

# 3OVERSTRAND ASSESSMENT AND FIRST MONTH OF BABOON MANAGEMENT

**Human Wildlife Solutions, November 2019**

## **October 2019: Hermanus Assessment**

During October 2019, a general assessment was conducted on the Voëlklip Troop in Hermanus. The objective of the assessment was to understand troop numbers and dynamics, movement of the troop and raiding activities.

The Voëlklip Troop was observed for a total of 181 hours during the month of October 2019. During this period the troop entered the urban area on 14 occasions. Seven incursions were into the Voëlklip suburb. The troop also entered Hermanus Heights on two occasions and the Golf Course on five occasions (see Figure 1). Poor waste management seemed to be a major attractant for baboons into the urban environment. A lack of baboon-proofing, open doors and windows, lack of burglar bars and a significant lack of baboon-proof bins were observed.



**Figure 1:** HWS Staff GPS locations while observing the Voëlklip Troop during October 2019.

The Voëlklip Troop predominantly slept at the Voëlklip and Three Dams Sleep Sites (seven nights at each sleep site), on the Hermanus Golf Course (four nights), on the cliff faces above Hermanus Heights (two nights) and the cliff faces East of Fernkloof Nature Reserve Visitor's Centre (two nights) (Figure 2).



**Figure 2:**VoëlklipTroop sleep sites in and around Hermanus, as observed during October 2019.

The Voëlklip Troop size is 28 (Table 1). The Vogelgat Troop was also seen and observed for 19 hours over a period of three days during October 2019. This troop consisted of 18 individuals (Table 1).

Troop	Adult Male	Adult Female	Sub-Adult Male	Juveniles	Troop Total
Voëlklip	1	12	3	12	28
Vogelgat*	1	9	2	6	18

**Table 1:** Voëlklip and Vogelgat Troops sizes with age class structure.\*Based on only two counts.

### **November 2019: Baboon Management in Hermanus and Pringle Bay**

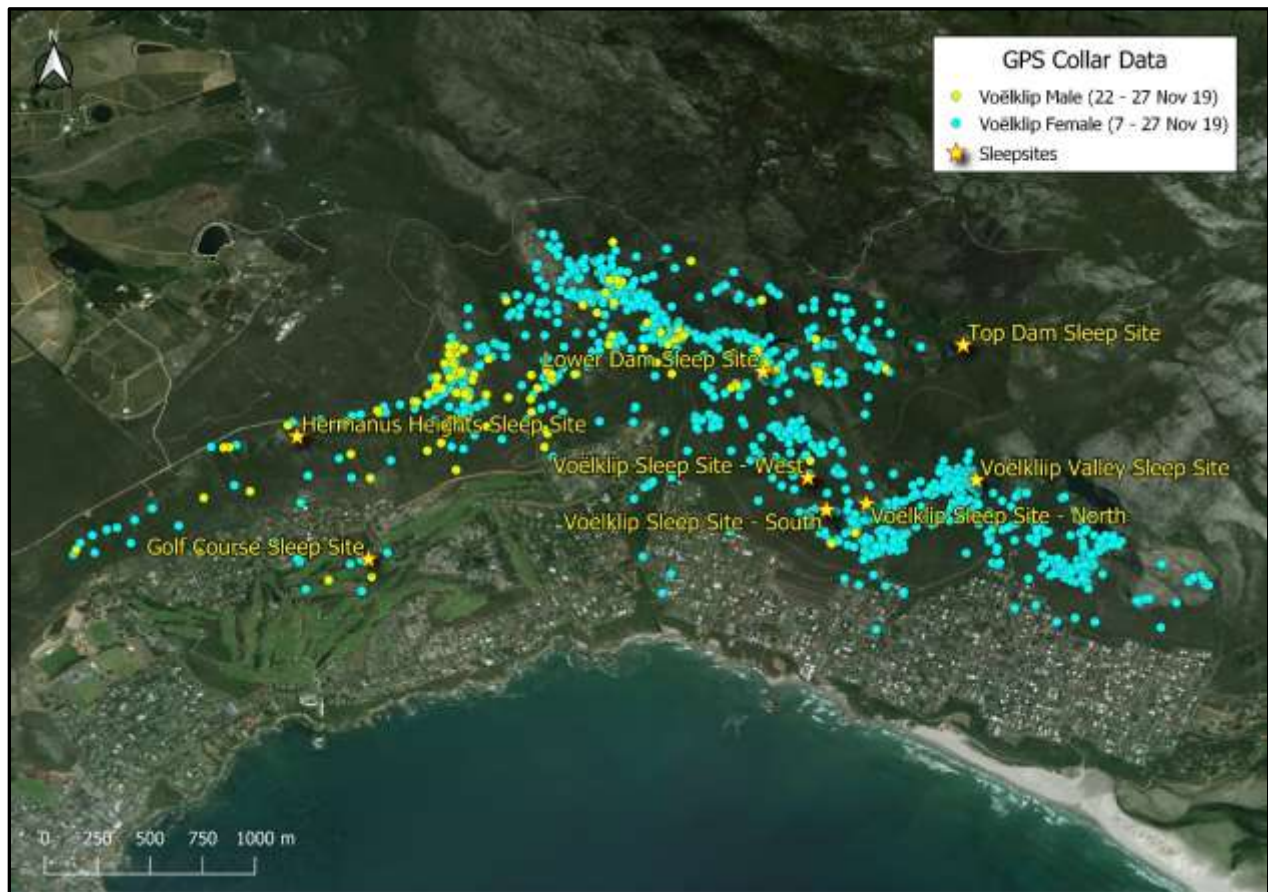
Active management of Overstrand baboons began in November 2019. The management of the Pringle Bay Troop continued in a similar manner to what was being done before, whilst being financed by the local resident's association. It is now being managed by HWS. Because of the lack of funds, they are not going to be using the virtual fence over the next 8 months, but only use paintball markers.

