



# The Meerkatter

The Friends of the Kalahari Meerkat Project Report – www.kalahari-meerkats.com – February 2025

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## A turbulent year

Whiskers, a beloved group and the one of the oldest ad-lib groups in our current study population, has indeed had a turbulent year of 2024. It is impossible to predict factors of change that would affect a long-standing, and some would say, strong group, but no one expected Whiskers to have such a hard time as it has had recently.

What makes a group strong? A successful breeding dominant pair could be one of those foundational elements within a group that determines their stability, and perhaps former Whisker's mating pair – former dominant female Swift (VWF176) and dominant male Brea (VLM157) jump to mind as both were successful breeders and described as devoted to each other by previous observers. Dominance changes within the group have proven to be a big element of instability for Whiskers as both male and female dominance changed within two months of each other at the end of the year 2023. Brea left the group in October 2023 and daughter of Swift - former dominant female Luna (VWF235) disappeared in December 2023. To add to this, and somewhere in between the dominance changes, in November 2023, four wild males immigrated into the group making Whiskers an official habituation group.



Swift (wearing the radio collar) and Brea at Whiskers. Photo credit: Laura Salamon, friend of the KMP.

Looking back this year, Whiskers' group member count did not increase throughout the year but instead reduced as 9 members were given their Last Seen throughout the year. Following Luna's disappearance, adult female Candy Land (VWF256) was collared but shortly after, her body was found in Whiskers' territory and the collar retrieved. Adult female Black Dragon (VWF264) was the next to be collared and a similar story unfolded. An observer tracking Whiskers in the morning radio'ed in when they found Black Dragon's body close to a Whiskers

sleeping burrow. The observer then proceeded to track the group, burrow sweeping their territory, and shortly after, found the group not far from where Black Dragon was lying. A collar was then fitted on adult female Gnoll (VWF262) who has been wearing the collar for Whiskers since September 2024. Adult female Medusa (VWF263) was another Whiskers member to go missing as she was last seen with the group in July 2024 and has not been seen since. Yearling littermates: female Mya (VWF268) and subordinate male Pintabeau (VWM269) were also given their Last Seen as Mya did not wake up with Whiskers in March 2024 and Pintabeau was not found with the group in November 2024. There is however a chance he is roving, as there was an opportunistic sighting of him in Vetkoeks territory a few days after he left Whiskers. Since we are still in roving season, and being a male of roving age, he will hopefully return to Whiskers sometime in the year of 2025.



Young Pintabeau at Whiskers. Photo credit: Annelise van Eeden, former Life History Coordinator

Group members leaving or disappearing was not the only struggle that Whiskers experienced as both male and female dominance positions remained unsettled for a year. All eligible females engaged in dominance competitions, but none were successful in securing the position and amidst the clashes over female dominance, there has also been some sad news on the litter front as six litters were lost before emergence, and two were aborted in the year of 2024. Adult subordinate Laika'a (VWF236) last litter consisting of yearling females Kylie (VWF265), Bruce (VWF266) and Sheila (VWF267) have also had a difficult time since the disappearance of their mother. All three females competed for dominance but have

left the group since December 2024. They have made appearances at the group’s sleeping burrow but have not been actively seen behaving as part of the group. Sheila reportedly had an injury on her tail base in November 2024 and similarly Bruce was reported with an injury to her tail base in December 2024. All three females did not leave with the group to forage in the morning and were seen emerging and running away before the rest of the group were up.

Throughout the year of 2024, Whiskers still had a high female to male ratio, but as females slowly left or disappeared, and towards the end of the year, the competition between all eligible females at the time shifted to the only two eligible females – Gnoll and adult female Archangel (VWF259). The two females have taken the spotlight, and tensions have been high throughout the month of December 2024 as Gnoll was confirmed the new dominant female at the group after observers witnessed enough submissions from eligible females within the group. Her dominance tenure did not last long and competitions between Gnoll and Archangel restarted a few weeks later. Gnoll was seen submitting to Archangel in January making Archangel the new dominant female at Whiskers.



