



Photo: Robyn Lawson-Craig

# Human Wildlife Solutions

## Overstrand Monthly Report

February 2020

**TABLE OF CONTENTS:**

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>VOËLKLIP TROOP .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2.1</b>	<b>In Town Statistics.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2.2</b>	<b>Incidents that Affected management .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.2.1</b>	<b>VKF3 (adult female) .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.2.2</b>	<b>Hermanus Heights &amp; Golf Course.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.2.3</b>	<b>Voëlklip &amp; Fernkloof .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.2.4</b>	<b>Tagging and Collaring.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.3</b>	<b>Births and Deaths .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2.4</b>	<b>Recommendations.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>PRINGLE BAY TROOP .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<b>In Town Statistics.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>3.2</b>	<b>Incidents that Affected management .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>3.2.1</b>	<b>Tagging and Collaring.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>3.3</b>	<b>Births and Deaths .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>3.4</b>	<b>Recommendations.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>GENERAL COMMENTS.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Population Characteristics .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Hotline Data .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>4.3</b>	<b>Percentage Time Out of Town .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>12</b>

## 1 INTRODUCTION

This monthly report covers the period from 1 to 29 February 2020. Management of the Voëlklip Troop in Hermanus and the Pringle Bay Troop are discussed. During this month the Virtual Fence was implemented to manage 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 Virtual Fence will be used in Pringle Bay from July onwards.

The Vogelgat Troop has continued to raid in the eastern avenues of Hermanus. HWS is currently not mandated to manage this troop, which seems to be moving further into town as the Voëlklip retreats further from town. HWS does physically respond to hotline calls for the Vogelgat Troop, but only when the Voëlklip Troop is under control.

At this time of year there are many fruiting trees, particularly fig trees, in the urban environment, which attract baboons into town. There are a number of streets within Voëlklip, where fruit trees have been noted as hotspots for baboon activity. Unless these trees are removed, or have their fruit picked, baboons will continue to run into town to obtain this high energy reward. This is especially true in the late summer months, when the fynbos is dry and food availability on the mountain is reduced.

## 2 VOËLKLIP TROOP

### 2.1 IN TOWN STATISTICS

- During February 2020, the troop spent 96.9% of its time out of town, remaining consistent since December 2019.
- Time out of town for individuals increased from 93.% in January to 94.5% in February.
- The troop predominantly slept at Dragon's Back (seven nights), Three Dams (six nights), 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue Kloof (five nights), Small Titanic (four nights) and Big Titanic (four nights) sleep sites. On the remaining three nights the troop continued to sleep out of town. The troop therefore spent 100% of its time sleeping out of town.
- During February, the Voëlklip Troop entered the urban area on 10 occasions. On six occasions, the troop entered the Fernkloof suburb and on four occasions it entered Voëlklip.

## **2.2 INCIDENTS THAT AFFECTED MANAGEMENT**

### **2.2.1 VKF3 (ADULT FEMALE)**

- VKF3 was euthanased on 4 February 2020, in terms of the CapeNature approved Guidelines for Baboon Management for assertive raiding.
- VKF3 was frequently the first baboon to initiate breaking the line and moving towards town, and she often solicited troop members to form a raiding group.
- VKF3's raiding behaviour increased steadily, and she often remained in town long after the troop had been pushed out. This greatly impacted the rangers' ability to manage the troop, and was encouraging other members of the troop to engage in this type of activity.
- Since VKF3 was removed, there has been a decrease in attempts to break the line by both individuals and the troop. The troop has also spent more time in the western half of their range, seldomly moving east of 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

### **2.2.2 HERMANUS HEIGHTS & GOLF COURSE**

- Ten individuals entered the Golf Course on 28 February for 15 minutes.

