



CITY OF CAPE TOWN
ISIXEKO SASEKAPA
STAD KAAPSTAD



Urban Baboon Programme

February 2024 Monthly Report



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City of Cape Town

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PREPARED BY:

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

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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). This contract was extended via a section 116 process until 31 December 2024. NCC are contracted to prevent designated 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 100% of the time out of the urban area.
- Individual baboons spent 97% of the time out of the urban area.

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- The troop spent the entire month foraging and roosting in the recently burnt mountainous area of Baskloof and Windford Farm, where the recent fires resulted in plentiful opportunity for foraging.
- DG19 and two females split off from the troop on 7 February and began visiting Scarborough and Da Gama Park on their own.
- DG20, a young adult male natal to the troop who has been displaying dispersing behaviour, spent the month on his own in Welcome Glen, Glencairn and Glencairn Heights.
- DG21 accessed an occupied house at Redhill informal settlement, which led to an altercation with a dog resulting in superficial injuries to both DG21 and the dog.
- An adult female and juvenile were killed by electrocution on an uninsulated medium voltage pole on Berg Farm.

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 100% of the time out of the urban area.

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- The troop moved in and out of the CoGH section of the TMNP and spent most of their time in the southern and western sections of their ranging area. They continue to visit Berg Farm at the bottom of Redhill but less so since the DG Troop has been spending time in this area.

- The battery for the GPS tracking collar on an individual of this troop is now depleted. As this troop spends the majority of their time within the CoGH of TMNP where the UBP does not operate, tracking capability is not possible and affects the response time of the field team to respond proactively to the troop's movement towards Scarborough.

2.3 SLANGKOP TROOP (SK)

TIME OUT OF TOWN

- The SK Troop spent 87.5% of the time out of the urban area.
- Individual baboons spent 91.7% of the time out of the urban area.

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- The troop spent more time in the natural space this month due to their utilisation of natural over urban roosting sites, although they did roost for a few nights on rooftops in Heron Park.
- Natal adult males SK14 and SK15 left the vicinity of the SK Troop and moved over to Kommetjie where they remained for the rest of the month.

2.4 SMITSWINKEL BAY TROOP (SWB)

TIME OUT OF TOWN

- The SWB Troop spent 94.8% of the time out of the urban area.
- Individual baboons spent 96.2% of the time out of the urban area.

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- The troop spent more time in the urban area this month. This was due to troop splitting between SWB6 and UKP2 and easy food attractants in the urban area.
- The biggest human-derived attractant for the troop this month was an open compost heap on a property on Fern Road in Murdock Valley South. Individuals from the troop have learned that fresh fruit and vegetable scraps are thrown in the compost daily. Removal of this attractant has been discussed with and promised by the property owner.
- UKP2 continued to behave assertively and challenge the field team. During the month, he also chased a member of the public, and pursued and jumped onto a small child who was carrying food, tearing her clothing. He continued to open doors and enter buildings at Rocklands Centre.
- SWB6 continued to push to enter Murdock Valley again this month. He managed to achieve this on a few occasions, leading the troop into the urban space with him.
- The troop roosted predominantly at the Rocklands Farm cliffs and Miller's Point cliffs.

2.5 WATERFALL TROOP (WF)

TIME OUT OF TOWN

- The WF Troop spent 86.6% of the time out of the urban area.¹
- Individual baboons spent 97% of the time out of the urban area.¹

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- The troop roosted predominantly on the roofs of buildings along the Main Road this month.
- The arrival of TK63 a few months ago has altered the dynamics of the troop with WF10 (alpha male), WF11 and TK63 moving separately with their small groups during the day. This has presented challenges to managing the situation in this area.
- TK63, along with a few individuals, continually to return to the Palace Hill area where he was previously fed by residents when he was ill in December 2023.
- WF11 has been observed breaking numerous windows and pulling open doors in the Mount Pleasant area to gain access to food inside houses.
- Waterfall Barracks and West Dockyard continues to have poor waste management despite being repeatedly requested to keep waste locked in bin rooms. Waste in these areas are big attractants, which incentivizes the troop to move down into town in the evening.

3 NORTHERN SUBPOPULATION

3.1 CONSTANTIA ONE TROOP (CT1)

TIME OUT OF TOWN

- The CT1 Troop spent 93.4% of time out of the urban area.
- Individuals spent 100% of time out of the urban area.

