



CITY OF CAPE TOWN
ISIXEKO SASEKAPA
STAD KAAPSTAD



Urban Baboon Programme

February 2023 Monthly Report



PREPARED FOR:
City of Cape Town

DATED:
28 February 2023

PREPARED BY:
Joselyn Mormile, Project Manager
NCC Environmental Services (Pty) Ltd
E • joselynm@ncc-group.co.za

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	3
2	SOUTHERN SUBPOPULATION	3
2.1	DA GAMA TROOP (DG).....	3
2.2	GROOT OLIFANTSBOS TROOP (GOB)	3
2.3	SLANGKOP TROOP (SK)	4
2.4	SMITSWINKEL BAY TROOP (SWB)	4
2.5	WATERFALL TROOP (WF)	5
3	NORTHERN SUBPOPULATION	5
3.1	CONSTANTIA ONE TROOP (CT1)	5
3.2	MOUNTAIN ONE TROOP (MT1)	6
3.3	MOUNTAIN TWO TROOP (MT2)	6
3.4	TOKAI TROOP (TK)	6
3.5	ZWAANSWYK TROOP (ZW)	6
4	MONTHLY GENERAL PROGRAMME SUMMARY	7
4.1	OVERALL TIME OUT OF TOWN.....	7
4.2	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	8
4.3	HOTLINE REPORTS.....	15
4.4	RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTIONS.....	17
4.4.1.	<i>Troop Specific Recommendations & Actions.....</i>	<i>17</i>
4.4.2.	<i>Recommendations & Actions for all Baboon Impacted Areas</i>	<i>19</i>

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 Da Gama Troop spent 98.3% of the time out of the urban area.
- Individual baboons spent 94.0% 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 ten occasions in February and roosted in Welcome Glen on two occasions.
- Unidentified individual baboons accessed two occupied houses and several bins in Da Gama Park.
- Increased number of fruiting trees in Welcome Glen and Da Gama Park are attracting baboons to the urban area. On one occasion, DG21, a subadult male and another unidentified juvenile went into Welcome Glen and foraged on fruit trees.
- The troop roosted most of the month at 2nd Avenue, followed by Welcome Glen on two occasions and at mountain sleep sites on two occasions.

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.

¹ Two adult females, a juvenile male and an infant that arrived in Scarborough a few months back have remained in the Scarborough area. These individuals moved independently from the troop without field rangers assigned to them and thus individual time in town for this month is unknown.

- No urban incursions into Scarborough occurred this month by the GOB Troop¹.
- Continued attempts are planned to catch the individuals in Scarborough and release them back into the reserve area.

2.3 SLANGKOP TROOP (SK)

TIME OUT OF TOWN

- The SK Troop spent 77.9% of the time out of the urban area.
- Individual baboons spent 93.5% of the time out of the urban area.

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- While spending time in Kommetjie, the troop roosted mostly on buildings in the village, including the burnt down shop and Stepping Stones. This posed significant challenges to moving the troop out of the urban space.
- On 24 February, with the assistance of additional contingency staff, the team managed to encourage the troop out of the Kommetjie area and back to the Rooikrans mountainside. Since the troop has been back in this area, the team has managed to reduce the amount of time they spend in the urban area.
- The three natal males in the troop have continued to compete for alpha status, resulting in poor troop cohesion. This presents challenges to preventing their movement into the urban space and encouraging them out of urban areas if they enter.

2.4 SMITSWINKEL BAY TROOP (SWB)

TIME OUT OF TOWN

- The SWB Troop spent 80.1% of the time out of the urban area.
- Individual baboons spent 59.4% of the time out of the urban area.

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- On 21 February, WF8 was humanely euthanised by the CoGH SPCA due to significant injuries sustained in a baboon-on-baboon altercation. In the days following his absence, the splinter group who routinely spend time in the Seaforth and Boulders beach areas were more easily encouraged south. However, natal male SWB13 quickly took over attempting to lead this group and has maintained a preference for these northern urban areas. Short-term contingency staff were allocated to this group to further assist with encouraging them out of the urban area.
- In the main SWB Troop, an adult male baboon (UKP2) has become more assertive towards adult male SWB6, causing some unrest amongst the troop.