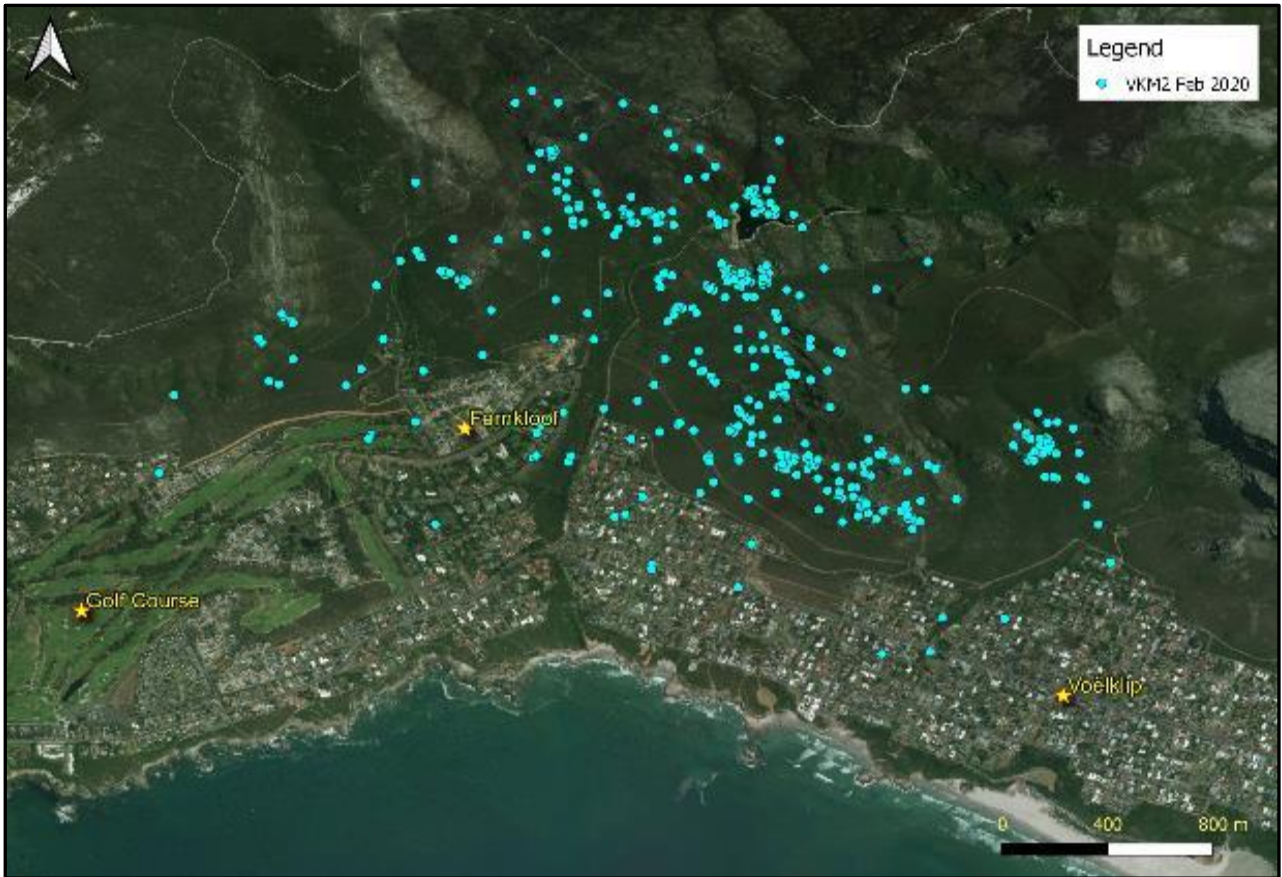
### **2.2.3 VOËLKLIP & FERNKLOOF**

- Bin raids were recorded on three occasions during February.
- 10 occupied house raids were recorded during February compared to 18 in January.
- Many of the properties in Fernkloof are very large, having 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.
- There are a number of fruit trees in the Voëlklip suburb that are frequently visited by baboons. These fruit trees are located in 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> Streets, between Reservoir Road and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and in 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Streets near 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

### **2.2.4 TAGGING AND COLLARING**

- No tagging or collaring took place during February.





**Figure 1:** GPS locations of the Voëklip Troop as determined by the GPS collar on VKM2 during February 2020. VKM2’s collar takes GPS readings every hour during daylight hours.

