

## Original Article

# The comparison of the Felidae species with karyotype symmetry/asymmetry index ( $S/A_1$ )

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### Abstract

The  $S/A_1$  is a new formula for the measurement of the karyotype symmetry/asymmetry index. Especially in higher animals and humans, it is important to know the values of the karyotype symmetry/asymmetry, so that species, genera, families and orders can be compared. Also the evolutionary relationships of higher organisms can be determined. The symmetry/asymmetry index is applied to the Felidae species. After a comprehensive literature search, karyotype formulae,  $S/A_1$  values and karyotype types of 23 species were determined. According to the  $S/A_1$  values, a phylogenetic tree was drawn showing relationships among the species.

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## INTRODUCTION

**F**elidae is placed in the suborder Feliformia in the order Carnivora. There are both domestic and wild species in Felidae. The family consists of at least 36 wild species. They are distributed naturally in almost every area of the world except Antarctica and Australia (Lamberski, 2015). The growth of human population has badly impacted the animal species in many ways such as; deforestation, habitat loss, invasive species, urbanization, industrialization, human-avian negative interactions and climate change (Ali *et al.*, 2016). The number of Felidae taxa decreases with especially human impacts. According to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature Red List, the five species are categorized as Endangered (EN). These species are *Catopuma badia*, *Leopardus jacobita*, *Lynx pardinus*, *Panthera tigris* and *Prionailurus planiceps* (IUCN, 2017). The Felidae is one of the most important members of the world's wildlife. Therefore many taxonomic and

cytotaxonomic studies have been reported related felids till now. The chromosome numbers of the taxa are  $2n = 36$  and  $2n = 38$  (Hsu *et al.*, 1963; Wurster–Hill and Gray, 1973; Wurster–Hill and Centerwall, 1982; Suedmeyer *et al.*, 2003; Keawmad *et al.*, 2007; Tanomtong *et al.*, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c, 2009). The chromosomes have been arranged as six groups based on size and centromeric position at the San Juan Conference (Jones, 1965). These groups are given in Table I.

Genetics play a major role in the determination of differences within a population (Tahir *et al.*, 2016). Chromosome number and the chromosome morphology are increasingly used in the taxonomy. Especially the karyotype symmetry/ asymmetry and chromosomal measurements are the most important taxonomic characters together with morphological characters (Eroğlu *et al.*, 2013) for the chromosome numbers of organisms are highly variable. The  $S/A_1$  is a new formula for the measurement of the karyotype symmetry/ asymmetry index in higher animals and humans (Eroğlu, 2015). The objective of this study is to

determine the  $S/A_i$  of the Felidae species according to the chromosome types and centromeric position.

**Table I: The chromosomal groups and chromosome types of the Felidae karyotypes**

Chromosomal groups	Chromosome type
A	Submetacentric
B	Acrocentric*
C	Metacentric
D	Submetacentric
E	Metacentric
F	Telocentric

\*Used as subtelocentric in some studies

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

### *The karyotype symmetry/asymmetry index formula (S/A<sub>i</sub>)*

The formula was reported by Eroğlu (2015) and given below.

$$S/A_i = (1 \times M) + (2 \times SM) + (3 \times A) + (4 \times T) / 2n(1)$$

or

$$S/A_i = (1 \times M) + (2 \times SM) + (3 \times ST) + (4 \times T) / 2n(2)$$

In these equations, M = metacentric chromosome number; SM = submetacentric chromosome number; A = acrocentric chromosome number; T = telocentric chromosome number; 2n = diploid chromosome number.

Eroğlu (2015) reported the new classification model for karyotype symmetry/asymmetry. There are 5 types of karyotype symmetry/asymmetry in the classification model. They are full symmetric, symmetric, between symmetric and asymmetric, asymmetric and, full asymmetric. A full symmetric karyotype is characterized by completely median chromosomes and the  $S/A_i$  value is 1.0000. In contrast, an asymmetric karyotype consists of a complete set of telocentric chromosomes and the  $S/A_i$  value is 4.0000 (Eroğlu, 2015).