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- The troop spent most of the month ranging and roosting on the wine farms and Price Drive.

3.2 MOUNTAIN ONE TROOP (MT1)

TIME OUT OF TOWN

¹ 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 76.6% of time out of the urban area for the troop and 96.2% for individuals.

- 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 spent the majority of their 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 100% of time out of the urban area.

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- The troop roosted mostly above The Range.
- The troop continues to regularly enter Constantia Uitsig.

3.4 TOKAI TROOP (TK)

TIME OUT OF TOWN

- The TK Troop spent 100% of time out of the urban area.
- Individuals spent 85% of time out of the urban area.

FACTORS THAT IMPACTED MANAGEMENT

- TK64 and TK65, two natal young adult males, have been showing signs of dispersal and have been spending an increasing amount of time in the urban area over the last several weeks.

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 96.2% of time out of the urban area this month (**Fig. 1**). The SK and WF troops did not reach 90% of time this month. Overall individual time out of town was 96.7%. Factors that impacted the differing levels of success for these troops and individuals can be found in their above respective summary.

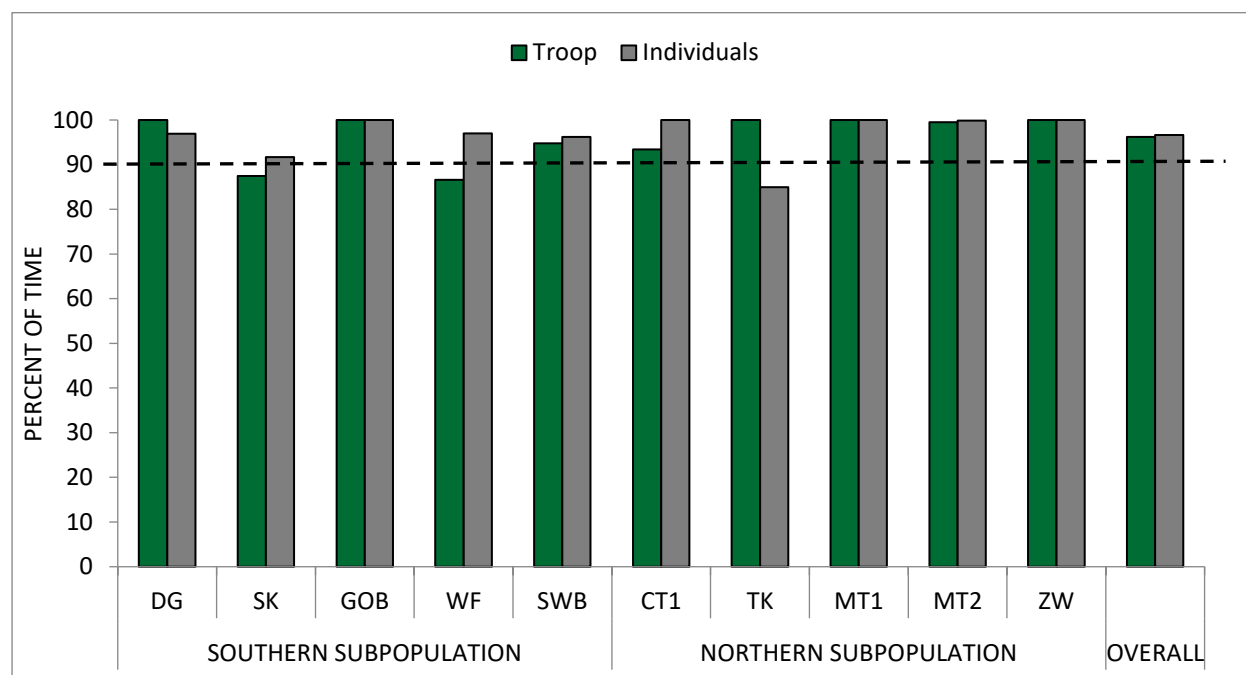


Figure 1. Percent of time out of town calculated for each troop and troop individuals for the month of February 2024. The full name of each troop can be found in the prior section. The percent of time out of town is calculated using the same method as the previous service provider, based on an average of 10.7 daylight hours per day per month.