HWS: TROOP MONTHLY REPORT																																	
SECTOR		CLASSES OF BEHAVIOUR																															
OVERSTRAND		1	In urban area	4	Attacking pets	7	Threatening behaviou/ attacking/ stealing food																										
BABOON TROOP:		2	Raid bins	5	Raid unoccupied house or vehicle	8	Breaking & Entering/Damaging property																										
MONTH: FEBRUARY		3	Non malicious damage	6	Raid occupied house or vehicle	9	Nocturnal Raiding																										
YEAR: 2020																																	
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	TOTAL		
Troop				1	1				1	1	1	1				1				1		1	1		1	1	6	1	1	1	10		
VKM2 ALPHA	M	6	1		1												6		1									1,1	1		13		
VKF4 YELLOW TAG	F		1																						1	1					3		
VKF3 RED TAG	F	1	1,1		1																										4		
VKF1 GREEN TAG	F																														0		
UniD Male	M			2	1							1,7					6								6	6		1	1		8		
UniD Males	M																														0		
UniD Females	F	1,6	1	1		1,1		1	1	1															1	1		1,1	1,1		13		
UniD Female	F				1	6				2						2	6					1	1		6						8		
UniD Individuals					1				1	6		1				1,1							6				1	1	1	1,1		7	
UniD Juvs		1														2						1	1			1	1	1	1,1		7		
		%	TIME SPENT IN TOWN (Minutes)																										HRS				
Troop		3,1																											11,90				
Individuals		5,5	50	92	121	78	7	62	40	105		12				80		62		45		130			50	41	66	54	145	55	135	66	21,43
Roost:	AM	15	12	12	12	14	14	8	8	8	8	11	8	5	10	5	8	10	8	5	5	10	12	8	9	10	10	10	12	5	8		
Roost:	PM	12	12	12	14	14	8	8	8	9	11	8	5	10	5	8	10	11	5	5	11	12	8	9	10	10	11	12	5	8	7		
Roost Sites																																	
		1	Golf Course	2	Hermanus Heights	3	Platte Klip	4	Adder Ladder	5	Lower Dam																						
		6	Middle Dam	7	Upper Dam	8	Dragon's Back	9	Droë Kloof	10	Big Titanic																						
		11	Small Titanic	12	10th Ave Kloof	13	11th Ave Kloof	14	Bos Klip	15	A-Shape																						
		16		17		18		19		20																							
		21		22		23		24		25																							
		26		27		28																											
ID Features of Baboons																																	
General remarks																																	

**Figure 2:** The Voëklip Troop raid sheet for February 2020.

## 2.3 BIRTHS AND DEATHS

- Two births were recorded on 6 February 2020.
- There was one death in the Voëlklip Troop. VKF3 was euthanased on 4 February 2020, in terms of the CapeNature approved Guidelines for Baboon Management for assertive raiding ([http://baboons.org.za/images/Protocols/Guidelines\\_for\\_Baboon\\_Management\\_March\\_2019.pdf](http://baboons.org.za/images/Protocols/Guidelines_for_Baboon_Management_March_2019.pdf)).

