GROVES

RULES OF THE REALM

by Steven Aramini
& Dan Letzring

GROVES

1-4 Players | 60 Minutes | Ages 13+

RULES OF THE REALM

Idyllon was the crown jewel of Faerie Queen Nivarra's kingdom. Once upon a time.

Since her passing, this once great land has dissolved into a formless void. While all of the Fae kingdom has mourned this tremendous loss, you – the Guardians of the Four Winds – have vowed to restore Idyllon to its former glory.

In her passing, Queen Nivarra left the crown of Idyllon for each of you to share in equal measure until the land is renewed. When it is, the Guardian who has built the most impressive domain shall keep the crown forevermore and become the new Lord or Lady of Idyllon.

COMPONENTS

93 Spirit Tokens (32 white, 12 yellow, 12 orange, 12 green, 12 blue, 13 black)

28 Grove Hexes

16 Starting Grove Hexes

16 Summoning Bonus Cards

12 Realm Bonus Cards

24 Crystal Tokens
"1-Value" Tokens (16)
"5-Value" Tokens (4)
"10-Value" Tokens (4)

24 Dominion Tokens
"1-Value" Tokens (16)
"5-Value" Tokens (4)
"10-Value" Tokens (4)

60 Element Tokens
20 Earth (green)
20 Light (yellow)
20 Water (blue)

8 Portals
(8 portal bases, 8 portal mirrors)

1 Crown Token

4 Summoning Bags

Rulebook

1 Tree of Idyll Mat

SETUP

1. Place the **Tree of Idyll mat** in the center of the table.

2. Set all of the **portals** (bases and mirrors), **dominion tokens**, **crystal tokens**, and **element tokens** within reach of all players, next to the Tree of Idyll.

3. Separate the **spirit tokens** by color and set these stacks below the Tree of Idyll to form the **supply**. Keep the black spirits (wraiths) separate from the rest of the stacks, placing them beside the portals.

4. Shuffle the **summoning bonus cards** and set the deck face down beside the Tree of Idyll.

5. Shuffle the **realm bonus cards** and reveal 3 cards, splaying them in a column next to the Tree of Idyll. Return all the remaining realm bonus cards to the box.

6. Create a draw stack with the **grove hexes**. The number of groves in the stack depends on player count (with all remaining groves returned to the box):
- 4 players: 25 groves
- 3 players: 22 groves
- 2 players: 17 groves

Shuffle the draw stack and place it face down above the Tree of Idyll. Flip over the top 4 groves, splaying them to form a **row of new groves** above the 1, 2, 3, and 4 crystal symbols of the Tree of Idyll.

7. The eldest creature in the group is the start player. Give that player the **crown token** and 1 crystal. Give 2 crystals to the second player, 3 crystals to the third player, and 4 crystals to the fourth player.

8. From among the **starting grove hexes**, give each player 1 quick-reference grove, 1 double-crystal grove, and 1 spirit-generating grove. Starting with the player to the right of the start player and moving counter-clockwise, each player chooses which 1 resource-generating grove they would like to start with.

9. Give each player 2 **element tokens** of each type: earth (green), light (yellow), and water (blue).
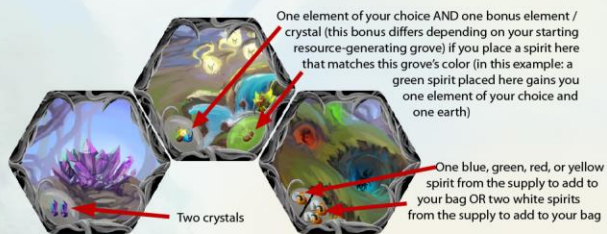
10. Each player takes a **summoning bag** and adds to it 8 white spirits and 1 spirit matching the color on the bottom right of their resource-generating grove. Return any unused summoning bags to the box.

Central Setup

Note: There should be no white spirits in the supply to begin a 4-player game.

