

IN PURSUIT OF A PANACEA: MITIGATING HUMAN-BABOON CONFLICT IN THE CAPE PENINSULA, SOUTH AFRICA.

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Large-scale transformation of natural habitats to urban, industrial and agricultural land-use often increases the frequency and severity of human-wildlife conflict. The Cape Peninsula's chacma baboon (*Papio ursinus*) population has been enveloped by human-modified environments, causing human-baboon conflict to escalate. Current conflict mitigation is achieved through the use of baboon monitors who 'defend' the urban edge. This method, although effective, is expensive and labour intensive and monitored troops still succumb to high levels of human-induced injury and mortality. I have implemented and tested various methods to enhance or replace the monitoring system. Each method was assessed for its biological efficiency and practical and financial sustainability. Light aversion, using reflective prisms, although inexpensive and practical, was unsuccessful. A combination of noise aversion and monitors holding the urban line has achieved a 100% reduction in raiding over a ten month period. Lastly, food provisioning, adapted from King *et al.* (2008) reduced the percentage of time that baboons spent in urban areas, increased natural foraging and was most effective when restricting access to urban food sources. My work suggests that successful deterrents are impervious to habituation, increase the risk to reward ratio of foraging in urban areas and exploit key elements target species' biology. I am currently testing waste management techniques to assess innovation, cultural transmission of learnt behaviour and their implications for baboon management. This work will provide a scientific basis for the goal of achieving sustainable commensalism between humans and baboons and valuable results to the primatological literature.

Keywords: conflict, *P.ursinus*, learning, provisioning