

Animal species in this issue

Domestic goat (*Capra aegagrus hircus*)



Kingdom: Animalia & Phylum: Chordata & Class: Mammalia & Order: Artiodactyla & Family: Bovidae & Subfamily: Caprinae & Genus: *Capra* & Species: *C. aegagrus* & Subspecies: *C. a. hircus* (Linnaeus, 1758)

The **domestic goat** (*Capra aegagrus hircus*) is a subspecies of goat domesticated from the wild goat of southwest Asia and Eastern Europe. The goat is a member of the Bovidae family and is closely related to the sheep as both are in the goat-antelope subfamily Caprinae. There are over three hundred distinct breeds of goat.

Female goats are referred to as *does* or *nannies*, intact males as *bucks* or *billies*; their offspring are *kids*. Note that many goat breeders prefer the terms "buck" and "doe" to "billy" and "nanny". Castrated males are *wethers*. Goat meat from younger animals is called *kid* or *cabrito*, and from older animals is sometimes called *chevon*, or in some areas "mutton".

Goats are ruminants. They have a four-chambered stomach. The females have an udder consisting of two teats, in contrast to cattle, which have four teats.

Goats have horizontal slit-shaped pupils, an adaptation which increases peripheral depth perception. Because goats' irises are usually pale, the pupils are much more visible than in animals with horizontal pupils, but very dark irises, such as cattle, deer, most horses and many sheep. Both male and female goats have beards, and many types of goat (most commonly dairy goats, dairy-cross boers, and pygmy goats) may have wattles, one dangling from each side of the neck.

Animal species in this issue

Nile Tilapia (*Oreochromis niloticus*)



Kingdom: Animalia & Phylum: Chordata & Class: Actinopterygii & Order: Perciformes &
Family: Cichlidae & Genus: *Oreochromis* & Species: *O. niloticus*

The **Nile Tilapia**, *Oreochromis niloticus* is a relatively large cichlid fish, which is native to Africa from Egypt south to East and Central Africa, and as far west as Gambia. Numerous introduced populations exist outside its natural range. It is also commercially known as Mango fish or Nilotica.

In modern aquaculture, wild-type Nile tilapia are not too often seen, as their flesh has a dark color that is not much desired by many customers, and because it has a bit of a reputation of being a trash fish associated with poverty. On the other hand, they are fast-growing and give good fillets; leucistic "Red" breeds which have lighter meat have been developed and these are very popular.

Hybrid stock is also used in aquaculture; Nile × Blue Tilapia hybrids are usually rather dark, but a light-colored hybrid breed known as "Rocky Mountain White" tilapia is often grown due to its very light flesh and tolerance of low temperatures.

The Nile Tilapia has recently been discovered in a small stream in central Arkansas. This invasive species may harm the other aquatic life present in this stream within the next few years, depending on how quickly it is able to reproduce and how adapted it is to competition with other aquatic vertebrates. As of yet, there is evidence to support the possibility that the Nile Tilapia has established a strong breeding ground and will eventually endanger other fish species, possibly competitively exclude them.

Animal species in this issue

The domestic dog (*Canis lupus familiaris*)



Kingdom: Animalia & Phylum: Chordata & Class: Mammalia & Order: Carnivora & Family: Canidae & Genus: *Canis* & Species: *C. lupus* & Subspecies: *C. l. familiaris* and *C. l. dingo*

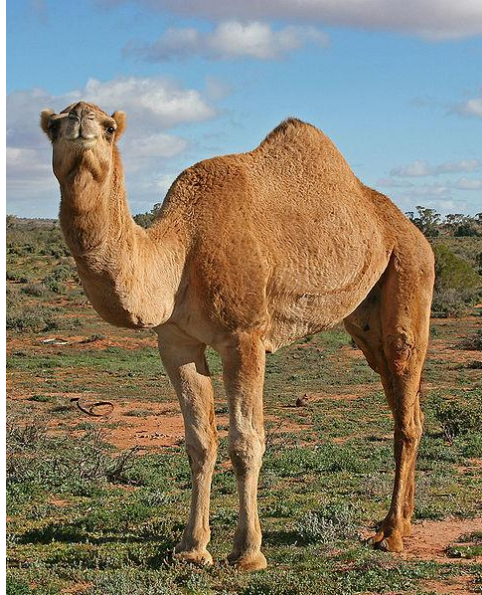
The term **dog** is used for both feral and pet varieties. The dog may have been the first animal to be domesticated, and has been the most widely kept working, hunting, and companion animal in human history. The word "dog" may also mean the male of a canine species, as opposed to the word "bitch" for the female of the species.