### *Sample application of symmetry/asymmetry on species*

The karyotypes of Felidae species were used for the example application. The Felidae includes the carnivorous mammals commonly known as cat, panthera and puma. After a

comprehensive literature search, karyotype formulae, index values and karyotype types of 23 species have been identified (Table II). Also, Table II contains the scientific name, common name and author of the species. The scientific names were checked from IUCN Red List (IUCN, 2017), because the scientific names of some species can be reported differently in the literature. Snow leopard is an important example. This species is named as both *Panthera uncia* (Johnson *et al.*, 2006) and *Uncia uncia* (Bagchi and Mishra, 2006; Herrin *et al.*, 2012). Jaguarundi is another example. This species is named as both *Herpailurus yagouaroundi* (Agnarsson *et al.*, 2010; Segura *et al.*, 2013) and *Puma yagouaroundi* (Johnson *et al.*, 2006; Eizirik *et al.*, 2008).

According to the index values in Table II, a phylogenetic tree was drawn showing relationships among the species of Felidae (Fig. 1). In Fig. 1 the female karyotype index values of 23 species are located. The male index data are insufficient for two reasons. (i) There is no male in the karyotype studies of *Felis silvestris*, *Felis catus*, *Caracal caracal*, *Catopuma temminckii*, *Panthera leo*, *Acinonyx jubatus*, *Prionailurus rubiginosus* and *Prionailurus viverrinus*; only the female karyotype has been reported (Wurster-Hill and Gray, 1973; Wurster-Hill and Centerwall, 1982; Tanomtonget *et al.*, 2009). (ii) There are males and Y chromosomes in the karyotype studies of *Lynx lynx*, *Panthera tigris*, *Leopardus geoffroyi*, *Leopardus pajeros* and *Herpailurus yagouaroundi*, but the Y chromosome is very small. The type of chromosome was not reported (Wurster-Hill and Gray, 1973; Suedmeyer *et al.*, 2003; Nieet *et al.*, 2012).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The ancestral carnivore karyotype is  $2n = 38$  (Nash *et al.*, 2008). The predominant diploid number of chromosomes in Felidae is  $2n = 38$ . Another common chromosome number is  $2n = 36$ . Although there are 38 chromosomes in many species, there are 36 chromosomes in only four (*Leopardus geoffroyi*, *Leopardus pajeros*, *Leopardus tigrinus* and *Leopardus wiedii*) of the 23 species in the Table II. As an interesting note, these species have the different chromosome numbers and the smallest index values (1.8889) together with *Herpailurus yagouaroundi* (1.8421). The karyotypes of genus *Leopardus* are symmetric types together with

*Neofelis*, *Acinonyx*, *Prionailurus* and *Herpailurus*. The karyotype type is between

symmetric and asymmetric in the other 6 genera and 13 species.