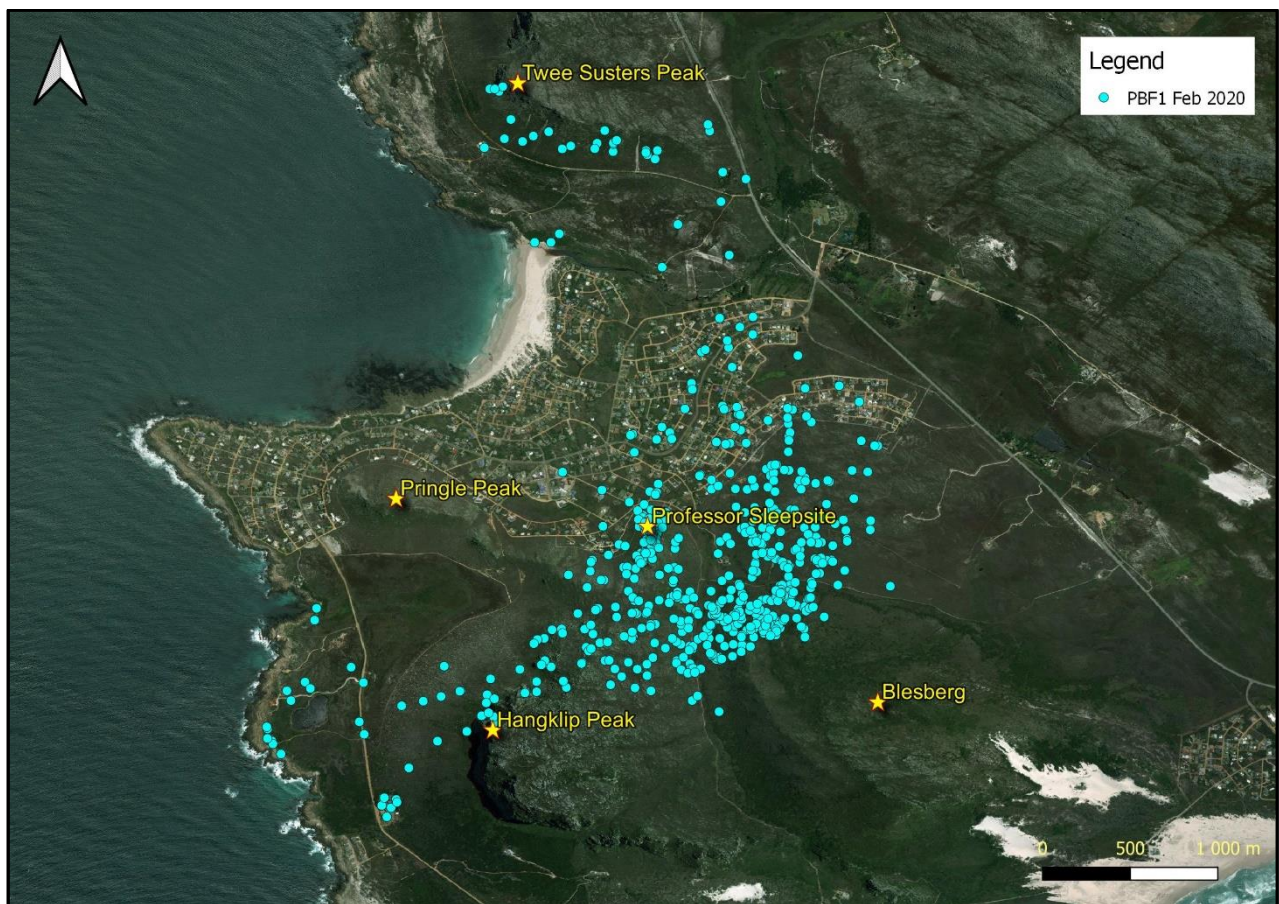
## 2.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

- **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

#### 3.1 IN TOWN STATISTICS

- The Pringle Bay Troop spent 95.2% of its time out of town in February, compared to 97.3% in January.
- Time out of town for individuals in February was 98.4%.
- The troop predominantly used its southern sleep sites in February, spending 24 nights at Professor and four nights at Hangklip Peak Sleep Sites. The troop only spent one night at its northern sleep site, Twee Susters Peak.
- The troop entered town on 20 occasions during February.



**Figure 3:** GPS locations of the Pringle Bay Troop as determined by the GPS collar on PBF1 during February 2020.

#### 3.2 INCIDENTS THAT AFFECTED MANAGEMENT

- Two unoccupied and one occupied house raids were recorded in Pringle Bay during February. During all of these raids, the baboons gained entry to the house through an open door or open window.
- The troop raided bins on one occasion this month.

- The troop predominantly used its Professor Sleep Site in February, which is on the edge of town. The troop would often enter town before the rangers arrived or after they had left at the end of the day.
- During February, the Hangklip Troop often moved north into the home range of the Pringle Bay Troop. This had the effect of pushing the Pringle Bay Troop into town, or across to the northern side of town.

**3.2.1 TAGGING AND COLLARING**

- No tagging or collaring took place during February.

