

# Fishing Cat

(*Prionailurus viverrinus*)

## Distribution

Fishing Cat is only found in Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Thailand though once the cat was widespread throughout Southeast and South Asia. In Pakistan, Fishing cats primarily survive in the riverine forests around the Indus river and the vast spreading canal system that extends from the Indus in Sindh and Balochistan province.

## Habitat

Fishing cats predominantly inhabit riverine habitats along the Indus river and thus, is also found in adjoining wetlands, river banks and marshlands.

## Feeding Behaviour

Fishing Cat feeds on fish, crab, rodents, birds, hard-shelled freshwater molluscs, and any other animals that can be caught as its prey.

## Morphology

the body weight is 5-16 kg.

The head-body length of Fishing Cat ranges from 57-78 cm

tail length of 20-30 cm



## Reproduction and Lifecycle

Fishing Cat become sexually mature at around 18 months. The general breeding period of Fishing Cat is in the winter season mainly in January and February.

## Social Behaviour

Fishing Cat is primarily nocturnal and solitary

## Threats

Fishing cats face numerous threats in Pakistan. Retaliatory killings are one of the most common threats as Fishing cats often prey on poultry from village households and fish from fish farms. Habitat destruction and loss is also a major threat.

## Conservation and Legal Status

Fishing Cat is Globally categorised as Vulnerable (VU) and Nationally Endangered in the IUCN Red List of threatened species. CITES protects Fishing cats under Appendix II. It is given special protection under Sindh Wildlife Management Act of 2020.

## Population

no national count yet





# Afro-Asiatic Wild Cat

## (*Felis lybica ornata*)

### Distribution

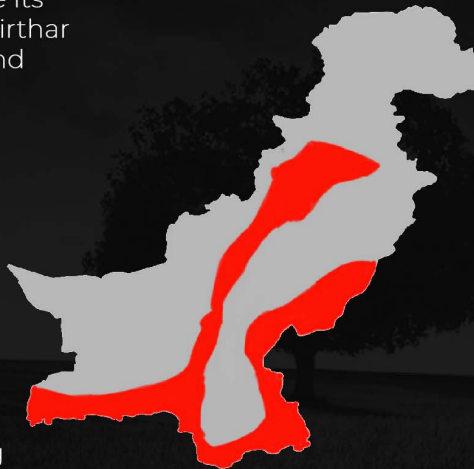
Asiatic Wild cat is a very localised species restricted to dry arid scrub along with alluvial and riverine tracts, mainly distributed in Thar and Cholistan desert as well as West of Indus where its distribution is not well known. It has been recorded from Kirthar range, Sulaiman range, Salt range, Waziristan and South and Central Balochistan.

### Habitat

In the country, this species is mainly found in deserts, and semi-arid areas, adapting to different climatic conditions and terrain types.

### Feeding behaviour

Asiatic wild cats are carnivorous predators, primarily hunting small mammals, birds, reptiles, and occasionally insects, using their stealth and agility to capture their prey.



### Reproduction and Life cycle

They reproduce through sexual reproduction, with a gestation period of about two months. The female raises the kittens independently and teaches them hunting skills.

### Social behaviour

Asiatic wild cats are solitary animals, establishing and defending territories. They communicate using scent marking and vocalisations, and their territories may overlap with those of other cats.

### Threats

Habitat loss, human-wildlife conflict, poaching, and fragmentation of their range pose significant threats to the Asiatic wild cat population in Pakistan.

### Conservation and Legal status

Jungle cats are globally categorised as Least Concern Globally, and Data deficient Nationally in the IUCN Red List of Species.

### Population

The population of Asiatic wild cats in Pakistan is not accurately known.





# Jungle Cat

## (*Felis chaus chaus/ affinis*)

### Distribution

Jungle cat is the most widespread cat species across Pakistan, occurring right from coastal scrub and deserts across the Indus plains uptill Himalayan foothills and Siwaliks. They have very aptly utilised farmland, green spots and adapted well to i

### Habitat

They inhabit diverse ecosystems such as marshes, reed beds, agricultural fields, and riverbanks, adapting well to both rural and urban environments. Their presence in Himalayan broadleaf forests has also been noted.