- Waste management in the residential areas of Simon's Town such as Murdock Valley, Froggy Farm and the Rocklands area have been carefully monitored and majority of the residential properties have baboon-proofed their bins. Simon's Town School however has been a substantial attractant to the splinter group, particularly when their bins have been left unlocked.

2.5 WATERFALL TROOP (WF)

TIME OUT OF TOWN

- The WF Troop spent 80.8% of the time out of the urban area.²
- Individual baboons spent 90.2% of the time out of the urban area.²

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- There was splitting within the troop again this month with some individuals following UKP1 and the others WF9. On a few occasions, these two groups roosted apart from one another.
- On 23 February, as a result of a human-related assault which left him blind, WF9 was humanely euthanised by the CoGH SPCA. Following his absence, the group of individuals that previously moved with him were absorbed by the rest of the troop.

3 NORTHERN SUBPOPULATION

3.1 CONSTANTIA ONE TROOP (CT1)

TIME OUT OF TOWN

- The CT1 Troop spent 82.1% of time out of the urban area.
- Individuals spent 99.2% of time out of the urban area.

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- The troop time in town decreased compared to the previous month due to improved cooperation with the neighbouring wine farms.
- The troop mostly roosted around the wine farms but also in the urban space on a few occasions.

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 59.6% of time out of the urban area for the troop and 87.7% for individuals.

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.

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 100% of time out of the urban area.
- Individuals spent 99.8% of time out of the urban area.

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- The troop roosted above The Range for majority of the month and continues to enter Constantia Uitsig on a regular basis.
- Individuals crossed Orpen Road on one occasion and visited Cape Academy.
- There are no field rangers allocated exclusively to this troop, however the tracking collar has proved valuable 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 99.1% of time out of the urban area.
- Individuals spent 95.2% of time out of the urban area.

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- The troop crossed Orpen Road on two occasions and entered the lower Tokai plantation.

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

- Individuals gained access to food at the Tokai picnic site on one occasion.

4 MONTHLY GENERAL PROGRAMME SUMMARY

4.1 OVERALL TIME OUT OF TOWN

The troops overall spent 91.8% of time out of the urban area this month (**Fig. 1**). The SK, WF, SWB and CT1 troops did not reach 90% this month. Overall individual time out of town was 92.4%, 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 summary above.

