

Human Wildlife Solutions

Overstrand Monthly Report

April 2020

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1 INTRODUCTION

This monthly report covers the period from 1 to 30 April 2020. Management of the Voëlklip Troop in Hermanus and the Pringle Bay Troop are discussed. During this month the use of Virtual Fence continued as the primary method of managing the Voëlklip Troop, but paintball markers still continued to be used for backup. Management of the Pringle Bay Troop continued through the use of paintball markers only.

The Vogelgat Troop showed an increased presence in the urban environment during this month, with an increase in the number of reports to the hotline during April. They continue to raid in the eastern avenues of Hermanus, with the majority of reports to the hotline highlighting individuals in town, rather than the entire troop. HWS is currently not mandated to manage this troop, but when resources allow (when the Voëlklip Troop is not in, or near the edge, of town), the baboon rangers assist in moving them back to their natural environment. By providing this additional assistance to this troop, HWS is attempting to prevent individuals learning these bad raiding behaviours from each other.

The percentage time out of town for the Pringle Bay Troop decreased from 94.9% in March to 90.8% this month. Once again, the troop predominantly slept at the Professor Sleep Site which is less than 100m from the edge of town. The troop utilized this site on 26 nights (87%) during April. This sleep site, in particular, provides the baboons with very easy access to the urban environment, resulting in a lower percentage of time out of town, with the baboons often moving during times when the rangers are not on duty (early mornings and late evenings). As with last month, the Hangklip Troop moved north into the Pringle Bay Troop's home range for approximately eight days. This provided additional motivation for the Pringle Bay Troop to move into town.

2 VOËLKLIP TROOP

IN TOWN STATISTICS

- During April, the troop spent 98% of its time out of town, a slight increase from 97.5% in March.
- Time out of town for individuals increased from 90.6% in March to 91.2% in April.
- The troop predominantly slept at Green Kloof (nine nights), Big Titanic (six nights), Small Titanic (four nights), 10th Avenue Kloof and Three Dams (three nights each) sleep sites. On the remaining five nights the troop continued to sleep out of town at a variety of sleep sites (see Figure 2 for details).

- During April, the Voëlklop Troop entered the urban area on eight occasions. On four occasions, the troop entered Voëlklop suburb, on three occasions it entered Fernkloof suburb and on one occasion it entered Hermanus Heights.
- Individuals entered Hermanus Heights on five days in April.



Figure 1: GPS locations of the Voëlklop Troop as determined by the GPS collar on VKM5 from 23 to 30 April 2020.

INCIDENTS THAT AFFECTED MANAGEMENT

2.1.1 HERMANUS HEIGHTS & GOLF COURSE

- An unidentified female raided a bin on one occasion during April.
- Three occupied house raids were recorded in Selkirk Street, one of the streets closest to the mountainside. These raids were made by a group of unidentified individuals, an unidentified female and VKM2, on one occasion each.

2.1.2 VOËLKLIP & FERNKLOOF

- On 27 April, VKM5 and a number of juveniles raided black bags on two separate occasions.
- Six occupied and two unoccupied house raids were recorded in 5th, 9th and 10th Street, as well as on 4th and 5th Avenue in Voëlkliip. Three occupied house raids were recorded in Contour Street and Fir Close in Fernkloof.
- Many of the properties in Fernkloof are very large, with big gardens with tall trees and are inaccessible to the rangers. This makes it difficult for the rangers to push baboons out of the suburb once they have entered.

2.1.3 TAGGING AND COLLARING

- VKM5, a sub-adult male, was collared and tagged (with a single red tag in the right ear) on 23 April 2020.

BIRTHS AND DEATHS

- No births or deaths were recorded during April.