Individual Setup
(Starting Player shown)

Each player chooses one of the resource generating groves to add to their starting realm.

Double Crystal Grove

Spirit Generating Grove

YOU'RE NOW READY TO PLAY!

Your Realm

Your play area is known as your *realm*. At the start of the game, your realm is made up of three starting groves (plus your quick-reference grove) that allow you to gain:

One element of your choice AND one bonus element / crystal (this bonus differs depending on your starting resource-generating grove) if you place a spirit here that matches this grove's color (in this example: a green spirit placed here gains you one element of your choice and one earth)

One blue, green, red, or yellow spirit from the supply to add to your bag OR two white spirits from the supply to add to your bag

Two crystals

Each grove has a limit of allowing one spirit to be placed on it per round. *As you gain new groves during the game, attach them to your starting groves to expand your realm and create more locations to visit.*

Tree of Idyll

In the center of play is a community area known as the Tree of Idyll. All players can visit the Tree of Idyll, and there is no limit to the number of spirits that may be placed on an area here. The Tree of Idyll is made up of three different locations that allow you to:

• Purchase a new grove to add to your realm

• Draw two summoning bonus cards and keep one of your choice

• Build a portal (building a portal requires two separate actions; see "Building Portals")

Dominion Points

Dominion is what you hold most dear. If you earn the most *dominion points*, you will be declared the new Lord or Lady of Idyllon! You earn dominion points by purchasing new groves to expand your realm, by building portals, by collecting grove rewards, and by scoring summoning bonus cards and realm bonus cards.

Overview of Gameplay

The game takes place over a series of rounds. To begin a round, *all players simultaneously draw three spirits* at random from their summoning bag. Don't peek when drawing! If you have fewer than three spirits in your bag, draw as many as you are able to. In the rare case that you have zero spirits in your bag at the beginning of a round, draw two white spirits from the supply instead.

Beginning with the player who controls the crown token, take turns placing *one* of your spirits onto any eligible grove, or the Tree of Idyll, to gain the reward listed on the location. Continue placing in clockwise order until all players have placed all spirits that they drew from their bag.

After all spirits have been placed, the round is over and the following steps must be taken to conclude the round:

1) All spirits (except wraiths, which remain in play) are picked up and distributed as follows:

• Spirits placed in your realm, no matter who placed them there, are *added to your summoning bag*.
• Spirits placed on the Tree of Idyll are *returned to the supply*.

2) In the row of new groves at the Tree of Idyll, if the grove that costs one crystal was not purchased this round, remove it from the game. Next, slide any remaining groves in the row to the left so that they occupy the lowest cost slots, then fill any open slots to their right by drawing new groves from the draw stack.

3) Pass the crown token to the next player clockwise, who will begin the next round.

Placing Spirits

At the start of the game, you may only place a spirit on any of your three starting groves OR any of the three areas on the Tree of Idyll.

When placing a spirit in your realm, check to make sure that the grove you are placing it on is unoccupied. If a spirit already occupies a grove in your realm, you cannot place on that specific grove (unless you are displacing a wraith; see "Displacing Wraiths"). Each grove in your realm may only be occupied by one spirit.

When placing a spirit on the Tree of Idyll, you may always place it, regardless of whether an area is occupied or not. Each area on the Tree of Idyll may be occupied by an unlimited number of spirits.

Wraiths are forbidden from visiting the sacred Tree of Idyll!

Example: A spirit has been placed on this grove. No other spirits may be placed here in this round.

Example: Multiple spirits from all players may be placed on the Tree of Idyll.

Collecting Grove Rewards

As soon as you place your spirit, you may immediately collect the reward / rewards listed at the bottom of that grove. A reference guide for reward iconography is listed on your quick-reference grove, as well as later on in this rulebook (p. 9).