Newest members of Whiskers – Luna, Dante and Soli. Photo credit: Saverio Carrera, KMP observer

To add more complications, three adult wild males had joined Whiskers from the middle of November 2023, making their habituation the primary focus of our observers in the year of 2024. The first adult marked was adult male Gojo Satoru (VWM274) who was also the first male to receive an official code. Habituation of Gojo Satoru was going well, he was weighed and would drink water and would also be the most comfortable with observers’ distances and movements. Sadly, he was last found with Whiskers in December and was seen only once thereafter when he emerged from the sleeping burrow with, at the time, evicted Kylie and Bruce and acted distant from the group. He ran in the opposite direction from the group as they left to forage and has not been seen since. The second male to be marked is now

Trackie-Daks dominant male Guido (VWM275). He was seen roving at Trackie-Daks at the beginning of November 2024 where the group war danced and chased him away, but he still proceeded to go below the same sleeping burrow using a different entrance. One morning, an observer returned from a session to confirm Guido is now part of the group when he emerged from the same entrance and left to forage with Trackie-Daks. He has now been confirmed dominant at Trackie-Daks when yearling subordinate male Kanto (VTDM036) and sub-adult subordinate male Tsodiyo (VTDM042) both submitted to him that month. Last but not least – and the only remaining habituation individual at Whiskers – is adult male Agent K (VWM276) who was showing promising results up until the immigration of new males. Agent K gained short term dominance at Whiskers when no other eligible males remained in the group but lost his dominance in January 2025 when former Trackie-Daks adult males Raclette (VTDM017) and Princess Carolyn (VTDM013) along with former Trakie-Daks yearling male Kanto (VTDM036) joined Whiskers. Since then, suspected fighting among the males have cause numerous injuries and Agent K has become more skittish of observers and in some instances would not leave the sleeping burrow with observers present.

Despite the struggles in habituating Agent K, male dominance seems to have settled within the group. This month, Raclette received submissions from eligible males and acted as dominant at Whiskers, overmarking the groups sleeping burrow and asserting his dominance over other males. It looks like Trackie-Daks and Whiskers have swapped male individuals, and could it be for the better for both groups? Two litters were welcomed into the group, adding seven new pups to the group’s member count. As breeding season is coming to an end, things are starting to settle down for the meerkats, and hopefully are settling down for Whiskers as we keep our hopes up for a happy and stable future for the group.

### Pregnancies in February 2025

<b>Females pregnant in February</b>	<b>13</b>
Females who aborted	1
Females who gave birth, litters lost	2
Females who gave birth, litter emerged	3
Females who gave birth, unknown outcome	0
Females still pregnant at the end of the month	7

### February 2025 Life History Details

Due to the large number of groups, we are covering, we have made some changes to the way we are collecting data at the KMP. There are four different

levels of data collection, that we will briefly introduce here.

Full data collection group (FDC)

We collect LH data at the group and regularly visit the group for full adlib and weights sessions.

Life History monitoring group (LHM)

Observers tend to visit these groups for shorter amounts of time. We collect LH data and increase our visits when new pups need to be habituated. We do not collect adlib data at these groups but collect morning and evening weights a few times per week.

Habituation group (HAB)

Habituating meerkats to our presence is the main goal at these groups. As the group's habituation progresses, we start collecting LH and weights data as well. In a later stage, we try to follow the group after morning weights, introduce lunch weights and start approaching the group in the afternoon.

Sub-group (SUB)

The amount of data we can collect at these groups depends mainly on whether a radio-collared individual is present. If that is the case, we try to collect LH, weights and adlib data, as it is very interesting to witness group dynamics within these newly formed groups. However, we do not always have a radio collar at these groups. In these cases, we focus on collecting LH data during opportunistic sightings.

