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## **Human Wildlife Solutions**

### **Overstrand**

### **Monthly Report**

**June 2024**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This monthly report covers the period from 1 June to 31 June 2024.

June was a turbulent month for the Voëlklip Troop. The adult males, UNKM1 and VKM6U fought frequently, with both animals sustaining injuries. A young (recently sub-adult) male, VKM7, also became involved in the conflicts. Amid this aggression the alpha male, UNKM1, lost his collar which also ceased to function. The alpha male also seemed to disappear, but a few observations of a male with a small green ear tag were made by HWS Rangers over the week after the collar fell off. Neither UNKM1 nor VKM6U were seen for the last week of June. This inter-male aggression also resulted in the deaths of two new-born babies through infanticide. Besides the heightened intra-troop conflict, members of the troop were present in town much more than in previous months (~5 hours vs ~1 hour) and spent the most time in town since December 2023. Lastly, the Voëlklip Troop was subjected to a pellet gun shooting incident on 19 June in the vicinity of the Southern Right Winery. Fortunately, no injuries were sustained by any members of the troop.

The Onrus Troop behaviour improved slightly from the previous month, with no reported raiding behaviour. Although no members of the troop were observed in town during June, the adult male, ONM2's, collar indicated that he made two brief incursions in the urban area but without being directly observed. This month the troop foraged more widely than normal and spent approximately five days foraging and sleeping in the mountains and valleys directly above and to the east of Hawston.

Both the Hamilton-Russel and Vogelgat Troops were seen infrequently during June, with the former directly observed on only nine days. The lack of a collar any member of the Vogelgat Troop was a significant factor in the lack of observations of this troop. Given the inclement weather, it was challenging to maintain visual contact with the troop because the baboons were either obscured or sought shelter in the rain. Fortunately, none of the Vogelgat Troop entered the urban area this month and most of their activity was centered around the Hermanus Yacht Club area.

## OVERSTRAND EAST TROOPS

### VOËLKLIP TROOP

#### IN TOWN STATISTICS

- Troop time out of town remained at 100% during June.
- Time out of town for individuals decreased from 99.8% during May to 98.3% in June.

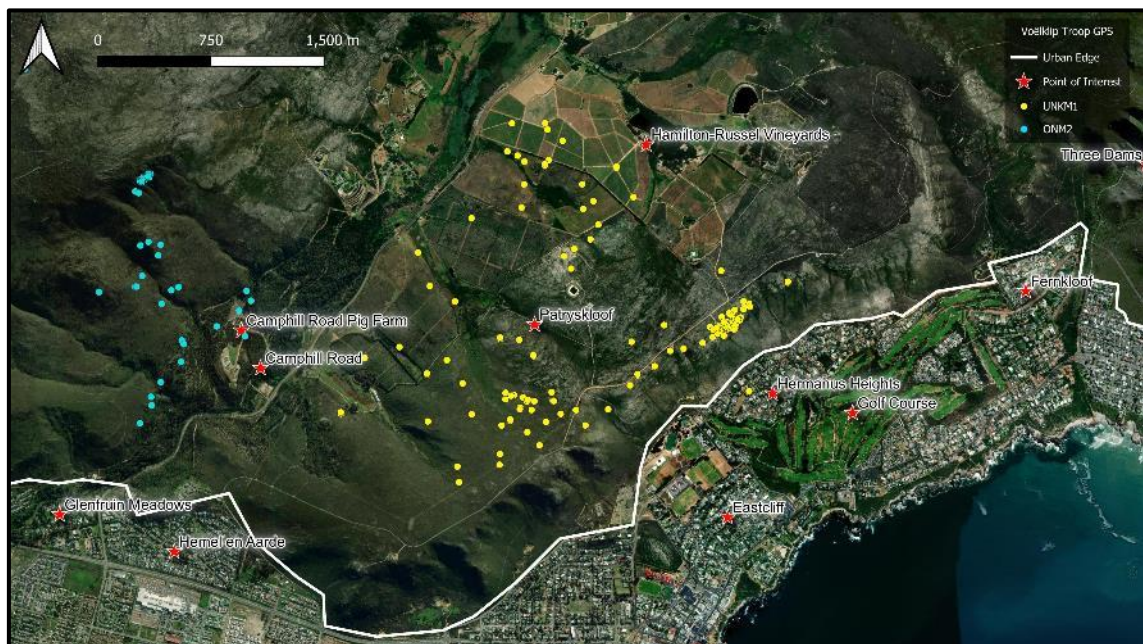
	% Out of Town	% Up or Down from Previous Month	Days Entered	Total Time in Town	Avg Time in Town per day	Max Daily Time in Town	Min Daily Time in Town
<b>Troop</b>	100.0	0.0	0	0:00	00:00	00:00	00:00
<b>Individuals</b>	98.3	-1.1	3	5:03	1:41	02:28	00:40