• All resources, including crystals, are simply collected and spent like currency.
• When collecting rewards, if you cannot collect the full reward because of shortage in the supply, collect as much of the reward as possible.
• Both your resource-generating starting grove and all groves from the draw stack have two rewards: a *primary reward* (bottom left) and a *bonus reward* (bottom right).
• The primary reward is collected by any spirit that visits the grove.
• The bonus reward can only be collected by a spirit whose color matches that grove. (Note that white spirits do not match any groves and therefore cannot ever collect a bonus reward.)

Primary Reward

Bonus Reward

- You are not required to collect a reward if you do not want to or are unable to. You may choose to collect only the primary reward or bonus reward without collecting the other.
- Always collect the primary reward first, followed by the bonus reward second.

BUILDING PORTALS

Portals create a connection between your realm and opponents' realms. To build a portal, you must first collect a portal base. Place a spirit on the portal area of the Tree of Idyll and immediately take a portal base, placing it in your play area.

Opening a portal requires placing two spirits on the Tree of Idyll (i.e., two separate turns): one to collect the portal base and one to collect an accompanying portal mirror. Only after you have collected both pieces can you build a portal.

Once you have gained both pieces, attach the mirror to the base. You must now immediately place the completed portal between your realm and an adjacent opponent's realm (that is, an opponent to your immediate left or right) with the mirror image facing you. This opens a portal from your realm to their realm! Once placed, a completed portal cannot be moved. In a two-player game, you have only one option, as you have only one opponent.

Once a completed portal is placed, it is considered "open" to you for the remainder of the game and you may visit that opponent's realm. However, opponents cannot visit your realm unless they have built their own portal; they may not use your portal.

Important: Note the "wraith" and "dominion point" symbols on each portal mirror. This indicates that, as soon as you complete a portal, you must take a wraith from the supply and add it to your bag, and that the portal earns you one dominion point at the end of the game. A portal base without an accompanying mirror does not earn you one dominion point.

SENDING THROUGH PORTALS

Once you have opened a portal, you may now place spirits not only within your own realm, but also within that opponent's realm! Standard rules apply when placing a spirit in their realm: check to make sure that the grove you are visiting is unoccupied. If a spirit already occupies a grove in their realm, you cannot visit that specific grove (unless you are displacing a wraith; see "Displacing Wraiths"). Keep in mind that sending spirits through portals is a one-way journey. Any spirits that you send to an opponent's realm will be picked up by that opponent and added to their bag at the end of the round!

PLACING WRAITHS

Wraiths are unique spirits in four regards:

- A wraith cannot be gained as a result of collecting a new spirit through a grove reward; instead a wraith can only be gained as a result of opening a portal
- A wraith is forbidden from being placed on the Tree of Idyll
- A wraith is considered "wild"; that is, when placed on any grove, you can collect the primary and bonus reward, regardless of that grove's color
- When placed on a grove, a wraith is not picked up at the end of a round; instead a wraith remains on that grove from round to round until it can be displaced. It is important to note that the player who placed a wraith only collects the grove rewards for the round it was placed; players do not continue to collect rewards each round that a wraith remains on a grove.

If you draw a wraith from your bag, you must place it on a grove in your own realm or in an opponent's realm that you can access through a portal. *Hint: Placing a wraith in an opponent's realm is a good strategy if you want to limit their options.*

DISPLACING WRAITHS

White spirits are the only spirits that can displace a wraith. To displace a wraith from a grove, on your turn simply pick up the wraith and add it to your bag and then place a white spirit on that grove, but **do not collect the reward!**

The chore of displacing the wraith is considered the only action the spirit may take.

Whether you displace a wraith from your realm or an opponent's realm, you must add the wraith to **your bag**, as you were the player who displaced it. However, if you placed your white spirit in an opponent's realm to displace the wraith, that white spirit would go into your opponent's bag at the end of the round, as normal.

PURCHASING GROVES

To purchase a grove, place a spirit on the groves area of the Tree of Idyll. Immediately take the grove of your choice from those available in the row of new groves, but only if you have the elements AND crystals required!