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, De Oude Weg, Kommetjie, Murdock Valley, Ocean View, Redhill, Scarborough, Simon's Town and Tokai:

- Engaged with residents who had sustained baboon damage to their homes and vehicles and provided advice on how to mitigate future damage, where possible.
- Informed residents of the proper channels to follow when they witness illegal behaviour such as feeding or harming baboons. Witnesses were urged to write affidavits to increase the chances of successful legal action.
- Residents were encouraged to remove or baboon-proof attractants at their properties to reduce baboon visits to their homes. These attractants included grapevines, compost heaps and unsecured waste bins.

- Informed residents with broken bins of how to apply for replacements. Information was also provided on how standard wheelie bins can be adapted to make them baboon-proof.
- Visited residents who were concerned about their safety and that of their families and pets when baboons were in the area. Typical baboon behavioral responses in common scenarios were discussed in an attempt to allay their fears. Residents were provided with practical advice on how to reduce the likelihood of baboons visiting their homes. Tips were also provided on how to behave should a baboon gain access to their home.
- Visited people who had experienced baboon incursions at their residences. Points of entry were identified, and baboon-proofing solutions discussed, whilst remaining cognisant of individual financial concerns.
- Met with residents to discuss the UBP and explain factors which impact its success in order to increase residents' understanding of the constraints which the programme works under. Ways in which residents can assist baboon management, such as managing attractants at their own properties and alerting the hotline when baboons are in the area, were also covered. Residents were reminded that the current Urban Baboon Programme is scheduled to end on 31 December 2024 and were encouraged to engage with the Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team (CPBMJTT) with regards to the way forward. Potential long-term solutions such as baboon-proof electric fencing were discussed.
- Engaged with residents about baboon troop dynamics, how these dynamics influence the frequency of urban incursions and how management techniques are adapted to mitigate this as far as possible. Ways in which UBP staff and community members can work together to reduce human-baboon conflict were also identified.
- Visited individual homes, farms and small holdings in the Redhill area who were experiencing increased levels of conflict owing to the sustained presence of the DG Troop in their area. Residents were provided with practical advice on how to reduce conflict.

Baboon and dog altercations – Three baboon and dog altercations were reported during the month of February. UBP staff liaised with the owners to check on the welfare of the dogs and to ascertain the events that led up to the altercations. Dog owners were also provided with advice to reduce the chance of future conflict. In cases where it was apparent that the owner may struggle financially to provide vet care for their pet, they were connected with the SPCA. The baboons involved in the altercations did not receive any injuries that required veterinary attention. All three altercations occurred on private properties and thus no legal contraventions occurred.

Alleged paintball marker, pellet gun and catapult use by members of the public – Responded to reports of members of the public using paintball markers, pellet guns and catapults against the baboons. All available evidence such as affidavits, photographs and video footage were collated and sent to CapeNature for their further action. When the alleged criminal activity was witnessed by NCC staff, the perpetrators were also informed that their behaviour was a contravention of the Nature Conservation Ordinance No. 19 of 1974 and the Animals Protection Act No 71 of 1962.

Alleged deliberate feeding of baboons by members of the public – Engaged with residents who were concerned about illegal feeding of baboons by motorists. Residents were advised of the evidence that would be required to facilitate further action being taken by the authorities. The legislation applicable to feeding baboons in a built-up area or public place and the applicable penalties in terms of the

Nature Conservation Ordinance of 1974 and the City of Cape Town's Animal Keeping By-law of 2021 were also discussed. Ways in which awareness could be raised about the legislation through signage, local social media and patrols of feeding hotspots were also deliberated.

Black Marlin Restaurant – Courtesy check-in with the staff to speak about recent incidents at the property. Training and permitting requirements were also discussed as the restaurant may wish to use some of their existing staff as in-house baboon rangers in the future.

Cape Point Farm Stall, Plateau Road – Site visit to check for baboon attractants, all waste was stored securely.

Chrysalis Academy, Tokai – Visit to check for waste compliance. All bins were stored securely and there was no evidence of baboons accessing waste anywhere on the property (**Fig. 2**).



Figure 2. Well-secured waste at Chrysalis Academy.

Kogelfontein, Red Hill – Site inspections are made on a regular basis to ensure that the skips are not serving as an attractant to the GOB or DG troops. The skips were found to be in good order and were not overfilled at the time of the visits. It is recommended that all skips that are placed on SANParks land have lids that close fully and are not bent as this can sometimes allow access to smaller baboons (**Fig. 3**). This has been communicated to SANParks.