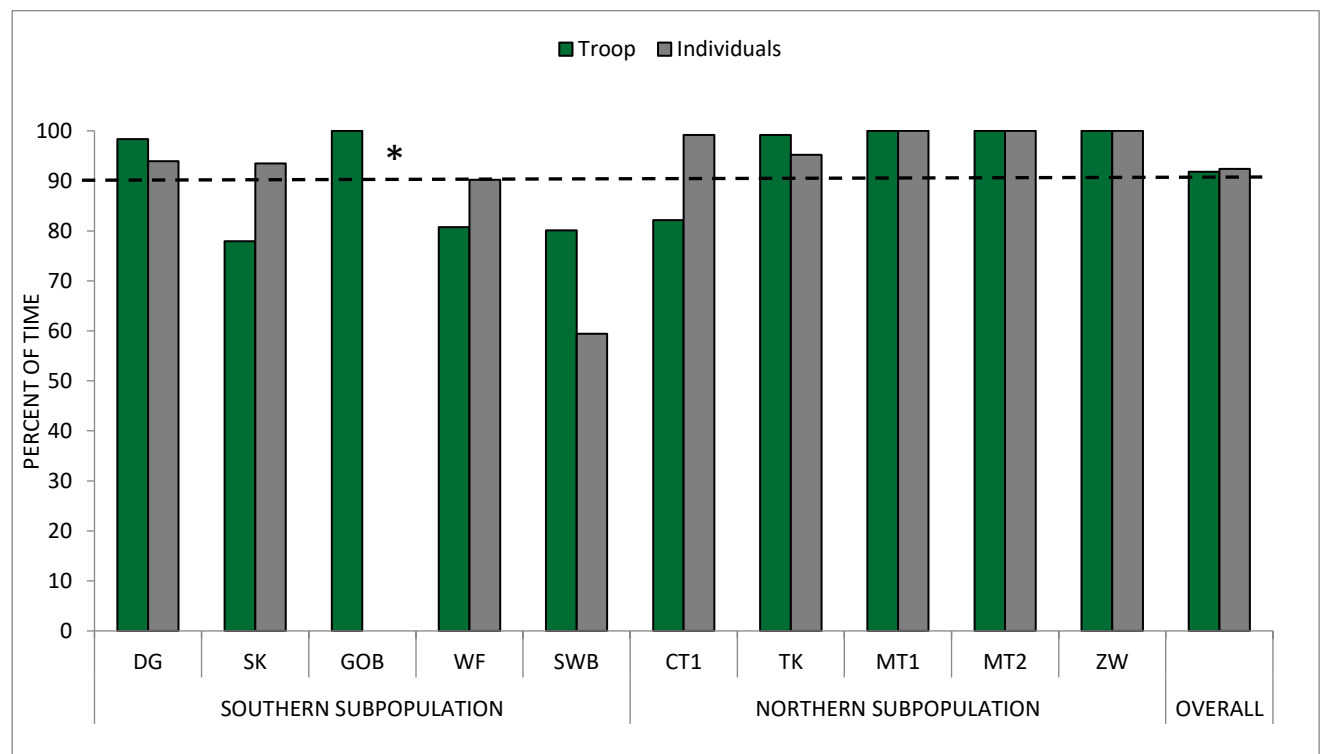


Figure 1. Percent of time out of town calculated for each troop and troop individuals for the month of February 2023. The full name of each troop can be found in the prior section. The percent of time out of town is calculated using the same method as the previous service provider, based on an average 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 Da Gama Park, Froggy Farm, Kommetjie, Miller's Point, Murdock Valley, Redhill, Seaforth, Scarborough, Simon's Town and Welcome Glen:

- Engaged with residents who had experienced baboon-related damage to their properties and had baboons entering their houses. Baboon-proofing advice was provided, including ways in which existing or inadequate baboon-proofing could be improved to prevent future issues (**Fig. 2**).
- Addressed common misconceptions surrounding the Urban Baboon Programme to increase resident's understanding of the challenges and constraints which the programme works under. Residents were encouraged to comment on the Draft Baboon Strategic Management Plan so that the Joint Task Team of SANParks, Cape Nature and The City of Cape Town can collectively address their concerns and assist with sustainable long-term solutions for their communities.
- Liaised with residents about current troop dynamics, how these dynamics can influence the frequency of urban incursions and how management techniques are adapted to mitigate this as far as possible. Ways in which the community can assist by managing their own properties were also discussed.
- Visited individual residents to discuss the Standard Operating Procedure for paintball marker use and how this governs baboon management practices.
- Advised residents on the appropriate reactive behaviour when faced with a baboon on their property. Best practice and safety measures were also discussed in terms of how residents can encourage baboons to leave their properties.
- Encouraged residents who had witnessed illegal behaviour such as feeding or harming the baboons, to write affidavits to facilitate prosecutions through the appropriate authorities.
- Discussed baboon behavior with residents to assist them in identifying fearful or antagonistic baboon body language, with a view to increasing safety for baboons and residents alike.
- Engaged with residents about an incident where an infant baboon was killed by a vehicle. Unfortunately, sufficient evidence was not available to unequivocally identify the driver, determine speed, or ascertain if there was intent to deliberately harm the baboon. Should further evidence come to light, it should be submitted to CapeNature.



Figure 2. An outbuilding roof in Da Gama Park which was inadvertently damaged by baboons while playing/fighting (left) and burglar bars which were broken by baboons in Simon's Town (right).

Alleged paintball marker use by members of the public – Followed up on reports of paintball marker use against baboons. Residents were advised of the illegality and consequences of such actions. The applicable sections of the Nature Conservation Ordinance of 1974 and Animal Protection Act were highlighted to the alleged offenders. Photo and video evidence and/or witness affidavits were filed with CapeNature where available.

Baboon and dog altercations – Met with a resident whose dog had been chased into bushes by baboons but thankfully neither baboons nor the dog were harmed. Safety tips were shared to help to prevent the likelihood of a similar incident occurring in future.

Cape Research Centre, Tokai – Visit to check that waste was being stored correctly. A skip with a bent lid is still being used on the site which enables baboons to access the waste. This has been highlighted to the relevant SANParks section ranger for their action (**Fig. 3**).



