



## AFRICAN WILD CAT

**Kingdom:** Animalia **Phylum:** Chordata **Class:** Mammalia **Order:** Carnivora **Family:** Felidae  
*Felis silvestris lybica*

**Description:** African wild cats are difficult to distinguish from domestic cats. Since they span a large geographic range, coat coloration and density varies with latitude, ranging from sandy yellow to gray and brown, with darker stripes and spots. They have a characteristic reddish tint to the fur on the backs of their ears.

**Height:** 13 inches

**Length:** 18-30 inches

**Weight:** 6-17 pounds

**Habitat:** All types of habitats except tropical rainforests

**Distribution:** Africa

**Diet:** Carnivore

**Life Span:** 15 years

**Status:** Stable

### Special Characteristics:

- Domestic cats are thought to have descended from African Wild Cats. African wild cats were present in towns in the Middle East at least 7,000 years ago. They were domesticated in Egypt about 4,000 years ago and began to be introduced outside of that area about 2,000 years ago.
- An Egyptian cult centered in the ancient city of Bubastis worshipped cats. Followers of the goddess Bast, the goddess of pleasure, created sanctuaries with bronze statues of cats and mummified hundreds of thousands of cats.
- They have 5 toes on their forepaws and only 4 on the back.
- Mainly nocturnal
- Solitary
- Wild Cats have scent glands on their foreheads, around their mouths, and near the bases of their tails. A cat rubs these glands against objects to mark them with its scent.
- They communicate with visual cues as well as vocal.
- The ears of a cat can rotate rapidly to identify the source of a particular sound and are able to respond to frequencies up to 25,000 vibrations per second. Because of this ability, cats can hear even ultrasonic noises made by small rodents.
- Their vision is about the same as human vision, but their color range is not as vast.



- Their whiskers are very sensitive touch organs that can detect small movements and check sizes of openings.

### **Reproduction:**

- Sexual maturity is 9-12 months for both male and female
- Gestation is 56-68 days
- Litter size is 1-8
- Born with eyes closed and unable to walk
- Weaned 6-12 weeks.
- Remain with mother learning hunting and survival skills up to 5 months.