Figure 3. Skip with bent lid at Kogelfontein.

Kronseil and Blue Fin Flats, Da Gama Park – Waste was stored appropriately in the dedicated waste rooms.

Miller’s Point picnic and slipway, Miller’s Point – Waste compliance was good at the time of the visits.

Rocklands Centre, Murdock Valley South – Site visit to speak with Rocklands Centre staff about recent incidents between campers and baboons and possible further measures that can be put in place to prevent future issues. Rocklands Centre staff make a concerted effort to educate their visitors with regards to appropriate behaviour in a baboon ranging area but visitor compliance can be problematic. Training and permitting requirements were also discussed as the centre may choose to use some of their existing staff as ad hoc baboon rangers in the future.

Rocklands Farm, Murdock Valley South – Courtesy visit to speak to staff about baboon activity around the farm. No significant issues were raised this month.

SA Navy Property – Job Maseko Wardroom, Seaforth – All waste was stored within the dedicated waste room. Broken windows at the property still allow baboons to access individual upper floor rooms. The Navy has been made aware of the need to fix or board up the broken windowpanes.

SA Navy Property – Signal School, Klawer Valley – All waste from the main kitchen was stored securely in the dedicated waste enclosure. It was noted that some general waste bins were placed outside of individual buildings. UBP staff recommended that these bins are placed within the assigned enclosure or are baboon-proofed. UBP staff will follow up to ensure that this is carried out.

SA Navy Property – Waterfall Barracks, Simon’s Town – There are still numerous issues at this property including baboon access to buildings which they use as secure sleep sites. Unsecured individual waste rooms also serve as a reliable source of human-derived foods for the baboons. UBP staff continue to advise Navy staff on steps that can be taken to reduce baboon access to attractants at the property, but little is actioned by the Navy. Poor waste management at the property is also leading to little pollution of the surrounding environment and waterways (**Fig. 4**).



Figure 4. Waste accumulating in the stream at Waterfall Barracks.

Cape Boat & Ski Boat Club, Miller's Point – Regular visits are undertaken to assess waste management at the site. No issues were noted during the reporting period.

The Sweetest Thing, Simon's Town – Courtesy visit to discuss an incident where baboons gained access to the kitchen via a wooden door after the café had closed. Staff were given advice on how to further secure the kitchen door to prevent future incidents and additional bolts were installed by the owner (**Fig. 5**).



Figure 5. Baboons gaining access to the kitchen at The Sweetest Thing (photo supplied by resident).

Tokai Picnic Site, Tokai – Site visit to check for baboon attractants. All waste was stored securely. NCC has recommended that the broken electric fence is repaired to further reduce incidents of human-baboon conflict at the picnic site.

Tokai Road Stables, Tokai – Courtesy visit to speak to the staff about baboon activity at the property. No significant issues were reported (**Fig. 6**).

STAKEHOLDER LIAISON

Ongoing reporting to the City's Solid Waste Department 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.

Collaboration with the City's Electricity Department facilitated by the Biodiversity Management Branch. Additional problematic electrical infrastructure was identified in the area around Berg Farm (**Fig. 7**). This has been brought to the attention of the electricity department who will use medium voltage line covers and pole greasing to mitigate the chance of further baboons being electrocuted on this line. UBP staff also continue to inspect known problematic infrastructure to ensure that existing mitigation remains effective.



Figure 6. Baboon foraging on oat hay at Tokai Road Stables.



Figure 7. Part of the electricity line at Berg Farm which has been highlighted for mitigation.

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

Continued cooperation with the Cape of Good Hope SPCA to ensure that significant baboon illnesses and injuries are logged with the SPCA's wildlife unit in order for them to be monitored and assessed. UBP staff also assist in a supportive role when it is deemed necessary for a baboon to be captured and taken to the wildlife unit for veterinary care.

Engagement with the Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Baboon Operational Team (JBOT) to provide a troop-by-troop situational overview for the Cape Peninsula.

Ongoing engagement with the Navy's environmental team to discuss baboon activity and attractants on Navy properties.