Figure 3. Skip with bent lid at Cape Research Centre which allows small baboons access to waste.

Glencairn Stables, Glencairn – Visit to speak with the stable manager to discuss how the baboons can be best managed around the horses and riders, and to ensure that all parties remain safe. Tactics for moving the baboons on quickly and with as little disruption as possible were agreed upon.

Happy Valley Home – Baboon-proofing on the property is typically adequate, however several unsecured bins were recently left out at the property. Staff on site were asked to ensure that the bins are stored more securely (**Fig. 4**).



Figure 4. Unsecured bins at Happy Valley Home

Kogelfontein, Red Hill – Waste compliance visits are frequently undertaken to prevent the skips from serving as an attractant for the GOB troop. The skip lids were recently left open. Users of the skip were reminded that the lids must always remain closed.

Miller's Point: picnic site and slipway – Visit to assess waste compliance. The area was clean and tidy.

Miller's Point: Cape Boat & Ski-Boat Club – Visit to check on waste management. No significant waste attractants were noted.

The Neighborhood Farm, Kommetjie – Visit to discuss recent baboon incursions and how farm and NCC staff can collaborate to reduce baboon related property damage and crop losses.

SA Navy Property, East Yard, Seaforth – Site visit to check for baboon attractants. Waste management is typically adequate at this property. The Navy has already removed several fruiting trees and have identified others that will be removed shortly (**Fig. 5**).



Figure 5. Waterberry tree which serves as a baboon attractant at East Yard.
The SA Navy has committed to removing this tree as soon as possible.

SA Navy Property, Job Maseko Wardroom, Seaforth – The new baboon resistant bins are still being used compliantly at the property. This continues to reduce baboon access to waste. Staff members have noted that the baboons have managed to break into the bins on a few occasions, however the situation has improved. An outside room is in the process of being cleared so that it can be used to store bins which are full.

SA Navy Property, Pool, Seaforth – Site visit to check on waste management and speak to the staff about increased baboon activity in the area. All waste at the property was well secured.

SA Navy Property, SAS Silvermine, Westlake – Visit to assess baboon attractants following recent visits by a young adult male baboon to the property (**Fig. 6**). Appropriate baboon-proofing measures have been communicated to the staff on site.



Figure 6. A male baboon accessing unsecured waste at SAS Silvermine.

SA Navy Property, SAS Simonsberg, Seaforth – The lack of baboon-proof bins at the property remains a significant challenge for the Urban Baboon Programme. NCC and the City’s Biodiversity Management Branch are liaising with Solid Waste to ensure that baboon-proof bins are delivered as a matter of priority. Fruit trees have also been identified for removal by the Navy (**Fig. 7**).



Figure 7. Loquat tree, which serves as a baboon attractant on SAS Simonsberg property.

SA Navy Property, Waterfall Barracks, Simons Town – Visit to check for potential waste management issues at the property. The waste storage rooms were all secure. Issues were however noted with waste bins that were being used in front of some of the blocks. Waste has also accumulated in several of the disused buildings. This has been brought to the Navy’s attention for their action.

Tokai picnic site, Tokai – During the previous reporting period it was requested that the on-site skip be replaced with one with a metal lid. The lightweight plastic lid is not secure and can be accessed by baboons. It has not been replaced yet. The relevant SANParks official has been reminded that the skip should be swapped as soon as possible (**Fig. 8**).



Figure 8. Skip at Tokai picnic which still requires replacement.

STAKEHOLDER LIAISON

- A meeting was convened with members of the Kommetjie community regarding continued baboon activity in the village. Ways in which the community can assist with reducing negative human-baboon interactions were identified and residents were reminded to submit suggestions and comments on the Cape Peninsula Baboon Strategic Management Plan (BSMP) to be considered for inclusion.
- NCC met with academics from the 'Unruly Natures Project' to assist with highlighting conflict hotspots in baboon ranging areas. The project focuses on residents' experiences of living in baboon-affected areas, with the goal of contributing to local efforts to minimise negative human-baboon interactions. Should you wish to learn more about the project please visit <https://unrulynature.com/>
- Engagement with the wine farms in the CT1 Troop's ranging area to encourage collaborative management and ensure that the regulations set out in the Standard Operating Procedure for paintball marker use are adhered to.
- Ongoing engagement with CCT Solid Waste Department and Cleansing Department to reduce baboon access to waste-based attractants and to highlight problem areas for inspection by Solid Waste Law Enforcement (**Fig. 9**).