HWS: TROOP MONTHLY REPORT																																	
SECTOR		CLASSES OF BEHAVIOUR																															
OVERSTRAND		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	TOTAL		
BABOON TROOP:	PRINGLE BAY	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	TOTAL		
MONTH: FEBRUARY	YEAR: 2020	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	TOTAL		
Troop						1	1	1	1	1,1		1		1	1				2	1			1,1	1	1	1		1	1	1	20		
PBF1	F																						5				1				2		
PBF2	F																									1					1		
UnId Male	M																														0		
UnId Males	M																														0		
UnId Females	F																									1					1		
UnId Female	F											5											5	1							3		
UnId Individuals																									6						1		
UnId Juveniles																															0		
		TIME SPENT IN TOWN (Minutes)																												HRS			
Troop	4,8					45	69	45	25	120		38	53	85	33				75	30			34	60	65	60	40		45	105	49	44	18,67
Individuals	1,6											60											120	85	1	60	45						6,18
Roost:	AM	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Roost:	PM	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Roost Sites		1	Professor			2	Hangklip			3	Lemoenkop			4	Rooi Els/Two Sisters			5															
		6				7				8				9				10															
ID Features of Baboons																																	
General remarks																																	

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

**3.3 BIRTHS AND DEATHS**

- No births or deaths were recorded in the Pringle Bay Troop during February.



### 3.4 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

### 4.1 POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

- The Voëklip Troop size at the end of February 2020 was 27. There were two births and one death during February. VKF3 was euthanased in terms of the Guidelines for assertive raiding. The size of the Pringle Bay troop remained at 15. The compositions of the two managed troops can be seen in the Table 1 below. Please note that the numbers for the Pringle Bay troop counted in October 2019 was previously reported as 18. This was an error, there were two sub-adult males in the troop that died of natural causes before October 2019. The size of the troop at the end of October was 16 and since then there has been one death in the troop bringing the population down to 15. This has been corrected in Table 1 below.

TROOP	OCTOBER 2019 COUNT	FEBRUARY 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				
Voëklip	29	2	1	0	3	5	0	27
Pringle Bay	16	0	0	0	0	1	0	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>42</b>

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

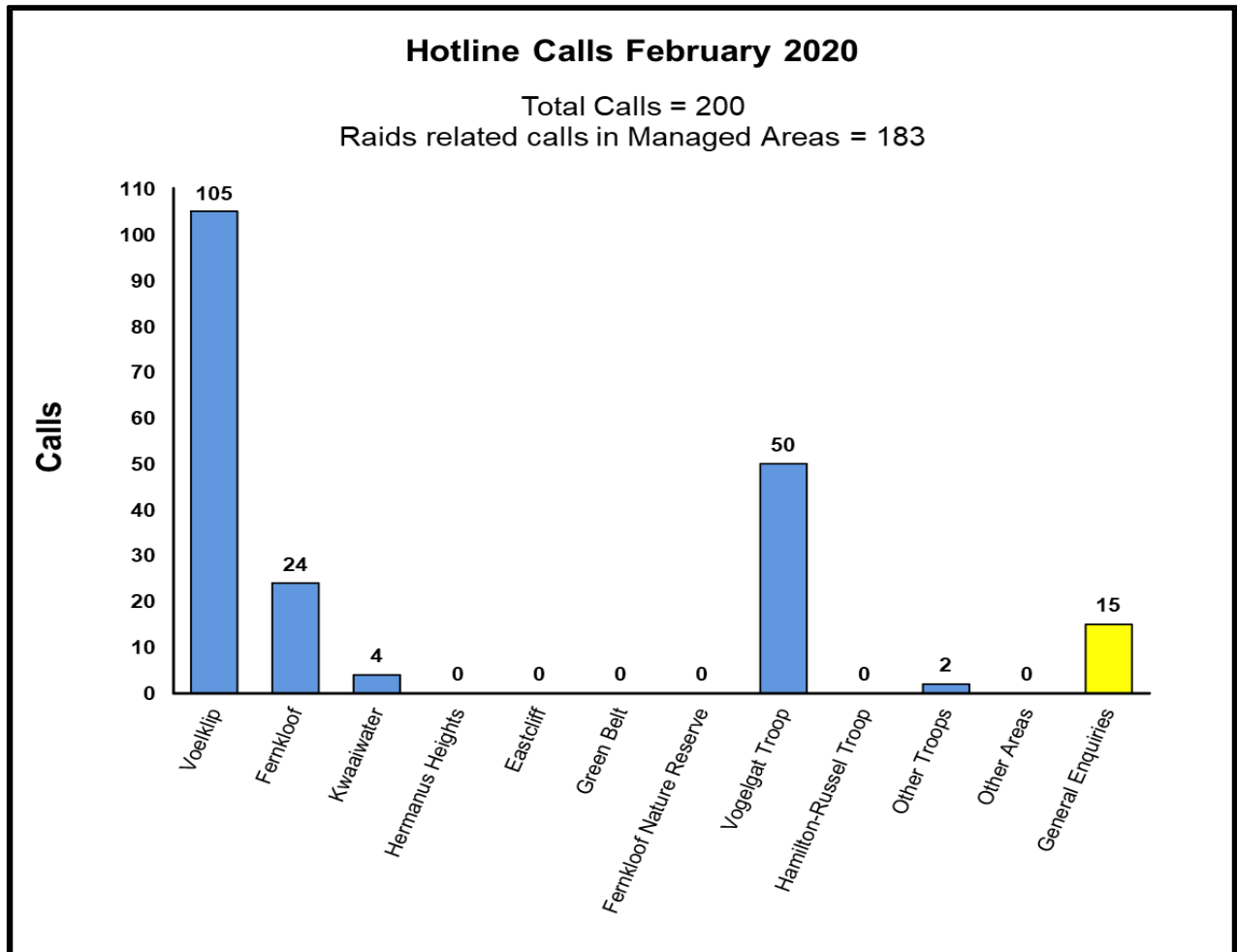
<b>Deaths</b>	<b>Current Contract 2019/20</b>	<b>FEB 2020</b>	<b>TOTAL</b> (since October 2019)
Management	3	1	3
Human Induced (HID)	1		1
<i>Direct **</i>	1		1
<i>Indirect ***</i>			0
Natural	2		2
Unknown			0
<b>TOTAL DEATHS</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>

