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3 POLICE ROAD BLITZ
NABS HUNDREDS**8** WAVERLEY ARTS
SOCIETY CLOSURE**20** SPRUIKER
BUSINESS NEWS**Waverley**
Leader**52**
PAGES TO
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- LIFTOUT

Call for all-day curfew

CATS 'ASTRONOMICAL' KILLERS

Julia Rabar

A WILDLIFE campaigner is calling for a 24-hour cat curfew in Monash after a bumper kitten season resulted in hundreds of native animals being killed or injured.

But Monash Mayor Paul Klisaris said because compulsory cat desexing was introduced last year, a curfew would not be considered until 2017.

South Oakleigh Wildlife Shelter manager Michele Phillips said it was appalling that cats could roam free at any time in Monash.

"There are 100,000 reasons why Monash Council should have a curfew," Ms Phillips said.

"The number of wild animals that cats kill is astronomical."

Ms Phillips said about 95 per cent of animals that came through her door had been injured or affected by cats.

"If they have not been injured themselves, it's the mum that's been killed and the babies come in, it's horrific," Ms Phillips said.

Cr Klisaris said the council introduced compulsory desexing of all newly registered cats last year after several people raised concerns about wandering cats during a review of the Domestic Animal Management plan in 2013.

"(A curfew) is a pretty strict measure to introduce, to require all cats inside," Cr Klisaris said.

"Rather than going down that route, we decided to introduce compulsory cat desexing as that will help reduce the number of

FELINES IN FOCUS

- There are 5080 cats registered in Monash
- From July 2014 to February 2015, Monash Council caught 261 stray cats and a further 135 were brought to the council or the RSPCA
- The council takes stray cats to the RSPCA where some are put up for adoption but most are euthanised
- Of surrounding councils, only Whitehorse and Kingston councils have night-time cat curfews, with Knox to review a curfew in 2016

unwanted cats being born."

Cr Klisaris said people were encouraged to keep their cats inside at night, and the council would reconsider a curfew ahead of the new 2017 Domestic Animal Management plan.

RSPCA Victoria animal services executive manager Helen Cocks said the organisation's policy went beyond curfews and instead focused on containment at all times.

"It is certainly possible for your cat to live happily contained within your property boundaries," Ms Cocks said.

"Contained cats are less likely to become lost or injured.

"They are also less likely to get into cat fights and therefore less likely to have cat fight-related injuries or catch diseases."

Should the council introduce a cat curfew? Email monash@leadernewspapers.com.au

South Oakleigh Wildlife Shelter manager Michele Phillips and this little guy are calling for a 24-hour cat curfew to protect wildlife.

Picture: VALERIU CAMPAN