Figure 9. An area in Scarborough where bins are often filled over capacity. This has been highlighted for a compliance visit from law enforcement.

- A meeting was held between CapeNature Law Enforcement officials and NCC to discuss recent incidents of members of the public using weapons against the baboons and to provide evidence for the potential prosecution of perpetrators under the Cape Nature Ordinance No. 19 of 1974.
- Engagement with SANParks regarding a case of domestic dogs being off leash and out of control on SANParks land, resulting in them chasing and almost catching baboons above Scarborough.

- Continued liaison with the Cape of Good Hope SPCA relating to baboon welfare concerns, injuries and contraventions of the Animal Protection Act by members of the public.
- Liaison with CapeNature to address contraventions of the CapeNature Ordinance No 19 of 1974.
- Discussions with the City's traffic department facilitated by the Biodiversity Management Branch to explore traffic calming measures on Orpen Road and reduce potential wildlife mortalities.
- **Thank you:** NCC would like to extend a special thank you to Sanette Smit, a Welcome Glen resident and the owner of Torga Optical in Plumstead for her generous donation of UV protective polarised sunglasses for the entire Da Gama Troop field team. She took great care to ensure that everyone received a pair that suited them both in terms of comfort and their personal style (**Fig. 10**).



Figure 10. Sanette with some of NCC's grateful staff members.

EDUCATION INITIATIVES:

Continued distribution of educational material: Educational material was provided to residents and businesses to assist with reducing potential negative interactions.

Simon's Town School: NCC met with the principal and grounds staff to walk around the property and discuss areas which were proving challenging in terms of baboon management. The school was provided with a waste management plan which they have started to implement, thus reducing baboon access to waste-based attractants. Members of the local community also kindly assisted the school both financially and in terms of manpower to baboon-proof most of the bins on the school grounds. NCC has been opportunistically engaging with the children about personal safety around baboons and is awaiting dates from the school to commence a more formal education programme (**Fig. 11**).



Figure 11. Bin attached to the wall at Simon’s Town School to reduce the likelihood of baboons tipping over the bin to access waste. Community volunteers also later added baboon-proof lid clips to further prevent access.

4.3 HOTLINE REPORTS

We received 888 hotline calls during the month of February. The majority of the hotline calls received were regarding baboon(s) in the urban area (810), followed by general enquires (61) and reports of injured baboons (17) (**Fig. 12**). The highest number of calls reporting the presence of baboons in the urban area came from Kommetjie in response to the presence of the SK Troop. The second highest number of calls came from Simon’s Town (and immediate surrounds of Seaforth and Murdock Valley) in response to the WF, SWB and SWB split troops (**Fig. 13**). Factors which impacted the management of these troops and individuals can be found in their above respective summary.

