

How did we tame wild animals?

Genes controlling the development of the brain and nervous system were fundamentally important for animal domestication, according to new research.

An international team of scientists have now made a breakthrough in understanding the genetic changes that tamed wild animals, which have long been a mystery.

The domestication of animals and plants, a prerequisite for the development of agriculture, is one of the most important technological revolutions in mankind's history.

Although the domestication of dogs and cattle started 9,000 to 15,000 years ago, the rabbit was domesticated much later, around 1,400 years ago at monasteries in southern France.

Miguel Carneiro, an author of the study from the Inbio-University of Porto, said rabbits were a good model for genetic studies of domestication as it happened fairly recently and we know where the domestication began.

For the study, scientists first sequenced the entire genome of one domestic rabbit to develop a reference genome assembly. Then they resequenced entire genomes of domestic rabbits representing six different breeds and wild rabbits sampled at 14 different places across the Iberian Peninsula and southern France.

Read the full, original story: [Domesticating rabbits: Scientists prove Charles Darwin's theory of genetics in taming animals](#)