



# Barbary Macaque Awareness and Conservation Annual Report 2024

[www.barbarymacaqueconservation.org](http://www.barbarymacaqueconservation.org)

Registered charity: 1188719



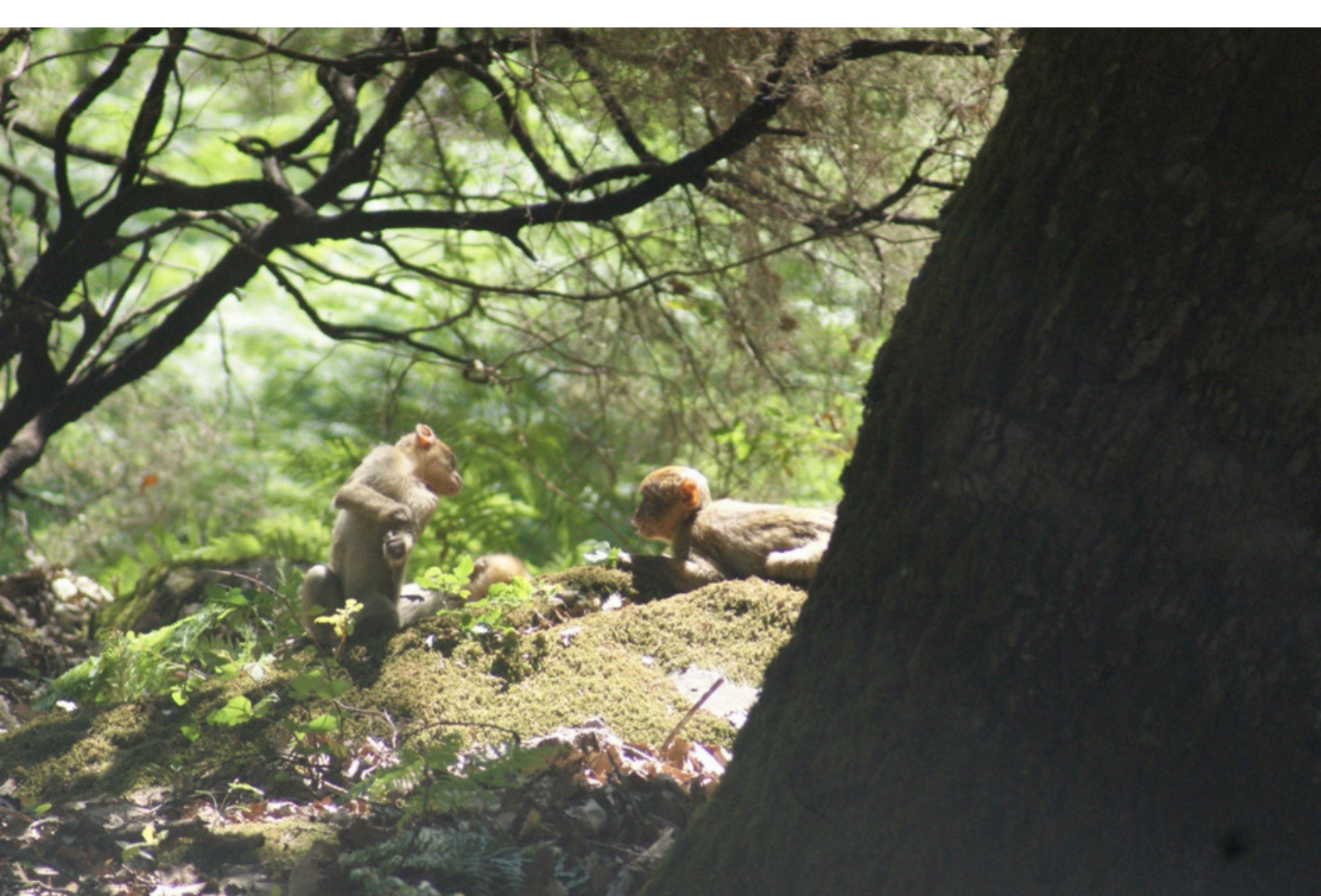


Dear Supporters,

The Barbary macaques of Bouhachem had a good year in 2024 with birth numbers back to normal. We were also relieved that there were no wildfires. Nevertheless, we are not complacent about the risk of wildfire and very grateful to organisations who have donated to our firefighting equipment fund. We hope we never have to use it but we feel safer knowing we have it.

