



CITY OF CAPE TOWN
ISIXEKO SASEKAPA
STAD KAAPSTAD



Urban Baboon Programme

April 2023 Monthly Report



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1 INTRODUCTION

NCC Environmental Services (Pty) Ltd (NCC) was appointed on 1 October 2020 as the service provider for the City of Cape Town's Urban Baboon Programme (UBP) on a three-year contract. NCC are contracted to prevent baboon troops from entering the urban area for at least 90% of daylight hours to minimise human-baboon conflicts.

2 SOUTHERN SUBPOPULATION

2.1 DA GAMA TROOP (DG)

TIME OUT OF TOWN

- The DG Troop spent 98.8% of the time out of the urban area.
- Individual baboons spent 94.3% of the time out of the urban area.

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- The troop moved through the residential areas of Da Gama Park and Welcome Glen on several occasions. During this time, individuals accessed bins and one occupied house.
- An increasing number of fruiting trees in Welcome Glen and Da Gama Park continue to attract baboons to the urban area.
- The troop roosted mostly at 2nd Avenue but also at mountain sleep sites on several occasions.
- There has been some fighting for dominance between DG19 and subadult male DG20 this month.
- A VHF collar placed on DG19 has allowed the field team to locate the troop more quickly while in the mountainous areas of their range.

2.2 GROOT OLIFANTSBOS TROOP (GOB)

TIME OUT OF TOWN

- The GOB Troop spent 100% of the time out of the urban area.
- Individual baboons spent an unknown amount of the time in the urban area.¹

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- The troop moved in and out of the Cape of Good Hope section (CoGH) of the Table Mountain National Park (TMNP) and spent most of their time in the southern and western sections of their ranging area and did not enter Scarborough.

¹ These individuals (two adult females, one juvenile male and an infant) moved independently from the troop without field rangers assigned to them and thus individual time in town for this month is unknown.

- At the end of April, the individuals that arrived in Scarborough several months ago were captured and returned to the Cape of Good Hope section of the Table Mountain National Park.

2.3 SLANGKOP TROOP (SK)

TIME OUT OF TOWN

- The SK Troop spent 70.8% of the time out of the urban area.
- Individual baboons spent 98.3% of the time out of the urban area.

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- The troop spent a slightly decreased amount of time in the urban area compared to last month. This was largely attributed to their time spent in and around Heron Park accessing attractants. Additionally, the continued competition between natal males SK13 and SK14 for alpha status, resulted in weak troop cohesion. This hinders interventions that prevent their movement into the urban space and encourages them out of urban areas if they enter.
- The troop roosted around Ocean View for the majority of the month.
- As a result of altercations with SK13, the natal adult male SK14 began showing signs of dispersal at the end of March. SK14 subsequently moved away from the troop and into the Kommetjie area on his own. He returned to the vicinity of the SK Troop in the beginning of April.

2.4 SMITSWINKEL BAY TROOP (SWB)

TIME OUT OF TOWN

- The SWB Troop spent 91.5% of the time out of the urban area.
- Individual baboons from the main SWB Troop spent 97.5% of the time out of the urban area.
- The SWB splinter troop spent 80% of time out of the urban area.

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- The SWB splinter troop has continued moving independently from the main SWB Troop through the Seaforth area and roosting mostly in the SA Navy's East Yard. Short-term contingency staff have remained with this group to assist with encouraging them out of the urban area and to move further south.
- Adult male UKP2 appears to have retained alpha status within the main SWB Troop and shows an inclination for keeping the troop in the southern portion of their usual ranging area. While the majority of the troop move with him, adult male SWB6 and some individuals move separately from the main troop and in a more northerly direction.
- The main SWB Troop spent a few days foraging and roosting in the far south of their range this month around Smitswinkel Bay corner.

2.5 WATERFALL TROOP (WF)

TIME OUT OF TOWN

- The WF Troop spent 86.5% of the time out of the urban area.²
- Individual baboons spent 97.2% of the time out of the urban area.²

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- UKP1, the current alpha male, and one adult female have begun entering the urban space on their own.
- The troop spent time at SANAD and were easier to keep out of the urban area as a whole with the assistance of short-term contingency staff this month.
- Inadequate waste management at SA Naval facilities continues to be a key factor attracting the troop to the urban area of Simon's Town.
- Recently tightened security on SA Navy properties has limited the field team's access to baboons while on these properties. This has impacted the team's ability to encourage the baboons out of the urban space.

