



Photo: Wian van Zyl

Human Wildlife Solutions

Overstrand

Monthly Report

June 2020

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1 INTRODUCTION

This monthly report covers the period from 1 to 30 June 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 Voëlklip Troop's time out of town was 97.9% in June.

The Vogelgat Troop showed a decreased presence in the urban environment during this month, with a corresponding decrease in the number of hotline calls. The troop continued 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 out 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 from learning bad raiding behaviours from each other.

The Pringle Bay Troop continued its May pattern of predominantly sleeping at the Professor Sleep Site, utilizing this site for 48% of the time in June. This sleep site, in particular, provided the baboons with very easy access to the urban environment. As a result, with the baboons often raided town during times when the rangers were not on duty (early mornings and late evenings). The Hangklip Troop moved north again this month, overlapping into the Pringle Bay Troop's home range. This had the effect of pushing the Pringle Bay Troop into town. The combined effect of this, and the baboons sleeping close to town, resulted in the Pringle Bay Troop's percentage time out of town decreased from 91.5% in May to 88.0% in June.

2 VOËLKLIP TROOP

IN TOWN STATISTICS

- During June, the troop spent 97.9% of its time out of town, a slight decrease from 98.8% in May.
- Time out of town for individuals increased from 93.6% in May to 98.4% in June.
- The troop predominantly slept at the western sleeping sites, sleeping at Hermanus Heights (six nights), Platteklip (six nights), Green Kloof (5 nights) and the Heights Dam (three nights). The remaining nights were spent at Adder Ladder (two nights), Lower Dam (one night), Middle Dam (one night), Upper Dam (one night), Big Titanic (one night) and Small Titanic (one night). On 27 June the troop was split between multiple sleep sites.

- During June, the Voëlklip Troop entered the urban area on four occasions. On three occasions the troop entered Voëlklip suburb, while on the other occasion it entered Fernkloof suburb.

INCIDENTS THAT AFFECTED MANAGEMENT

2.1.1 HERMANUS HEIGHTS & GOLF COURSE

- Individuals entered Hermanus Heights on three days in June.
- VKM2 raided two occupied houses in Hillside Village on 6 June.
- The troop split into three smaller groups on 27 June and slept in three separate locations, including the Golf Course, the pine trees at the outskirts of Hermanus Heights and on the mountain above Hermanus Heights. The troop rejoined the following day.

2.1.2 VOËLKLIP & FERNKLOOF

- A single female raided a house on 6th Street Voëlklip on 24 June. It is unclear whether the house was occupied or not.

BIRTHS AND DEATHS

- A new infant was first seen on 16 June.



Figure 1: GPS locations of the Voëklip Troop as determined by the GPS collar on VGM1.

HWS: TROOP MONTHLY REPORT																																		
SECTOR																																		
OVERSTRAND		CLASSES OF BEHAVIOUR																																
BABOON TROOP:		VOËLKLIJ																																
MONTH: June		YEAR: 2020																																

Figure 2: The Voëlklip Troop raid sheet for June 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, 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

- Please note that data for nine days was lost this month. The data reported here is only for the remaining 21 days.
- The Pringle Bay Troop spent 88.0% of its time out of town in June.
- Time out of town for individuals was 99.4%.
- The troop predominantly used its southern sleep sites in June, spending 10 nights at Professor, six nights at Pringle Peak and two nights at Lemoenkop, while spending one night each at the Valley and Hangklip sleep sites. On the evening of 19 June, the troop was split between the Rooi Els and Professor sleep sites with the majority sleeping at the Rooi Els sleep site.
- The troop entered town on 14 occasions during June.



Figure 3: GPS locations of the Pringle Bay Troop as determined by the GPS collar on PBF1 (adult female) during June 2020.

INCIDENTS THAT AFFECTED MANAGEMENT

- Seven house raids were recorded in June. Individuals gained access via open doors as well as unsecured cat flaps.
- As has been the trend over the past few months, the troop continued to use its Professor sleep site predominantly. Because the sleep site is very close to town, the baboons often gained easy access to town when sleeping here.
- The Hangklip troop's presence continued to affect the Pringle Bay Troops movements, often pushing it to the northern parts of its home range. The Hangklip Troop was even observed to sleep on Pringle Peak on 15 June.
- The Pringle Bay Troop seemed to push to town more actively this month. This was likely a seasonal change, in addition to pressure from the Hangklip Troop. With the arrival of winter, and a reduced availability of natural food in the mountains, the lower lying areas of town were much more attractive to the baboons.