**Table II: Karyotype formulae, index values and karyotype type of species**

No	Species Scientific name/common name	2n	Autosomes and sex chromosomes	S/A <sub>i</sub>	Karyotype type	References
1	<i>Felis silvestris</i> (Schreber, 1777) (Wildcat)	38	10M + 14SM + 8A + 4T X = SM, Y ?*	2.1579 (F)	Between symmetric and asymmetric	Wurster–Hill and Gray, 1973
2	<i>Felis catus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) (Domestic cat)	38	10M + 14SM + 8A + 4T X = SM, Y ?*	2.1579 (F)	Between symmetric and asymmetric	Wurster–Hill and Gray, 1973
3	<i>Felis chaus</i> (Guldenstadt, 1776) (Jungle cat)	38	10M + 14SM + 8A + 4T X = SM, Y = SM	2.1579 (F) 2.1579 (M)	Between symmetric and asymmetric	Wurster–Hill and Gray, 1973; Tanomtonget <i>al.</i> , 2008c
4	<i>Lynx lynx</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) (Eurasian lynx)	38	10M + 14SM + 8A + 4T X = SM, Y minute**	2.1579 (F)	Between symmetric and asymmetric	Nieet <i>al.</i> , 2012
5	<i>Lynx rufus</i> (Schreber, 1777) (Bobcat)	38	8M + 16SM + 8ST + 4T X = M, Y = ST	2.1579 (F) 2.2105 (M)	Between symmetric and asymmetric	Hsu <i>et al.</i> , 1963
6	<i>Caracal caracal</i> (Schreber, 1776) (Caracal)	38	10M + 14SM + 8A + 4T X = SM, Y ?*	2.1579 (F)	Between symmetric and asymmetric	Wurster–Hill and Gray, 1973
7	<i>Catopuma temminckii</i> (Vigors and Horsfield, 1827) (Asian golden cat)	38	10M + 14SM + 8A + 4T X = SM, Y ?*	2.1579 (F)	Between symmetric and asymmetric	Wurster–Hill and Gray, 1973; Tanomtonget <i>al.</i> , 2009
8	<i>Puma concolor</i> (Linnaeus, 1771) (Cougar)	38	8M + 14SM + 12ST + 2T X = M, Y = ST	2.1579 (F) 2.2105 (M)	Between symmetric and asymmetric	Hsu <i>et al.</i> , 1963
9	<i>Panthera leo</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) (Lion)	38	10M + 14SM + 8A + 4T X = SM, Y ?*	2.1579 (F)	Between symmetric and asymmetric	Wurster–Hill and Gray, 1973
10	<i>Panthera pardus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) (Leopard)	38	10M + 14SM + 8A + 4T X = SM, Y = SM	2.1579 (F) 2.1579 (M)	Between symmetric and asymmetric	Tanomtonget <i>al.</i> , 2008b
11	<i>Panthera tigris</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) (Tiger)	38	10M + 14SM + 8A + 4T X = SM, Y minute**	2.1579 (F)	Between symmetric and asymmetric	Suedmeyeret <i>al.</i> , 2003
12	<i>Panthera uncia</i> (Schreber, 1775) (Snow leopard)	38	10M + 14SM + 8A + 4T X = SM, Y = SM	2.1579 (F) 2.1579 (M)	Between symmetric and asymmetric	Soderlundet <i>al.</i> , 1980

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No	Species Scientific name/common name	2n	Autosomes and sex chromosomes	S/AI	Karyotype type	References
13	<i>Panthera onca</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) (Jaguar)	38	10M + 16SM + 6A + 4T X = M, Y = SM	2.0526 (F) 2.0789 (M)	Between symmetric and asymmetric	Ledesmaet <i>al.</i> , 2004
14	<i>Neofelis nebulosa</i> (Griffith, 1821) (Clouded leopard)	38	12M + 14SM + 8A + 2T X = SM, Y = SM	2.0000 (F) 2.2000 (M)	Symmetric	Tanomtonget <i>al.</i> , 2008a
15	<i>Acinonyx jubatus</i> (Schreber, 1775) (Cheetah)	38	12M + 14SM + 8A + 2T X = SM, Y ?*	2.0000 (F)	Symmetric	Wurster–Hill and Centerwall, 1982
16	<i>Prionailurus bengalensis</i> (Kerr, 1792) (Asian leopard cat)	38	12M + 14SM + 8A + 2T X = SM, Y = M	2.0000 (F) 1.9737 (M)	Symmetric	Wurster–Hill and Gray, 1973; Keawmadet <i>al.</i> , 2007
17	<i>Prionailurus rubiginosus</i> (l. Geoffroy Saint- Hilaire, 1831) (Rusty-spotted cat)	38	12M + 14SM + 8A + 2T X = SM, Y ?*	2.0000 (F)	Symmetric	Wurster–Hill and Centerwall, 1982
18	<i>Prionailurus viverrinus</i> (Bennett, 1833) (Fishing cat)	38	12M + 14SM + 8A + 2T X = SM, Y ?*	2.0000 (F)	Symmetric	Wurster–Hill and Gray, 1973; Tanomtonget <i>al.</i> , 2009
19	<i>Leopardus geoffroyi</i> (d'Orbigny and Gervais, 1844) (Geoffroy's cat)	36	12M + 14SM + 8A X = SM, Y minute**	1.8889 (F)	Symmetric	Wurster–Hill and Gray, 1973
20	<i>Leoparduspajeros</i> (Desmarest, 1816) (Pampas cat)	36	12M + 14SM + 8A X = SM, Y minute**	1.8889 (F)	Symmetric	Wurster–Hill and Gray, 1973
21	<i>Leopardustigrinus</i> (Schreber, 1775) (Oncilla)	36	12M + 14SM + 8A X = SM, Y = SM	1.8889 (F) 1.8889 (M)	Symmetric	Seibt, 2009
22	<i>Leoparduswiedii</i> ( Schinz, 1821) (Margay)	36	12M + 14SM + 8A X = SM, Y = SM	1.8889 (F) 1.8889 (M)	Symmetric	Seibt, 2009
23	<i>Herpailurus yagouaroundi</i> (É. Geoffroy Saint- Hilaire, 1803) (Jaguarundi)	38	14M + 14SM + 8A X = SM, Y minute**	1.8421 (F)	Symmetric	Wurster–Hill and Gray, 1973