3 NORTHERN SUBPOPULATION

3.1 CONSTANTIA ONE TROOP (CT1)

TIME OUT OF TOWN

- The CT1 Troop spent 92% of time out of the urban area.
- Individuals spent 100% of time out of the urban area.

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- The troop mostly foraged and roosted around the wine farms. Collaboration with the wine farms has continued to assist the UBP.

3.2 MOUNTAIN ONE TROOP (MT1)

TIME OUT OF TOWN

- The MT1 Troop spent 100% of time out of the urban area.
- Individuals spent 100% of time out of the urban area.

² There are several SA Navy facilities within the suburb of Simon's Town. These naval facilities act as human-derived feeding hubs within the built area. These hubs are dispersed across the urban area, facilitating easy baboon movement between them and into the urban space. When adjusting the time out of town figure to account for time spent on SA Navy property that falls within the urban space, this figure is reduced to 50.4% of time out of the urban area for the troop and 96.3% for individuals.

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- The troop was not seen around Porter Estate this month and spent the majority of the time above Buitenverwachting.

3.3 MOUNTAIN TWO TROOP (MT2)

TIME OUT OF TOWN

- The MT2 Troop spent 99.3% of time out of the urban area.
- Individuals spent 100% of time out of the urban area.

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- The troop roosted above The Range for majority of the month and continued to enter Constantia Uitsig on a regular basis.
- Individuals crossed Orpen Road on four occasions and visited Cape Academy.
- There are no field rangers allocated exclusively to this troop, however the tracking collar has proved invaluable in monitoring the troop's movement and assisted the field team in preventing them from moving deeper into the urban space.

3.4 TOKAI TROOP (TK)

TIME OUT OF TOWN

- The TK Troop spent 100% of time out of the urban area.
- Individuals spent 100% of time out of the urban area.

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- Individuals accessed food from a table at the Tokai picnic site on one occasion.

3.5 ZWAANSWYK TROOP (ZW)

TIME OUT OF TOWN

- The ZW Troop spent 100% of time out of the urban area.
- Individuals spent 100% of time out of the urban area.

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- None this month.

4 MONTHLY GENERAL PROGRAMME SUMMARY

4.1 OVERALL TIME OUT OF TOWN

The troops overall spent 93.8% of time out of the urban area this month (**Fig. 1**). The SK and WF troops did not reach 90% this month. Overall individual time out of town was 94.2%, however individuals from the SWB Troop did not reach 90%. Factors which impacted the management of these troops and individuals can be found in their respective summaries above.