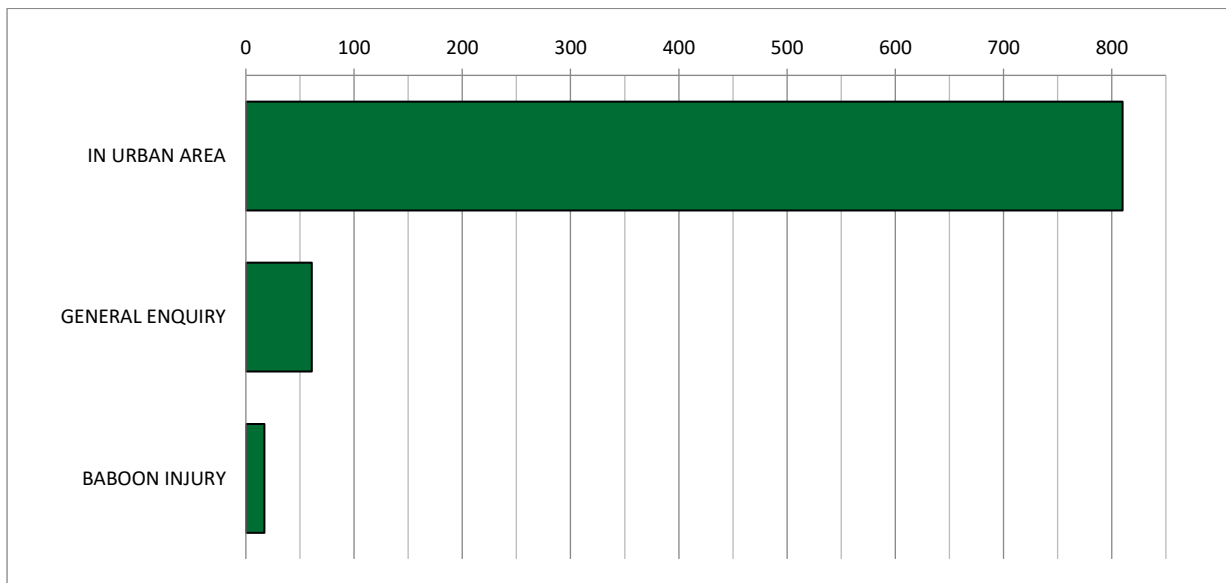


Figure 12. The number of hotline calls by type in February 2023.

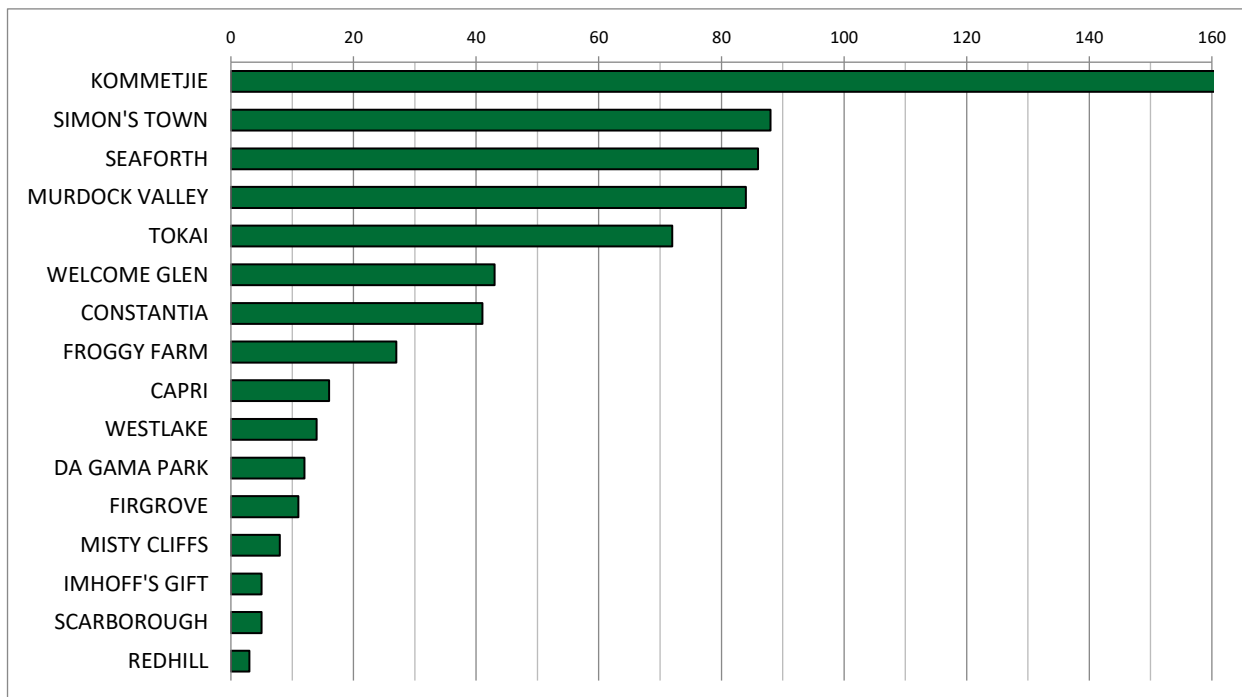


Figure 13. The number of hotline calls reporting baboon presence by suburb in February 2023.

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.	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 guests 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 LIAISON</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.	None this month.	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.