There are two teams of three persons (two rangers and a supervisor) operating on four day shifts from dawn to dusk in Pringle Bay. No data are available at present, except that the troop was mostly out of town to the north of Pringle Bay in the mountains. This movement seems to be largely because of the presence of the Hangklip Troop appearing on the southern edge of town occasionally over the last two weeks. No Pringle Bay baboons have been collared recently. Two attempts have been made, but because the troop seemed to be avoiding the larger Hangklip Troop, the troop was seldom seen and generally high up the mountain. The Hangklip Troop needs to be monitored. It cannot be allowed to raid Pringle Bay. It is suggested that at least one adult male in the troop is GPS radio collared.

### **Hermanus: Voelklip Troop Management**

The alpha male and a dominant female have been GPS radio collared this month, and their data are presented in Figure 3. As in Pringle Bay, baboon management in Hermanus is currently being conducted by two teams operating on four day shifts from dawn to dusk. They are currently familiarizing themselves with the terrain on the outskirts of Hermanus and keeping baboons out of town using paintball markers. They are also planning the positioning and activation of the Virtual Fence while allowing a buffer zone around Hermanus. The Virtual Fence will be activated for the first time on 2 December.

Full scale paintball management began on the 8th of November. Over the past 16 days the troop has spent two hours in town. It broke through to the golf course on 25 November for two hours. A few individuals also separated from the rest of the troop and raided Voelklip on 22 November. These raids both equate to approximately 0.9% time in town. To date both the troop and individuals have spent 99.1% time out of town since active management began on 8 November 2019.



**Figure 3:** GPS collar locations for the alpha male and a dominant female in Voelklip Troop. Note the female collar is transmitting GPS locations every 10 minutes. The male collar is transmitting at 30 minute intervals.

### Other Troops

The Vogelgat Troop has not been seen this month. The Hamilton Russel Troop has been reported on the slopes above Hermanus Heights on two occasions. On both occasions they were observed foraging just above the urban edge. It is therefore suggested that at least one GPS radio collar is put onto this troop and that the Virtual Fence is used on it to scare it away from becoming a raiding troop in Hermanus in the future. The same applies to the Vogelgat Troop which was observed as far west as the corner of 9th Street and 9th Avenue during October.

The October assessment report will be finalised and submitted this week.

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