Dogs were domesticated from gray wolves about 15,000 years ago. Their value to early human settlements led to them quickly becoming ubiquitous across world cultures. Dogs perform many roles for people, such as hunting, herding, pulling loads, protection, assisting police and military, companionship, and, more recently, aiding handicapped individuals. This impact on human society has given them the nickname "Man's Best Friend" in the Western world. In 2001, there were estimated to be 400 million dogs in the world.

Compared to equally sized wolves, dogs tend to have 20% smaller skulls, 30% smaller brains, as well as proportionately smaller teeth than other canid species. Dogs require fewer calories to function than wolves. It is thought by certain experts that the dog's limp ears are a result of atrophy of the jaw muscles. The skin of domestic dogs tends to be thicker than that of wolves, with some Inuit tribes favoring the former for use as clothing due to its greater resistance to wear and tear in harsh weather.

Animal species in this issue

One-humped camel (*Camelus dromedarius*)



Kingdom: Animalia, Phylum: Chordata, Class: Mammalia, Order: Artiodactyla, Family: Camelidae, Genus: *Camelus*

Camel is an even-toed ungulate within the genus ***Camelus***, bearing distinctive fatty deposits known as humps on its back. There are two species of camels: the dromedary or Arabian camel has a single hump, and the Bactrian camel has two humps. They are native to the dry desert areas of West Asia, and Central and East Asia, respectively. Both species are domesticated to provide milk and meat, and as beasts of burden.

The average life expectancy of a camel is 40 to 50 years. A fully grown adult camel stands 1.85 m at the shoulder and 2.15 m at the hump. The hump rises about 30 inches (76.20 cm) out of its body. Camels can run at up to 65 km/h (40 mph) in short bursts and sustain speeds of up to 40 km/h (25 mph).

Fossil evidence indicates that the ancestors of modern camels evolved in North America during the Palaeogene period, and later spread to most parts of Asia. Humans first domesticated camels before 2000 BC.

Camels are able to withstand changes in body temperature and water content that would kill most other animals. Their temperature ranges from 34 °C at night and up to 41 °C during the day, and only above this threshold will they begin to sweat.

Animal species in this issue

Ostrich (*Struthio camelus*)



Kingdom: Animalia & Class: Aves & Superorder: Paleognathae & Order: Struthioniformes & Family: Struthionidae & Genus: *Struthio* & Species: *S. camelus*

The **Ostrich**, *Struthio camelus*, is a large flightless bird native to Africa. It is the only living species of its family, Struthionidae and its genus, *Struthio*. Ostriches share the order Struthioniformes with the kiwis, Emus, and other ratites. It is distinctive in its appearance, with a long neck and legs and the ability to run at maximum speeds of about 72 km per hour, the top land speed of any bird). The Ostrich is the largest living species of bird and lays the largest egg of any living bird.

The Ostrich is farmed around the world, particularly for its feathers, which are decorative and are also used for feather dusters. Its skin is used for leather and its meat marketed commercially.

Ostriches usually weigh from 63 to 130 kilograms. The long neck and legs keeps their head 1.8 to 2.75 metres above the ground, and their eyes are said to be the largest of any land vertebrate – 50 millimetres in diameter, they can therefore perceive predators at a great distance. The eyes are shaded from sun light falling from above.

The strong legs of the Ostrich, like those of other birds, are scaled and unfeathered. The bird has just two toes on each foot (most birds have four), with the nail on the larger, inner toe resembling a hoof. The outer toe lacks a nail. The reduced number of toes is an adaptation that appears to aid in running.