**Full Data Collection Groups:**

**Alba (FDC):**

- 15 out of 16 individuals were present at the end of February.
- Dominant female Cleopatra (VALF008) was made officially pregnant this month.
- Pup Orlov (VALM026) was not found with the group on the 26<sup>th</sup> this month, he is yet to return by the end of the month.
- No encounters, inter-group interactions or group splits were observed at Alba this month.
- Orlov has a wound on the back of his front left leg, he was able to use the leg when last seen before becoming absent from the group. All other members of the group seemed healthy by the end of the month.

**Brussels Sprouts (FDC):**

- All 7 members of the group were present at the end of the month.
- Dominant female Arabella's (VMPF035) single pup Dropke (VBSF015) emerged for the first time this month and joined the group on her first forage.
- Enough time has passed for adult subordinate female Sien (VBSF008) to be given her Last Seen.
- Adult subordinate male Gurke (VHMM036) was roving at Gold Diggers on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, he was back with the Brussels Sprouts on the morning of the 24<sup>th</sup>.

- The group had four encounters with former Zulus adult subordinate female Leona (VZUF070) this month. On the 21<sup>st</sup>, Leona was seen foraging with Gurke at a 25-meter distance from the group. The group war danced at both individuals who retreated and returned to forage at a 50-meter distance from the group who ignored them. Leona approached Brussels Sprouts sleeping burrow twice and retreated twice after the group went below, she did not go below with the group. On the 23<sup>rd</sup>, Leona was seen at Brussels Sprouts babysitting burrow as the group left the forage. Leona went below and emerged when the group returned and chased her away from Dropke who emerged with her, Leona retreated.
- Brussels Sprouts had no inter-group interactions or group splits observed this month.
- Arabella has a dislocated finger on her front left paw, the injury is permanent. All other members of the group appeared to be in good health.

**Elrond's Council (FDC):**

- All 14 members were present at the end of February.
- *Male dominance* remained *unconfirmed* at Elrond's Council. We will be reporting on *male dominance* in the coming months.
- Adult male Tower (VECM050) was given his Last Seen this month.
- Enough time has passed for adult male Ivory (VECM051), yearling males Croqueta (VECM052), Hoid (VECM055), Nightblood (VECM056), Arpeggio (VECM057) and Mozart (VECM058) to be emigrated out of the group.
- The group had an overnight group split on the 6<sup>th</sup>, and a daily group split on the 15<sup>th</sup> this month.
- Elrond's Council had no encounters or inter-group interactions observed this month.
- Habituation is classed as *In Progress*. Two of the three wild males who had immigrated into the group last month were marked for the first time this month. Follows of 2.5 hours have been re-introduced at Elronds Council, and behavioural data collection has resumed on the 18<sup>th</sup> this month. The males are comfortable with group follows but will forage at a distance from observers. Adult male Jonsnow (VECM070) is comfortable with a 10-meter follow but was not interested in egg or water. Adult male Jatu (VECM071) ate egg this month but is less comfortable with observers following the group at a 10-meter distance.
- All other members of the group appeared to be in good health.

**Gold Diggers (FDC):**

- All 15 members were present at the end of February.
- Dominant female Goldeneye (VGDF007) gave birth this month. The group moved sleeping burrows on the 19<sup>th</sup> and the three pups Chiffre (VGDP072), Silva (VGDP073) and Blofeld (VGDP074) were not seen since the burrow move. With no clear signs of lactation and no babysitting the litter is considered lost, and the

pups were given their Last Seen. Adult subordinate female Peanut (VGDF047) was made officially pregnant this month.