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: June		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						5	1	1	1	1	*	*	*	*		1	1	1		14					
PBM1			*	*	*	*	*																*	*	*	*												
PBF1	F		*	*	*	*	*																*	*	*	*												
PBF2	F		*	*	*	*	*																*	*	*	*												
UnId Male	M		*	*	*	*	*																*	*	*	*												
UnId Males	M		*	*	*	*	*																*	*	*	*												
UnId Females	F		*	*	*	*	*							1									*	*	*	*						1						
UnId Female	F		*	*	*	*	*										1	5					*	*	*	*		1				3						
UnId Individuals			*	*	*	*	*														1		*	*	*	*						1						
UnId Juveniles		1,6	*	*	*	*	*	1,6	6	6,6							1	5					*	*	*	*	1					10						
	%	TIME SPENT IN TOWN (Minutes)																																HRS				
Troop	12,0	120	*	*	*	*	*	60	240	180	180	67	52					180	19	52	180	39	*	*	*	*		95	33	32		25,48						
Individuals	0,6	*	*	*	*	*	*							15			15				20		*	*	*	*	32					1,37						
Roost:	AM	1	*	*	*	*	*	7	1	1	8	1	4	1	4	4	1	1	1	1	7	1+7	4	*	*	*	*	3	3	*	4	4						
Roost:	PM	1	*	*	*	*	*	1	1	8	1	4	1	4	4	1	1	1	1	1	1+7	4	3	*	*	*	*	3	*	4	4	2						
Roost Sites		1	Professor					2	Hangklip					3	Lemoenkop					4	Pringle Peak					5	Twee Susters											
		6	Axel Kop					7	Rooi Els Mountain					8	Valley					9						10												
ID Features of Baboons																																						
General remarks		Data unavailable for the following dates: 2-5 June and 22-25 June 2020 (indicated with *).Time out of town was calculated using only the 21days on which data was collected. On 19 June 2020 the troop slept at two locations. Monitors finished early due to storm and were consequently unable to confirm the roosting site for 27 June (indicated by *). On 19 June 2020 the troop split and slept at two sleep sites.																																				

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

BIRTHS AND DEATHS

- No births or deaths were recorded during June.

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

One birth was recorded in the Voëlkliip troop. The infant was first seen on 16 June. No births or deaths were recorded for the Pringle Bay troop. The Voëlkliip troop has thus increased to 29 individuals, while the Pringle Bay troop remains at 16 individuals. The compositions of the two managed troops can be seen in the Table 1 below.

TROOP	OCTOBER 2019 COUNT	June 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				
Voëlkliip	29	1	0	0	5	5	0	29
Pringle Bay	16	0	0	0	1	1	0	16
TOTAL	45	1	0	0	6	6	0	45

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

Deaths	Current Contract 2019/20	June 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 June 2020 there was a total of 51 hotline calls, 43 of which were raid-related calls received from managed troops. This was a 47% decrease in the number of calls, compared to May. Hotline calls are for the Hermanus area only, because the Pringle Bay residents operate using another system of reporting raids.