### Feeding behaviour

Jungle cats are opportunistic predators, preying on small mammals, birds, reptiles, and insects, utilising their excellent hunting skills to secure their meals. Their characteristic jump and dive can be quite a sight to see.



### Reproduction and Lifecycle

They reproduce through sexual reproduction, with a gestation period of around two months. After birth, the kittens are nurtured and taught hunting techniques by their mothers.

### Social behaviour

Jungle cats are solitary creatures, except during the mating season. They establish territories and communicate through scent marking and vocalisations. Pairs have also been noted to hunt together.

### Threats

Habitat loss, poaching, and human-wildlife conflicts pose significant threats to the jungle cat population in Pakistan, endangering their survival.

### Conservation and legal status

Jungle cats are globally categorised as Least Concern Globally, and Least Concern Nationally in the IUCN Red List of Species.

### Population

The exact population of jungle cats in Pakistan is unknown.



# Caracal

## (*Caracal caracal schmitzi*)

### Distribution

Asiatic Caracals are restricted to dominant desert regions of the country: Cholistan, Thar, South-central Balochistan and have penetrated into low-lying hilly habitats of Salt Range, Dera Ismal Khan and Waziristan. A very elusive animal, it prefers areas devoid of human settlements.

### Habitat

They inhabit diverse habitats, including scrublands, deserts, and rocky areas, where they can find suitable shelter and prey.

### Feeding behaviour

Caracals are skilled hunters, feeding mainly on small to medium-sized mammals like rodents, hares, and sometimes birds.



### Reproduction and Lifecycle

They reproduce through sexual reproduction, with a gestation period of approximately two to three months. The female raises the kittens until they become independent.

### Social behaviour

Caracals are mostly solitary, except during the mating season. They establish and defend territories, communicating through scent marking and vocalisations.

### Threats

Habitat loss, human-wildlife conflict, poaching, and illegal trade pose significant threats to the caracal population in Pakistan.

### Conservation and legal status

Jungle cats are globally categorised as Least Concern Globally and Critically Endangered Nationally in the IUCN Red List of Species.

### Population

The population of caracals in Pakistan is not precisely known.



# Sand Cat

## (*Felis margarita thinobia*)

### Distribution

Sand cat is the most sparsely distributed across other small wild cat species in Pakistan. Although their limit of distribution has not yet been definitely accurately, it has been mainly recorded from Kharan desert region in Extreme Western Balochistan. Distribution connectivity is expected with both Afghanistan and Iran.

### Habitat

They inhabit very barren desert ecosystems, including sandy and rocky deserts, where they are well-adapted to extreme heat and arid conditions.

### Feeding behaviour

Sand cats are nocturnal hunters, preying on small mammals, birds, reptiles, and insects, relying on their acute hearing and night vision to locate their prey.



### Reproduction and Lifecycle

They reproduce through sexual reproduction, with a gestation period of around two months. Females give birth in burrows and raise their kittens independently.

### Social behaviour

Sand cats are solitary animals, except during the breeding season. During the day time they occupy resting locations. They establish and defend territories, using scent marking and vocalisations for communication.

Threats to the sand cat population in Pakistan include habitat degradation, human encroachment, and poaching for the illegal pet trade.

### Conservation and legal status

Jungle cats are globally categorised as Least Concern Globally, and Critically Endangered Nationally in the IUCN Red List of Species.

### Population

The population of sand cats in Pakistan is not precisely known.





# Pallas's Cat

(*Otocolobus manul manul/ nigripictus*)

## Distribution

Pallas's cats have a limited distribution along the Western and Northern mountains in the country. Though the distribution is not well-known it has been known to occur from mountain ranges in Northern Balochistan, through Waziristan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces North to Gilgit Balistan. Pallas's cat may be more widespread than believed due to its secretive nature and impressive camouflage.

## Habitat

They inhabit high-altitude habitats, including alpine meadows, rocky slopes, and cold desert regions, where they can navigate their unique environment.