HWS: TROOP MONTHLY REPORT																																									
SECTOR		CLASSES OF BEHAVIOUR																																							
OVERSTRAND		1	In urban area										4	Attacking pets										7	Threatening behaviour/ attacking/ stealing food																
BABOON TROOP:		VOËLKLIIP		2	Raid bins										5	Raid unoccupied house or vehicle										8	Breaking & Entering/Damaging property														
MONTH: APRIL		YEAR: 2020		3	Non malicious damage										6	Raid occupied house or vehicle										9	Nocturnal Raiding														
BABOON ID	Sex	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	TOTAL									
Troop			1.1		1		1			1		1			1		1		1		1											8									
VKM2 ALPHA	M			1					1.1	1.1		1		1	6	1		6	1		1			1	1.1				1	1			17								
VKM5 RED TAG	M																								1			2.1	1	5		5									
VKF4 YELLOW TAG	F								1.1	1.1												1.1							5	1		8									
VKF1 GREEN TAG	F																												1	6		2									
UnID Male	M				1		1		6	1.6	1	1				1			1	1.1		1		1	1					1	6	16									
UnID Males	M																															0									
UnID Females	F			1	1				1	1.1	1.1	1	1			1				1.1		1	1		1				1	6		17									
UnID Female	F	1		1.1			1					1			1		1.1			6	1		1	1	2,1,1,1				1.1	1	6	19									
UnID Individuals			6	1.1					6,1,1					1.1			6.6	6				6		1				1.1				15									
UnID Juvs		1			1		1			1.1	1	1	1			1				1	1			1	1			2.2	1.1			17									
	%	TIME SPENT IN TOWN (Minutes)																																	HRS						
Troop	2.0		122		27		40			64			52				46					50										6.68									
Individuals	8.8	28		106	65		24		136	57	33	101	20	48	43	75	40	4	22	77	63	177	17	62	126			77	145	146	75	29.45									
Roost:	AM	12	14	9	12	13	6	3	3	12	12	15	14	6	13	12	12	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	5	8	12	12	14										
Roost:	PM	14	9	13	13	6	3	4	12	12	15	14	6	13	13	12	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	5	8	12	12	14	12										
Roost Sites							1	Golf Course						2	Heights Dam						3	Green Kloof						4	Platte Klip						5	Adder Ladder					
							11	Lower Dam						7	Middle Dam						8	Upper Dam						9	Dragon's Back						10	Droë Kloof					
							16	Blaaie Kloof						12	Big Titanic/Cave						13	Small Titanic						14	10th Ave Kloof						15	11th Ave Kloof					
							16	A-Shape						17	Bos Klip						18							19							20						
							21							22							23							24							25						
							26							27							28																				

Figure 2: The Voëlkliip Troop raid sheet for April 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Waste and recycling collection should be prioritised** to take place in the early mornings in suburbs affected by baboons. This will reduce the attractant value of the waste to baboons. This is especially important for the area north of the Main Road in Voëlklip suburb, which is close to the mountainside. Here waste is currently collected at around midday.
- All bins used in baboon-affected areas should be **baboon-proof and locked**.
- **Refuse bags** should not be left lying open on the sidewalk, and easily available to baboons.
- Ripening **fruit on fruit trees** in baboon-affected areas should be harvested to remove this attractant for baboons.
- **Open vegetable gardens** should be baboon proofed. Baboon-proofing of all domestic vegetable gardens in baboon-affected areas will reduce baboon incursions into the suburbs.
- There are many **tall pine and bluegum trees** on the Hermanus Golf Course that provide ideal sleep sites for baboons, particularly in winter. If many of these trees (particularly pines) could be removed it would greatly reduce the baboons' incentive to sleep in town.
- Many house owners leave their **doors and windows open** by day and do not have burglar bars. Residents should be made aware that easy access to food attracts baboons into the area. Residents should install baboon-proof burglar bars where possible.

3 PRINGLE BAY TROOP

IN TOWN STATISTICS

- The Pringle Bay Troop spent 90.8% of its time out of town in April.
- Time out of town for individuals was 94.6%.
- The troop predominantly used its southern sleep sites in April, spending 26 nights at Professor, two nights at Pringle Peak and one night at Lemoenkop Sleep Sites.
- The troop entered town on 23 occasions during April.