**Table 1.** In Town Statistics for the Voëlklip Troop for June 2024. Time is expressed in hours and minutes. Average daylength in June was 9 hours and 53 minutes.

#### NOTEWORTHY INCIDENTS

- Individuals from the Voelklip Troop were present in town on three days during the month, with the young male (VKM7) the individual most frequently seen in town. In total, they spent approximately five hours and three minutes in town. No assertive behaviour (threatening behaviour or house incursions) was directly observed but one occupied house raid was reported via the baboon hotline. One bin raid, at the Bosko School on the urban edge was reported via the hotline on 14 June
- The Voëlklip Troop utilised the sleep site above Hermanus Heights intensively during June. Overall the troop did not range widely during the month, with foraging behaviour focused primarily between Camphill Road and the cliffs above Hermanus Heights. (Figure 1).
- On Saturday 15 June 2024 it was noticed that the collar readings for the alpha male (UNKM1) of the Voëlklip Troop had not been received since 10h30 the previous day. At 11h35 a search was undertaken around the area of the last collar reading. The search did not reveal any evidence of the collar or the baboon, which was not with the troop. Field rangers continued to search for UNKM1 or his collar throughout the weekend, but no evidence of either was found.
- On Sunday 16 June a male presumed to be UNKM1 was seen by HWS Rangers approaching the Voëlklip Troop. It was presumed to be UNKM1 because a small green tag was apparently seen on the right ear of the animal. This coincides with the small green tag that UNKM1 had on the right ear. Later that day VKM6U and a male (possibly UNMK1) were witnessed chasing each other.
- On Monday 17 June a male, apparently with a small green tag (but no collar), was seen again in the vicinity of the Voëlklip Troop. It was assumed to be UNKM1, but a positive identification by senior Manager was not established. HWS has not radio tagged any other males with a small green tag.
- On Tuesday 18 June more visuals were obtained of a male apparently with a small green tag, however the male only spent some time with the troop in the morning before moving off. There were no further visuals of that male for the remainder of the day. Ongoing searches were undertaken until the end of the month but no further evidence of UNKM1 or his collar was found.

- It was most extraordinary that the radio collar of UNKM1 disappeared and ceased to give any readings after 10h30 on 14 June. At the same time UNKM1 seemed to disappear although a few brief observations were made of a male without a collar but with a short green eartag in his right ear. No visible wounds or blood were observed on any of the males (UNKM1, VKMU6 or VKM7) vying for dominance of this troop.
- The fact that a few rangers reported seeing a short green eartag on the right ear of a male associated with the Voëlklip Troop after 15 June, suggests that UNKM1 was still alive. However there was a dramatic change in the behaviour of this animal. He no longer associated with the troop like an alpha male, but rather was seldom seen and only on the periphery of the troop. HWS' only explanation of these features is that he must have been involved in a serious fight with another male during which his collar was broken off and severely damaged at the same time. All new collars are fitted with hemp rot-off joins so that the collars should fall off after 2 – 3 years. UNKM1's collar was fitted on 5 October 2023 (eight months ago).
- The deaths of two newborns have been attributed to infanticide. One case of infanticide was observed directly, whereas the other death is suspected to be infanticide given the level of inter-male conflict within the troop. These conflicts were primarily between UNKM1 and VKM6U. However, since UNKM1 lost his status, the young male (VKM7) has since become involved in the conflicts. Indeed, it was VKM7 that was seen killing one of the newborns.
- Interestingly, both UNKM1 and VKM6U were both absent from the troop between 26 and 30 June.
- In the absence of the adults males the older females seemed to dictate troop movement and were then followed by VKM7 and the rest of the troop.
- On 19 June, a pellet gun was fired from a building on the Southern Right Wine Farm at the Voëlklip Troop as they traversed the property. No injuries from this incident were observed. This shooting was reported to the appropriate authorities.