Regular meetings are held with community members and baboon interest groups to facilitate open communication and collaborative problem solving. UBP staff will be working with Simon's Town community members and environmental interest groups to facilitate the building of secure waste storage areas in the West Navy Dockyard. It is hoped that this will significantly reduce the Waterfall troop's motivation to cross Simon's Town Main Road to access human-derived foods in the dockyard.

EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

Ocean View – A meeting was held with Ocean View community representatives to discuss further environmental education opportunities for the youth of Ocean View. Current conflict between baboons and children in the area was also discussed as well as ways in which this could be reduced. UBP staff hope to schedule an environmental education event with the Ocean View Cadets in the month ahead.

Rocklands Centre – UBP staff met with the lead educator at Rocklands to discuss upcoming camps and identify their environmental education needs.

Distribution of printed educational material – Leaflets explaining the dispersal process for male baboons were posted in the Klein Slangkop area where two young adult males from the SK Troop had been spending extended amounts of time. The leaflet also provides advice on what residents can do to reduce the potential for human-baboon conflict (**Fig. 8**).



Figure 8. Dispersing Male Baboon leaflet.

Electronic distribution of educational material – Residents are continually sent and encouraged to share educational infographics on their community groups to raise awareness about baboon behaviour and what can be done to reduce human-baboon conflict in their neighbourhoods. Many requests were received for information pertaining to illegal feeding of baboons during the reporting period.

Ongoing creation of educational material – UBP staff continue to create educational infographics and tools to assist with community education efforts.

Thank you

NCC would like to extend our gratitude to 30 South (www.30south.co) for their generous donation of sunglasses for our Slangkop and GOB baboon ranger teams (**Fig. 9**). The rangers were extremely pleased with their sunglasses which are not only practical but stylish too. Your generosity is much appreciated.



Figure 9. Representatives of 30 South with some of the NCC Slangkop and GOB Rangers.

4.3 HOTLINE REPORTS

We received 661 hotline calls during the month of February. The majority of the hotline calls received were regarding baboon(s) in the urban area (603), followed by general enquires (43) and reports of injured baboons (15) (**Fig. 10**). The highest number of calls reporting the presence of baboons in the urban area came from Kommetjie and Capri in response to the troop and/or individuals from the SK Troop, followed by Murdock Valley in response to the SWB Troop or individuals (**Fig. 11**). Factors which impacted the management of these troops and individuals can be found in their above respective summary.

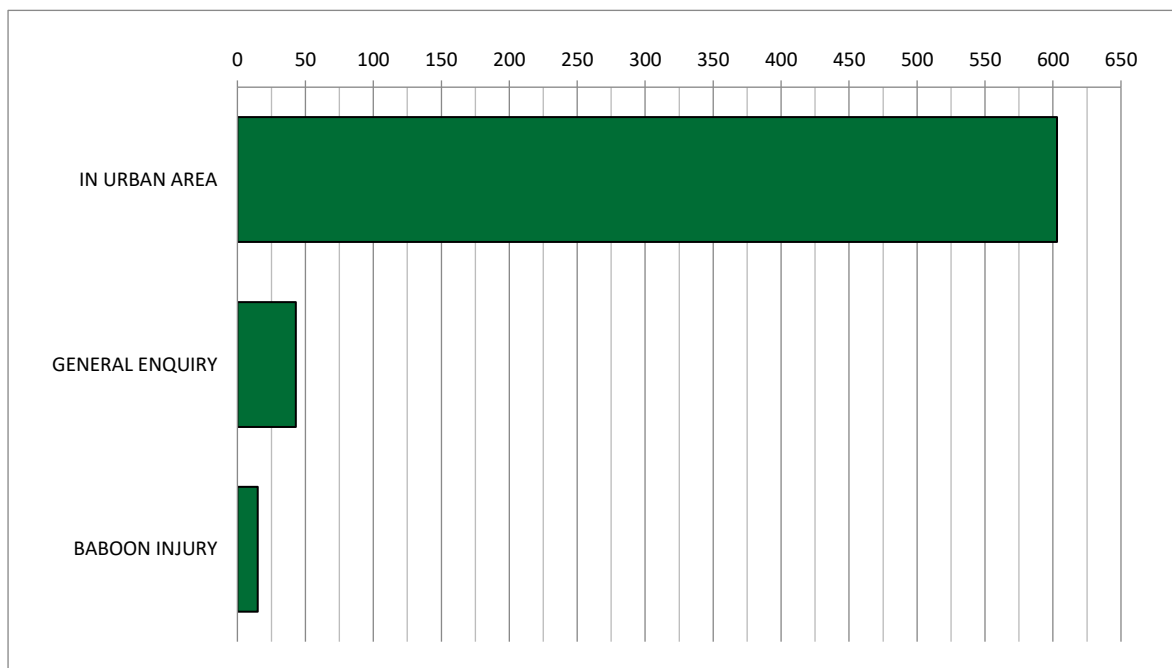


Figure 10. The number of hotline calls by type in February 2024.