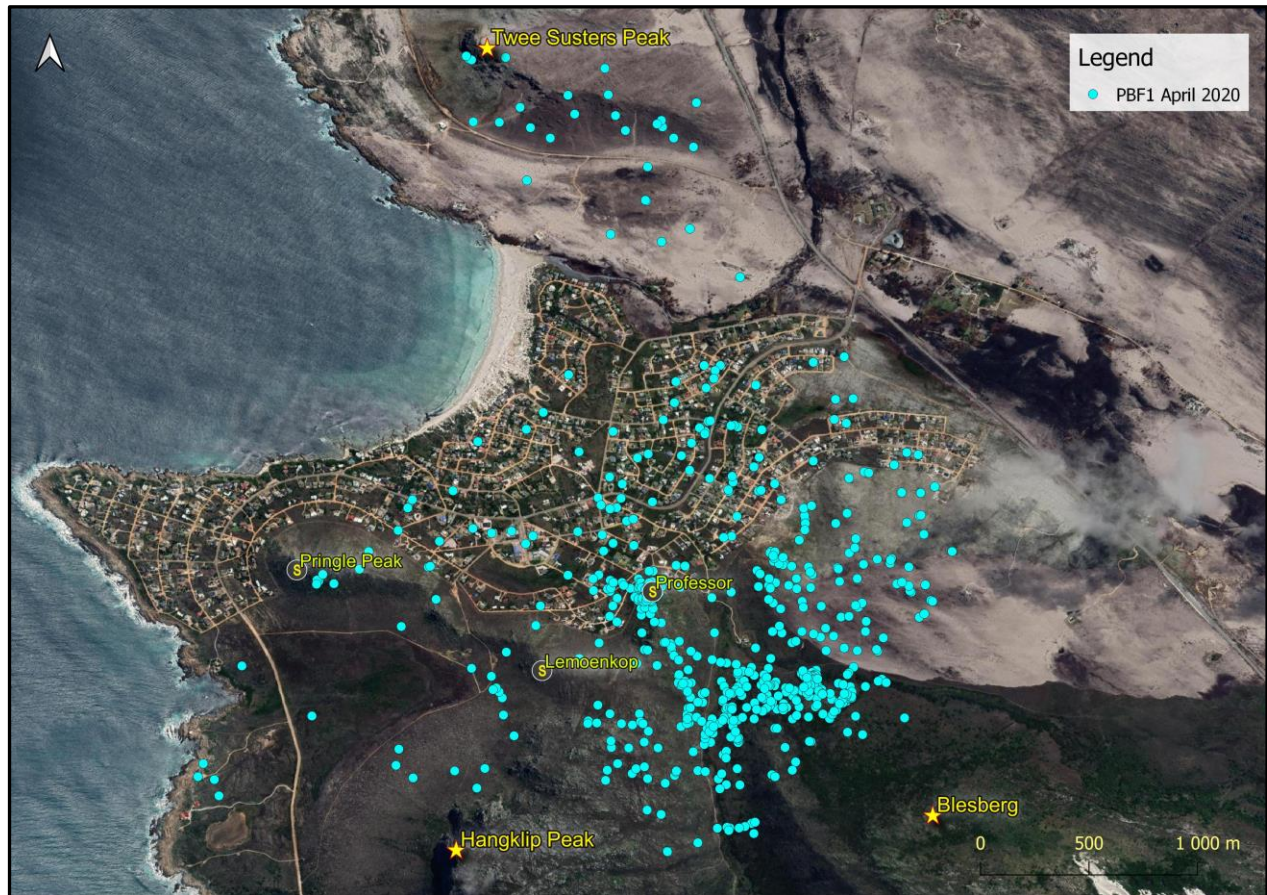


Figure 3: GPS locations of the Pringle Bay Troop as determined by the GPS collar on PBF1 (adult female) during April 2020. PBF1's collar takes GPS readings every hour during daylight hours.

