



Human Wildlife Solutions



## Dealing with baboons

Help us manage baboons on  
the urban fringe by

- \* **Understanding the work of the Rangers**
- \* **Wise waste-management**
- \* **Baboon-proofing your property**

**As you live within the urban edge it is important to understand the role of both rangers and residents in deterring baboons from raiding and keeping baboons outside suburban zones.**

- \* **Rangers** are permitted to use certain tools with the utmost discretion and which are not intended to hurt or harm baboons in any way.
- \* Only Human Wildlife Solutions (HWS) staffers are permitted to use these tools.
- \* **Residents** are requested to secure their waste and baboon-proof homes and property.

### Tools used by baboon rangers...

**Paint ball markers, bear bangers and pepper balls are the tools that can legally be used by HWS to manage & control baboons.**

- \* **Paintball markers** are used predominantly for recreation and in military simulations, but have been used in mark-recapture studies of free-ranging wildlife populations and in deterring problematic wild species (e.g. coyotes) from urban environments. They are currently used to deter baboons from tourist and residential areas in KZN, Sun City and the Overberg (Hermanus).
- \* **Bear bangers** are cartridges that are fired into the air. Originally developed to scare away bears in Canada and the U.S.A., they explode with a loud bang that scares baboons.
- \* **Pepper balls** are shot from a paintball marker and are fragile balls which break upon impact and release a super-irritant powder called

PAVA (capsaicin II) pepper. They are only used to chase baboons in extreme circumstances.

### Why is HWS using these tools?

To meet our brief from the City of Cape Town to ensure safety of the community; prevent raids; keep distance between baboons and humans; and to protect and ensure sustainability of the baboons.

### Does HWS have a permit to use these tools?

Yes. Cape Nature has issued HWS with a permit to use these tools, including use in residential areas. The NSPCA supports the use of these tools by HWS.

### Is the permit available for perusal on request?

Yes, supervisors and field managers carry permits.

### Are residents or children allowed to use paintball markers against baboons?

Definitely not - it is illegal to use paintball markers on any animals without a permit.

### How to recognise a paintball marker operator?

An operator wears a luminous jacket with the HWS logo and wording 'Baboon Ranger' on it, and will have the paintball marker under a cover at all times.

### What training does the paint ball operator receive?

All rangers operating paintball markers undergo training on firing procedures from a competent instructor and receive a certificate of competency.

This course includes:

- Safe & responsible use of a paintball marker, its propellants and ammunition
- Targeting & responsible shooting techniques
- Laws pertaining to the use of paintball equipment
- Safe storage of markers and CO<sup>2</sup> tanks.
- Supervisory rangers are instructed to monitor the use of the paintball markers and to report any misuse or inappropriate use of paintball markers to the Field Manager.

### **What projectile is used in the paintball markers operated by HWS?**

HWS only use gas-propelled, soft, spherical pellets that are filled with water-soluble, non-toxic paint. Pepper balls are only used in extreme or emergency situations.

### **Are paintball marker operators authorised to enter private property without the owner's permission?**

No, they have to have the permission of the owner.

### **Can an operator use a paintball marker on private property?**

Yes, if given permission by the owner.

### **Do operators have a strict code of conduct?**

All operators adhere to the standard operating procedures for paintball markers, which has recently been reviewed by the City of Cape Town, CapeNature, SANParks, the SPCA and HWS.

### **Are paintball markers used on any baboon in the troop or only certain baboons?**

The operator will only target adult baboons that are within a safe distance from juvenile and

infant baboons but within 20m of the operator (so as not to compromise accuracy). NO adult females **carrying infants** will be targeted. At the discretion of the Field Manager, large juveniles can be targeted.

### **What are the protocols and procedures pertaining to the use of paintball markers?**

- Operators must always wear their identifiable apparel.
- Operators must always have their paintball marker concealed by a cover when not in use.
- Operators must follow the code of conduct, procedures and protocols to the letter of the law.

#### **Basic criteria for use of paintball markers in the buffer zone and within urban areas**

##### **In the buffer zone (an area 100 to 200m outside the urban edge):**

- The operator will position himself between the troop & nearest urban edge (firing will ALWAYS be directed towards natural areas).
- No more than 1 or 2 warning shots are to be fired into the ground in front of any adult baboon.
- The central back and rump of an adult will be targeted.
- From this point, the baboons will either begin to retreat from the urban area or will continue their approach. If the baboons approach the urban area purposefully, the protocol for use within human areas will be followed.
- Caution is used when firing on baboons moving directly toward the operator in order to avoid the risk of hitting the facial region.
- Should the adult retreat away from the operator, towards natural land, targeting of an adult will cease once it is beyond the buffer zone.
- If the troop moves back into the buffer zone, the firing protocol will be adjusted accordingly.

#### **Within human (urban) areas:**

- Efforts will be geared primarily towards keeping local residents safe, firing as little as possible and moving the troop out of the human area as quickly as possible.
- In the village, when monitors are herding the baboons out, firing must be used as a support to the monitors by targeting adult males/females that break ranks with the troop. If the troop is moving in a general direction, herded by the rangers, then firing should be guided by the Supervisory Ranger so as not to scatter the troop.
- No firing will be allowed where visibility of the paintball's trajectory is obstructed.
- No firing will be allowed in the direction of people, domestic animals, windows or vehicles.
- If there are multiple operators, a predetermined direction in which to push the baboons must be decided prior to entering and firing in human areas. If baboons are located on roof tops, trees or dead-ends, the operators MUST devise an operational plan prior to firing. Baboon escape routes must be determined and operators must allow baboons the opportunity to escape in the direction away from the operator. No other operators or monitors should hinder this escape route.

#### **Protocols pertaining to the use of bear bangers and pepper balls**

**Bear bangers** will only be used on the urban edge and all attempts will be made to notify the community when the cartridges are discharged.

**Pepper balls** are to be used in emergency or extreme situations where no other method allows for the baboons to be moved.

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