**Figure 1.** Map showing the movements (yellow) of the Voëlklip Troop in June 2024 based on the GPS collar fitted to UNKM1.

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: June		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																																																							
UNKM1 GREEN TAG	M																																																						
VKM6UJ	M																																																						
VKF4 YELLOW TAG	F																																																						
VKF5 RED TAG	F						1																									1																							
VKF1 GREEN TAG	F																																																						
VKF6 ORANGE TAG	F																																																						
VKF7 PINK TAG	F																																																						
VKM7	M	1					1																									2																							
UnID Male	M																																																						
UnID Sub-Male	M																																																						
UnID Sub-Males	M																																																						
UnID Males	M																																																						
UnID Females	F												1																			1																							
UnID Female	F																																																						
UnID Individuals		1											1																			2																							
UnID Juveniles																																																							
	%	TIME SPENT IN TOWN (Minutes)																														HRS																							
Troop	0.0																															0.00																							
Individuals	1.7	40					148					115																				5.05																							
Roost:	AM	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	28	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	4	5	5	3	3	4	4																								
Roost:	PM	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	28	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	4	5	4	3	3	4	4	4																							
Roost Sites	1	Golf Course										2	Heights Dam										3	Green Kloof										4	Platte Klip										5	Adder Ladder									
	6	Lower Dam										7	Middle Dam										8	Upper Dam										9	Dragon's Back										10	Droë Kloof									
	11	Blaaie Kloof										12	Big Titanic/Cave										13	Small Titanic										14	10th Ave Kloof										15	11th Ave Kloof									
	16	A-Shape										17	Bos Klip										18	Hermanus Heights										19	Steyn's Kloof										20	In Town									
	21	Tallie's Kloof										22	Kanonkop										23	BHB Waterfall										24	Rooklip										25	ZigZag									
	26	9th Avenue Kloof										27	Shade Rock										28	BOSKO										29	Groot Uitkyk										?	Unknown									
ID Features of Baboons																																																							
General remarks																																																							

Figure 2. The Voëlkliip Troop incident sheet for June 2024.