INCIDENTS THAT AFFECTED MANAGEMENT

- Seven occupied house raids were recorded in Pringle Bay during April. On most occasions the individuals gained entry through an open door or window.
- The troop predominantly used its Professor Sleep Site in April, which is on the edge of town. The troop continued to enter town before the rangers arrived regularly, or after they had left at the end of the day.
- During April, the Hangklip Troop moved north into the home range of the Pringle Bay Troop on a few occasions. This had the effect of pushing the Pringle Bay Troop, which is a much smaller troop, into town. Although the Pringle Bay Troop has foraged north of town in the past, currently there is very little natural forage available there, and so the troop did not spend much time north of town.
- The additional time that the Pringle Bay Troop has been spending in town, may also be a result of seasonal change. With winter approaching, and the reduced natural food available in the mountains, the lower lying areas of town are more attractive and fertile.
- During this month, PBF1, as well as unidentified juveniles, were responsible for the highest number of raiding incidents in this troop (nine incidents each).

HWS: TROOP MONTHLY REPORT																																		
SECTOR		CLASSES OF BEHAVIOUR																																
OVERSTRAND		1	In urban area										4	Attacking pets										7	Threatening behaviour/attack/stealing food									
BABOON TROOP:	PRINGLE BAY	2	Raid bins										5	Raid unoccupied house or vehicle										8	Breaking & Entering/Damaging property									
MONTH: APRIL	YEAR: 2020	3	Non malicious damage										6	Raid occupied house or vehicle										9	Nocturnal Raiding									
BABOON ID	Sex	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	TOTAL		
Troop		1		1	1	1.1	1	1		1		1.1	1	6		1		1	1		1.1	1	1	1	1	1	1					23		
PBM1				6			1					6																				3		
PBF1	F								1	1		1.1	1				6	1											1	1		9		
PBF2	F																															0		
UnId Male	M					1	1																									2		
UnId Males	M																															0		
UnID Females	F							1						1															1			3		
UnID Female	F					1						6			1											6						4		
UnID Individuals				6	1	6				6		1	1																			6		
UnID Juveniles						1		1				1	1.1	1				1		1						6						9		
	%	TIME SPENT IN TOWN (Minutes)																													HRS			
Troop	9.2	42		60	90	180	175	56		47		104	125	50		106		79	68		167	140	55	90	95	44	85					30.97		
Individuals	5.4			45	35	75	25	47	40	102		101	220	38	22		62	29		30									119	105		18.25		
Roost:	AM	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	5	1	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			
Roost:	PM	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	5	1	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			
Roost Sites		1 Professor					2 Hangklip					3 Lemoenkop					4 Pringle Peak					5 Twee Sisters												
		6 Axel Kop					7					8					9					10												
ID Features of Baboons		PBF2 has a crooked tail																																
General remarks																																		

Figure 4: The Pringle Bay Troop raid sheet for April 2020.

BIRTHS AND DEATHS

- No births or deaths were recorded during April.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Waste and recycling collection should be prioritised** to take place in the early morning in Pringle Bay. This will reduce the attractant value and accessibility of the waste to baboons.
- All bins should be **baboon-proof and locked**.
- **Refuse bags** should not be left lying on the sidewalk where they easily available to baboons.
- The **waste collection point (bin cage)** at the entrance to Pringle Bay should be sufficiently secured/enclosed to prevent baboons and other wildlife gaining access to the waste. This should be collected by solid waste regularly to prevent the waste becoming unmanageable, particularly during the holiday season and long weekends. Waste should not be left outside this collection point (bin cage), because it is a major attractant to baboons.
- Residents should ensure all **windows and doors are closed** when baboons are in the Pringle Bay urban area. Residents should install baboon-proof burglar bars where possible.

4 GENERAL COMMENTS

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

There were no births in the Voëlkop or Pringle Bay Troops during April, thus the troop sizes remain at 28 and 16 individuals, respectively. The compositions of the two managed troops can be seen in the Table 1 below.