## Feeding behaviour

Pallas's cats are opportunistic hunters, feeding on small mammals like rodents and pikas, supplemented with birds and insects.



## Reproduction and Lifecycle

They reproduce through sexual reproduction, with a gestation period of about two to three months. The female raises the kittens independently.

## Social behaviour

Pallas's cats are solitary creatures, with minimal social interactions. They have a solitary and elusive nature to adapt to their harsh mountainous habitat and camouflage really well like most felines.

## Threats

Threats to Pallas's cat population in Pakistan include habitat loss, human disturbances via pasturing, retaliatory killing, and climate change impacting their fragile ecosystems.

## Conservation and legal status

Jungle cats are globally categorised as Least Concern Globally, and Near Threatened Nationally in the IUCN Red List of Species.

## Population

The population of Pallas's cats in Pakistan is not precisely known.





# Mainland Leopard Cat

## (*Prionailurus bengalensis bengalensis*)

### Distribution

The Mainland Leopard Cat has a broad distribution across moderate to moist Temperate forests as well as Coniferous and subtropical zones in the foothills. It has distribution from wider valleys in Karakoram and Himalayas down to Margalla hills and Waziristan in the West. The species may be much more common than previously believed. Its occurrence in Northern Balochistan and Salt range is doubtful and needs confirmation.

### Habitat

The Mainland Leopard Cat primarily inhabits diverse habitats, ranging from forests and woodlands to grasslands and scrublands. They are adaptable and can be found in both dense evergreen forests as well as rocky landscapes throughout their distribution.

### Feeding behaviour

Mainland Leopard Cats are opportunistic predators with a varied diet. They primarily hunt small mammals such as rodents, birds, and insects. Additionally, they may occasionally feed on reptiles and amphibians, depending on the availability of prey in their habitat.



### Reproduction and Life cycle

The Mainland Leopard Cat has a gestation period of approximately two to three months. Females give birth to litters of usually two to three kittens, although litter sizes can vary. The mother raises the kittens in a den, providing them with care and protection until they are old enough to fend for themselves.

### Social behaviour

Mainland Leopard Cats are mostly solitary animals, and they lead a solitary lifestyle throughout their adult lives. However, occasional interactions may occur between individuals, especially during the mating season.

### Threats

The Mainland Leopard Cat faces various threats in Pakistan, including habitat loss due to deforestation and human encroachment, illegal poaching for the wildlife trade, and human-wildlife conflict.

### Conservation and Legal status

Jungle cats are globally categorised as Least Concern Globally, and Data Deficient Nationally in the IUCN Red List of Species.

### Population

The population of Mainland Leopard Cats in Pakistan is not precisely known.





# Himalayan Lynx

(*Lynx Lynx Isabellinus*)

## Distribution

The Eurasian or Himalayan lynx has a limited distribution in Pakistan, primarily found in a much higher elevation than any other small wild cat species in the country. Preferring high alpine zones on the edge of treeline, Lynx appears to be restricted to suitable habitat in the North, from Chitral to Gilgit and greater Baltistan.

## Habitat

They inhabit mountainous regions, and rocky terrain, mainly on the edge of the treeline. .

## Feeding behaviour

Eurasian lynx are generalist predators like most small wild cats, primarily hunting Hare species, Gamebirds, ungulates like deer and ibex, but they can also prey on smaller mammals, birds, and occasionally, fish.



## Reproduction and Lifecycle

They have a gestation period of around two to three months. The female gives birth to a litter of one to four kittens and raises them in a den.

## Social behaviour

Eurasian lynx are solitary creatures, except during the mating season. They establish and defend large territories.

## Threats

Threats to the Eurasian lynx population in Pakistan include habitat loss, illegal hunting for fur trade, and human-wildlife conflict resulting from retaliatory killings and prey scarcity. Habitat loss due to Global warming is expected to hit the range of this species hard.

## Conservation and legal status

Jungle cats are globally categorised as Least Concern Globally , and Least Concern Nationally in the IUCN Red List of Species.

## Population

The population of Eurasian lynx in Pakistan is not precisely known.

