then the player to your left takes a Galah from the tree and puts it in their hand. Them the player to their left takes a Budgerigar from the tree and puts it in their hand.

Palm Cockatoo

STICK DRUMMING: Choose any other player. Take any 2 cards from their hand without looking at what they are. Put them in your hand. Then, to make up for what was stolen, the player you took from draws 2 cards from the draw pile and puts them in their hand. After this, you continue your turn as usual.

The player you choose may like to shuffle their hand before you take cards from it.

Example: You choose the player to your left and take 2 cards from their hand without looking at what they are. You then put them in your hand and see they are a Brolga and a Galah. The player to your left then draws 2 cards from the draw pile and puts them in their hand.
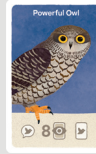
Powerful Owl

NIGHT HUNTING: Name out loud any 1 of the 7 bird types in the game. Then reveal 8 cards from the draw pile and place them face-up on the table. Put all the cards that match the bird you named in your hand. Then put all the cards that didn't match face-up on the discard pile.

Remember, you still get to draw 1 card at the end of your turn as usual.

Example: You name 'Brolga' out loud. Then you reveal 8 cards from the draw pile. They are 3 Brolgas, 2 Budgerigars, 2 Galahs and 1 Tawny Frogmouth. You put the 3 Brolgas in your hand and put the other 5 cards face-up on the discard pile.
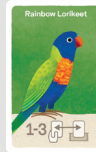
Rainbow Lorikeet

NECTAR FEAST: Choose any card in the tree and place it in your hand. Then you must take any card from your hand and place it face-up in the tree in the gap you just made. You may do this action 1-3 times.

You may not take the Rainbow Lorikeet card that you played to use this power.

Example: You take a Brolga from the tree and put a card from your hand in its place. You take a second Brolga from the tree and put a card from your hand in its place. You then take a Galah from the tree and put a card from your hand in its place.

Tawny Frogmouth

NIGHT VISION: Reveal 5 cards from the draw pile and place them face-up on the table. Choose any 2 of them to put in your hand and put the other 3 face-up on the discard pile.

Remember, you still get to draw 1 card at the end of your turn as usual.

Example: You reveal 5 cards from the draw pile. They are 2 Brolgas, 2 Galahs and 1 Budgerigar. You choose to put the 2 Brolgas in your hand and put the other 3 cards face-up on the discard pile.
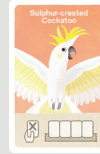
Superb Fairy Wren

STUNNING PLUMAGE: First, place any 1 card from your hand face-up on the discard pile. If you do not have a card to discard, you may not play a Wren. Next, play any card from your hand (except another Wren, or a Magpie that will copy a Wren) face-up at the end of a branch and use that card's power 2 times.

If you use the Wren to play a bird whose power involves making a choice (for example, which bird to name with the Powerful Owl) you may make a different choice the second time the power is used.

Example: You discard 1 Brolga from your hand. Then you play a Galah from your hand to the end of a branch. You use its power to take a Budgerigar and a Palm Cockatoo from the tree and put them in your hand. Then you use the Galah's power a second time to take a Budgerigar and a Tawny Frogmouth from the tree and put them in your hand.

Sulphur-crested Cockatoo

LOUD SCREECH: First, place any 1 card from your hand face-up on the discard pile. If you do not have a card to discard, you may not play a Sulphur-crested Cockatoo. Next, take any 4 cards that are in an adjacent row on any 1 branch. You may choose to take fewer than 4 cards, but they must all be in a row.

You may not take the Sulphur-crested Cockatoo card that you played to use this power.

Example: You discard 1 Galah from your hand. Then you take the second, third, fourth and fifth cards from the top branch.
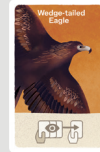
Wedge-tailed Eagle

SWOOPING ATTACK: Choose any other player. Look at all the cards in their hand. Take any 1 of them and put it in your hand. Then, to make up for what was stolen, the player you took from draws 1 card from the draw pile and puts it in their hand. After this, you continue your turn as usual.

This is the only time you are allowed to see the cards in an opponent's hand.

Example: You choose the player to your left and look at their hand of cards. You choose a Brolga from it and put it in your hand. The player to your left draws 1 card.

About Joey Games

At Joey Games, we want to share our love for people and the planet through playing games.

We believe play is an essential part of living a healthy, balanced and restful life. Our games are designed to create meaningful connections between kids and adults as they play together.

We design our games to celebrate the peoples, plants and animals of Australia and foster an understanding and care for them.

Joey Games was founded by Meredith and Phil Walker-Harding.

Find out more about us or get in touch at **www.joeygames.com.au**
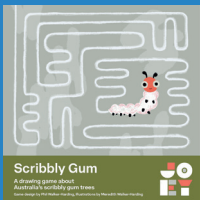
Also available

Pass the Party Food
A co-operative game about classic Australian party food.
2-4 players
Ages 7+
30 minutes

Scribbly Gum
A drawing game about Australia's scribbly gum trees.
1+ players
Ages 6+
20 minutes

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BirdLife Australia

1% of profits from the sale of Busy Beaks will be donated to **BirdLife Australia**'s vital bird and habitat conservation programs.

BirdLife Australia is proud to be the nation's largest bird conservation organisation. As an independent, not-for-profit organisation, their aim is clear: to create a bright future for Australia's birds.
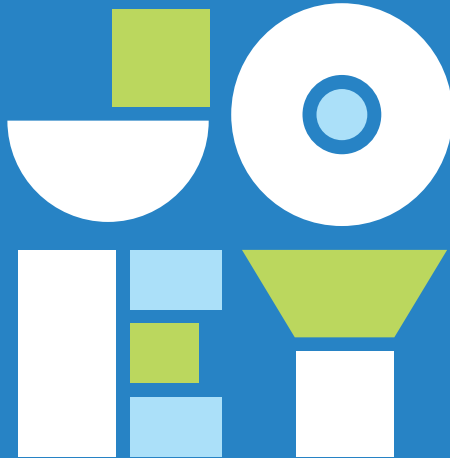
www.birdlife.org.au

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