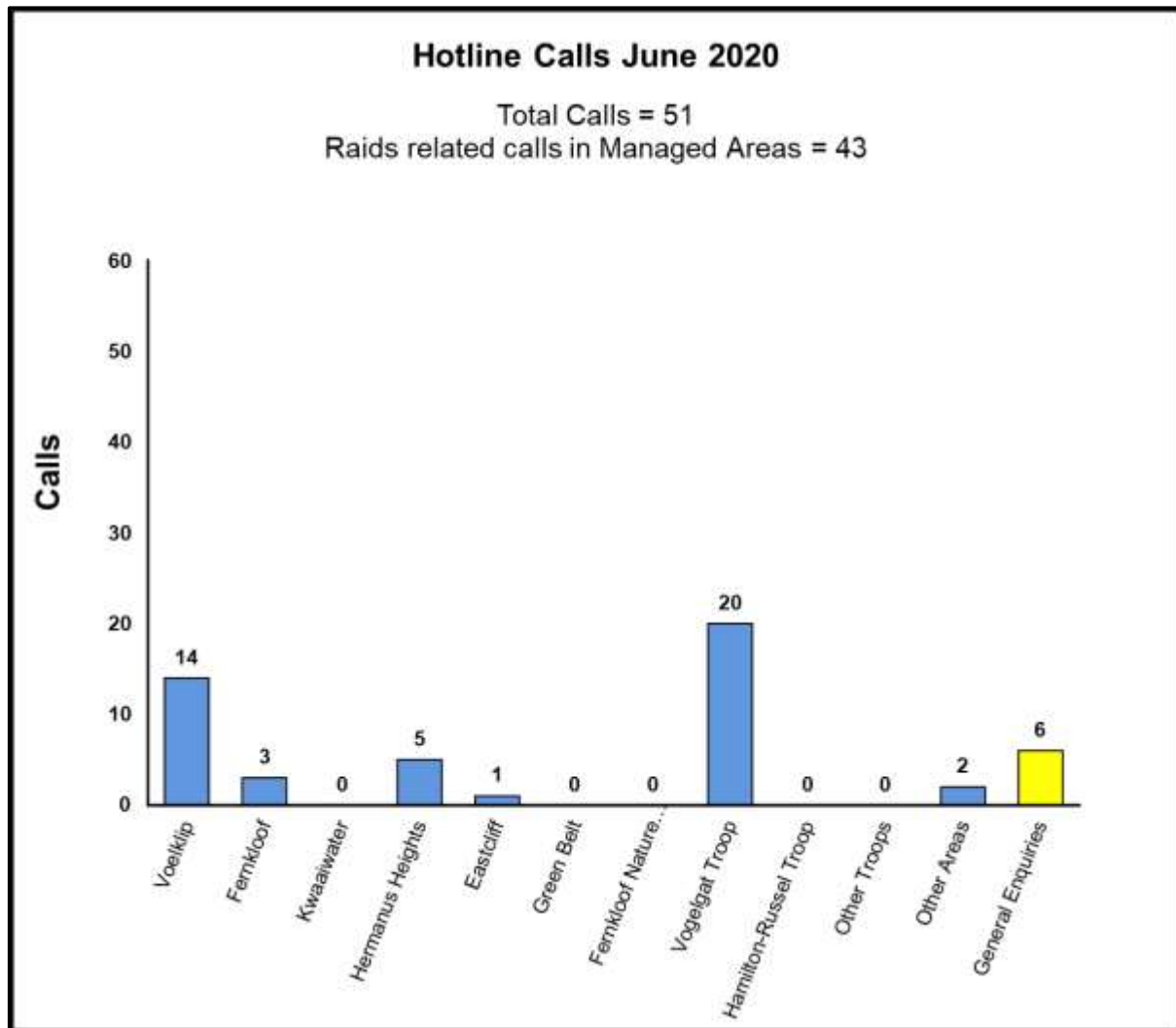


Figure 5: Hotline calls in baboon affected areas of Hermanus for June 2020. Raid-related hotline calls are calls reporting managed baboons in urban areas. Managed areas are those areas in which managed baboon troops raid. Other Areas, represent those areas beyond the urban edge or the range of managed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

There was a decrease in the number of hotline calls which reported raids by the Vogelgat troop, from 28 in May to 20 in June. Nineteen of these calls were for individuals being in the urban environment, with one hotline call reporting individuals raiding black bags. No house raids were reported for the Vogelgat troop this month.

The vast majority of the hotline calls this month (88%) were reporting the presence of baboons in the urban area. Only three occupied house raids were reported, which is a decrease from nine in May.