We are also grateful to our donors for supporting the employment of a Research and Operations Officer. We welcomed Haitam Skhairi to the BMAC team in October. Haitam is a Tetouan University science graduate. He is very much enjoying the fieldwork and finding out about the macaques and Bouhachem from the team. We are very happy he has joined the BMAC team.

We look forward to a busy 2025. Thank you very much from us all for your past and present support of our work.



## Barbary macaque trade

We have seen a steady increase in the numbers of Barbary macaques kept as pets since the Covid19 pandemic. We believe the reason for this is that, once again, the photo touts in Marrakech are exhibiting very young macaques. This stimulates impulse buying of these infants by visitors from elsewhere in Morocco. Some of these very young macaques are often used by social media influencers to elevate their profiles. The macaque owners often carry out cruel and stupid activities such as shaving the macaque or washing it. For example, in August, we received a report about the maltreatment of a young male Barbary macaque by a pet groomer. The groomer washed and dried the monkey with a hair drier (below) while filming the process to publicise his business.



During the process, the poor infant was either frozen with fear or reacted by trying to defend itself. It was upsetting to watch the video and we reported it to Facebook as animal cruelty but the video was not removed. We alerted the authorities and they confiscated the macaque the following day and requested we transfer him to our care. The macaque was young enough to be adopted by a male macaque so we decided to release him to a wild group in Bouhachem. The youngster settled quickly post-release and began foraging on wild foods. The released confiscate was swiftly joined by a wild male (below) interested in adopting this individual. We have since seen the youngster with the group twice. He is foraging well and seems integrated into the group.





When people discover that macaques make bad pets, they try to get rid of them by selling them or releasing them into the wild. The owners mistakenly believe that the macaques will be fine. Unfortunately, these macaques have been taken from their families while very young and have no idea how to live with other macaques in the wild. We had two ex-pet macaques abandoned in Bouhachem in 2024. One was left at the roadside while another was dumped in a remote village. Both immediately came close to people hoping for food and shelter. These individuals were at serious risk of starvation or being attacked by dogs or people. The BMAC team quickly trapped and transported both macaques to Dream Village in Mohamedia where they were health checked and began their rehabilitation journey.

## Education and Awareness



In Morocco, the team erected an information plaque in Arabic for visitors to Bouhachem forest. The plaque provides brief information about the macaques and the forest with a particular emphasis on safety around fires.



The team visited eight schools to deliver a Barbary macaque conservation message to ~900 pupils. We conducted a forest school for 48 pupils from a Tetouan school. We were invited once again by the charity, Rifcom to raise awareness about macaque conservation at their annual football tournament. There, we talked about Barbary macaque conservation, to 200 men and boys, many of whom live close to macaque habitat.





## Outreach 2024

In April, Siân was a keynote speaker at the Human-wildlife Interactions in the Tropics conference at Bangor University, Wales.

In late September, Siân gave a presentation about our Barbary macaque survey work and an update on the forest and macaques post-fire at the third African Primate Society Congress in South Africa. Siân also participated in a panel on decolonising African primatology. During the post-conference training course, Siân taught a class on including people in conservation using social science methods in conservation. The course was attended by 30 young African primatologists.

Publications by BMAC team members (in bold).

2024. **Waters S.** (Ed.). Responsible Primate-Watching for Tourism Professionals. IUCN SSC Primate Specialist Group Section on Human-Primate interactions.

2024. Eppley, T. M., .... **Waters, S.**, et al. Tropical field stations yield high conservation return on investment. Conservation Letters.





## Supporters

Huge thanks to the following donors for supporting our activities and to all our private donors, trustees and volunteers

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Germany: [Affenberg Salem](#); [NaturZoo Rheine](#)

Gibraltar: [Alameda Wildlife Conservation Park](#)

Italy: [ARCA Foundation](#), [Parco Natura Viva](#)

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