The required **elements** to purchase a grove are listed in the upper right corner of that grove. Return elements to the supply in the amount indicated on the grove. If you do not have enough elements, you may not purchase that grove.

The cost in **crystals** is equal to the number of crystals listed in the corresponding slot along the top edge of the Tree of Idyll. You must pay honor to the crown by **giving these crystals to the player who controls the crown token** this round. If you control the crown token, give the required crystals to the supply instead. You must have both the required elements and crystals in order to purchase a grove.

Each round, the player who controls the crown token may NOT place their first spirit on the groves area of the Tree of Idyll. They may, however, place there on subsequent turns this round.

After paying the required elements and crystals, take the grove you purchased and add it to your play area to expand your realm. You must add a new grove such that it connects to an existing grove by at least one edge.

Groves that have been purchased are NOT replaced in the row of new groves until the end of the round!

Summoning Bonus Cards

Each summoning bonus card has a *summoning goal* — that is, an opportunity to earn additional dominion points if you succeed in satisfying the condition listed on the card. To gain a summoning bonus card, place a spirit on the bonus area of the Tree of Idyll. Immediately take the top two cards from the summoning bonus draw deck, choose one of these cards, and place it face down in front of you so only you know what it is. Place the card you didn't choose face down at the bottom of the draw deck.

At the beginning of any subsequent round, when you draw three spirits from your summoning bag, check to see if you summoned spirits that match those pictured on your summoning bonus card. If you did, then immediately reveal the summoning bonus card and keep it in your play area for end-game scoring!

- You must summon all spirits depicted on the card during the same bag draw to satisfy the condition.
- Bonus bag draws gained from grove rewards do not count toward satisfying the condition. Only the initial bag draw (i.e., three spirits) counts.
- You may score multiple summoning bonus cards at once if you can satisfy the conditions for them during the same bag draw.

Realm Bonus Cards

Realm bonus cards are *global goals* that all players are trying to achieve to earn additional dominion points. There are two types of realm bonus cards, each achieved in a different way, but only purchased groves (i.e., not starting groves) can be counted toward realm bonuses. For details about each type of scoring condition, see the list on page 9 of this rulebook.

Final Round

When the final grove in the draw stack is moved to the row of new groves above the Tree of Idyll, this signals the final round. If there are not enough groves to fill the row, play proceeds with whatever groves remain. All players draw three spirits as normal and the final round is played. When the final spirit is resolved, the game ends.

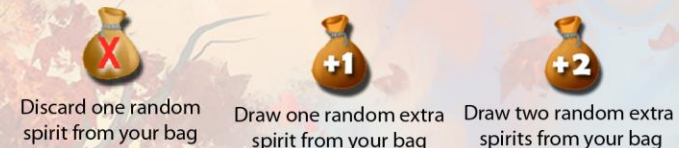***The New Lord or Lady of Idyllon is declared!***

Players tally dominion points as follows:

- dominion tokens gained through grove rewards
- groves in your realm (points listed on each grove)
- realm bonus cards achieved
- summoning bonus cards achieved
- one dominion point per portal you built
- one dominion point for every five elements and/or crystals you own (rounded down)

The player with the most dominion points wins! If tied, the tied player with the most groves in their realm wins. If still tied, the tied player with the most elements and/or crystals wins. If still tied, the tied players rejoice in the shared victory!

Reference

Symbols of the Realm:

| Earth | Light | Water | Element of choice | Dominion | Crystal(s) |

| Discard X in exchange for Y | Choose one or the other | Add one spirit of your choice to your bag | Add one white spirit to your bag |

| Discard one random spirit from your bag | Draw one random extra spirit from your bag | Draw two random extra spirits from your bag |

Summoning Bonus Cards:

Standard summoning cards earn you one dominion point for drawing both of the two pictured spirits from your bag. (In this example: one blue and one green spirit)

Drawing three spirits, each of a different type, from your bag earns you one dominion point. The spirits cannot be white spirits.