- Adult subordinate female Serafina Pekkala (VGDF049) returned on the 10<sup>th</sup> this month after not being part of the group since the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January.
- Yearling subordinate female Manchego (VGDF054) was not with the group on the afternoon of the 26<sup>th</sup>, she was seen returning to the group and was accepted by the group on the morning of the 27<sup>th</sup>.
- Gold Diggers had three encounters this month. On the 11<sup>th</sup>, Lazuli's adult subordinate male Subigubi (VUBM050) was seen approaching the group, following Peanut. He mated with Goldeneye for 15 minutes and was chased away by dominant male Shrew (VUBM018), Subigubi retreated. Shrew sniffed and chinned Goldeneye who chattered back at him. On the 13<sup>th</sup>, Subigubi was seen foraging close to the group and was chased away by adult subordinate male Captain Patel (VGDM048), Subigubi retreated. On the 20<sup>th</sup>, Ubuntu's adult subordinate male Beans (VUBM053) appeared at the group's babysitting burrow, the group war danced and chased him away and Beans retreated.
- The group had two inter-group interactions with Lazuli observed this month. On the 10<sup>th</sup>, Captain Patel saw Lazuli at a 100m distance and alarmed, Gold Diggers ignored Lazuli, Lazuli went below a bolt hole. Lazuli emerged and both groups moved in opposite directions to each other. On the 13<sup>th</sup>, Gold Diggers war danced at Lazuli who war danced back at the Gold Diggers but retreated. Lazuli war danced at Gold Diggers a second time and Gold Diggers war danced back at Lazuli; Lazuli eventually retreated from Gold Diggers moving past their sleeping burrow.
- Gold Diggers had one daily group split observed on the 19<sup>th</sup> this month.
- All members of the group appeared to be in good health by the end of the month.

#### **Lazuli (FDC):**

- 9 out of 10 individuals were present at the end of February.
- Dominant female Masiwa (VLF308) gave birth this month. On the morning of the 4<sup>th</sup> - following Masiwa giving birth on the night of the 3<sup>rd</sup> - dominant male Rogelio de la Vega (VGDM015) brought one pup to the surface of the groups' sleeping burrow. Rogelio de la Vega killed it and ate the pup in front of the group, the group did not react to this. With no observed lactation or babysitting, the litter is considered lost from infanticide.
- On the 11<sup>th</sup>, adult subordinate male Subigubi (VUBM050) was roving at Gold Diggers, he woke up with Lazuli on the morning of the 12<sup>th</sup>. On the 13<sup>th</sup>, following an inter-group interaction with Gold Diggers, Subigubi was seen leaving Lazuli and following Gold Diggers. On the 21<sup>st</sup>, adult subordinate male Tinashe (VLM310) was not found with the group, he appeared at the group's sleeping burrow, the group war danced and chased him, Tinashe retreated. He went

below the group's sleeping burrow after the group went below and woke up with the group on the morning of the 22<sup>nd</sup> acting as part of the group.

- Lazuli had two inter-group-interactions with Gold Diggers this month. On the 10<sup>th</sup>, Tinashe saw Gold Diggers and alarmed, Lazuli went below a bolt hole. When Lazuli emerged from the bolt hole, both groups moved in opposite directions from each other.
- The group had no encounters or group splits observed this month.
- Masiwa has a wound on the left side of the neck observed this month. All other members of the group appeared to be in good health by the end of the month.

#### **Side Quest (FDC):**

- All 14 members were present at the end of the month.
- The group had one encounter with an unknown individual on the 16<sup>th</sup> this month. The group war danced and chased the individual who retreated.
- Side Quest had no observed inter-group interactions or group splits this month.
- All members of the group appeared to be in good health by the end of the month.

#### **Trackie-Daks (FDC):**

- All 16 individuals were present at the end of the February.
- Yearling subordinate female Unova (VTDF037) gave birth this month. Four pups, Hoen (VTDP049), Sinnoh (VTDP050), Alola (VTDP051) and Galar (VTDP052) have emerged this month.
- Trackie-Daks had no encounters, inter-group interactions or group splits observed this month.
- The habituation level is currently in *Advanced Progress*. Dominant male Guido (VWM275) drinks water and was seen eating egg this month. He has not been weighed this month but will go halfway into the scale for water. He is comfortable with 2m follows for 15 minutes.
- All individuals appeared to be healthy by the end of the month.