**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.

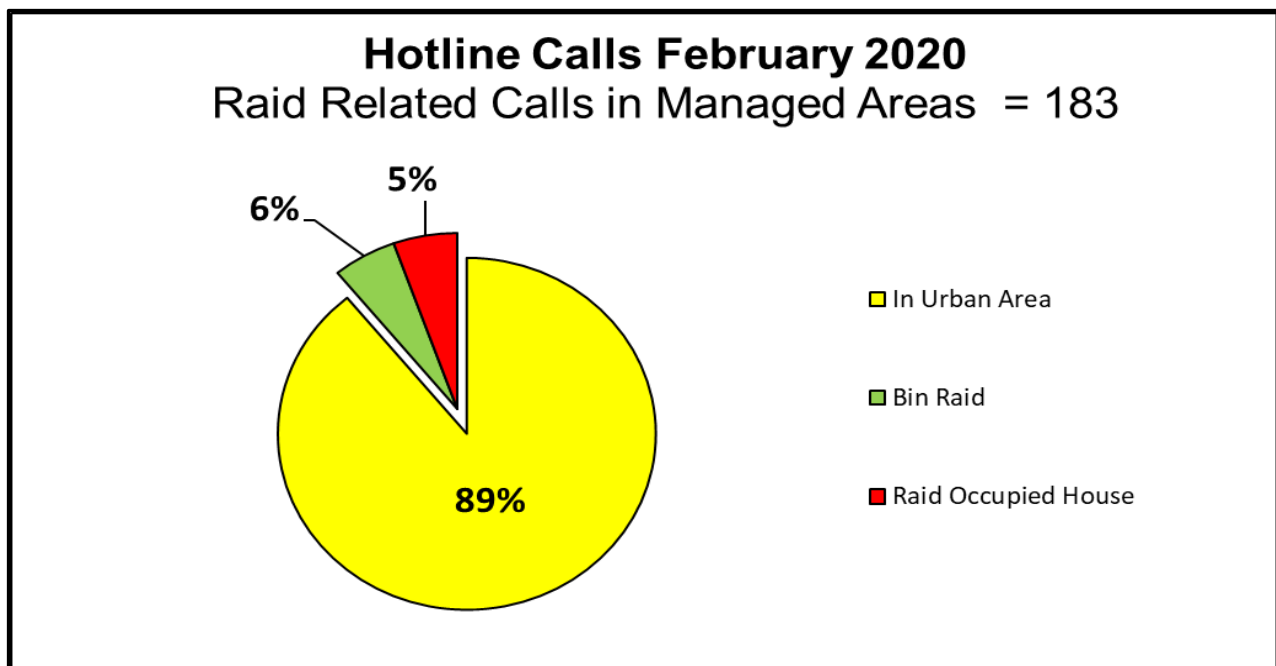
## 4.2 HOTLINE DATA

During February 2020, there was a total of 200 hotline calls, 183 of which were raid-related calls received from managed areas. This is a slight decrease from 213 raid-related calls received in January. Hotline calls are for the Hermanus area only, because the Pringle Bay residents operate using another system. The vast majority of calls (105) were from Voëlklip suburb, followed by 24 calls from Fernkloof, and four from Kwaaiwater.

There were also 50 calls which reported raids by the Vogelgat Troop in the eastern side of Voëlklip suburb and two calls for a troop raiding in Onrus. The Hamilton-Russell Troop was not reported to the hotline during February but was spotted on top of the mountain north of the Three Dams. This troop was previously reported on the mountainside just above Hermanus Heights on two occasions during January, and four occasions in December. HWS is not currently mandated by the Overstrand Municipality to manage these three troops (Vogelgat, Hamilton Russell and Onrus Troops).



**Figure 5:** Hotline calls in baboon affected areas of Hermanus for February 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.



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

During February, 89% (163 calls) of all raid related calls were simply reporting baboons in the urban area. Occupied house raids, accounted for 5% (9 calls) of raid related calls, and bin raids accounted for 6% (11 calls) of all raid related calls. It is evident from these data that 95% of raid related hotline calls were either reporting baboons in the urban area, or baboons raiding bins. The occupied house raids (5%) may seem disproportionately high compared to bin raids (6%), but one must bear in mind, that because of the nature of the raid, occupied house raids are mostly reported, whereas bin raids will be less noticed and less likely to be reported.

### 4.3 PERCENTAGE TIME OUT OF TOWN

During February 2020, the average time out of town for the troops was 96.1% and 96.5% 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	96,9	94,5
Pringle Bay Troop	95,2	98,4
Average Percentage Time Out of Town	96,1	96,5

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

