



Introduction

The year 2024 was rich in achievements for the Chameleon Center Conservation association. Guided by our mission to protect chameleons through scientific, educational and collaborative actions, we consolidated our projects and forged new partnerships. This report presents the major actions of the year and demonstrates the impact of our initiatives in favour of these fascinating reptiles.

Strengthening the team

The arrival of two new members marked a turning point in the development of our association:

- **Benoît de Villelongue**, an expert in herpetoculture and founder of Herpeto-Technique, brings his expertise to the design of reptile infrastructures and the improvement of zootechnical conditions in our breeding programmes.
- **Martin Etave**, a naturalist specialising in systematics and evolution, coordinates the research and conservation projects as Project Manager.

Their commitment strengthens our operational and scientific capabilities.

*"Saving a species
means preserving
a unique world."*

Dr. Jane Goodall





Field studies and conservation

Inventory and ecology of chameleons in the Vohimana reserve (Madagascar)

Progress made :

- 580 chameleon sightings documented since 2023, thanks to the work of trained and equipped local guides and our project managers.
- Acquisition of additional equipment, including GPS, headlamps and UV meter, thanks to the support of AFSA (Association Francophone des Soigneurs Animaliers).
- In-depth exploration of the reserve, gathering new data on the distribution of species and their environment, for a scientific article to be published early next year.

"The future of conservation lies in the involvement of local communities."

George Schaller

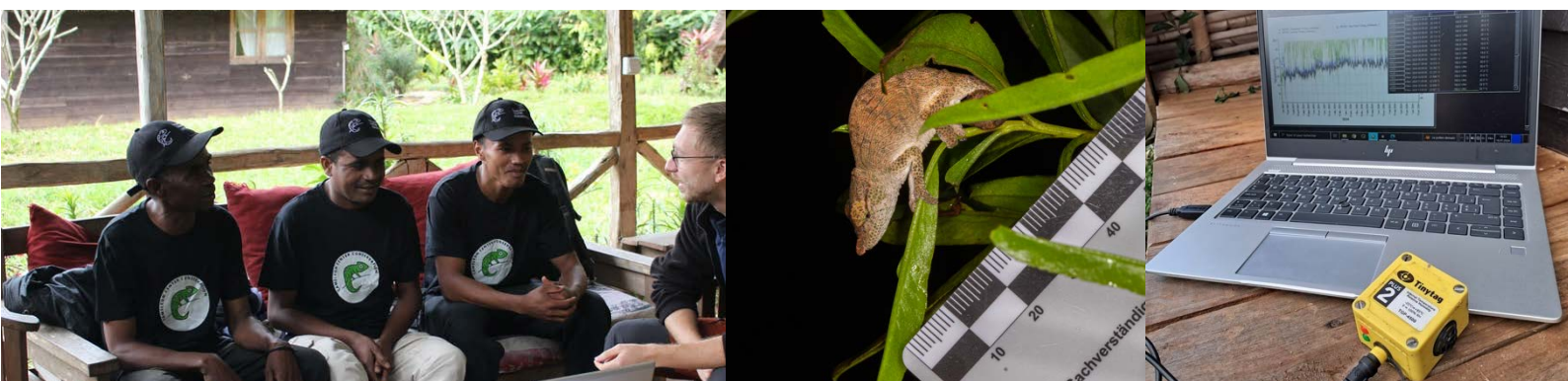
Conservation of the Parson's chameleon (*Calumma parsonii*)

Highlights:

- Installation of additional climatic data loggers in the Vohimana reserve and collection of the first data recorded over 12 months in the Parson's chameleon microhabitat.
- Development of a radio guidance system in collaboration with Chester Zoo (England) for telemetric monitoring of wild populations.
- An initial mission to carry out a health check on the Parson's chameleon population in the Vohimana reserve, led by a European veterinarian and a student from the University of Antananarivo (Madagascar).