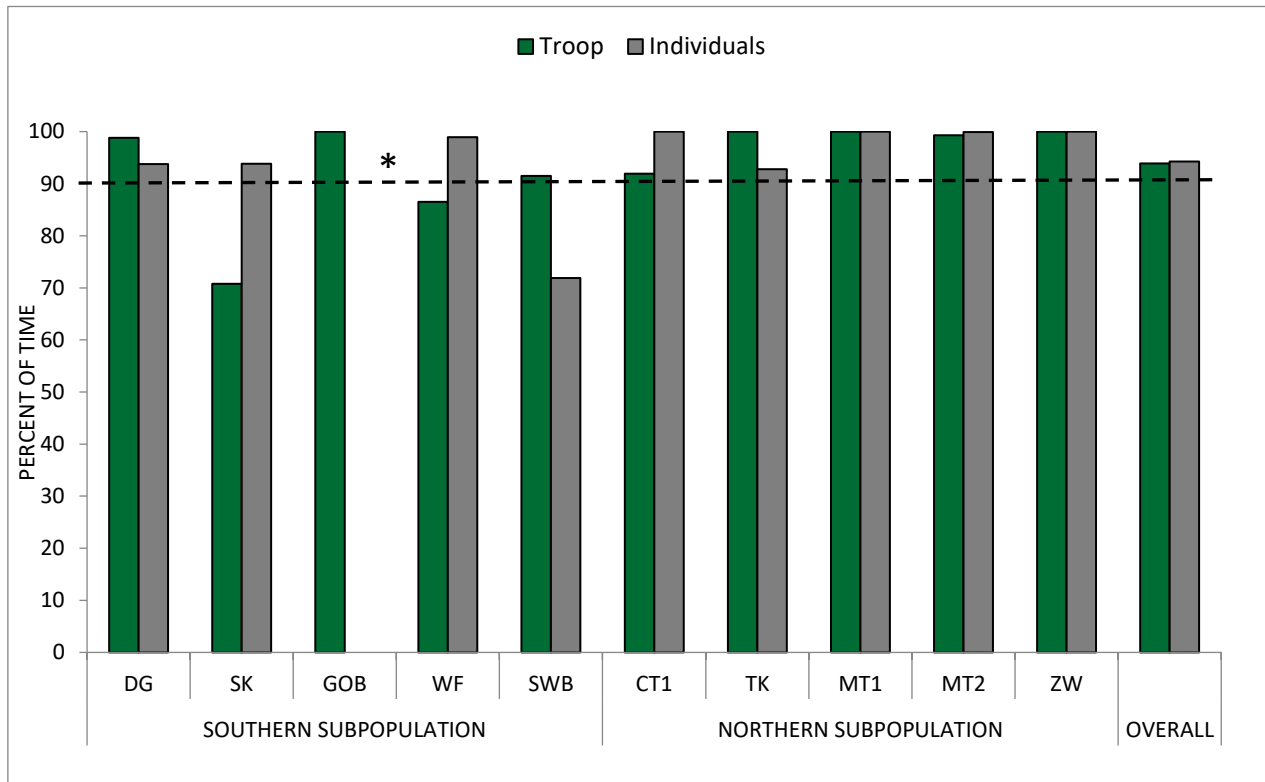


Figure 1. Percent of time out of town calculated for each troop and troop individuals for the month of April 2023. The full name of each troop can be found in the prior section. The percent of time out of town is calculated using the same method as the previous service provider, based on an average of 10.7 daylight hours per day per month.

*Time in town for GOB individuals was unknown this month.

4.2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Site visits, stakeholder liaison, and community engagement, including education initiatives, took place this month as follows.

SITE VISITS

Private properties in Capri, Da Gama, Misty Cliffs, Murdock Valley, Redhill, Scarborough, Seaforth, Simon's Town:

- Advised residents on how to manage their properties and gardens to minimise potential attractants for baboons, thus reducing the likelihood of baboon damage and incursions into their homes (**Fig. 2**).
- Encouraged residents to baboon-proof their bins and informed them that replacements for broken or stolen bins can be obtained by emailing wastewise@capetown.gov.za.
- Promoted the use of the hotline to alert field teams to the presence of baboons, thus reducing the time which the troop spends in town and the likelihood of human-baboon conflict. Residents were reminded that NCC does not monitor local alert groups and baboon locations should also be sent to the dedicated Baboon Hotline (071 588 6540) to ensure the field team is informed.
- Liaised with residents who had witnessed illegal behaviour to assist them with reporting the contraventions to the relevant authorities.
- Engaged with residents regarding the presence of a small group of baboons in Scarborough and Misty Cliffs and what could be done to reduce human-baboon conflict.
- Engaged with residents to address individual queries with regards to field team operations. Common misunderstandings were addressed to facilitate a greater understanding of the programme, how baboons behave in the urban space and the constraints which the field teams operate under.
- Advised residents, tourists, and guesthouse employees on how to react should a baboon enter their properties. Guesthouse staff were also directed to NCC's website (<https://ncc-group.co.za/baboons/>) where they can access printable infographics for inclusion in their guest information folders.



Figure 2. SWB13 eating bread obtained by entering an open window in Simon's Town.

Alleged paintball marker and pellet gun use by members of the public – Assisted with collating and submitting evidence to CapeNature to facilitate investigations in terms of contraventions of the Nature Conservation Ordinance of 1974. The SPCA were also informed. The public can refer to NCC’s infographic on reporting illegal activities at <https://ncc-group.co.za/reporting-illegal-activities-baboons/>.

Baboon and dog altercations – Two incidents occurred during the reporting period. The altercations occurred in the naval housing area of Da Gama Park and involved the same dog which was not contained on its property. The matter was attended to by the Military Police and the SPCA. NCC provided eye-witness affidavits to assist with the case. The dog has been confiscated by the SPCA until the case can be concluded.

