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Overstrand

Monthly Report

May 2024

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INTRODUCTION

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

During May the Voëlklip Troop spent most of its time near Rotary Way, foraging in the area to the south and east of Hamilton-Russel Vineyards. This continued the movement trend observed during the previous month. Despite the intense utilization of sleep sites above Hermanus Heights, members of the Voëlklip Troop only managed to access town for very brief periods over the course of five days during May. No assertive behaviour was recorded, and individuals spent on average 23 minutes in town when they did manage to enter.

One highly significant event that took place in May was the death of VGF2, the collared adult female in the Vogelgat Troop. VGF2 was found on 5 May on a property above the R43. The cause of death is unknown, with no external indications as to what killed VGF2. This death created a major setback for the management of the troop because HWS field staff can no longer monitor the movements of the troop remotely just by logging in on their mobile devices. Instead, the field rangers have to rely on locating the baboons either visually, or by listening for their calls. As such, the ability of field staff to preempt troop movements towards town has been significantly reduced.

The Onrus Troop displayed a slight decline in its raiding behaviour during May. Some members from the troop were reported in town briefly on one day during the month, and one non-urban occupied house raid by ONM2 and an adult female was recorded. Despite this, the troop remained out of town for the whole month and the new collar fitted to ONM2 allowed field staff to preempt several other attempts that the troop made to enter town.

OVERSTRAND EAST TROOPS

VOËLKLIP TROOP

IN TOWN STATISTICS

- Troop time out of town remained at 100% during May.
- Time out of town for individuals decreased from 99.8% during April to 99.4% in May.

	% 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
Troop	100.0	0.0	0	0:00	00:00	00:00	00:00
Individuals	99.4	-0.5	5	1:57	0:23	00:44	00:09

Table 1. In Town Statistics for the Voëlklip Troop for May 2024. Time is expressed in hours and minutes. Average daylength in May was 10 hours and 19 minutes.

NOTEWORTHY INCIDENTS

- Several individuals from the Voëlklip Troop, namely VKF5 (red tagged female) and unidentified sub-adult males and females, were present in town on five days during the month. In total, they spent approximately 1 hour and 57 minutes in town. No assertive behaviour (threatening behaviour or house incursions) was recorded.
- At 09h21 a hotline text reported a baboon in town, near 20 Fernkloof Drive. By 09h35 there was still no sign of the individual in town. At 09h46 VKF5 was seen moving towards the troop from the paragliders launch off site on the cliffs overlooking Hermanus Heights.
- UNKM1 and VK6U continued to fight through out the month, often spending prolonged periods away from the troop during these bouts of conflict. UNKM1 continued to be successful in preventing VKM6U from joining the troop fully. VKM6U spent the majority of his time slightly apart from the troop, but often associated with VKF5 or other females.
- On 7 May UNKM1 was seen with blood on his shoulder, likely due to conflict with VKM6U. Similarly, VKM6U was observed limping on May 8. Both injuries appeared to have been minor because both individuals recovered quickly.
- The Voëlklip Troop utilised the western portion of its home range extensively during the month and rarely headed north past Hamilton-Russel Vineyards or east into Fernkloof Nature reserve (Figure 1). Sleeping activity was concentrated at sleep sites on the cliffs above Hermanus Heights.