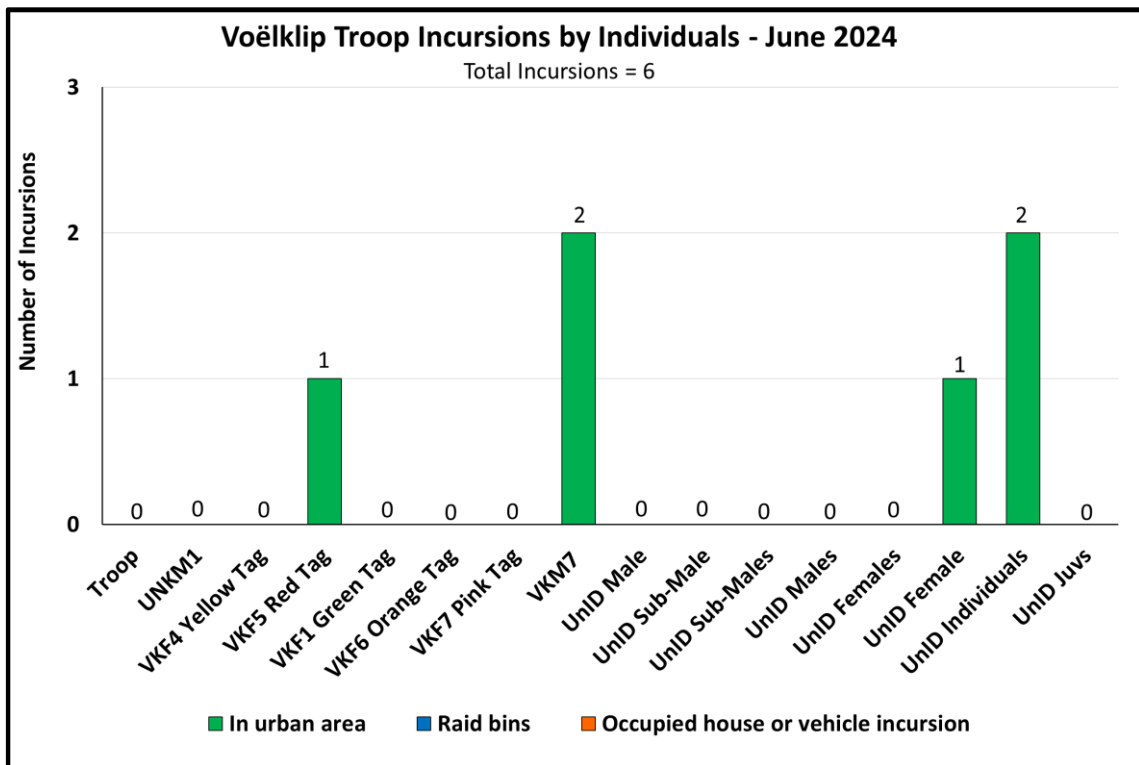


Figure 3. The Voëlkliip Troop Incursion summary graph for June 2024.

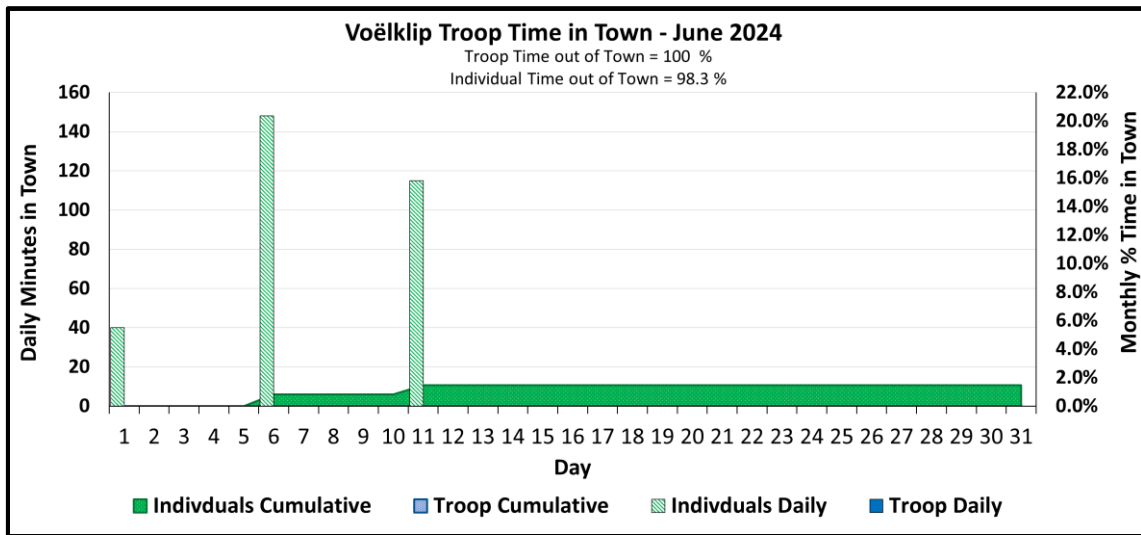


Figure 4. The Voëlkliip Troop Time out of Town summary graph for June 2024.