#### **Ubuntu (FDC):**

- All 18 individuals were present at the end of the month.
- Dominant female Agazoth (VUBF039) and yearling subordinate female Hotfoot (VUBF071) gave birth this month. Six pups Pawpaw (VUBP080), Moppie (VUBP081), Fifi (VUBP082), Stella (VUBP083), Baba (VUBP084) and Koka (VUBP085) have emerged this month.
- On the 20<sup>th</sup>, adult subordinate male Beans (VUBM053) left the group and was roving at Gold Diggers. He was back with Ubuntu on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Ubuntu had no observed encounters, inter-group interactions or group splits this month.
- All individuals at the group appeared to be in good health by the end of the month.

**Zulus (FDC):**

- All 7 members were present at the end of February.
- Dominant female Spruddel (VZUF028) was made officially pregnant this month.
- Enough time has passed for adult subordinate female Leona (VZUF070) to be emigrated out of the group.
- The group had 16 encounters with Leona this month. On the 5<sup>th</sup>, Leona was seen 50m from the group, the group war danced and chased her, Leona retreated. On the evening of the 5<sup>th</sup>, Leona was seen at the groups sleeping burrow as the group returned. She retreated to a bolt hole 40m away and approached the groups sleeping burrow and went below using a different entrance after the group went below. On the evening of the 6<sup>th</sup>, Leona was seen at a 45m distance from the group. The group saw and ignored her at first, but war danced at her as they approached her, and she retreated. She was seen at a 15m distance from the groups sleeping burrow as the group returned. Yearling subordinate female Sooty (VZUF071) saw her and ignored her as she entered the group's sleeping burrow using a different entrance 8m away from the entrance the group was using. On the 7<sup>th</sup>, Leona emerged from a different entrance of the sleeping burrow the group was using and retreated to a bolt hole 40m away from the group. The group saw her and ignored her, Leona retreated before the group left to forage. On the 8<sup>th</sup>, Leona was seen at a bolt hole 40m away from the groups sleeping burrow. The group saw her and ignored her, and she retreated before the group left to forage. On the evening of the 8<sup>th</sup>, Leona was seen at the group's sleeping burrow as the group returned. The group saw and ignored her, and Leona retreated to a bolt hole 40m away from the groups sleeping burrow and went below there for the night. On the 14<sup>th</sup>, Leona was seen at the group's sleeping burrow as the group returned, the group ignored her and she went down the same sleeping burrow as the group using a different entrance. On the 15<sup>th</sup>, Leona was seen foraging at a 40m distance from the group, the group saw her and ignored her, she continued to forage at a 40m distance. On the evening of the 15<sup>th</sup>, Leona was seen at the group's sleeping burrow as the group returned. The group ignored her as they approached the burrow, Leona retreated and was not seen going below. On the 16<sup>th</sup>, the group saw and chased Leona, Leona retreated. She returned again and was chased away again by the group. She returned a third time and yearling subordinate male Sweep (VZUM072) chased her. Leona did not retreat but was seen submitting to Sweep, Spruddel then attacked and chased Leona who submitted and retreated from the group. On the evening of the 20<sup>th</sup>, the group war danced at Leona who retreated from the group. On the evening of the 24<sup>th</sup>, Leona was seen at the group's sleeping burrow as the group returned. The group war danced at her and she retreated from the group. On the evening of the 27<sup>th</sup>, Leona was seen at

the group's sleeping burrow as the group returned. The group war danced, and Leona retreated, she returned and went below the group's sleeping burrow using a different entrance.

- Zulus had no observed inter-group interactions or group split in the month of February.
- All members of the group appeared to be in good health by the end of the month.