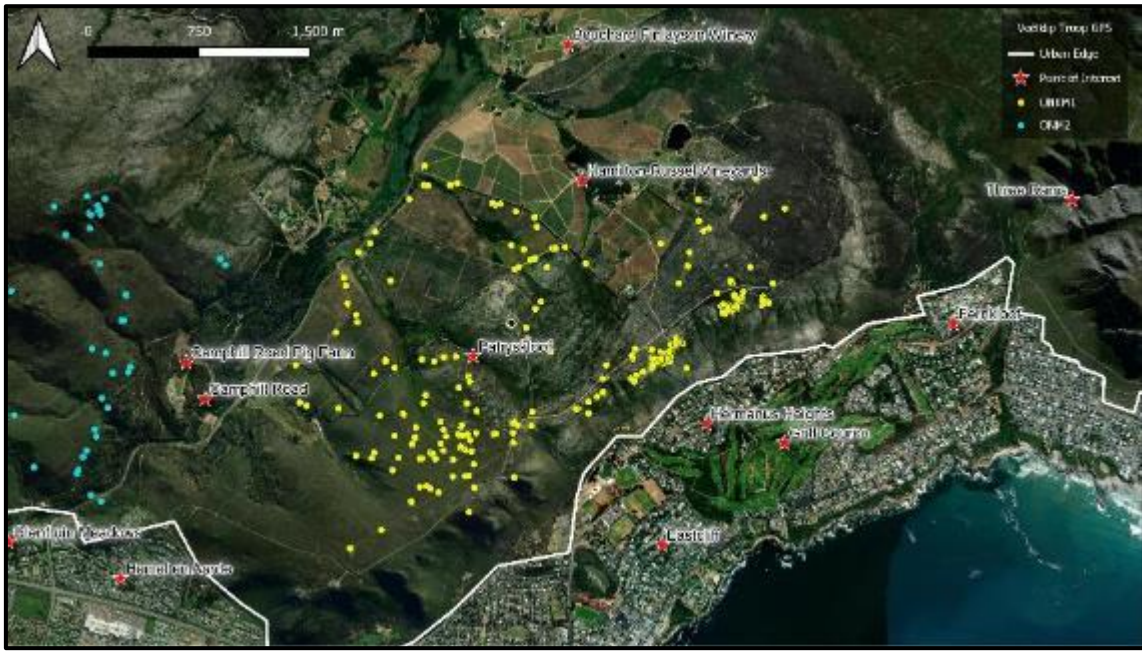


Figure 1. Map showing the movements (yellow) of the Voëlkliip Troop in May 2024 based on the GPS collar fitted to UNKM1. GPS data for the Onrus Troop are in blue.

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	31	TOTAL		
BABOON TROOP: Voëlkliip		VOËLKLIIP		1 In urban area		4 Attacking pets		7 Threatening behaviour/ attacking/ stealing food		2 Raid bins		5 Raid unoccupied house or vehicle		8 Breaking & Entering/Damaging property		3 Non malicious damage		6 Raid occupied house or vehicle		9 Nocturnal Raiding															
MONTH: May		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	31	TOTAL		
Troop																																			
UNKM1 GREEN TAG	M																																		
VKM6U	M																																		
VKF4 YELLOW TAG	F																																		
VKF5 RED TAG	F				1																													1	
VKF1 GREEN TAG	F																																		
VKF6 ORANGE TAG	F																																		
VKF7 PINK TAG	F																																		
UnID Male	M																																		
UnID Sub-Male	M																											1						1	
UnID Sub-Males	M																																		
UnID Males	M																																		
UnID Females	F																																		
UnID Female	F																							1					1			1		3	
UnID Individuals																																			
UnID Juveniles																																			
		%	TIME SPENT IN TOWN (Minutes)																												HRS				
Troop		0.0																																0.00	
Individuals		0.6			15																			13				44	9			36		1.95	
Roost:	AM	18	2	18	18	18	2	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	2	18	18	2	2	18	2	18	18	18	2	2			
Roost:	PM	2	18	18	18	2	18	18	18	2	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	2	18	18	2	2	18	2	18	18	18	2	2			
Roost Sites	1	Golf Course		2	Heights Dam		3	Green Kloof		4	Platte Klip		5	Adler 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	Hermonus 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 May 2024.