TROOP	OCTOBER 2019 COUNT	APRIL 2020			Total observed Births (1 October 2019 to 30 June 2020)	Total observed Deaths (1 October 2019 to 30 June 2020)	Total Migrations (1 October 2019 to 30 June 2020)	TOTAL POPULATION Per Monthly Reports
		Births	Deaths	Emigration / Immigration				
Voëlkop	29	0	0	0	4	5	0	28
Pringle Bay	16	0	0	0	1	1	0	16
TOTAL	45	0	0	0	5	6	0	44

Table 1: Population data for the two managed troops in the Overstrand in April 2020. Emigration/Immigration figures show animal movements between troops and are accommodated in the troop population totals.

Deaths	Current Contract 2019/20	APR 2020	TOTAL (since October 2019)
Management	3	0	3
Human Induced (HID)	1		1
<i>Direct **</i>	1		1
<i>Indirect ***</i>			0
Natural	2		2
Unknown			0
TOTAL DEATHS	6	0	6

Table 2: Causes of baboon deaths since October 2019; **Deaths caused directly by humans, such as motor vehicle accidents, shooting, poisoning and dogs. ***Deaths caused indirectly by humans such as electrocutions and fire.

HOTLINE DATA

During April 2020, there was a total of 145 hotline calls, 142 of which were raid-related calls received from managed areas in Hermanus. This is a 20% decrease in the number of calls, compared to March (179 calls, of which 174 were raid-related). Hotline calls are for the Hermanus area only, because the Pringle Bay residents operate using another system of reporting raids.

The vast majority of calls (61) were from the Voëlklip suburb, followed by 19 calls from Fernkloof, 18 from Hermanus Heights and three from Kwaaiwater.

There was an increase in the number of hotline calls which reported raids by the Vogelgat Troop, from 29 calls in March, to 41 in April. Reports of the Vogelgat Troop, were largely for individuals being in the urban environment (25 calls), with one hotline call reporting a bin raid in 6th Street and five calls reporting occupied house raids in 3rd, 8th and 9th Streets (Voëlklip suburb).

There were two general enquiries calls and two calls were received for 'Other Areas'. One of these calls was received from Betty's Bay, reported baboons in Lipkin Street, while the second call was received from Kleinmond, reporting that baboons were moving through the suburb and that the baboons were being stoned. There were no reports of the Hamilton-Russel Troop during April.

HWS is not currently mandated by the Overstrand Municipality to manage these additional troops (Vogelgat, Betty's Bay and Kleinmond Troops).

