

# Ballarat Times

(<https://timesnewsgroup.com.au/ballarat/>)

Thursday, November 2nd, 2023

## Calls for cat curfew change

July 15, 2023

BY Miriam Litwin (<https://timesnewsgroup.com.au/ballarat/author/miriam/>)



On the prowl: Some community members are calling for a 24-hour cat curfew. Photo: FILE

THERE are calls in the community for the municipality's cat curfew to be changed from sunset to sunrise, to twenty-four hours a day.

Currently, City of Ballarat residents are required to keep their feline friends confined in their premises after dark to minimise damage to the environment and other wildlife, however, some are calling for more action.

Jessica Robertson is the president of Ballarat Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation and is urging people to put pressure on the City to make the curfew change and consider how it will improve the safety of pet cats and wider biodiversity.

“Once attacked by cats, wildlife almost always dies because of the toxins in their saliva,” she said.

“If there’s no management of a cat, they’re just out killing every day.

“We need more people to think about what their cats have been doing every day because I think if anyone realised what they were actually killing they’d think twice about letting them out.

“It’s out of sight out of mind.”

Findings by the Threatened Species Commission suggest that on average one pet cat, if not confined to a property, kills 186 mammals, reptiles, and birds each year.

Research sent to Wildlife Rehabilitation Conservation by Wildlife Victoria has found that cases of wildlife attacks by cats and dogs in Ballarat has increased by 350 per cent in the last four years.

“That’s a huge increase so something is definitely not working in terms of our animal management in Ballarat, and these are really shocking statistics,” said Ms Robertson.

“The statistics we have are alarming, but they are only the tip of the iceberg because we only know about the wildlife that is reported.”

Keeping cats secured can also positively impact their health and wellbeing, with Melbourne Animal Rescue finding that while indoor cats can live up to twenty years, outdoor cats have an average life expectancy of five years.

“It’s also about the safety of pet cats, because as wildlife rescuers we are not responsible for recusing pet cats, but we often drag dead cats off the road after they have been hit by cars,” said Ms Robertson.

“If you care about your cat, you should be containing it on your property.”

Other Victorian councils such as Knox, the Yarra Ranges and Bendigo have already implemented or are soon to implement rules restricting the movement of cats.

Ms Robertson has been meeting with the City's animal management team to provide information on local statistics and there is hope the idea of this new curfew will go to community consultation soon.

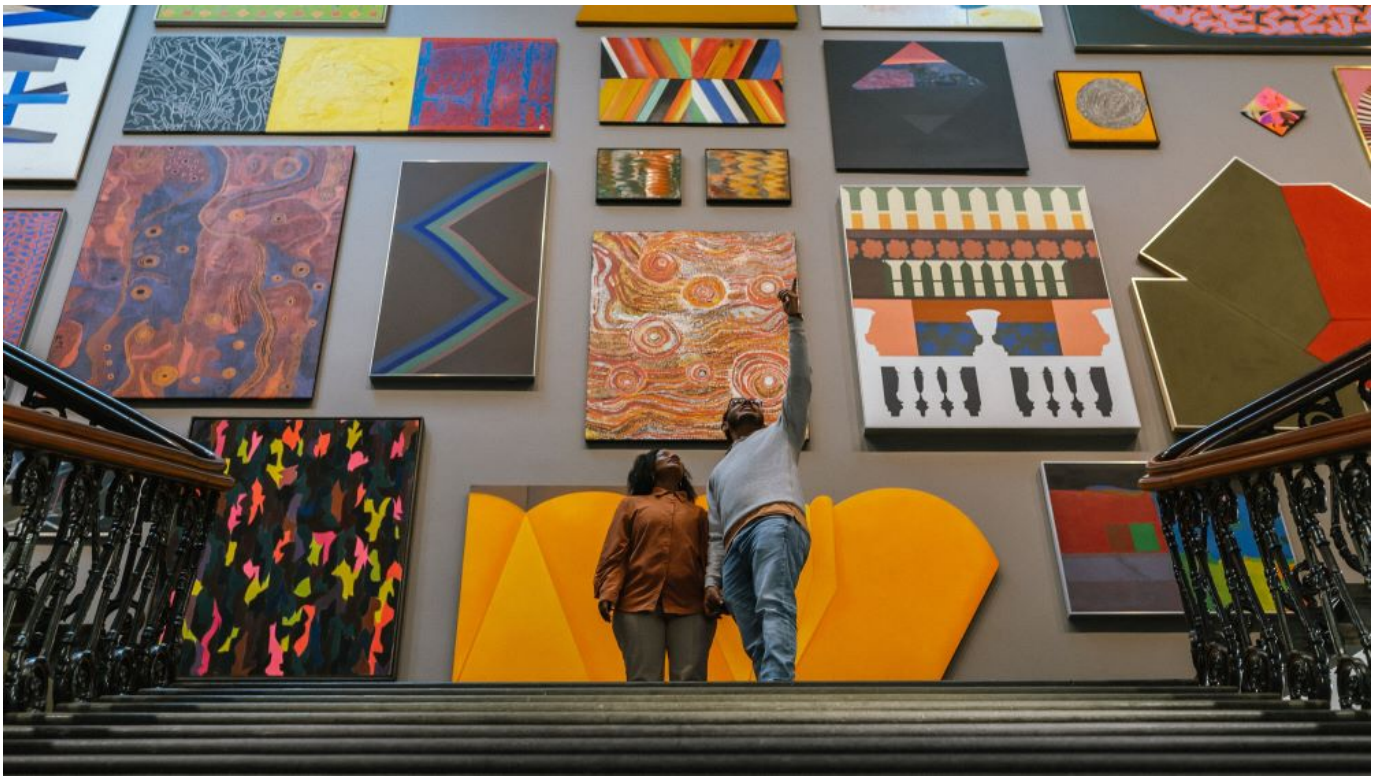
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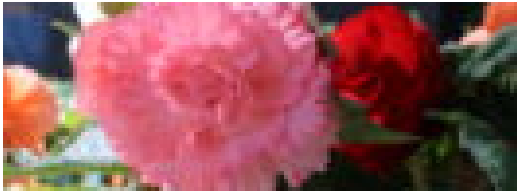
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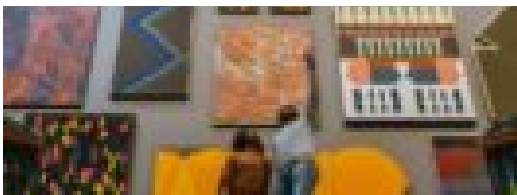


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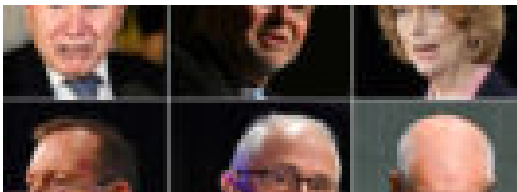


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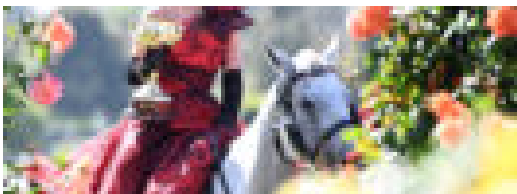


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