



HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR
Ministry for Health & Environment
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PRESS RELEASE

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Government announces plans for the re-location of Barbary macaques

Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar is pleased to announce that it will be relocating a group of Barbary macaques to the Blair Drummond wildlife park in Stirling, Scotland. Following a period of extensive research and discussions with park officials, approximately 30 macaques from the Middle Hill troop will be making the trip to the wildlife park on the 14th October. The macaques will be flown to the UK on a chartered aircraft and then transported by road to the safari park. They will spend a short time in a quarantine facility before being allowed into their new spacious home. The macaques will be accompanied at all times by two experienced Gibraltar based keeper/operatives with additional support being provided by officials from the Department of the Environment.

The selection of this group has been facilitated by the tracking work carried out last year by a team of US researchers and the Gibraltar macaque management team made up of GONHS, the Gibraltar Veterinary Clinic, and the Department of the Environment's Upper Rock team. This is the group that was frequenting Laguna Estate, Devil's Tower Road and Catalan Bay. All the animals have been trapped with minimal disruption and temporarily accommodated in a specially built holding station manned by team on a 24 hour basis. Their veterinary needs have been monitored by the Gibraltar Veterinary Clinic.

The relocation of the macaques is part of the Government's wider Barbary macaque management plan which counts on a number of key measures such as increased human resources and awareness, improved feeding facilities, an improved contraception programme and habitat management.

Although commonly referred to as the 'Barbary ape' the macaque is a true monkey and wild populations from North Africa are currently listed as endangered by the World Conservation Union (IUCN) due to illegal logging, habitat destruction, persecution and demands of the illegal pet trade. Gibraltar's population is the only wild monkey population in the European continent and an important part of Gibraltar's tourist attractions and culture.

This is the first large scale export of macaques since the 1990s. It is an option preferred to culling as a way of removing urbanised groups of macaques.

Minister for the Environment Dr John Cortes said, "Everyone has been working very hard over the past year to make this a reality. It is sad to see them go, but they will be going to an excellent home and it is so much better than culling them. We will now continue to develop the management plan and it is vitally important that the public cooperates by not providing feeding opportunities that would once again attract monkeys to built up areas. We wish our monkeys a safe journey and a happy future in Scotland."