Yellow baboon (*Papio cynocephalus*)

**Conservation Status:** Least Concern

Yellow baboons are aptly named for the yellow-brown fur that covers most of their bodies. The underside of yellow baboons is white, and their face, ears, hands, feet, and posterior appear purplish-black in color and are free of fur. Like other baboons, yellow baboons have doglike noses, powerful jaws, and sharp canine teeth, and they lack a prehensile (gripping) tail. Yellow baboons are the largest baboon and are highly sexually dimorphic.

**Fun Facts**

1. The scientific name for yellow baboons comes from the Greek words *kynos* and *kephalikos*, meaning “dog” and “head.”
2. Yellow baboons are the largest baboon.

**Habitat**

Yellow baboons are found in savanna grassland, steppe, and rainforest habitats.

**Diet**

Grasses, seeds, lichens, fruits, flowers, invertebrates, reptiles, birds, and other primates, such as vervet monkeys and bush babies

**Predators**

Humans, leopards, cheetah

**Behavior**

Yellow baboons are highly social, living in groups known as troops, which can contain dozens or even hundreds of individuals of both sexes. Baboons sleep, feed, travel, and socialize within troops. Male baboons compete for dominance, with high-ranking males having an advantage when it comes to mating, food, water, and territory. Troops spend the majority of the day on the ground foraging for a wide variety of foods with intermittent periods of socialization. Baboons groom one another to remove insects and dead skin and use barklike vocalizations. Yellow baboons also exhibit other behaviors such as branch-shaking, teeth displays, ground-slapping, and yawning as forms of communication.

Yellow baboons move on all fours over the ground with their tail raised in the air at an angle. Like other Old World Monkeys, they lack a prehensile (gripping) tail but are still able to climb trees with ease to eat, sleep, and play.

**Breeding**

Mating is polygynandrous, with both males and females mating with multiple partners. Females reach sexual maturity at around five years of age. After a gestation period of about six months, yellow baboons typically give birth to one young. Weaning occurs sometime around one year of age. Females generally reproduce every two years and will continue to reproduce consistently until old age. Most parental behavior is performed by the female; females nurse, groom, and play with their offspring.

**Size:**

Length: 50-79 cm

Tail length:35-75 cm

**Weight:**

Male: 21-26 kg

Female: 12-14 kg

**Life Span:** 20-30 years

**Gestation period:** 6 months

**Average number of offspring:** 1