

# Buffelgrass—Unwanted Invader

This game board represents A Mountain, a famous landmark in Tucson, Arizona. It is the habitat of desert plants like saguaro cacti and palo verde trees, as well as many animals.

There is another plant here that isn't from the Sonoran Desert. It is called buffelgrass. People brought it here to feed cattle and hold soil in place. It is a threat to the desert. This game shows how buffelgrass spreads, why it is a problem, and what we can do about it.

## How does Buffelgrass Threaten the Desert?



**Buffelgrass competes with desert plants for water and soil nutrients.**



**Buffelgrass carries hot fires that kill desert plants and animals. It grows back strong from its roots and takes over the habitat.**

# Buffelgrass Game Rules



## Buffelgrass Game Set—Up

- A. Gather a team of 4-6 players.
- B. Place the game board in the middle of a table for players to sit around.
- C. Put the desert animal and plant cards on the table surrounding the game board.
- D. Stack the buffelgrass plant and buffelgrass seed cards in the two labeled squares on the lower left side of the board.

## Play Game

- A. With your fellow players, place the animals and plants on the desert scene where you think they might live.
- B. Take two buffelgrass plants and set them somewhere amidst the desert animals and plants. These are the only two buffelgrass plants beyond the road to start.
- C. Roll the dice and place or remove buffelgrass seed and plant cards across the desert according to the number rolled **as follows**:
  - 1) **Light wind blows buffelgrass seeds a short distance into the desert. (Move two seed cards next to each buffelgrass plant already on the board.)**
  - 2) **Summer rain falls and buffelgrass seeds sprout into young plants. Adult plants grow tall and make lots of seeds. (Turn all seed cards on board into plant cards.)**
  - 3) **Strong wind carries seeds across the desert. (Put five seed cards anywhere throughout the desert.)**
  - 4) **Winter rain falls and buffelgrass seeds sprout; plants grow tall. (Turn all seed cards on board into plant cards.)**
  - 5) **Fire starts and burns across the buffelgrass, charring everything in its path. Grass grows back from roots. (Keep buffelgrass where it covers the landscape. Remove any desert plants that were within an inch of the buffelgrass cards on the board, and any animals that might not escape fire nor survive without these plants.)**
  - 6) **People clear out buffelgrass. (Remove 1/2 of the buffelgrass plant cards that are on the board and return them to the start pile. Put buffelgrass seeds cards in their place.)**

## Discuss

After you play, talk about what you noticed about the challenge of buffelgrass. It's a problem we can solve! Find out how you can help at [buffelgrass.org](http://buffelgrass.org)!

# Buffelgrass Game Plant Cards



**Saguaro  
Cactus**



**Saguaro  
Cactus**



**Saguaro  
Cactus**



**Saguaro  
Cactus**



**Saguaro  
Cactus**



**Brittlebush**



**Cholla Cactus**



**Prickly Pear Cactus**



**Agave**

# Buffelgrass Game Plant Cards



**Palo Verde Tree**



**Palo Verde Tree**



**Ocotillo**



**Creosote Bush**



**Barrel Cactus**



**Barrel Cactus**

# Buffelgrass Game Animal Cards



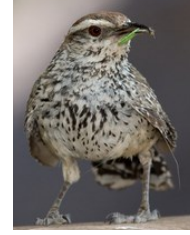
**Gambel's  
Quail**



**Desert  
Tortoise**



**Desert Spiny  
Lizard**



**Cactus  
Wren**



**Mule Deer**



**Zebra-tailed  
Lizard**



**Cottontail  
Rabbit**



**Rock  
Squirrel**



**Bark  
Scorpion**



**Coyote**



**Roadrunner**



**Gopher Snake**



**Harris'  
Antelope  
Ground  
Squirrel**



**Gila  
Wood-  
pecker**



**Carpenter  
Bee**



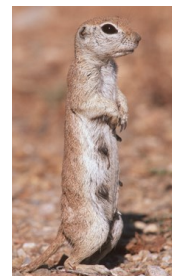
**Packrat**



**Queen  
Butterfly**



**White-  
winged  
Dove**



**Round-  
tailed  
Ground  
Squirrel**



**Bobcat**



**Javelina**



**Elf Owl**







**Buffelgrass  
Plants**



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**Buffelgrass Game Dice Pattern:**

Make a game dice with this pattern. Print on card stock. Cut out around the outer solid lines. Fold the dotted lines and tape together.

