



WILD FACTS

BIG CATS



Hi Alex

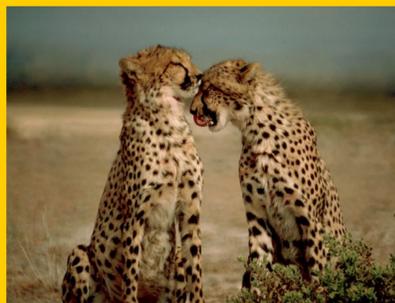
Summer holidays are here! Are you ready to go on a safari? There's a whole tiny wild world to discover in your garden, local park, woods or beach. Look under logs and stones, and inside bushes and trees for spiders, butterflies, bees, snails, frogs and other little creatures. Please always treat nature gently and with respect, watch don't touch, and check with your parent or guardian first.

This Wild Crew we're looking at cats – big and little, and how to make sure your own feline friend is wildlife-friendly!

From

*Laura*

Laura Gosset  
Wild Crew



### Meet the cats

Cats are incredible! The cat or 'feliid' family is roughly split into small cats and big cats. They vary in size from your 3.5kg pet tabby to the 350kg tiger. But however little or large, all cats species are surprisingly similar. Cats are 'carnivores' (meat-eaters) and designed to hunt. Intelligent and flexible, they have razor-sharp teeth and claws, and excellent eyesight and hearing. Their 'camouflaged' coats blend into the backgrounds so they are hard to spot.



### Big cats

There are four species of big cat – tigers, lions, jaguars and leopards, although cheetahs, pumas and snow leopards are also sometimes included in this group. The awesome tiger is the biggest of all the cat family. Solitary creatures, they live and hunt alone, but you may see a tiger mum with her cubs as she teaches them the skills they need to survive. Called the King of the jungle, the lion is actually found in Africa's vast grasslands, known as savannah. The lion is the only social cat, living together in family prides. Born Free features a lioness on our logo. The true story of Elsa's journey to freedom inspires our charity to always remember individual animals. We work hard to protect wild tigers and lions, and stop their exploitation in captivity.



### Small cats

There are over 30 species of small cats from the critically endangered Iberian lynx to the stunning ocelot. Two small species of cats found in Africa are the serval and the caracal. Spotted servals look rather like small cheetahs with their long legs and long necks. Big ears listen out for food and they leap up to 3.5m in the air to pounce on mice and rats. The beautiful caracal is the most powerful of all cats - relative to body size. Their name in Turkish means 'black ear'. Born Free's wildlife centre in Ethiopia rescues orphan serval and caracal, preparing them for life back in the wild whenever possible.



### Pet cats

Do you have a feline friend? Help your cat to be wildlife-friendly. Put a couple of bells on their collar to give birds and other wildlife a warning. Keep your cat in at night – sunset and sunrise are the times of day when cats like prowling and catch most wildlife. It's great to put feeders out for birds, but make sure they're high enough to be out of your cat's reach – at least 2m above ground.



### Sleepy cats

Supporters sent us pictures of their snoozing little cats during our laid-back Big Cat Nap week of fun and fundraising. Contented kitty winners included Max, pictured here.

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Broadlands Business Campus,  
Langhurstwood Road, Horsham,  
West Sussex, RH12 4QP, UK.

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