## VOGELGAT TROOP

### IN TOWN STATISTICS

- Time out of Town for the troop remained at 100% during June.
- Time out of Town for individuals remained at 100% during June.

	% Out of Town	% Up or Down from Previous Month	Days Entered	Total Time in Town	Avg Time in Town per day	Max Daily Time in Town	Min Daily Time in Town
<b>Troop</b>	100.0	0.0	0	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
<b>Individuals</b>	100.0	0.0	0	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00

Table 2. In Town Statistics for the Vogelgat Troop for June 2024. Time is expressed in hours and minutes. Average daylength in June was 9 hours and 53 minutes.

### NOTEWORTHY INCIDENTS

- Since the death of VGF2 the Vogelgat Troop has not had a radio collar fitted to any member of the troop. This has made it difficult to locate the troop in the dense mountain vegetation. The adverse weather conditions during June contributed to this challenge because the troop sought shelter from the strong winds and rain. As such, there were 14 days in June where the Vogelgat Troop was not seen. Furthermore, due to the loss of VGF2 and her radio collar, HWS was unable to determine the full foraging area of the troop during June.
- No members of the Vogelgat Troop were observed, or reported, entering the urban area during June.

HWS: TROOP MONTHLY REPORT																																																	
SECTOR		CLASSES OF BEHAVIOUR																																															
OVERSTRAND		1	In urban area	4	Attacking pets	7	Threatening behaviour/ attacking/ stealing food																																										
BABOON TROOP:	VOGELGAT	2	Raid bins	5	Raid unoccupied house or vehicle	8	Breaking & Entering/Damaging property																																										
MONTH: June	YEAR: 2024	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																																																	
UnID Male	M																																																
UnID Males	M																																																
UnID Females	F																																																
UnID Female	F																																																
UnID Individual																																																	
UnID Individuals																																																	
UnID Juveniles																																																	
UnID Juvenile																																																	
	%	TIME SPENT IN TOWN (Minutes)																													HRS																		
Troop	0.0																															0.00																	
Individuals	0.0																															0.00																	
Roost:	AM	?	19	15	1	?	?	?	15	15	?	?	19	19	?	20	?	?	?	19	6	?	?	?	?	15	?	19	20	19																			
Roost:	PM	19	15	1	?	?	?	15	?	?	19	19	?	?	?	?	?	?	19	6	?	?	?	?	15	?	19	20	19	?																			
Roost Sites		1	Baboon Castle	2	18th Ave Kloof	3	11th Ave Kloof	4	10th Ave Kloof	5	Uitkyk Punt	6	Vogelgat Nature Reserve	7	Halfway Ridge	8	Bosklip	9	Groot Uitkyk	10	1st Kloof	11	2nd Kloof	12	3rd Kloof	13	4th Kloof	14	17th Avenue Kloof	15	Waterfall	16	A Shape	17	Bitterbiesie	18	Maanskyknop	19	Stillwaters	20	Maanskynbaal SS	21	Lagoon SS	22	Southwinds	23	Blue Crane	?	Unknown
ID Features of Baboons																																																	
General remarks		Please note that the numbers in red indicate non-urban raids or incursions.																																															

Figure 5. The Vogelgat Troop incident sheet for June 2024.

## ONRUS TROOP

### IN TOWN STATISTICS

- Time out of Town for the troop remained at 100% during June.
- Time out of Town for individuals remained at 100% during June.

	% Out of Town	% Up or Down from Previous Month	Days Entered	Total Time in Town	Avg Time in Town per day	Max Daily Time in Town	Min Daily Time in Town
<b>Troop</b>	100.0	0.0	0	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
<b>Individuals</b>	100.0*	0.0	0	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00

Table 3. In Town Statistics for the Onrus Troop for June 2024. Time is expressed in hours and minutes. Average daylength in June was 9 hours and 53 minutes. \* Individuals present in town (indicated by collar readings) but were not directly observed.

