



Rockjumper Birding Tours

Worldwide Birding Adventures

Madagascar Comprehensive

7th to 28th October 2009 (22 days)



Trip Report compiled by tour leader Glen Valentine

Top ten birds as voted by participants:

1. Velvet Asity
2. Scaly Ground-Roller
3. Pitta-like Ground-Roller
4. Long-tailed Ground-Roller
5. Madagascar Pygmy Kingfisher
6. Madagascar Paradise Flycatcher
7. Blue Coua
8. Grey-headed Lovebird
9. Schlegel's Asity
10. Yellow-bellied Sunbird-Asity

Tour Summary



Our extremely memorable and enjoyable tour to the diverse and endemic-rich island of Madagascar kicked off in the bustling expanse of Antananarivo. With the sun glistening off the brilliant green rice paddies and contrasting red brick kilns we traversed the open meat markets and vegetable stands towards Tsimbazaza Zoo and nearby Lake Alarobia. At these two introductory sites we found our first of many exciting Malagasy specialties such as France's Sparrowhawk, Malagasy Pond Heron (in full breeding plumage), Malagasy Kingfisher, Malagasy Coucal and Dimorphic Egret along with a host of more common and widespread species.

The next morning saw us leaving the hustle and bustle of Tana by flying to the coastal town of Mahajanga on the north-west coast, our gateway to Ankarafantsika National Park. Birding around the camp was alive as usual and we soon picked up many mouth-watering species like Grey-headed Lovebird, Lesser Vasa Parrot, Sickle-billed, White-headed and Chabert's Vanga, noisy Crested Drongo, gaudy Broad-billed Roller and the stately Madagascar Hoopoe. Friendly Cuvier's Iguanid scurried around our feet, while Coquerel's Sifaka foraged in the canopy nearby.

The dry deciduous woodlands of Ampijoroa added many highly sought-after, gorgeous and entertaining mammals and birds alike. As we worked through the different levels of the forest we slowly reeled in all the specialties of the area. Immaculate Schlegel's Asity, unique White-breasted Mesite and Van Dam's Vanga stole the show but Rufous and Blue Vanga, Coquerel's and Crested Coua, Souimanga and Malagasy Green Sunbird, Madagascar Green Pigeon and Sakalava Weaver also provided great entertainment. A boat ride on Lake Ravelobe was very productive and yielded wonderful close-up views of Humblot's Heron and the rare and endangered Madagascar Fish Eagle. In order to soak in the complete array of species in this wonderful reserve we embarked on night walks, which added several nocturnal species, which included Madagascar Nightjar and Totoroka Scops Owl. Fat-tailed Dwarf Lemur, Grey Mouse Lemur and Milne-Edward's Sportive Lemur also showed well and we left Ampijoroa with satisfaction and anticipation for the days to come.

A short visit to a small pan in Mahajanga produced a loose flock of boldly-patterned African Pygmy Geese and we enjoyed a feeding flock of Black Heron. Our boat trip into the fabled Betsiboka Delta awaited us the next morning. This estuary is the only known easily accessible site for the rare and endangered Bernier's Teal and Madagascar Sacred Ibis, both of which were found easily and showed exceptionally well for all on board.

After a very successful trip to the north-west it was time to head to the south-east corner of the island. Leaving the airport at Fort Dauphin we bounced along the road to Berenty passing villages, farmlands (rice, kasava, mangos, litchis and sisal) and patches of spiny forest. We made a few stops in this unique and other-worldly habitat and managed to coax out Lafresnaye's Vanga, Archbold's Newtonia and Thamnornis, whilst a Warty Chameleon was seen crossing the road before arriving at the famous





Berenty Lemur Reserve. The next morning was warm and sunny with Ring-tailed Lemurs walking around our feet and Verreaux's Sifaka's dancing across the red sand. We headed out to a nearby open field where we soon found several small flocks of Madagascar Sandgrouse, a displaying Madagascar Lark and the endemic Madagascar Cisticola. We then embarked on a short but highly rewarding and entertaining walk through the nearby riverine woodland picking up the scarce Madagascar Cuckoo-Hawk, confiding Giant Coua, Hook-billed Vanga and White-browed Owl as highlights. Lemurs were abundant in the remaining forest and provided close, intimate encounters and

great photographic opportunities.

