

Cats

Origin and Classification

Objectives

You will be able to:

- describe how domestic cats are similar to their specific ancestors
- Classify domestic cats and other wild cats into genus groups
- List the genus and species of the domestic cat

Origin of Cats

- **Miacis**
 - carnivorous, tree-climbing, mammal
 - Common ancestor with dogs
- **Proailurus**
 - first normal or feline cat
 - Appeared 35 million years ago
 - Characteristics
 - binocular vision
 - Teeth for shearing meat
 - retractable claws
 - a short face (compared to Dogs and Bears)
 - almost exclusively carnivorous diet



Cat Evolution

- Canine teeth appeared 7 million years ago
 - Unclear whether evolved from saber toothed felines?
- Domesticated 4,000 years ago
 - Independent nature of cats prolonged domestication



African Wild Cat

- Ancestor of modern domestic cats
- Tabby /striped markings but larger



Cat Genus Groups

- **Panthera**
 - large, roaring cats
 - Ex.- lion, leopard, tiger & jaguar



Cat Genus Groups

- **Felis**
 - cats that do not roar
 - Includes domestic and small cats
 - 2 types – short hair and long hair



Cat Genus Groups

- *Acinoyx*
 - Have claws that do not retract
 - Cheetah is the only member of this genus



Scientific name of Domestic Cats

- Genus
 - Felis
- Specie
 - catus