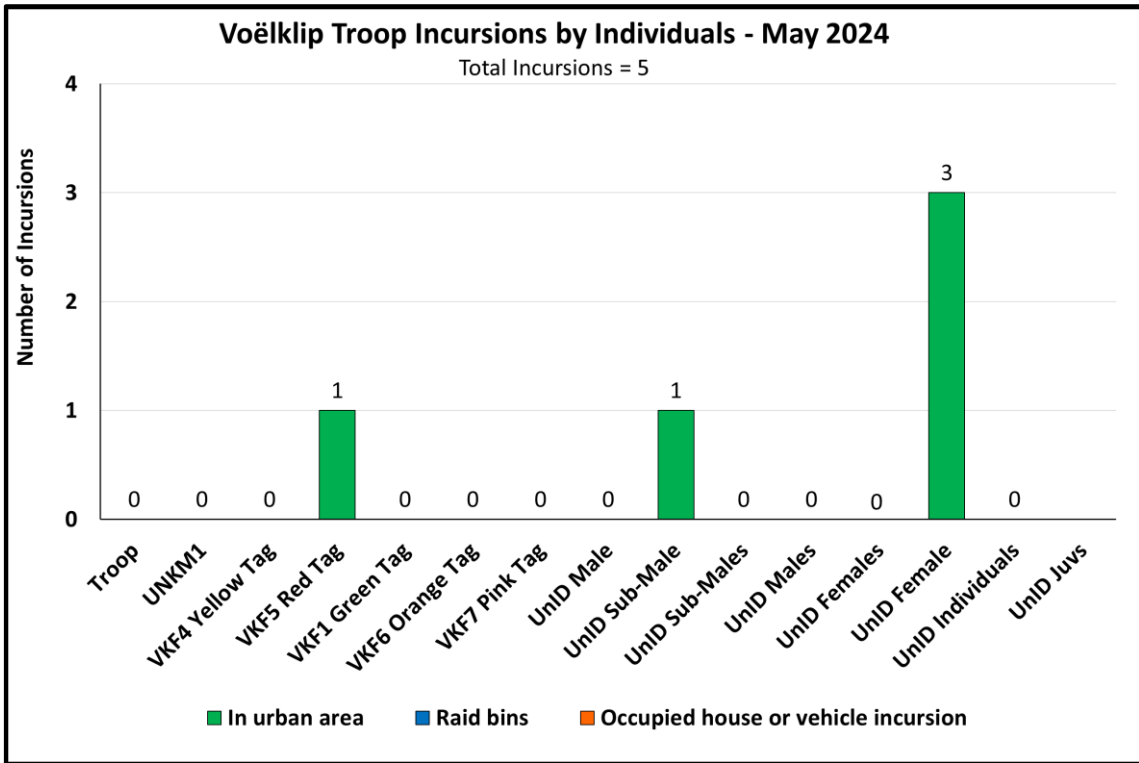


Figure 3. The Voëklip Troop Incursion summary graph for May 2024.