Cape Research Centre, Tokai – Site visit to check on waste management. The on-site skip, which has required replacement for several months, has not yet been replaced and waste is still potentially accessible through the bent lid. SANParks staff are aware of the need to action this replacement.

Dido Valley Housing Project, Dido Valley – Site visit to speak to the staff about progress with the housing development and to express concerns that the Da Gama Troop may begin visiting the houses if good waste management is not observed. On site staff shared the details of the relevant senior contacts at the developers. NCC staff are in the process of arranging a meeting to advise on how to reduce the likelihood of human-baboon conflict at the development (**Fig. 3**).



Figure 3. Dido Valley Housing Project.

Happy Valley Home, Simon’s Town – Site visit to check for baboon attractants. Everything was in order and the refuse bins were stored securely in the custom baboon-proof housing (**Fig. 4**).

Kogelfontein, Red Hill – Visit to ensure that waste at the property is not serving as an attractant for the Groot Olifantsbos troop. The waste was all contained within the skips at the time of the visits (**Fig. 5**).



Figure 4. Waste bins stored securely outside Happy Valley Home.

Lluvia Nutrition, Heron Park – Site visit to speak to staff about preventing the baboons from accessing used peanut butter barrels. The barrels are now being collected on a more frequent basis to be washed and recycled and plans are underway to build an outbuilding to eliminate the likelihood of baboons accessing the barrels.

Miller’s Point Picnic Site and Slipway, Miller’s Point – Regular visits are undertaken to assess waste management. The area was clean and tidy during all visits.

Miller’s Point Ski Boat Club, Miller’s Point – Visit to check for baboon attractants. All waste was stored securely.

Rocklands Farm, Murdock Valley South – Courtesy visit to speak with the staff about any challenges they may be experiencing with the baboons. No significant issues were highlighted for the reporting period and no waste attractants were noted at the time of the visit.

SA Navy Property, Job Maseko Wardroom, Seaforth – Significant efforts have been made by the staff at Job Maseko to reduce baboon access to waste. A dedicated outbuilding is used to store refuse bins. Bins which are outside and in use are secured to the wall to prevent baboons from tipping them over. Unfortunately, some of the newly acquired baboon resistant bins have broken, either through baboons breaking the cable mechanism or through routine use. This issue has been reported to the City to highlight the need for a more robust alternative to be sourced (**Fig. 6**).



Figure 5. Waste was sufficiently contained in the skips at Kogelfontein.



Figure 6. Damaged bins at Job Maseko with broken cables and lid hinges (indicated by the yellow arrow).

SA Navy Property, Waterfall Barracks, Simon's Town – Baboon access to both unoccupied and occupied buildings remains a problem at the barracks. Unoccupied open buildings provide shelter for baboons. Windows are often left ajar in occupied accommodation blocks, providing opportunities for baboons to gain access to food. These issues have been highlighted to the relevant Navy officials.

SA Navy Property, West Yard, Simon's Town – Several broken bins are still being used at West Yard. The Navy have been advised on how to apply for replacements from the City's Solid Waste Department. NCC has assisted with collecting wood and identifying redundant fencing materials which can be repurposed to make secure bin housing at West Yard.

Tokai Picnic Site, Tokai – The skip at the picnic site remains problematic. It has a split plastic lid which the baboons are able to lift and access the waste. SANParks is still in the process of arranging a more suitable skip. The bins in the picnic area were all well secured (**Fig. 7**).



Figure 7. The skip at Tokai picnic site which is not baboon-proof.

STAKEHOLDER LIASION

Ongoing reporting to the City's Solid Waste and Cleansing Departments to highlight waste issues on the peninsula. This is facilitated by the City's Biodiversity Management Branch and all incidents which significantly increase baboons' opportunities to access waste derived food rewards are reported. This includes but is not limited to late waste collection, problematic areas, dumping and solid waste by-law enforcement issues.

A meeting was held with representatives from the independent baboon lobby group Baboons of the South to formally introduce the new area manager for the Smitswinkel Bay and Waterfall Troops. The discussion focused on current troop dynamics, management and community challenges, and achievements. Opportunities for collaboration were also identified.

Ongoing communication with the Groot Constantia, Klein Constantia and Buitenverwachting wine farms to support cohesive management of local baboon troop movements.