### NOTEWORTHY INCIDENTS

- During June the Onrus Troop was observed ranging over a much broader area than in the previous three months of being fitted with a GPS radio collar. Towards the end of the month the troop spent a period of eight days largely in western section of their home range and foraging in the mountains overlooking However, for the remainder of the month the troop’s activity was centred around Owl Rock and the Camphill Pig Farm. Here the troop spent a significant amount of time foraging in the *Eucalyptus* forest above the pig farm.
- On 27 June members of the Onrus Troop managed to gain access to feed at the pig farm. This was the only occasion of the month during which the baboons managed to enter the farm and access the pig feed.
- No individuals from the Onrus Troop were observed in town. However, ONM2’s radio collar



indicated that he was present in town briefly on two days (26 and 29 June) of the month. On both occasions the troop was kept out of the urban area but ONM2 managed to avoid the rangers without being noticed.



Figure 6. Map showing the movements (blue) of the Onrus Troop in June 2024 based on the GPS collar fitted to ONM2.

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	30	TOTAL
BABOON TROOP:	ONRUS																															
MONTH: June	YEAR: 2024																															
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																																
ONM2	M																										1			1		
UnID Male	M																															
UnID Males	M																															
UnID Females	F																															
UnID Female	F																															
UnID Individual																																
UnID Individuals																																
UnID Juveniles																																
UnID Juvenile																																
	%	TIME SPENT IN TOWN (Minutes)																													HRS	
Troop	0.0																															
Individuals	0.0																															
Roost:	AM	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	5	5	5	3	3	3	5	5	1	1	4	1	
Roost:	PM	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	5	5	5	3	3	3	5	?	1	1	4	1	4	
Roost Sites		1 Leopard Rock					2 Owl Rock					3 Waterfall					4 Camphill					5 Hawston										
ID Features of Baboons		6 Berghof					?																									
General remarks		Please note that the numbers in red indicate non-urban raids or incursions.																														

Figure 7. The Onrus Troop incident sheet for June 2024.

## HAMILTON RUSSELL

- The Hamilton Russell Troop was observed on nine days during June.
- The Hamilton Russell Troop spent the majority of its time foraging between Volmoed Valley and Camphill Farm, with the troop most frequently seen near the Plaaskombuis Restaurant. On 3 June an adult male was seen with an injury to its hind leg.

## VIRTUAL FENCE

- The virtual fence was used on eight days during June.
- The majority (five) of the activations were used to deter the Onrus Troop, with two and one activations used for the Vogelgat and Voëlklip Troops respectively.

## GENERAL COMMENTS

### POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Three births were recorded in the managed troops in the Overstrand East during June, with all three births occurring in the Voëlklip Troop. Two deaths were recorded. It is assumed that both deaths were the result of infanticide. One of the deaths was directly observed, with VKM7 seen killing one of the newborns. The other death was not observed but given the high levels of intra-male conflict during June, it is highly likely that this infant was killed by one of the adult males.

The June end of management year count showed that the Overstrand East baboon troops remained stable from a year on year perspective with the total population only increasing from 115 in June 2023 to 118 in June 2024. The Onrus and Vogelgat Troops showed quite large mid year fluctuations, but these were most likely the result of these two troops being under counted in the thick and mountainous vegetation they typically inhabit.

Troop	October	June	June	June	June	January	June	June 2024			Total observed Births (1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024)	Total observed Deaths (1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024)	Total observed Migrations (1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024)
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024	Births	Deaths	Emigration / Immigration			
Voëlklip	29	29	27	37	39	44	43	3	2	0	6	3	+1
Vogelgat	N/A	22*	29	27	27*	17	23	0	0	0	0	2	0
Onrus	N/A	N/A	25*	24*	24*	18	25	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hamilton Russel	N/A	N/A	21*	25	25*	31	27	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>

**Table 4 .** Population data for the managed troops in the Overstrand in June 2024. Emigration and Immigration figures show animal movements between troops. \* Troop sizes were estimated when accurate counts were not feasible. Note: **Troop numbers are counted twice a year in December and June.** Troop numbers are not updated during the year by just counting births and deaths, because these may occur without being observed by field rangers..