Scientific research into the interaction between chameleons and plants

- Study carried out by a Master's student at the University of Neuchâtel (Switzerland) on the correlations between chameleons and plants in the Vohimana reserve, such as the chameleons' choice of night roosts.



Scientific studies and awareness-raising

Collaboration with the CNRS to study chameleons

Progress made :

- Export of 14 specimens of *Trioceros jacksonii* from Switzerland to France as part of the project. This transfer was carried out in compliance with veterinary standards, including health checks before and after transport, as well as the implantation of identification chips to guarantee traceability.
- In-depth study of the thermal preferences and hydro-regulation capacities of this population, carried out in collaboration with Dr. Olivier Lourdais of the Centre d'Études Biologiques de Chizé - CEBC, CNRS (France).

*"Nature never does
anything in vain.*

Aristotle

Developing the conservation breeding of the Parson's chameleon

- A young male *Calumma parsonii* was welcomed at **Muzoo** (Switzerland), accompanied by an exhibition to raise awareness of the dangers facing this species and the conservation measures being taken as part of our project. The introduction of a female is envisaged in the medium term to take part in the European breeding programme.

Exhibitions and events

- Organisation of our **exhibition** "the super powers of chameleons" at the Tropicarium in Servion (Switzerland) and the Vivarium in Meyrin (Switzerland), which attracted a large audience.
- Participation in international conferences (SHF, AFSA, DGHT), the 10th anniversary of the reopening of the Parc zoologique de Paris and various other events to share our progress.





Communication and visibility

Highlighting our projects

- Recognition of our projects in the Paris Zoological Park press kit as one of the "10 research and conservation projects from around the world".
- Participation in the celebration of the first **International Day of the Chameleon** (9 May)

Presentations at international conferences

Our actions were highlighted at several key conferences:

- **SHF Congress** in Carcassonne (France) - scientific poster entitled "Study and conservation of chameleons in the Vohimana reserve (Madagascar)", highlighting the results of the inventory and the first stages of in situ monitoring of *Calumma parsonii*.
- **AFSA symposium** at Beauval Zoo (France) - conference on the initial ecological results of the Vohimana chameleons, highlighting the synergies between in situ and ex situ conservation.
- **DGHT Day - AG Chamaeleons** (Germany) - presentation on habitat preferences of Vohimana chameleons, leading to fruitful discussions with European specialists.
- **Le Pal Nature Foundation Day** (France) - conference entitled "In situ and ex situ conservation of chameleons in Madagascar: challenges and initial results", which raised awareness of our work among visitors to the park.

"Education is the most powerful weapon for changing the world.

Nelson Mandela





Outlook for the next 12 months

The coming year will see an intensification of our efforts to conserve and study chameleons, with ambitious projects on several fronts. We will be formalising our **collaborations with Madagascan universities**, supporting Masters theses to further our knowledge of the ecology of chameleons in Madagascar and training a new generation of local researchers. At the same time, we **will be exploring little-studied areas of research**, such as the microbiota and diet of chameleons, in both *in situ* and *ex situ* contexts.

As part of our desire to reuse and adapt the methodologies developed since 2022 in Madagascar, we want to **extend our initiatives to continental Africa** by launching a project to inventory and ecologically study chameleons. We will also **continue to support the *Calumma parsonii* breeding group** in European zoos, which is essential for raising public awareness and supporting *in situ* projects. Finally, we will continue to strengthen local actions by involving communities more, so that inventory and study initiatives lead to **sustainable conservation actions, carried out directly by local people**.

We would like to express our **deepest gratitude to all our** technical and financial **partners**, and in particular to those who joined us this year: Réserve africaine de Sigean (France), Fondation Le Pal Nature (France), Muzoo (Switzerland), Zoopark Zajezd (Czech Republic), AFSA (France) and Chester Zoo (England), whose support enables us to implement and develop our chameleon conservation projects.

*"A true partnership
is based on a
shared vision,
mission and
responsibilities."*

Anonymous

Sébastien Métrailler

Chairman of the association Caméléon Center Conservation