Regular assessments are undertaken of problematic electrical infrastructure to minimise the electrocution risk for baboons. Poles and transformers that pose a risk are highlighted to the City's Electricity Department via the Biodiversity Management Branch for mitigation measures to be put into place (e.g. greasing, see **Fig. 8**).

Continued partnership with the Cape of Good Hope SPCA on all baboon welfare matters including injury, welfare concerns and violations of the Animals Protection Act by members of the public. This relationship is complimented by ongoing dialogue and collaboration with the Wildlife Forensic Academy who assist with providing investigative services, including forensic postmortems, when the cause of death is unknown or suspected to be linked to criminal activity.



Figure 8. An electricity pole on Plateau Road treated with red grease, thus reducing the baboons' ability to reach the live wires.

Continued discussions with the SA Navy highlighting baboon point sources attractants on SA Navy property and how baboon access to these attractants can be mitigated.

EDUCATION INITIATIVES

Continued distribution of educational material – Electronic educational pamphlets are distributed to residents and businesses on an ongoing basis.

Distribution of printed educational material – Pamphlets detailing legislation surrounding baboons and their welfare were distributed in various key areas where illegal activity is suspected. It is hoped that this will educate and encourage neighbours to report any legal contraventions that they may witness.

Opportunistic engagement with residents in Kommetjie about the presence of a young male baboon in the area and the reasons why he may have begun to disperse or be taking a temporary hiatus from his natal troop. Tips were also shared on how to minimise the presence of attractants and thus reduce the risk of human-baboon conflict (**Fig. 9**).



Figure 9. SK14 in Kommetjie.

4.3 HOTLINE REPORTS

We received 449 hotline calls during the month of April. The majority of the hotline calls received were regarding baboon(s) in the urban area (410), followed by general enquires (30) and reports of injured baboons (9) (**Fig. 10**). The highest number of calls reporting the presence of baboons in the urban area came from Kommetjie in response to visits from the young adult male SK14 from the Slangkop Troop. The second and third highest number of calls came from Murdock Valley in response to visits from the SWB Troop or individuals and Simon’s Town in response to visits from the SWB splinter troop or the Waterfall Troop. (**Fig. 11**). Factors which impacted the management of these troops and individuals can be found in their above respective summaries.

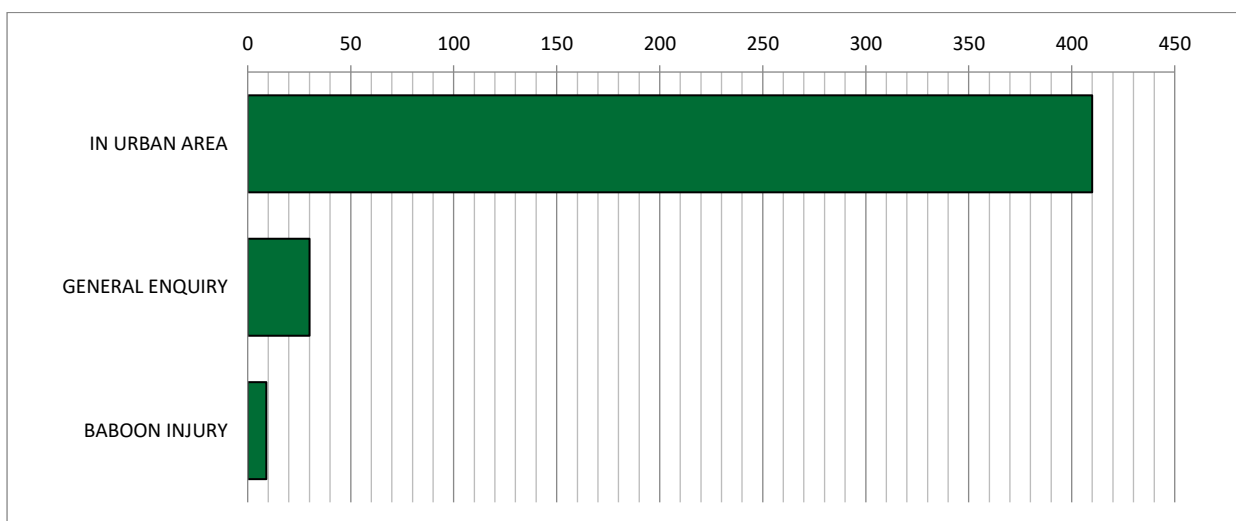


Figure 10. The number of hotline calls by type in April 2023.