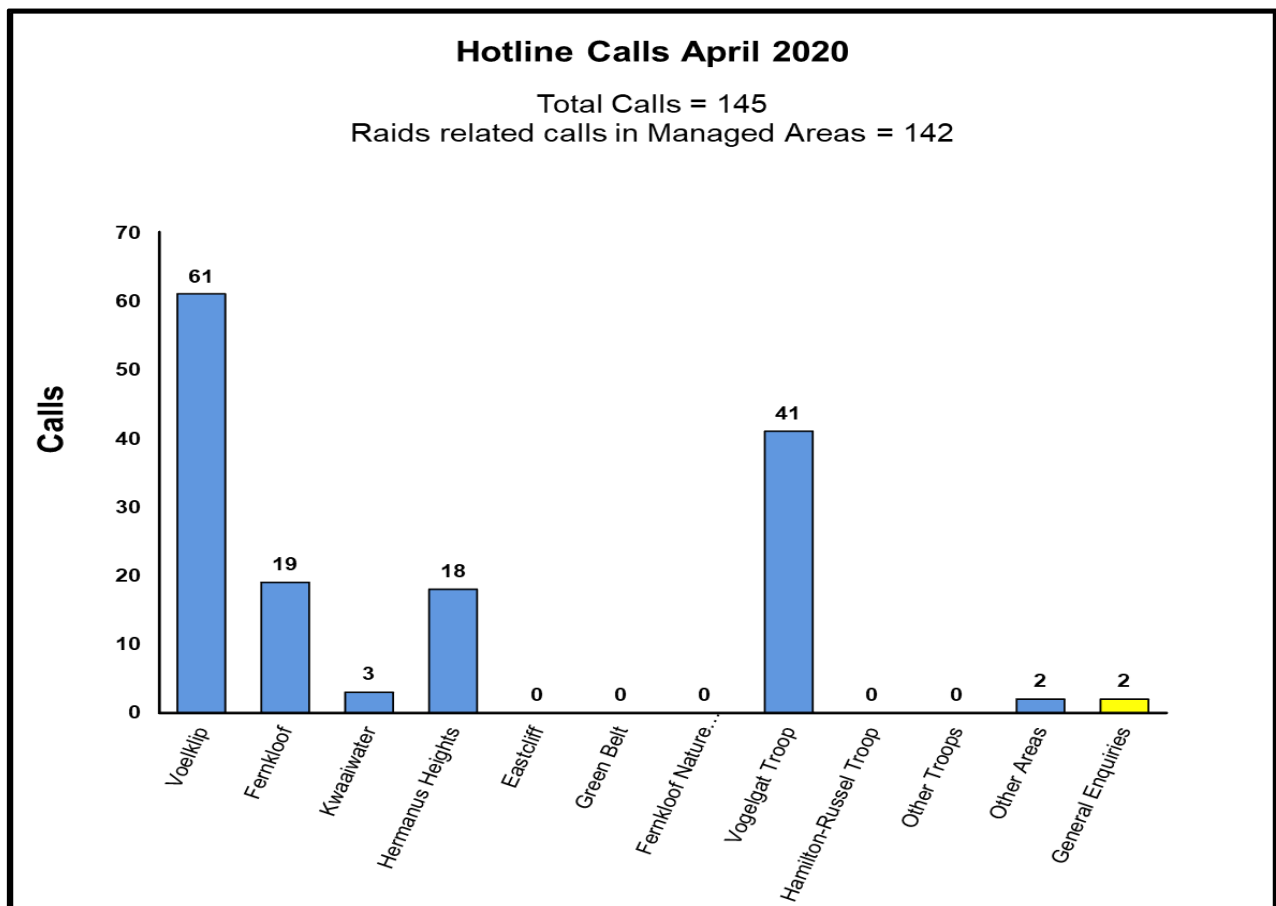


Figure 5: Hotline calls in baboon affected areas of Hermanus for April 2020. Raid-related hotline calls are calls reporting baboons in managed urban areas. Managed areas are those areas in which managed baboons raid. 'Other Areas', represent those areas beyond the urban edge, or the range of managed baboons.