Deaths	2019/20 (October - June)	2020/21 (July - June)	2021/22 (July 2021 - June 2022)	2022/23 (July 2022 - June 2023)	2023/24 (July 2023 - June 2024)	June 2024	TOTAL (since October 2019)
Management	3	0	1	0	0	0	4
Human Induced (HID)	1	2	9	10	1	0	22
Direct *	1	2	8	8	1	0	19
Indirect **	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Natural	2	7	7	4	3	2	20
Unknown	0	0	2	2	1	0	4
<b>TOTAL DEATHS</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>55</b>

**Table 5.** Causes of baboon deaths since December 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**

A total of eighteen hotline calls were received during June. Fifteen calls were received from managed areas, with ten calls made concerning baboon incursion behaviour (**Table 6**). Two calls were received concerning the Onrus Troop, one reporting the presence of baboons at the Southern Right Farm and one reporting the presence of baboons near the urban edge. Ten hotline calls were received with regards to the Voëklip Troop with seven reporting the presence of baboons in the urban area. Only one call reported an assertive raid, and that was an occupied house raid in Fernkloof Estate. Three calls were received from Hamilton Russel Vineyards concerning the behaviour of the Voëklip Troop.

<b>Troop</b>	<b>Number of Calls received</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Types of Call</b>
Onrus Troop	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Southern Right Farms (1)</li> <li>Leopard Rock Estate (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reporting Baboon location (2)</li> </ul>
Voëklip Troop	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hermanus Heights (6)</li> <li>Fernkloof (4)</li> <li>Hamilton Russel (3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reporting Baboon location (7)</li> <li>Reporting non-urban location (3)</li> <li>Bin raid (2)</li> <li>Occupied House Raid (1)</li> </ul>
Unmanaged Troops	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pringle Bay (2)</li> <li>Franschoek (1)</li> </ul>	

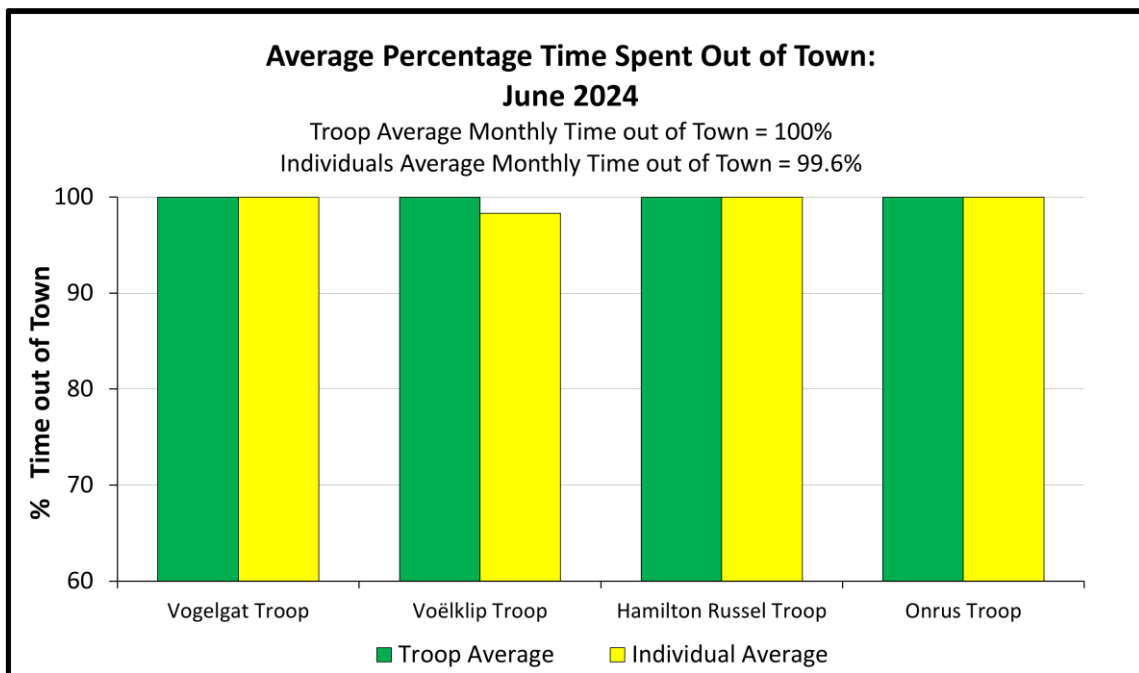
**Table 6.** Overstrand hotline call data for June 2024.