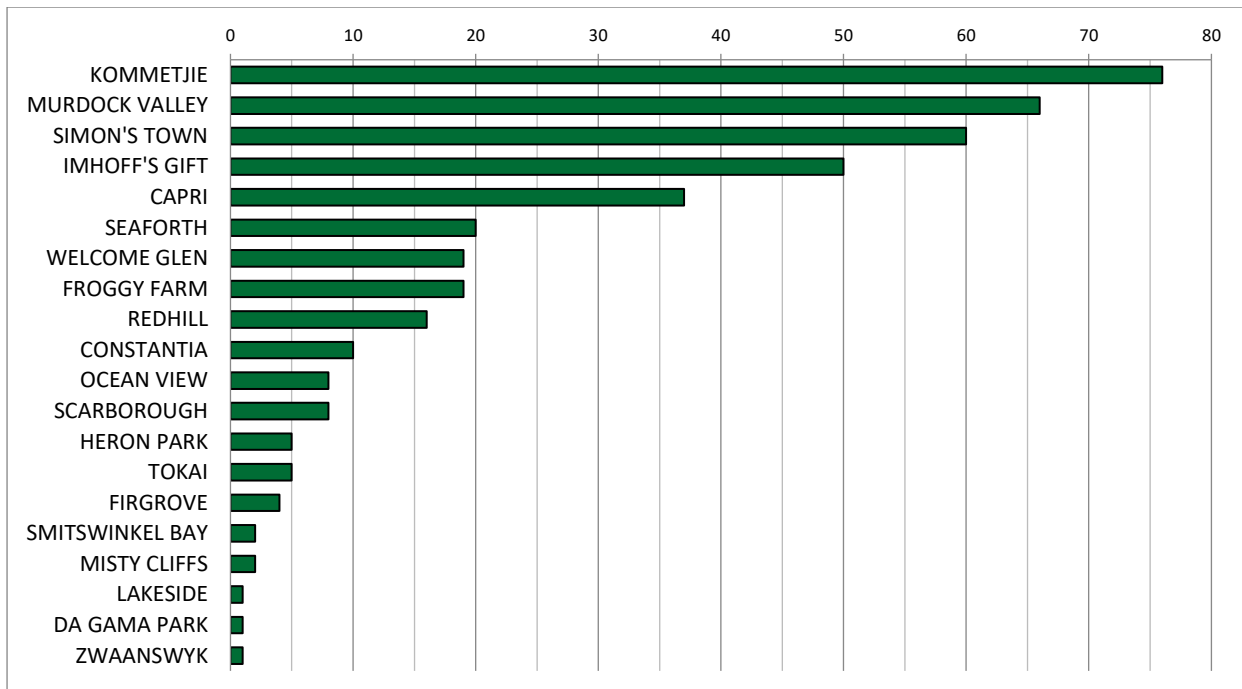


Figure 11. The number of hotline calls reporting baboon presence by suburb in April 2023.

4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTIONS

4.4.1 Troop Specific Recommendations & Actions

| TROOP | RECOMMENDATION | ACTION UNDERTAKEN THIS MONTH | ACTION STILL REQUIRED |
|-------|---|---|---------------------------------|
| DG | There is a 3km above ground electricity line running through a section of the DG Troop's natural ranging area. This line should be diverted underground to protect baboons and other wildlife from further electrocutions. | NCC and members of the CCT Biodiversity Management Branch are engaging with CCT Electricity Department regarding short-term mitigation measures for electricity poles and power lines in baboon ranging areas while long-term measures are put in place. See section 4.2, STAKEHOLDER LIAISON | Ongoing engagement. |
| DG | The alien invasive vegetation surrounding Da Gama Park is extensive, dense, and overgrown. This vegetation should be removed as it obscures the troop's movements and allows them to enter the urban area undetected. It also poses a fire risk to the built-up area. | No known clearing this month. | Continued clearing. |
| GOB | Residents of Scarborough should remain alert to the possibility that baboons may visit the village and maintain baboon-proofing of their properties. | See section 4.2, SITE VISITS | Ongoing community engagement. |
| GOB | Owners of rental properties should alert their guest to the possible presence of baboons and proper conduct required to mitigate against conflicts. | See section 4.2, SITE VISITS | Ongoing community engagement. |
| GOB | Both skips at Kogelfontein should be kept locked to reduce this troop's access to human-derived foods. | See section 4.2, SITE VISITS | Ongoing monitoring & reporting. |