**Life History Monitoring Groups:****Dik-Diks (LHM):**

- All 12 members were present at the end of the month.
- Dominant female Juliet (VGDF009) was made officially pregnant this month. Former Dik-Diks adult subordinate female Shelby (VGDF022) was made officially pregnant as an opportunistic sighting of the female confirmed the pregnancy.
- Enough time has passed for adult subordinate female Shelby (VGDF022) to be emigrated out of the group.
- Dik-Diks had 10 encounters this month. On the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Shelby and former Dik-Diks member adult subordinate female Tuna Fish II (VGDF026) approached the group. Juliet and dominant male Rufaro (VUBM046) saw and ignored the females. Tuna Fish II retreated, and Shelby went below the groups sleeping burrow using the same entrance as the group. The group chased her away led by Juliet and juvenile male Siyah (VDDM014), Shelby retreated. On the evening of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, two unknown adult females were seen at the group's sleeping burrow when the group returned, the females retreated as they saw the group. On the 3<sup>rd</sup>, Shelby woke up at the group's sleeping burrow using a different entrance. Rufaro saw and ignored her as she retreated to a 30m distance from the sleeping burrow. The rest of the group alarmed at Shelby and chased her away led by Juliet; Shelby retreated. On the evening of the 12<sup>th</sup>, Shelby and Tuna Fish II were seen at the groups sleeping burrow, they retreated from the group as the group returned to the burrow. On the 13<sup>th</sup>, Shelby and Tuna Fish II woke up at the groups sleeping burrow, Rufaro emerged and groomed with both females, and they left before the rest of the group was up.
- Dik-Diks had no inter-group interactions or group splits observed this month.
- Habituation of the group remains in *Advanced Progress* at the end of the month. Dominant female Juliet (VGDF009) drinks water and has been weighed twice this month. She is comfortable with an observer sitting and standing at 1 meter distance, and comfortable being followed at 2 meters.
- All members of the group appeared to be in good health at the end of the month.

**Renegades (LHM)**

- All 10 members were present at the end of the month.

- Five pups, VRGP001, VRGP002, VRGP003, VRGP004, VRGP005 emerged from the group's babysitting burrow this month.
- Renegades had no encounters, inter-group interactions or group splits observed this month.
- Habituation is classed as *Advanced Progress*. The group was visited ten times this month. Dominant male Coquillette (VTSM014) drinks water and is comfortable with a 2-meter sitting distance. He remains weary of observers standing at a 2m distance and was not seen eating egg this month. Dominant female Ricky Baker (VGDF031) has become an official habituation individual this month. She eats egg, approaches the scale, and is comfortable with a 2-meter standing distance for observers.
- Ricky Baker has a submandibular lump on her left cheek which has burst this month. The lump was examined and confirmed not to be tuberculosis. Ricky Baker has a swollen left side of the neck and a cut about her left eye. The female also has a mid-tail wound which is healing by the end of the month. Adult subordinate female Maya II (VGDF039) has a submandibular lump on the left side of her cheek and a puncture wound on the left side of her mouth. The scab on her tail base has healed this month. All other members of the group appeared to be in good health

**Vetkoeks (LHM):**

- 8 out of 9 members were present at the end of February.
- Dominant female Mooncake's (VHMF053) pup Tshembo (VVKM024) has emerged this month and joined the group on his first forage. Three pups were seen in total at the babysitting burrow on the 28<sup>th</sup> of January, but part of Mooncake's litter is considered lost as two of the pups did not emerge and were not seen since the 28<sup>th</sup> of January. The litter is partially lost from what was likely a snake predated the pups while they were babysat at their sleeping burrow. The group returned earlier than usual to the burrow on the 28<sup>th</sup>, and babysitter adult subordinate Blackjack (VVKM002) was found with an injury resembling a snake bite to his head. Pups Shenzi (VVKP025) and Banzai (VVKP026) were given their Last Seen this month.
- Juvenile female Brownie (VVKF020) was not with the group on the 21<sup>st</sup> this month. She is yet to return by the end of the month.
- The group had no encounters, inter-group interactions or group splits observed this month.
- On the 2<sup>nd</sup> this month, adult subordinate male Blackjack (VVKM002) was found with an injury to the head most likely resulting from a snake bite. The injury consists of necrosis and swelling to the right side of his face, he is blind in the right eye, and skinny – his pelvic bones are protruding. All other members of the group

appeared to be in good health by the end of the month.

