

BABOONS ON YOUR PROPERTY

Baboons are attracted by food and enter the villages with the sole purpose of finding food.

A baboon troop can cause extensive damage to your home, it is therefore essential to effectively manage your property, to make it less attractive to baboons.

- Keep rubbish secure in a baboon-proof dustbin and practice good waste management. Compost should be contained in composting bins.
- The easiest way to get baboons off your property is by turning the hosepipe on them. They hate getting wet!
- Do not leave dog food outside.

BABOONS DO NOT NEED TO BE FED

If baboons know that they are going to get easy rewards, they will return to the source over and over again – be it a village, a camp site, or the roadside where tourists frequent.

If baboons do not forage naturally, the balance of relationships between baboons and nature is disturbed and it disrupts their social relationships in the troop as they learn to rely on human food.

BABOONS AT PICNIC & CAMP SITES

Baboons are intelligent animals and have very nimble fingers. They can unzip, unclip and rip almost anything open – a tent or a backpack keeps nothing safe.

- Where possible, eat at designated areas and don't stop and eat in front of baboons. If baboons arrive, pack up immediately and leave the area.
- Store food in lockable trunks and a lockable camping fridge. If necessary, store food in the boot of your car, and stow away all bags.
- Only use baboon-proof dustbins, if there are none available, do not leave rubbish behind – please take it with you.
- If you go hiking, carry vacuum-packed food.



INITIATIVE OF:



IN COLLABORATION WITH:



- By planting fruit trees and vegetable gardens, you'll be attracting baboons.
- Do not feed wild birds or porcupines as these grains will attract baboons onto your property.
- Burglar proof your home – make sure the bars are not wider than 8cm apart otherwise the juveniles will gain access. The same applies to cat-flaps.
- Do not leave food on display in your house (eg a fruit bowl on a window sill).

BABOONS IN YOUR HOME

If baboons gain access to your home it is important to remain calm and to not block their exit route. If you panic, the baboons could panic and in doing so, may run frantically around the house causing even more damage.

- First and foremost, you must make it obvious that you are confident and serious about getting them out.
- Never try to get food back from a baboon, it will fight to keep it.
- Back off slowly and identify the baboon's shortest escape route.
- To coax a stubborn baboon out your house, try using a water spray bottle (never use anything stronger than water, as they may react negatively).

It is essential baboons are not trapped or cornered whilst in your home; make sure there's an easily accessible escape route – open doors and windows.

BABOONS ON THE ROADSIDE

Please remember to SLOW DOWN when you see baboons on the road – they have little road sense.

Despite the number of injuries and deaths on the road, baboons are attracted to warmth on the roads, road litter and food from cars.

People often stop their cars to watch baboons on the roadside. Many find the baboons engaging and unfortunately some end up feeding them. If you feed them, you are keeping them on the roads and that is how they get killed or maimed for life.

FEEDING A BABOON COULD MEAN ITS DEATH SENTENCE!

Baboons have learnt that humans are a good source of food and can show aggressive behaviour in their efforts to gain access to food. They jump into cars and onto people in their search for food.

Once baboons show aggression, the authorities are forced to shoot them.

- Keep your car windows and doors locked (some baboons have learnt to open car doors).
- Even if you do not have food, they may take any bag thinking it contains food.
- It is not advisable to get out of your car to watch or photograph baboons.

INJURY AND DEATHS OF BABOONS

Baboon numbers in certain troops are declining at an alarming rate. They suffer many injuries and deaths – if the death rate continues at the present pace, the viability of the population will be threatened.

- Hurting the animals solves nothing.
- Pain deterrents are ineffective if animals can still secure the rich rewards of easy food.

Only correct management and strict control will eventually pay off. Baboons have to learn – after many, many years of raiding – that humans no longer offer easy food. This vital change is only possible if every human plays a part in the management process. Hopefully a peaceful legacy will be passed on to future generations of humans and baboons.

THE LAW

Baboons are a protected species in the Western Cape (CapeNature Conservation Laws Amendment Act, 2000, Ordinance 19 of 1974). It is illegal to feed baboons; to poison, trap, hurt or kill a baboon by driving with the intent to kill; hunt by shooting at baboons using a pellet gun, catapult, bow-and-arrow, stoning, setting your dog on them, or use a weapon of any kind in order to injure a baboon; or to keep a baboon in captivity without a permit.

All these offences are punishable by law and carry stiff penalties.