

The cat (*Felis catus*), commonly referred to as the domestic cat or house cat, is the only domesticated species in the family Felidae. It is a social species, but a solitary hunter and a crepuscular predator. Recent advances in archaeology and genetics have shown that the domestication of the cat occurred in the Near East around 7500 BC. It is commonly kept as a house pet and farm cat, but also ranges freely as a feral cat avoiding human contact. It is valued by humans for companionship and its ability to kill vermin.