

## **Living with baboons on Sparrebosch**

Some residents may appreciate the fact that wildlife is literally on their doorstep, and enjoy watching baboons interacting with one another.

Whilst baboons are protected by law, we do not want our residents to take up arms against them, and for this reason, we as Trustees will take the relevant actions to manage the baboons in a more proactive manner.



From the recent presentation we had by Cape Nature it transpired that we have the following options:

1. Eliminating / culling some of the male baboons.
2. Relocating of baboons.
3. Management of baboons.

### **We believe the long term option is:**

1. Ensure constant awareness of baboon activities and have all residents buy in on the programme.
2. Improving waste management.
3. Making homes less attractive to the baboons by reduction of available food.
4. Promote baboon proof bins and appropriate baboon proof burglar bars. (refer to document "Wonderbar.pdf" under Downloads).
5. Investigate the feasibility of introducing baboon monitors.

HOA is maintaining contact with Cape Nature and other primatologists to establish a baboon management programme for Sparrebosch which hopefully will result in the residents and baboons living in harmony.

### **Sparrebosch Action Plan**

1. With immediate effect we have assigned two persons to monitor the baboons. Their duties / responsibilities are to find the troop/s early in the morning and then to join up with the troop for the day.
2. They will herd the baboons away from the residential areas and prevent them from entering any homes.
3. Daily activities of the baboons will be recorded to assess their routines and to establish the number of troops and the number of baboons within the troop/s.

This may sound like a simple operation, but it will not be as easy as the baboons are active from sunrise to sunset with behavioral patterns that are often unpredictable. The troop sometimes split up which makes it more difficult to monitor. Therefore total or 100% success cannot be guaranteed. Our goal however is to keep the baboons away from the residential areas for as much of the day as possible.

Baboon Monitors can be identified by the bright orange vest they wear over their normal clothing. These vests each have a number on the back and if any negative or positive behavioral incident is noticed please notify the HOA with reference to the specific number.

Baboon monitoring on its own however would not solve our problem. Residents need to take responsibility, and to achieve success in the long term will require a joint effort from all on the estate.

The baboons unfortunately will continue their easy foraging around the estate as the reward is high if there is a lot of food available to them in dustbins, dog food bowls, bird feeders and food in our homes.

We have to keep in mind that it won't be in any-one's interest to feed the baboons as they can later become problematic and aggressive to get food.

The "window shopping" activities of the baboons will lead to them entering homes where doors or windows are left open and unguarded. Baboons easily enter homes with little or insufficient security on windows and doors.

We have to keep in mind that these baboon "thieves" are only after one thing and that is food. Baboons can smell food/fruit from quite a far distance, and with this knowledge it is our responsibility to take preventative action by securing our windows and doors.

In closing, it may seem that by killing the alpha male will solve our problem. This can and will only lead into total anarchy taking place. New upcoming dominant males will take over which will lead to a baby boom within months.

*JJ - 02/07/2009*