## **RECORDED INCURSIONS**

A total of six incursions were recorded by HWS Rangers during June. All of the incursions were attributed to the Voëklip Troop. Other than being recorded in the urban area, no other incursion behaviour was observed by HWS Rangers during the month. It should be noted that one bin raid and one occupied house raid was reported via the hotline, with both incidents being attributed to members of the Voëklip Troop.

## **PERCENTAGE TIME OUT OF TOWN**

The average time spent out of town by troops in the eastern Overstrand during June did not change, staying at 100%. Individual time out of town decreased from 99.99% to 99.6% due to the increased amount of time spent in town by members of the Voëklip Troop (1hr 57min in May to 5h 3min in June). It is important to note that any time spent in town can only be calculated if members of the HWS field team observe baboons in the urban area.



**Figure 8.** Percentage time the managed baboon troops and individuals spent out of town during June 2024.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Waste and recycling collection should be prioritized** to take place in the early mornings and starting on the edge of town and working inwards.
- Residents should **not** put out their waste **the night before** collection day because this may encourage baboons to raid that evening or early the next morning.
- **Refuse bags** should never be left lying open on the sidewalk and easily available to baboons.
- All bins used in baboon effected areas should be **baboon-proof and locked**.
- **Open vegetable gardens** should be baboon proofed.
- Ripening fruits should be removed from fruiting trees.
- Residents are strongly discouraged from feeding wildlife, including birds. Bird seed is a powerful attractant for baboons.
- Residents are encouraged to record and report the feeding of wildlife to the municipality, CapeNature, or to the baboon hotline (072 028 0008).
- Dogs should always be on a leash when walking in an area where baboons June be present. This is mandatory in the Fernkloof Nature Reserve.

## **CONCLUSION**

Generally during winter baboons in the western Cape often make extra efforts to raid farms or villages for food. This June three of the four managed baboons in the Overstrand East remained 100% out of town. In the fourth troop, the Voëlkip Troop, only a few individuals made incursions into the urban area, and were in town for a total of about five hours spread over three days.

What was of much greater significance to the troop was that the adult males in the troop, the alpha male, UNKM1, the intruder male, VKM6U, and a young adult male, VKM7, all engaged in a great deal of fighting and chasing during June. The result at the end of the month was that the alpha male appeared to have been deposed and was also no longer seen around the troop. Furthermore, this male's collar fell off or was torn off and it also stopped working, thus leaving the troop again without a collared individual to record the daily movements of the troop. In the absence of the alpha male, two out of three infants born during June were killed in bouts of infanticide, at least one by the young male VKM7.

The Onrus Troop saw an improvement in their behaviour during June, with no assertive behaviour recorded for any member of the troop. Furthermore, members of the troop were only able to access food at the pig farm on one day, despite spending a significant portion of their time foraging in the *Eucalyptus* forest surrounding the farm. The Onrus Troop was managed using the Virtual Fence on five occasions during June. This kept the troop out of town, although the collared male did manage to make two brief incursions into the urban area.

### **Human Wildlife Solutions**