

Cosmic Lepidoptera

By: Alex Koeberl

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A game about being Space Moth guardian deities and negotiating with the sun to preserve your solar system. A game for between three and as many players that you can fit in a space without breaking fire code.

Player Roles:

- The Sun (1 player)
- Space Moths (all other players)

Materials (required):

- A timer

Materials (optional, but highly recommended):

- An X card to facilitate safe play
- Moth-related accessories (pre-made or hand-crafted, may include pipe cleaner antennae, black clothes, oversized goggles, etc.)

Introduction:

You are a group of Space Moths that are the guardian deities of your respective neighboring planets. Your planets have revered you as their patrons since time immemorial in your microcosmic galaxy tucked away in the corner of the universe, far from us. Every century, you gather around the sun for the Cosmic Lepidopteran Convention with your fellow Space Moths. As everyone knows, during the convention, all the Space Moths approach the sun and offer sacrifices to it. If the sun is not satisfied, it goes supernova, and your beloved pocket of the galaxy explodes, wiping out you and any semblance of life.

Safety:

Before the game begins, if you are in person, discuss with players whether you want to involve any forms of physical contact in the game. Physical contact is not required to play *Cosmic Lepidoptera*, but it may enhance your experience (see “stoking The Sun” below). Discuss what other safety tools you would like to use, including the X card, “open door policy,” and “cut and brake”.

Being a Space Moth:

Being a Space Moth means you are encouraged to do Space Moth things. Space Moth things include being distracted by nearby stars and other light sources, flapping your wings as a warning, playing dead when faced with something you dislike/fear, orbiting around light sources,

flying around, screeching at other Space Moths if they get too close, feeding on asteroids, etc. These are some general suggestions based on common knowledge about Space Moths.

Game Phase Summary (Overview):

Creation: Players choose their Sun/Space Moth attributes.

Introduction: Space Moths circle around The Sun, who introduces the game's objective.

Negotiation: Space Moths "stoke The Sun" by poking (optionally) them while making offerings. The Sun responds however they please, Space Moths try to deduce if they are satisfied or dissatisfied.

Supernova Sun: The Sun announces whether they were satisfied with the offerings presented after the timer ends. If The Sun is satisfied, Space Moths dance around The Sun until every last Space Moth is too tired to continue. If The Sun is dissatisfied, all Space Moths must egress through the nearest safe exit immediately as chaotically as possible.

Debrief: Cover Space Moth related questions, break down significant moments.

Sequence of Play (Detailed):

Creation:

The Sun: Think of an emotion or mood. When you are presented with an offering, you will use that emotion as part of your consideration. Examples will be provided below for easy use/inspiration.

Example Sun Emotions/Moods:

Joy	Hunger	Whimsical	Anguish	Hyperactive
Energetic	Amusement	Surprise	Fascination	Curiosity

Space Moths: Select a name and create a planet that your moth oversees. Planets require a name and a civilization. Silliness and whimsy are very much encouraged during the creation phase. Sample player info will be listed below for easy use/inspiration.

Example Space Moth Names:

Glorgoth Mothington	Wingsley Flapsworth	Anteannio Probuscia
Atlassa Titania	Silksman Everflutter	Rosetta Maplesap
Cyclopia Supernova	Centauri Floatsalot	Polaris Eyeballus

Example Planet Names/Civilizations:

Terracove/Groundhogs	Technologia/Sentient Calculators	Aquatica/Dolphins
Fungalia/Parasitic Fungi	Fulgariton/Lightning Spirits	Billtopia/Martian Ducks

Introduction:

After creating your Space Moth, begin the Cosmic Lepidopterian Convention. Space Moths will start walking in a circle around The Sun. The Sun says the following: “Hear ye, hear ye, this centennial Cosmic Lepidopterian Convention is now in session. Satisfy me or face your demise.”

Negotiation:

Set a timer for three minutes. Space Moths have until the timer goes off to make offerings to The Sun. They must introduce themselves and their planet’s name and civilization before presenting an offering. They may poke The Sun (if agreed upon before starting the game) while doing so. This process is called “stoking The Sun”. Space Moths continue orbiting The Sun while stoking it.

Remember to act as a Space Moth would, flap your wings, bump into light sources (like The Sun if given consent), etc. Space Moths can cooperate to make offerings to The Sun, or may all make offerings simultaneously. They must reintroduce themselves if another player forgets their name. Go be Space Moths!

The Sun may choose how to convey its approval or disapproval of an offering verbally or non-verbally. Examples may include shouting, shaking your body vigorously, spinning rapidly, etc., as a form of communication.

Supernova Sun:

When the timer goes off, The Sun declares the following: “Hear ye, hear ye, this centennial Cosmic Lepidopterian Convention ends...” and whether they have been satisfied by the offerings. If so, announce that the Space Moths will live another century. If not, announce that you are going supernova, destroying the entire solar system.

If The Sun is satisfied, all Space Moths dance and flap their wings around The Sun to celebrate. This is done until the final Space Moth is too tired to continue. The game ends.

If The Sun goes supernova, all moths scatter quickly and must make a beeline for the nearest (safe) exit, whether it be a door, a window, or something else. The game ends.

Debrief:

After play, all players reconvene (especially if they left the room). Gather your group and ask the following questions: Did you enjoy being a Space Moth? What did being a Space Moth mean to you? Were there points where being a Space Moth felt frustrating or surprisingly entertaining?

Play Example:

Creation: The Sun has chosen Curiosity. Space Moth 1 has chosen Glorgoth Mothington as a Space Moth name, and Terracove as its planet, which is inhabited by groundhogs. Space Moth 2 has chosen Wingsley Flapsworth as a Space Moth name, and Billtopia as its planet, which is inhabited by Martian Ducks.

Introduction: Space Moth 1 and 2 walk in circles around The Sun, flapping their arms and making noises. The Sun introduces the objective as stated above.

Negotiation: For three minutes, Space Moth 1 and 2 make offerings to The Sun. Space Moth 1 begins by saying, “My name is Glorgoth Mothington, and I am the patron god of Terracove. Terracove is inhabited solely by groundhogs who believe I am a winged groundhog, and I offer that the groundhogs will decorate their burrows using lightbulbs shaped like flamingos in your honor.”

The Sun, having chosen curiosity, doesn’t care about decorating groundhog burrows with flamingo-shaped lightbulbs. To show disapproval, The Sun begins spinning in the opposite direction as the Space Moths are walking in. Space Moth 2 begins to make an offering, but moves toward a star (a lamp) they noticed in the corner of the room.

Supernova Sun: The timer goes off. The Space Moths continue circling The Sun. The Sun declares that it is not satisfied with the offerings made above and goes supernova. Space Moth 1 and 2 must now run to the nearest safe exit and leave the room. Once everyone has left the room, all players reconvene and debrief.