

BABOON MATTERS

There is a great deal of concern amongst residents regarding the baboon - human conflict situation on our estate, in Hunters Home and in the Rexford area with many residents appealing to the HOA to investigate ways to better manage the situation. Whilst the presence of baboons is not new, the frequency and destructive nature of home intrusions together with an increase in aggression towards humans is worrying. With this in mind, a committee consisting of JJ, representing the HOA, and George Debbo, Chris Vile and Trevor Cloete representing the home owners has been formed to address the baboon issues on the estate. The first meeting was held on Thursday 4th November 2021 during which it was resolved to meet and consult with a range of experts and stakeholders to help us develop our own plan to manage the situation. We ask that residents email any helpful suggestions and ideas to JJ using cobus@pezulagolfestate.com

The approach will be to address the problem as a whole and not necessary the “problem” baboon. This is also in line with best practice dictated by national and international protocols in this regard.

For the interim the committee has decided to implement the following pro-active measures to address the baboon issue: -

1. To recruit more monitors and provide them with adequate and proper training.
2. Monitors will be active from dawn to dusk.
3. To provide golf carts to specific monitors in order for them to move around more effectively.
4. To establish and identify the baboon hotspots.
5. To introduce a communication forum (WhatsApp group) between monitors, committee members and residents. This WhatsApp group will only be for reporting the location of baboons. Anyone that uses the Group for any other means will be removed.
6. To meet with Cape Nature and other stakeholders to explore solutions to the problems Pezula home owners, golfers and visitors are experiencing with baboons on the estate.
7. To meet with an expert in baboon tracking, management and training of the baboon monitors.
8. To update guidelines for the management of waste on the estate. These guidelines apply to home owners, golfers, visitors, the hotel and contractors. Easy access to human food needs to be prevented. All homes must have lockable baboon proof wheelie bins and the waste bins on the golf course need to be better managed.

We need to understand that, despite preventative measures, certain individual baboons are repeat offenders and manage to circumvent the protective measures taken.

The main reason why baboons venture into urban areas where they come into conflict with humans is because of a readily available food source.

With the festive season close on hand we would like to bring the following to all members and visitors attention.

Household waste will be collected on **Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays between 09h00 and 11h00. Please use wheelie bins with baboon proof latches** – if the bins do not have these latches, contact the HOA who will assist to provide them. **PLEASE** do not leave your waste, especially in plastic bags, on the street outside as this provides easy access for baboons and crows.

Baboons are active from sunrise to sunset with behavioural patterns that are often unpredictable. Monitors do their best to keep them away from homes however, the troop sometimes splits up making it more difficult to monitor which means they cannot always guarantee success. Be alert, don't leave unattended windows or doors open, make sure that you don't lure them by displaying food or fruit in your home and **NEVER** feed them.



Baboon Monitors can be identified by the bright orange vest they wear over their normal clothing. Should any negative or positive behavioural incident be noticed, please notify the HOA.

Baboon monitoring on its own however cannot 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 baboons are only after one thing and that is food. They can smell food/fruit from quite a distance, and with this knowledge it is our responsibility to take preventative action by securing our windows and doors.

Please refer to information attached: -

- **Our behaviour and baboons**
- **What do we do when they are in our garden and homes:-**

Our behaviour and baboons

How can we help to manage baboons:-

There are a few simple things we can do to reduce the attractiveness of our properties to baboons. These strategies involve removing (or rendering inaccessible) the things that attract baboons to our properties in the first place:

- **Food - Keep fruit or any other food out of sight from windows and glass doors.**



- **Garbage - Keep rubbish secure in a baboon proof bin or stored in the garage until collection day.**



- **Fruit trees - Vegetable gardens and fruit trees are all attractive to baboons.**



- **Feeding them – Don't feed them.**



Apart from the above:-

- **Don't leave pet food outside during day time.**
- **Keep fruit or any other food out of sight from windows and glass doors.**
- **Keep windows and doors closed.**
- **Secure those openings so that baboons cannot enter.**
- **Partake and co-operate with baboon monitors and neighbours to discourage baboons collectively.**

What do we do when they are in our garden and homes? -

Remain calm and contact the Estate Security – 044 384 0739



Remain calm and relaxed whenever in close proximity to baboons. This actually applies to all animals. Baboons are far better at reading body language than we are, and if we come across as threatening, they will become nervous and unpredictable and may be more likely to become aggressive. This is of course easier said than done, as it is obviously not easy to remain calm when you encounter a baboon in your house or car! But it is really important to do so. At the very least, when confronted by a baboon, lower your eyes and look at the ground in front of you. This will be less threatening to the baboon than staring directly at it.

Do not feed baboons



One of the biggest problems with the human-baboon interface is that baboons have learned that humans often carry food – and that this food is both easy to acquire and usually quite satisfying! The result of this is that baboons now associate humans with an easy meal. Whenever possible, we must avoid reinforcing this. Every time a baboon is successful at getting food from a human, it just exacerbates the problem. Thus, your first reaction upon seeing a baboon should be to hide your food and prevent the baboon(s) from seeing it or accessing it.

On the other hand, sometimes it is too late to do the right thing and you must simply minimize conflict. If a fearless baboon encounters you carrying food, he may try to take it away from you. In this case, it is probably best to simply let him have it.

Do not tease baboons



Some people like dangling food in front of a baboon. This is very dangerous. Do not deliberately provoke a wild animal? While baboons may look cute, they are not domesticated like dogs, and they will likely not respond well to food being hung just out of reach. Bottom line: this is a recipe for disaster.

Let the baboon have the bag



Many baboons have learned that backpacks and other bags contain food, and that humans will drop those bags at the least provocation, yielding a bounty for the baboon provocateur. If drive or walk around the estate and golf course area try not to bring any bags with you. If you bring a camera, carry it separately so that baboons will see that it is a camera and not food. And if a baboon tries to physically take a bag from you, do not try to take it back as this is very likely to lead to aggression. Let the baboon have the bag! The baboon will eventually get bored with it - even more quickly if there is no food inside - and you can then go pick it up.

PLEASE CONTACT THE ESTATE SECURITY AT 044 384 0739 REGARDING ANY BABOON INCIDENTS