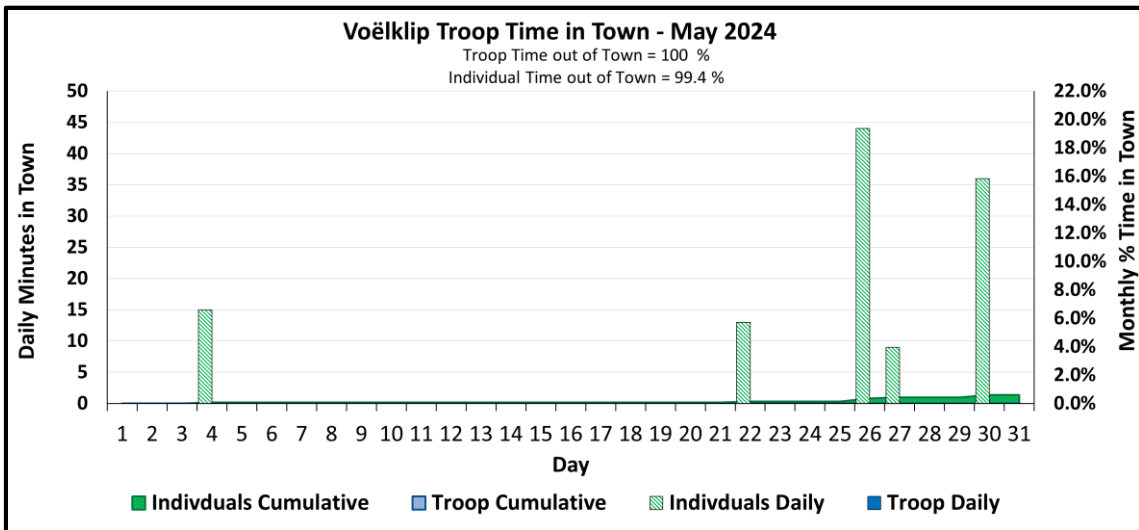


Figure 4. The Voëklip Troop Time out of Town summary graph for May 2024.

VOGELGAT TROOP

IN TOWN STATISTICS

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

	% 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
Troop	100.0	0.0	0	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
Individuals	100.0	0.0	0	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00

Table 2. In Town Statistics for the Vogelgat Troop for May 2024. Time is expressed in hours and minutes. Average daylength in May was 10 hours and 19 minutes.

NOTEWORTHY INCIDENTS

- On May 3 the collar fitted to VGF2 indicated that VGF2 had hardly moved during the course of the day. This inactivity prompted a search on May 4 to determine the status of VGF2 and the collar. On 5 May VGF2 was found deceased on a property on the northern side of the R43. The cause of death is uncertain, because there were no external indications on the body of VGF2. The female's body was sent for an autopsy and tested for toxins, but no evidence of snake bite or poisoning were obtained.
- On 7 May a hotline report was received informing HWS about a dead baboon on the R43 east of Hermanus. No location was provided in the report. After searching the stretch of R43 from Hermanus to the edge of Stanford, no body was found. It is likely that this report concerned an individual from an unmanaged troop residing east of the Vogelgat Troop.
- No members of the Vogelgat Troop were observed entering the urban area during May. One hotline call was received on 8 May reporting baboons near the OK supermarket in Voëlklip. Field staff searched the area but did not detect any baboons.
- The troop spent the majority of the month foraging in the vicinity of Stillwaters Farm and the Hermanus Yacht Club. Unfortunately, due to the loss of VGF2 and her radio collar, HWS was unable to determine the full foraging area of the troop during May.

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: May 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	31	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	21	23	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
Roost:	PM	23	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
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 Maanskynkop	19 Stillwaters	20 Maanskynbaai 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 May 2024.

ONRUS TROOP

IN TOWN STATISTICS

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

	% 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
Troop	100.0	0.0	0	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
Individuals	100.0	0.0	0	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00

Table 2. In Town Statistics for the Onrus Troop for May 2024. Time is expressed in hours and minutes. Average daylength in May was 10 hours and 19 minutes.

NOTEWORTHY INCIDENTS

- The Onrus Troop foraged in a fairly small area during May, utilising the mountains above Onrusrivier North and Glenfruin Meadows, and extending inland to the valleys above the Camphill Road Pig Farm. The troop appeared to have utilised only three sleep sites during the month.
- On 11 May, a hotline call reported several male baboons moving down from Owl Rock to Glen Street. When HWS field staff arrived in the area the troop was spotted on the mountain above Owl Rock Road. The virtual fence was activated in the evening to prevent the troop from descending the mountain again.
- On 14 May a hotline call was received reporting an out of town occupied house raid by an adult male baboon wearing a collar (ONM2). ONM2 was accompanied by a female baboon. The house in question was on the Southern Right Farm. The troop was steered away from the farm when HWS field staff arrived.



Figure 6. Map showing the movements (blue) of the Onrus Troop in May 2024 based on the GPS collar fitted to ONM2. GPS data for the Voëlklip Troop are illustrated in yellow.