| TROOP | RECOMMENDATION | ACTION UNDERTAKEN THIS MONTH | ACTION STILL REQUIRED |
|-------------------|--|---|--|
| SK | Though baboons do not move through Kommetjie often, residents of Kommetjie should remain alert to the possibility that baboons may visit the village and maintain baboon-proofing of their properties. | See section 4.2, <i>SITE VISITS</i> | Ongoing community engagement. |
| SK | The installation of electric fencing aprons on the roofs of businesses within the Heron Park industrial area and baboon-proof bin storage would reduce the amount of time the troop spends in this area. | None this month. | Ongoing community engagement. |
| SK | Continued environmental education in Ocean View, particularly with children, is recommended in an attempt to reduce the level of human-baboon conflict along the urban edge. | None this month. | Ongoing community engagement. |
| SWB | The Cape Boat and Ski Boat Club should continue to store all bins inside the baboon-proof enclosure. | See section 4.2, <i>SITE VISITS</i> | Ongoing monitoring & reporting. |
| SWB/WF | The baboon-proofing of waste areas, windows and doors in facilities of SA Navy property would reduce access to human-derived foods and assist baboon management. Alternatively, an initiative to keep doors and windows closed when baboons are in the area would reduce access. | See section 4.2, <i>SITE VISITS</i> | Ongoing monitoring, reporting & engagement. |
| TK/ZW | Forest Glade Centre should improve their bin cage to improve waste management & reduce attractants to baboons. | None this month. | Alterations by owner. |
| CT1/MT1/MT2/TK/ZW | The Constantia wine farms and the UBP should collaborate on management strategies as per the CapeNature permit agreement. | See section 4.2, <i>STAKEHOLDER LIASION</i> | Ongoing engagement. |
| MT1/MT2/TK/ZW | Cape Academy should consider removing fruiting trees from their property to reduce attractants on their property. | None this month. | Additional removal of fruit trees where necessary. |

4.4.2. Recommendations & Actions for all Baboon Impacted Areas

| RECOMMENDATION | ACTION UNDERTAKEN THIS MONTH | ACTION STILL REQUIRED |
|--|---|---|
| Residents are advised to keep windows and doors closed when baboons are in the vicinity and to baboon-proof their properties as much as possible. | See section 4.2, SITE VISITS | Ongoing community engagement. |
| Vegetable gardens should be baboon-proofed to prevent access. | See section 4.2, SITE VISITS | Ongoing community engagement. |
| Planting of fruiting trees should be discouraged and/or managed by timeously removing fruit to reduce the attractiveness of the area for baboons. | See section 4.2, SITE VISITS | Ongoing community engagement. |
| Residents should be aware that the use of pellet guns in urban areas is illegal and be informed about the suffering that is inflicted on baboons who are shot. The public is encouraged to report pellet gun use to SAPS, CapeNature & the Cape of Good Hope SPCA. | See section 4.2, SITE VISITS | Ongoing community engagement. |
| Due to increased snare activity on the Cape Peninsula, it is important for members of the public to report incidents to the Baboon Hotline. | A request that the public alert the Baboon Hotline to the presence of snares is made in each monthly report. | Ongoing alerts in monthly reports & community engagement. |
| The erection of strategically placed baboon-proof fences would prevent baboons from entering urban areas while allowing for the maximum use of their available ranges. | See section 4.2, SITE VISITS | Ongoing community engagement. |
| The availability of baboon-proof rubbish and recycle bins in baboon-impacted suburbs would minimize baboon access to human-derived foods. | Communication is ongoing with the CCT Solid Waste Department & Biodiversity Management Branch. | Ongoing communications. |
| Regular waste management inspections by the City of Cape Town's Solid Waste Department By-law Division would help address waste related issues. | NCC closely monitors waste collection in baboon affected suburbs. If waste collection is delayed in any suburb, NCC informs CCT's Biodiversity Management Branch who in turn alerts the CCT Solid Waste Department. | Ongoing monitoring & reporting. |