Drawing three spirits of the same type from your bag earns you three dominion points. The spirits cannot be white spirits.

Realm Bonus Cards:

This realm bonus card (with the trophy symbol) is awarded *at the end of the game to only one player* — the player with the most green spirits.

Count spirits both in your realm and in your bag towards this goal. If two or more players tie, nobody gets the bonus.

This realm bonus card (with the trophy symbol) is awarded *at the end of the game to only one player* — the player with the most groves of a single color in their realm. Only Grove cards that were purchased for your realm count toward this goal (i.e., no starting groves). If two or more players tie, nobody gets the bonus.

This realm bonus card (with the lightning symbol) is awarded *immediately to the player who is first to achieve it.* That player immediately takes the card and places it in their play area for end-game scoring.

Solo Play Rules

The fate of Idyllon is in your hands. You, the sole remaining Guardian in the realm, have sworn to create a thriving land of peace and prosperity. However, the wraiths are conspiring to cast the realm into eternal darkness. In this struggle between light and shadow, you must build a realm to outshine the growing evil. The wraiths seek to gather at the Hollows of the Lost; the more wraiths that congregate, the more the darkness grows. Which side will be victorious?

Setup

Follow the normal setup instructions, with the following changes and additions:

1. Flip the Tree of Idyll mat so that the side labeled "Solo Play" is face up.

2. Take 3 crystals from the supply, instead of the amount dictated by your place in turn order.

3. Search through the deck of summoning bonus cards and return to the box all 4 cards that have a wraith as a requirement, then shuffle as normal.

4. Use all 28 grove hexes when creating the draw stack.

5. Set up your summoning bag as normal, with 8 white spirits and 1 spirit that is the same color as your resource-generating starting grove. Then set up a second bag with 8 white spirits and 1 wraith; this is the *wraith bag*.

6. Set the wraith bag off to the side and place the other 12 wraiths beside it to form the *wraith supply*.
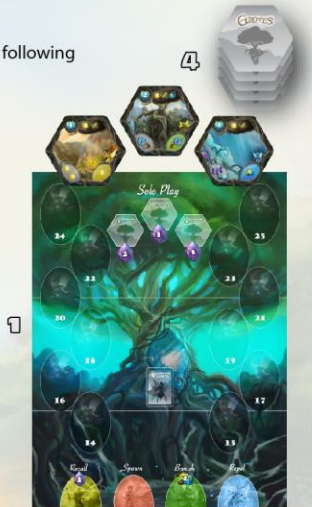
Round Sequence

Gameplay works just like it does in the standard game, with a few exceptions. Each round, after drawing three spirits from your summoning bag, you will place all three spirits at available locations either in your realm or on the Tree of Idyll, taking actions as normal. Once you have placed all three spirits, your turn is over.

Note: *During the game, when placing your spirits on the Tree of Idyll, you will only be able to place them on the middle section (summoning bonus) or the top section (purchase a grove).*

After your turn, check to see whether any wraiths will be added to the *Hollows of the Lost* (i.e., the oval spaces that surround the Tree of Idyll). Draw three spirits from the wraith bag, just like you would from your own bag. Place each wraith drawn this way in the Hollows of the Lost, so that it occupies the lowest remaining wraith space.

After placing any drawn wraiths, return all other spirits that were drawn to the wraith bag *along with an additional wraith from the wraith supply.* If there are no more wraiths in the supply, simply ignore that step and just return all other spirits that were drawn.

Drawn Wraith

Wraith's Current Score (Lowest Exposed Value)
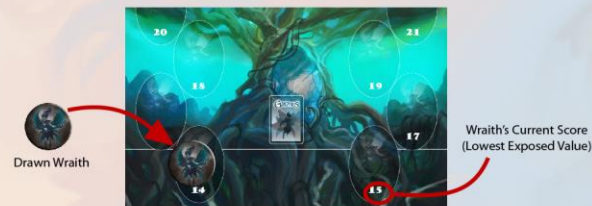
Next, check the row of new groves and remove from the game any groves that are in the two leftmost slots. Slide the remaining grove (if any) all the way to the left and fill the open slots by drawing new groves from the draw stack, as normal.