HWS: TROOP MONTHLY REPORT																																	
SECTOR		CLASSES OF BEHAVIOUR																															
OVERSTRAND		1 In urban area	4 Attacking pets	7 Threatening behaviour/ attacking/ stealing food																													
BABOON TROOP:	ONRUS	2 Raid bins	5 Raid unoccupied house or vehicle	8 Breaking & Entering/Damaging property																													
MONTH: May	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	31	TOTAL
Troop																																	
ONM2	M																																
UnID Male	M																																
UnID Males	M																																
UnID Females	F																																
UnID Female	F																																
UnID Individual												1																					
UnID Individuals																																	
UnID Juveniles																																	
UnID Juvenile																																	
	%	TIME SPENT IN TOWN (Minutes)																													HRS		
Troop	0.0																																
Individuals	0.0											*																					
Roost:	AM	1	3	3	3	?	?	?	3	?	3	1	1	3	3	1	3	3	3	?	1	?	?	3	3	1	3	?	?	?	?	3	
Roost:	PM	3	3	3	3	?	3	3	3	3	1	1	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	1	?	?	3	3	1	3	?	?	?	?	3		
Roost Sites		1 Leopard Rock		2 Owl Rock		3 Waterfall		4 Camphill		5 Hawston																							
ID Features of Baboons		6 Berghof		?		Unknown																											
General remarks		Please note that the numbers in red indicate non-urban raids or incursions.																															

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

HAMILTON RUSSELL

- The Hamilton Russell Troop was observed on 23 days during May.
- The Hamilton Russell Troop spent a significant time foraging between Volmoed Valley and Camphill Farm.

VIRTUAL FENCE

- The virtual fence was used on three days during May.

- All activations were used to deter the Onrus Troop from entering town near the Leopard Rock sleep site. The first activation was on the evening of 11 May; the second was on the morning of the 20 May; and the last activation was in the morning of 25 May.

GENERAL COMMENTS

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

No births were recorded in the managed troops in the Overstrand East during May. Additionally, no migration activity was noted during the month. One death was recorded. VGF2 was found deceased on 5 May. The cause of death was unknown.

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

Table 3. Population data for the managed troops in the Overstrand in May 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)	May 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	1	0	20
Unknown	0	0	2	2	1	0	4
TOTAL DEATHS	6	9	19	16	3	0	53

Table 4. 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 13 hotline calls were received during May. Nine calls were received from managed areas, with four calls made concerning baboon incursion behaviour (**Table 5**). Three calls were received concerning the Onrus Troop, one reporting the presence of baboons in the urban area and two reporting non-urban baboon activity on the Southern Right Farm (including one occupied house raid). Five calls were received from the Hermanus Heights area. Two of these calls reported the presence of baboons in the urban area, with three calls reporting baboon vocalizations on the mountains above the suburb. Lastly, one hotline call was received from Voëlklip reporting the presence of baboons in the vicinity of the OK supermarket. Three calls were received from unmanaged areas, all three concerning baboons in Pringle Bay.

Troop	Number of Calls received	Area	Types of Call
Onrus Troop	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southern Right Farms (2) Chanteclair (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting Baboon location (2)
Voëlklip Troop	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hermanus Heights (5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting Baboon location (2) Reporting Non-urban location (3)
Vogelgat Troop	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voëlklip (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting Baboon location (1)
Unmanaged Troops	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pringle Bay (3) 	

Table 5. Overstrand hotline call data for May 2024.

RECORDED INCURSIONS

A total of six incursions were recorded during May. The majority of the incursions were attributed to the Voëlklip Troop (five), with one incursion by a member of the Onrus Troop. No assertive incursion behaviour was recorded during the month. All incursion behaviour was classed as being “in the urban area”.

PERCENTAGE TIME OUT OF TOWN

The average time spent out of town by troops in the eastern Overstrand during May did not change, staying at 100%. Individual time out of town remained at 99.99% despite a slight increase in the amount of time spent in town by members of the Voëlklip Troop (15 minutes during April to 1 hour and 57 minutes in May). 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.

