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# African Wildcat

The African wildcat, (Felis lybica) also sometimes referred to as the Near Eastern Wildcat, is a wildcat subspecies that occurs across northern Africa and extends around the periphery of the Arabian Peninsula to the Caspian Sea. As it is the most common and widely distributed wild cat, it is listed as Least Concern by IUCN since 2002.[1]

The African wildcat appears to have diverged from the other subspecies about 131,000 years ago. Some individual African wildcats were first domesticated about 10,000 years ago in the Middle East, and are the ancestors of the domestic cat. Remains of domesticated cats were found in human burials in Cyprus that are estimated to have been established by Neolithic farmers about 9,500 years ago. Crossings between domestic cats and African wildcats are still common today.

## References[]