

# LESSON PLAN: HAMADRYAS BABOON

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**Objective:** Education is a big part of the Wildlife Waystation's mission. Lesson plans are available to download for students, teachers and anyone interested in learning more about wild and exotic animals.



## BUBBA

*Bubba is a 17-year-old Hamadryas Baboon (Papio Hamadryas). He came to the Waystation in 2005 from a private party in Oregon. A male Hamadryas may have up to ten females in his harem; Bubba has two: Chloe & Gobblin. He rules over them with true baboon devotion. If you hear Bubba giving off a loud series of grunts you know he is greeting someone. When meeting Bubba it is not a good idea to smile as showing teeth can be interpreted as a threat.*

## Animal Facts:

Baboons are among the most flexible, adaptable, and opportunistic animals on earth. The Hamadryas Baboon is found in the semi-desert, savannas and rocky areas of Somalia, Ethiopia, Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Baboons never stray far from any watering hole or the cliffs on which they sleep. They spend most of their time on the ground and live in a close-knit group and have a very complex social structure.

Several families form a clan; several clans form a band; and several bands form a troop, which can number up to 100 individuals. Male baboons remain with the clan but females leave to join another. The male passes his ownership of the "family" down to his male offspring.

They have long dog like muzzles, with large canine teeth. They have large heads and cheek pouches for storing food. Their heavy brow ridge protects their eyes. They have relatively long limbs with short digits and a comparatively short tail. Their fur is rather coarse. Males are distinguished from other baboons by a long, silver-grey shoulder cape. These baboons have a pink or red, not black, face and rump.

## Did You Know?

*Hamadryas baboons are the only non-human primates found in the Middle East.*

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*In Ancient Egypt, Hamadryas baboons were considered sacred and associated with Toth, the God of Writing & Knowledge. They were allowed around temples and some were buried in sarcophagi. There are also paintings depicting them and statuettes representing Toth with a Baboon head.*

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*In Ancient Egypt, Hamadryas were kept as pets.*

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*Nowadays, there aren't any Hamadryas baboons in Egypt, even though they are part of the history and mythology of the country.*

Their pink sitting pads on their bottoms make it more comfortable for sleeping in a seated position.

The males are larger, weighing around 21.5 kg, than the females, weighing around 9.4 kg.

Being omnivores their diet consists of grass, roots, tubers, seeds, nuts, fruit, insects, and small animals. They change their taste to whatever is available at the moment. They are opportunistic eaters, foraging three hours in the morning, resting during the heat of the day, and foraging again in the afternoon before returning to their sleeping places at the end of the day.

Females give birth to a single offspring after a 6-month gestation. Baby baboons are black. By three or four months of age, infants begin to get bits of food on their own, starting with easy foods like flowers, berries, and fresh green grass blades. They are able to gather their own food as they reach their first birthday.

A Baboon's greatest enemy is the leopard (who looks at baboons like humans look at fried chicken), lions, and cheetahs. Humans, due to habitat loss and indiscriminate hunting, have now become their worst enemy. Their species is extremely endangered.

### Did You Know?

*When alarmed, baboons run in a galloping gait on all fours.*

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*Baboons keep track of their friends and family while foraging by calling each other.*

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*Baboons use different calls to communicate with each other. For instance, they have alarm calls to tell their friends a snake is around.*

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*Baboons lip-smack at another baboon as a sign of friendliness.*

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*Grooming is a very important activity. It cements bonds between the different members of a group or clan.*

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*Baboons can live into their 30s in the wild, longer in captivity.*

## QUIZ & LEARN

1. How many fingers do Hamadryas baboons have?
2. What does it mean when a Hamadryas baboon yawns?
3. What is a "threat display"?
4. What does it mean if a baboon turns his back and lip-smacks at you?
5. What is referred to as an "OMU"?

*(See how you did by checking out the answers at the bottom of the page).*

## Project

Make your own Hamadryas Baboon mask for Halloween or anytime you feel like dressing up. You can download a template on our website.

*Quiz Answers:*

*1) Five (5) and they have fingernails - 2) Yawning is a threat. Male baboons will show their teeth while yawning. - 3) A "threat display" is the term used to indicate a threatening behavior by a baboon – like the yawn mentioned in the previous question. - 4) It means the baboon is being friendly. - 5) OMU stands for a "One Male Unit" or a harem*