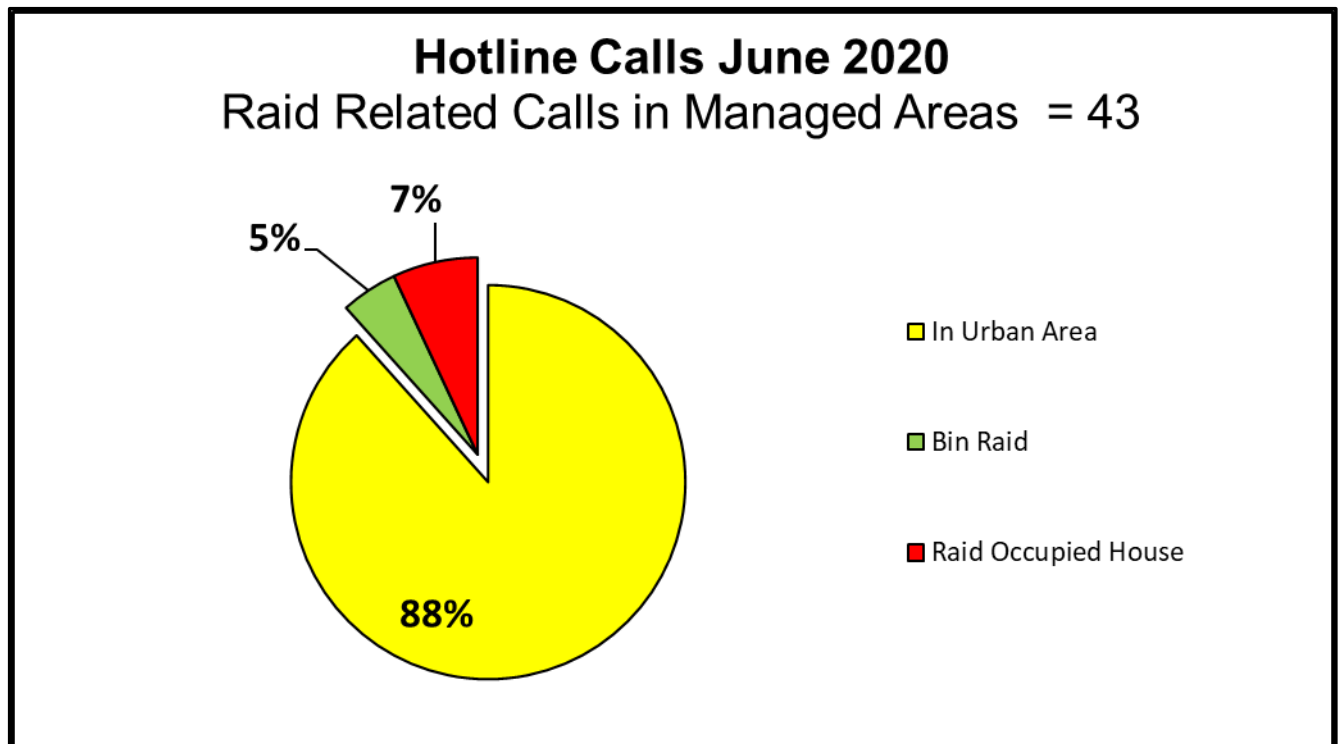


Figure 6: Composition of raid-related hotline calls during June 2020. Note this graph represents the composition of hotline calls, not the composition of raids by baboons.

PERCENTAGE TIME OUT OF TOWN

During June 2020, the average time out of town for the troops was 93.0% and 98.9% 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	97,9	98,4
Pringle Bay Troop	88,0	99,4
Average Percentage Time Out of Town	93,0	98,9

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

5 CONCLUSION

Winter has arrived in force. The month of June was characterised by low temperatures, strong winds and periods of high rainfall as multiple cold fronts hit the Western Cape. Although the baboons generally push harder to enter town during winter to gain access to Human Derived Foods (HDF's), the Voëlklip troop still spent a high percentage of time out of town (97.9%). The amount of time spent in town by raiding individuals decreased significantly during June, but the amount of time spent in town by the troop as a whole, almost doubled. This was mainly due to a single extended bout during which the troop spent almost four hours in town in the Fernkloof area near Contour Road on 25 June. Many of the properties in this area are very large and provide the baboons with ample hiding place to avoid the rangers. This makes it extremely difficult to push the baboons out when rangers cannot access the properties.

The Pringle Bay Troop predominantly continued to use its southern sleep sites closest to town in June. This, and northward pressure from the Hangklip Troop, resulted in the Pringle Bay Troop spending an increased amount of time in town. Nevertheless, the percentage time out of town for this troop increased in June in comparison to May.

Residents in suburbs affected by baboons are urged to play a role in preventing baboons pushing to 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