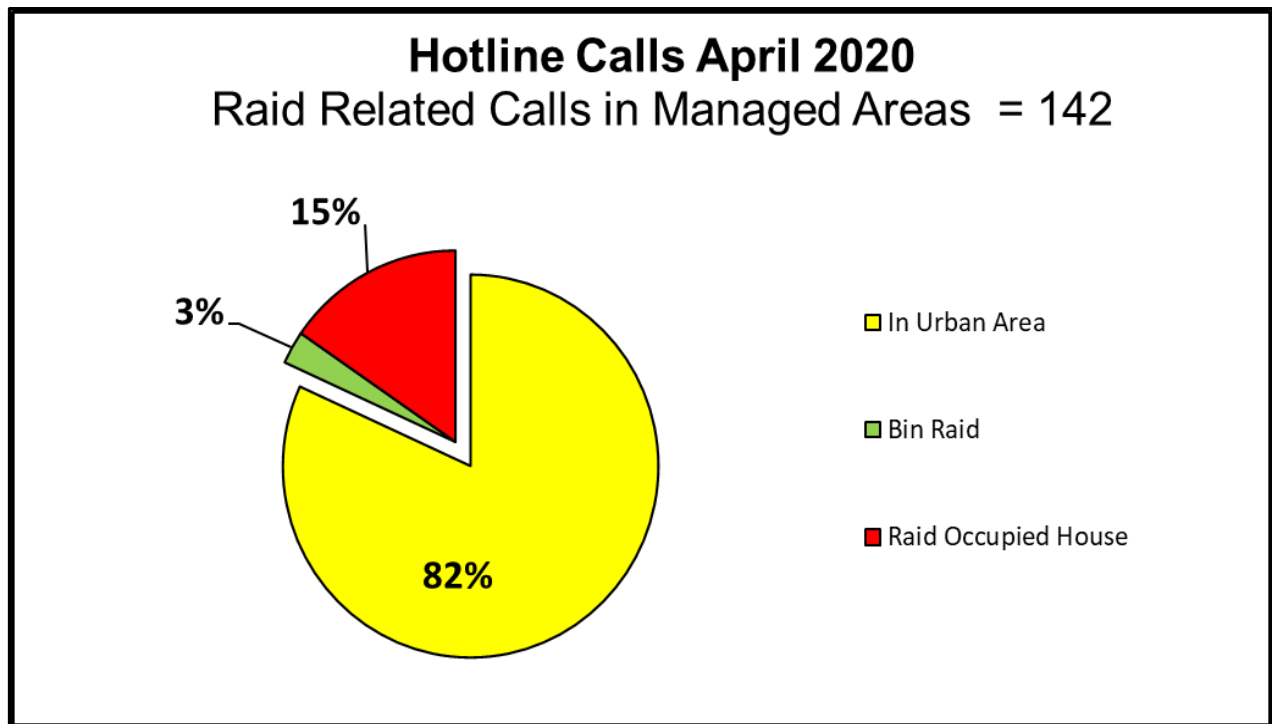


Figure 6: Composition of raid-related hotline calls during April 2020. Note this graph represents the composition of hotline calls, not the composition of raids by baboons.

The most significant factor of the hotline data this month is that most of the calls (82%) were reporting baboons in the urban area. There was also a decrease in the number of raid-related calls in the urban area from 152 calls in March to 117 calls in April. The number of bin raid related calls remained the same as in March, while reporting of occupied house raids increased from 15 calls in March, to 21 calls in April. The increase in the number of occupied house raids, and calls related to these raids, may also be due to the increase in the number of people, including individuals who do not usually stay in the area, during the national Covid-19 lockdown.

PERCENTAGE TIME OUT OF TOWN

During April 2020, the average time out of town for the troops was 94.4% and 92.9% for individuals. Individual time in town is only counted if individuals or small groups of baboons enter the urban area alone. These data are counted separately from when the whole troop enters the urban area.

PERCENTAGE TIME OUT OF TOWN	TROOP	INDIVIDUAL
Voëklip Troop	98,0	91,2
Pringle Bay Troop	90,8	94,6
Average Percentage Time Out of Town	94,4	92,9

Table 3: Percentage time the Voëklip and Pringle Bay troops and individuals spent out of town during April 2020.

5 CONCLUSION

During April, the weather begins to get cooler, as winter approaches. The cooler conditions, together with the reduced natural forage in some areas, generally results in baboons pushing harder to enter town and gain access to human-derived foods (HDFs).

Despite this, the Voëlkliip Troop remained out of town for 98% of the time. This positive trend for the Voëlkliip Troop is probably the result of the HWS staff getting to know the behaviour of this troop better and making progressively better use of the Virtual Fence.

In Pringle Bay, there was a decrease in the time out of town for the troop and individuals, compared to March 2020. This can be attributed to the change in seasons, as well as the fact that the troop slept right on the edge of town at the Professor Sleep Site for most of the month. In addition, the much larger Hangkliip spent more than a week just south of Pringle Bay, and this had the effect of pushing the Pringle Bay Troop into town on numerous occasions.

During the national lockdown there has been an increase in the number of residents in Pringle Bay and Hermanus. This is likely to have had an impact on the opportunities provided to the baboons to raid. Residents in suburbs affected by baboons are urged to play a role in preventing baboons from pushing into town on a regular basis. This includes keeping windows and doors closed when the baboons are in town, not leaving food in locations visible to baboons, improving waste management, baboon-proofing vegetable gardens and removing fruit from fruit trees.

Dr Phil Richardson

HUMAN WILDLIFE SOLUTIONS