

Wildcat

Wildcat
Felis silvestris

Wildcats are the species from which our domestic housecat stems, specifically from the subspecies of the African wildcat. However, the original wildcat still exists in Africa, Arabia, Europe and Asia. The subspecies African wildcat lives throughout Africa and Southwest Asia and can be identified by its tabby markings, which it passed on to the domestic cat. The African wildcat looks similar to the domestic cat and it can be difficult to distinguish them from each other in the wild. Rodents, birds and reptiles are their main prey.

The subspecies European wildcat is larger than its African relative and has adapted to the colder environment. The European wildcat exists in Scotland, Russia, Spain, Portugal, France, Belgium, Germany, Poland, Switzerland and Italy, as well as other countries in Eastern Europe. The main threats to the wildcat are interbreeding with domestic cats, habitat loss and hunting.

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