**Abbreviations:** M, metacentric; SM, submetacentric; A, acrocentric; ST, subtelocentric; T, telocentric; F, female; M, male. \* There is no male in the karyotype study. \*\* Could not determine the type of chromosome.

The karyotype symmetry/ asymmetry values of 13 species are 2.0526–2.1579. The species of the same genus are located close in Figure 1. The karyotypes of *Felis*, *Lynx*, *Caracal*, *Catopuma*, *Puma* and *Panthera* are the type between symmetric and asymmetric. Although between symmetric and asymmetric, the index value of *Panthera onca* is different from other *Panthera* species. The karyotype types and index values are determined the close genus and species. The karyotypes between symmetric and asymmetric of the Figure are evaluated with reported the morphologic and genetic analysis (Kitchener and Rees, 2009). There is no definitive classification and no clear consensus with regard to *Felis* species showing a worldwide distribution. However the genetic

relationship of wildcats and domestic cats is similar (IUCN, 2017). Sunquist and Sunquist (2002) reported that there is a relationship in terms of morphological characters between *Felis chaus* and genus *Lynx*. The caracal is close lynx, domestic cats, golden cat and serval (Johnson *et al.*, 2006). Johnson *et al.* (2006) reported that the snow leopard is a species in the genus *Panthera* according to the genetic analysis. It is most closely related to the tiger, having diverged over 2 million years ago (O'Brien and Johnson, 2007). However genetic analysis studies of the Snow Leopard have not yet been done. According to the karyotype symmetry/asymmetry value, the snow leopard is located in the same group with genus *Panthera*.