**Habituation Groups :**

**Hogwarts (HAB) :**

- All 7 members of the group were present at the end of the February
- Dominant female Salazar (VZUF051) was made officially pregnant this month.
- Enough time has passed pup Fitzgerald (VHWP008) to be given its Last Seen.
- Habituation is classed as *In Progress*. Habituation of sub-adult subordinate male Buckbeak (VHWM002) is going well, he is drinking water, is comfortable around the scale and got weighed twice this month. He is comfortable with 1m sitting distance, 2m standing distance and movements at a 3m distance. Dominant male Caraxes (VHWM004) drinks water but was not interested in egg this month. He remains skittish when observers move at a 5m distance from the group. Habituation of the pups is going well. Pups Tolkien (VHWP007) and Rowling (VHWP005) are both interested in egg, they did not drink water this month and remain skittish of the scale. They are comfortable with a 3m sitting and 5m standing distance.
- All individuals appeared healthy at the end of the month.

**Jaxx (HAB):**

- 12 out of 13 members were present at Jaxx at the end of the month.
- *Male dominance* is currently *unconfirmed*. We will be reporting on *male dominance* at Jaxx in the coming months.
- Adult subordinate male Sneaky (VJXM170) was not with the group on the 12<sup>th</sup>, he was back with the group on the 14<sup>th</sup>. On the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Sneaky was not found with the group and is yet to return by the end of the month.
- Jaxx had no encounters, inter-group interactions or group splits observed this month.
- Habituation is classed as *In Progress*. Habituation of the unknown adult male is going well; this month, group follows of 1.5 hours after leave time have been introduced at the group. The unknown adult male has not yet shown interest in egg or water but is comfortable with observers sitting at 1 meter distance at the sleeping burrow and follows at a 6-meter distance.
- All members of the group appeared to be in good health by the end of the month.

**Mandalore (HAB):**

- Habituation is classed as *In Progress*. The group was found on the 10<sup>th</sup> this month and the radio collar was removed from adult male Floki (VWM241). The group was seen three times following the removal of the collar. Egg frenzies were performed at their sleeping burrow, Floki

and an unknown female ate egg and were comfortable with an observer sitting at 2-5 meters and standing at 5-10 meters. An unknown female in the group is confirmed pregnant, if the group remain on territory that is accessible to us, we will attempt habituating the pups at their babysitting burrow.

- Floki has an injury on his neck that appears to be healing by the end of the month. All other members of the group appeared to be in good health.

**Whiskers (HAB):**

- 9 out of 12 individuals were present at the end of February.
- *Male dominance* has become *confirmed* this month. Dominant male Raclette (VTDM017) has received enough submissions from eligible males this month to be confirmed the dominant male at Whiskers.
- Dominant female Archangel's (VWF259) five pups Luna (VWF279), Amarula (VWF280), Soli (VWF281), Anita (VWF282) and Dante (VWF283) have emerged and joined the group on their first forage this month.
- Adult subordinate females Kylie (VWF265), Bruce (VWF266) and Sheila (VWF267) were given their Last Seen this month.
- Enough time has passed for adult subordinate male Gojo Satoru (VWM274) to be emigrated out of the group.
- Juvenile female Bubblegum (VWF278) did not wake up with the group on the 7<sup>th</sup> this month. The two pups Amarula and Anita did not wake up with the group on the 22<sup>nd</sup> this month. They are yet to return by the end of the month.
- Whiskers had no encounters, inter-group interactions, or group splits observed this month.
- The group's habituation is classed as *In Progress*. Adult subordinate male Agent K (VWM276) drank water, is eating egg and is comfortable with a 2-3m sitting distance and a 5m standing and moving distance. We will continue visiting the group and increasing Agent K's comfort distance as well as potentially getting his weight.
- Raclette has a wound on the left side of the neck that is healing by the end of the month. Adult subordinate female Groll's (VWF262) lesion on the front right paw has healed this month. Agent K still has a tear on his right cheek, it has not healed by the end of the month. All other members of the group appeared to be in good health.

**The following authors contributed to this report:**

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