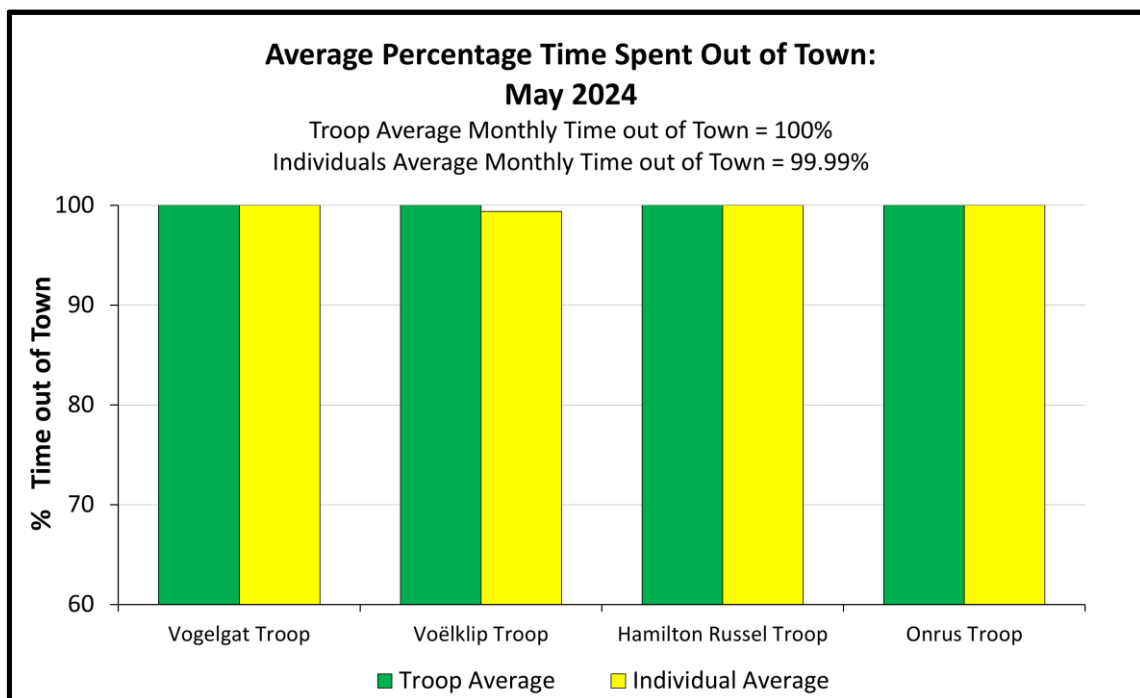


Figure 8. Percentage time the managed baboon troops and individuals spent out of town during May 2024.

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 may be present. This is mandatory in the Fernkloof Nature Reserve.

CONCLUSION

The behaviour of managed baboons in the Overstrand during May was generally positive, with time out of town for individuals and troops above 99.9%. There was a slight increase in the amount of time spent in town by members of the Voëlklip Troop, with individuals having spent 1 hour and 57 minutes in town over the month. Despite this, no assertive behaviour was recorded for any troop within the urban area during the month. One non-urban occupied house raid, committed by ONM2 at a cottage on Southern Right Farm, was recorded. This behaviour is concerning and needs to be actively discouraged to prevent it from becoming a habit within the troop. However, assertive behaviour beyond the urban edge is difficult to manage given the size of the area and complexities regarding access to private land.

The death of VGF2, and the subsequent loss of a collar to monitor the Vogelgat Troop, is the most significant incident to have occurred during May. The cause of VGF2's death is not known. No external injuries were evident and the results of a post-mortem examination did not indicate that the baboon had suffered from poisoning or snake bite. The loss of VGF2's collar will appreciably impact the ability of field staff to monitor the movement behaviour of the Vogelgat Troop and hence the preemptive the use of the Virtual Fence system. Recollaring an individual in the Vogelgat Troop should be considered a high priority in order to facilitate effective management of the troop with the Virtual Fence.

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