## 5 CONCLUSION

Active management of the Voëklip Troop began in November 2019. Traditionally this is always the best time of year for baboons, when the fynbos is at its best as a result of the combination of the warmth of summer following the winter rains. Then, as the summer heat progresses the best food is eaten and the fynbos slowly dries out. This effect can be seen in the percentage time out of town the baboons spend over the summer.

In November the Voëklip Troop spent 98.8% of their time out of town, but then this dropped to an average of 96.6% for December and January. This is probably a reflection of the combination of the summer heat drying the fynbos out, and an abundance of non-baboon conscious tourists in town leaving doors and windows open and exercising poor waste management.



This month the Voëlklip's average time out of town was 96.9%, which is a slight increase over previous months despite being late into the summer and having less food available in the fynbos. This can hopefully be attributed to the activation of the Virtual Fence on the 5<sup>th</sup> of February. Since then, the rangers have successfully used the Virtual Fence as the main deterrent/management tool to keep the troop out of town.

The rangers only resorted to using paintball markers when the troop or individuals managed to break through the Virtual Fence, or when weather conditions did not permit the use of the Virtual Fence. There has been a noticeable decrease in the number of occasions that individuals leave the troop and enter town on their own. The baboons also did not travel as far into town as before.

As the management on the Voëlklip Troop has progressed, the Vogelgat Troop has been noted to be spending more time in town. This can likely be attributed to the Voëlklip Troop spending less time on the eastern side of the Voëlklip suburb. In addition to hotline calls reporting the Vogelgat Troop in town this month, there were two calls received for the Onrus Troop.

This month the Pringle Bay Troop again predominantly used the southern sleep sites closest to town, and only slept at a northern sleep site once. This led to an increased percentage of time in town for the troop and individuals, with the troop entering town on 20 occasions. During these raids it was primarily females that opportunistically raided unoccupied houses.

Dr Phil Richardson

**HUMAN WILDLIFE SOLUTIONS**