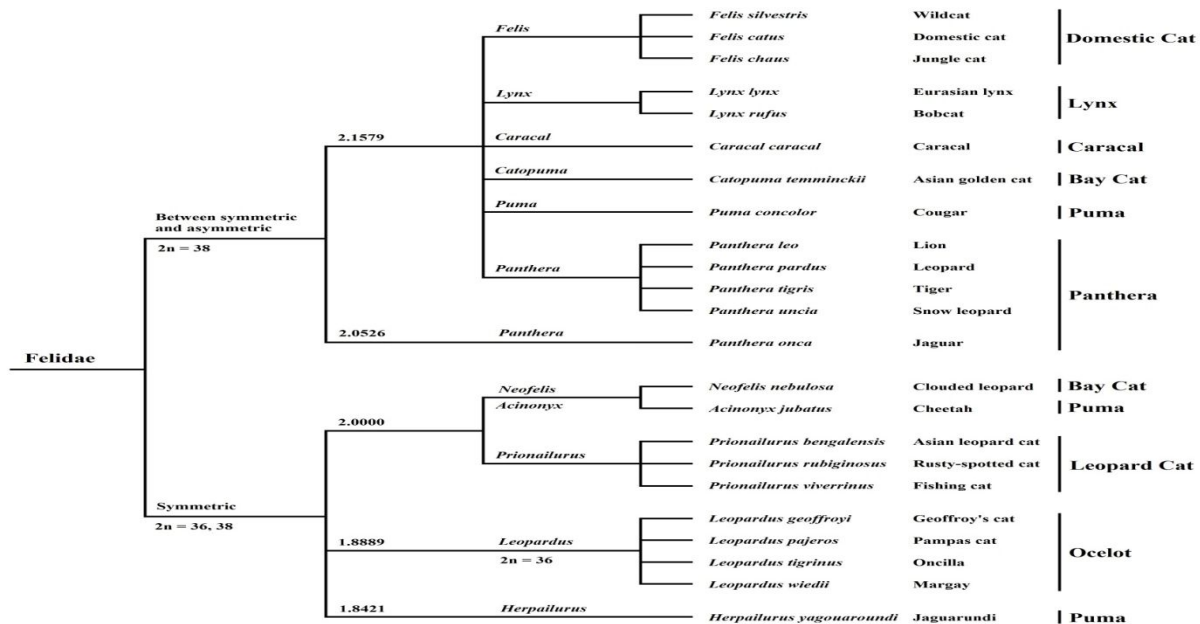


Figure 1: The phylogenetic tree showing relationships of the index values among the species of felids.

The karyotypes of *Neofelis*, *Acinonyx*, *Prionailurus*, *Leopardus* and *Herpailurus* are symmetric types. While the highest index value is 2.000 (*Neofelis*, *Acinonyx* and *Prionailurus*), the lowest index value is 1.8421 (*Herpailurus*) at symmetric type. Genus *Leopardus* has different chromosome number ( $2n = 36$ ) and different index value (1.8889) from all genus. The symmetric type karyotypes in Figure 1 are evaluated with the morphologic and genetic analysis. It is reported that the cheetah, puma and jaguarundi are close species in the tribe Acinonychini (Johnson and O'Brien, 1997; Bininda-Emonds *et al.*, 1999; Mattern and

MacLennan, 2000). There is no relationship among these three species in Figure. The heterogeneous distribution of these species can be explained with some reasons. Different authors may report different results, due to chromosomal polymorphism or changes in chromosome structure. For example, the karyotype formula of *Herpailurus yagouaroundi* (Wurster–Hill and Gray, 1973) used in the present study is different from that described by Novillo–González (2010). The index values from Novillo–González (2010) are 1.7895 (female) and 1.8158 (male). When using these values, the position of *Herpailurus yagouaroundi* will not

change in the Figure 1. Both in the present study and in other studies (Eizirik *et al.*, 1998) reported that there is no relationship between genus *Leopardus* and other genus. The yagouarundi is a species in the genus *Puma* (Johnson *et al.*, 2006; Eizirik *et al.*, 2008), but Agnarsson *et al.* (2010) reported that the Jaguarundi is not a similar species to the Puma. Segura *et al.* (2013) noted that the Cheetah and Puma are similar species, unlike Jaguarundi is quite different from Puma. The IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group classifies the yagouarundi in the genus *Herpailurus* according to the phylogenetic uncertainties and morphological and behavioral differences (IUCN, 2017). In Figure 1 the yagouarundi is located quite far away from genus *Puma*. As a result, the karyotypes of Felidae species were used for the comparison with karyotype symmetry/asymmetry index. As shown in Fig. 1, SA<sub>i</sub> together with the other parameters will contribute to phylogenetic trees of mammals.

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