Finally, return to your summoning bag all the spirits that you placed in your realm. All spirits that you placed on the Tree of Idyll (except wraiths) return to the supply, as normal.

Adding to the Wraith Bag

Whenever you gain a reward that allows you to add a spirit of your choice to your bag, you may instead add that spirit to the wraith bag. If you gain a reward that allows you to add two spirits to your bag, you may choose to put both spirits in your own bag or put one in your own bag and one in the wraith bag (you cannot put both spirits in the wraith bag, however).

Adding spirits to the wraith bag will improve your chances of preventing the wraiths from reaching the Hollows of the Lost. During the course of the game, *you can only add one spirit of each color (yellow, orange, green, blue) to the wraith bag,* but you can add an unlimited number of white spirits.

When you add a yellow, orange, green, or blue spirit to the wraith bag, note this by taking a spirit of that color from the supply and placing it on the base of the Tree of Idyll mat, below the matching symbol. This is a reminder that a spirit of that color is now in the wraith bag and you cannot add another of that color.

Using Special Powers

Whenever you draw a yellow, orange, green, or blue spirit from the wraith bag, you may use the corresponding special power immediately. At the end of the round, the spirit must be returned to the wraith bag, whether you used the special power or not.

Place a spirit here to indicate that a spirit of that color is in the wraith bag. When a spirit of one of these four colors is drawn from the wraith bag, you may use the corresponding special power.

Recall (yellow) – When you draw a yellow spirit from the wraith bag, if you spend two crystals, you may immediately recall the wraith most recently added to the Hollows of the Lost, returning it to the wraith bag.

Spawn (orange) – When you draw an orange spirit from the wraith bag, you may immediately add one white spirit from the supply to the wraith bag.

Banish (green) – When you draw a green spirit from the wraith bag, if you spend two elements of your choice, you may immediately banish the wraith most recently added to the Hollows of the Lost, removing it from the game entirely.

Repel (blue) – When you draw a blue spirit from the wraith bag, you may immediately repel one wraith you just drew, returning it to the wraith bag instead of adding it to the Hollows of the Lost.

GAME END

When the final grove in the draw stack is moved to the row of new groves, this signals the final round. If there are not enough groves to fill the row, play proceeds with whatever groves remain. Take your turn and then draw three spirits from the wraith bag and resolve, as normal. The game is now over.

WINNING THE GAME

If wraiths occupy every wraith space in the Hollows of the Lost, be warned — you are dangerously close to losing! If a wraith is drawn from the wraith bag and there is no unoccupied wraith space, you lose immediately. In addition, if all wraith spaces in the Hollows of the Lost are occupied at the end of the game, you lose.

After the final round, count up the dominion points you have earned and compare this to the lowest exposed value in the Hollows of the Lost. (At the beginning of the game, that value is 14. It increases by one with each wraith added.) If your score exceeds this value, you win! If your score is equal to or lower than this value, you lose; the wraiths consume Idyllon and cast it into eternal shadow!

CREDITS

Game Concept and Design: Steven Aramini and Dan Letzring

Artwork: Nolan Nasser

Layout: Michael Cofer and Jeff Wallace

Rulebook Proofreading: Dustin Schwartz

Playtesting: Teresa Aramini, Janice Baker, Aaron Cloutier, Carly Cook, Danny Devine, Deni Kassan, Joseph Kisenwether, Paul Kluka, Michael Letzring, Stephanie Letzring, Rick LouAllen, Brian Povio, Simon Reid, Tim Smith, Jeff Wallace, Tyler Wilson, Mike Wokasch, Nicholas Yu, Rochester Crashtest group, Rochester Unpub group

Letiman Games, LLC
www.letimangames.com
Contact.LetimanGames@gmail.com
Twitter: @LetimanGames