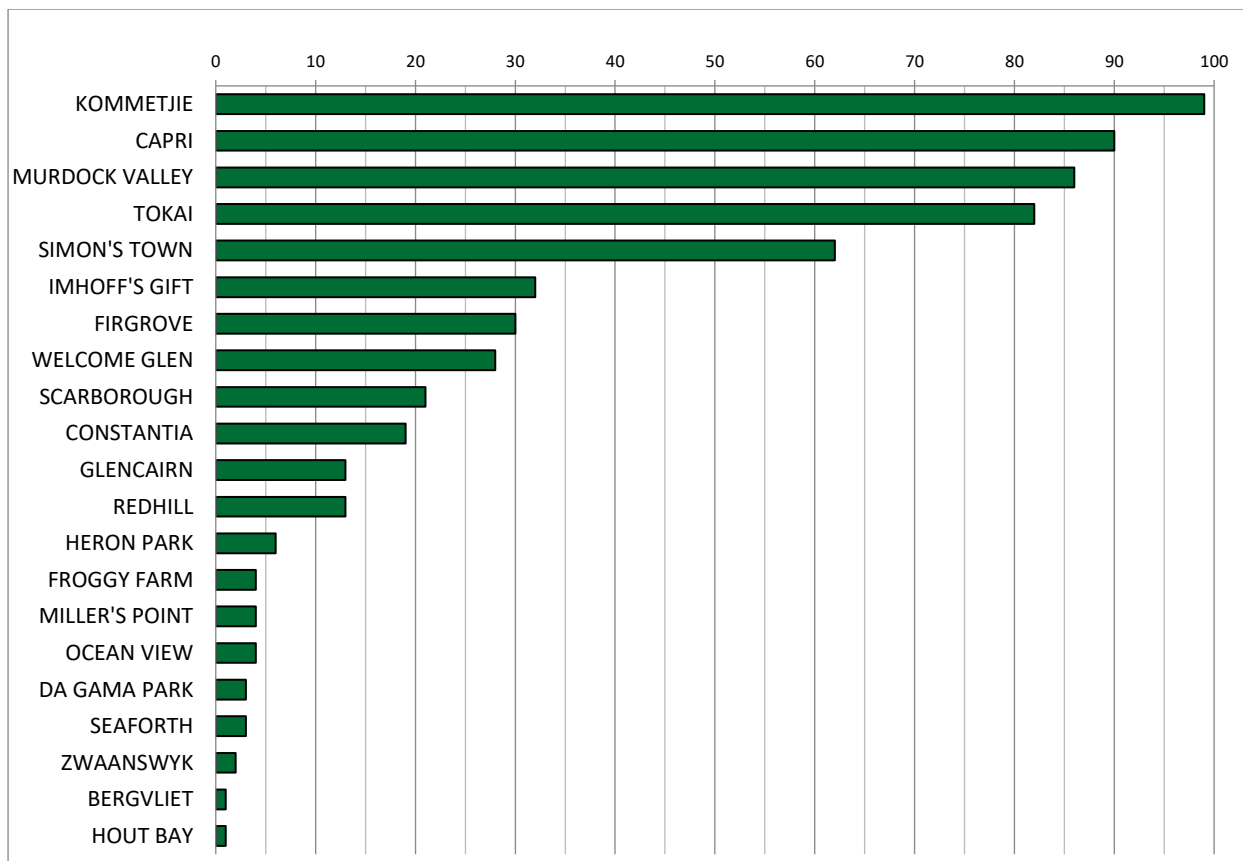


Figure 11. The number of hotline calls reporting baboon presence by suburb in February 2024.

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 being investigated.	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 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 & the Snare Free initiative at 076 127 8485	A request that the public alert the Baboon Hotline & the newly formed Snare Free initiative 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.