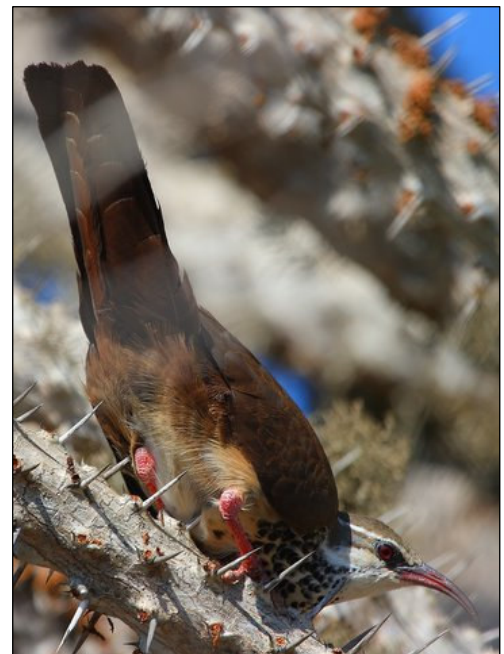
The tiny patches of spiny forest still harbour some good endemics and we found Green-capped Coua, Madagascar Buttonquail, White-footed Sportive Lemur and comical Three-eyed Lizards.

After enjoying our time at Berenty we bumped back along the road to Fort Dauphin to catch our flight to Tulear. The spiny desert around Ifaty where a variety of exciting and exceptionally localized birds are on offer was our next target destination. This unique habitat of giant Baobabs - most of them being hundreds of years old - along with several species of *didierea*, *pachypodium* and *Euphorbia* support the only populations of two of the world's most specialized and desirable birds: Long-tailed Ground Roller and Subdesert Mesite. We were promptly treated to incredibly satisfying views of both species along with good views of Madagascar Cuckoo and a very confiding Running Coua. The surrounding grasslands and wetlands produced a few more of the areas specialties, most notably the rare Madagascar Plover, whilst confiding Baillon's Crake and Madagascar Swamp Warbler were also enjoyed.

After finding all the target birds for the area, we made for Tulear, the largest town in the south-west from where we would board our boat for the island of Nosy Ve. The island lies just off the coast and is home to breeding Red-tailed Tropicbirds, which flew within meters of us on many occasions parading their exquisite red tails. A major surprise came in the form of a brilliant adult White-tailed Tropicbird that flew over our heads just before we departed back to the mainland at Anakao. After a sun-drenched morning filled with tropicbirds, beautiful shells and crystal clear waters we enjoyed a delicious seafood lunch before searching the surrounding gardens and finding the area's localized specialty, Littoral Rock Thrush.

La Table, a small mountain just to the east of Tulear was our next destination, where we would target two more severely range-restricted endemics: Red-shouldered Vanga and Verreaux's Coua. Both of these species were found in their dry, coral rag scrub habitat before moving north towards Isalo National Park. We popped into a patch of dry deciduous forest, which yielded a very confiding group of Appert's Tetraka and the outrageous Phelsuma Standingi, an electric-green day gecko before continuing on to our luxurious hotel at Isalo.

It was wonderful to enjoy the luxuries of our hotel, with its divine food and amazing setting within the jagged sandstone mountains of Isalo National Park. The area's endemic specialty, Benson's Rock Thrush was quickly picked up the next morning before leaving the central plateau and heading



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east towards the rainforest. The extensive and luscious forests of Ranomafana National Park beckoned and this would be our first rainforest destination of the trip. The park protects a fairly large tract of pristine mid-altitude rainforest and is home to a host of exciting endemic Malagasy species. The park was initially proclaimed to protect the only known populations of the localized Golden Bamboo and Greater Bamboo Lemurs, which were discovered in the area in the late 1980's, both of which were seen at close quarters during our stay in the park. Many extremely elusive and sought-after endemic bird species occur in the forests of Ranomafana and we managed to obtain views of most of these specials. Yellow-bellied Sunbird-Asity, gorgeous Pitta-like Ground Roller, Brown Mesite, Forest Rock Thrush,



Red-fronted Coua, White-throated Oxylabes, mouse-like Brown Emutail, stunning male Velvet Asity, skulking Yellowbrow and Madagascar Pratincole were among the many avian highlights that were seen during our stay here. Red-bellied Lemur, Red-fronted Brown Lemur and Brown Mouse Lemur were also seen and provided further enjoyment. Herps are also very well represented in these diverse forests with Oshaughnessy's, Band-bellied and Nose-horned Chameleons, the newly described *Calumma crypticum* (split from Short-horned Chameleon) and bright green Four-spotted Day Gecko being just a few of the fantastic herps that we added to our ever-growing list.

Bidding farewell to the riches of Ranomafana, we made our way further north and then east towards the legendary eastern rainforest site of Perinet. Like most rainforest sites, Perinet and Mantadia require a lot of hard work, perseverance and patience but in so doing, offer great reward.

Mantadia National Park, offering more extensive forest at a slightly lower altitude than Perinet, lies just to the north of the latter park and was our prime focus for the next two days. We worked exceptionally hard in the permanent drizzle for many of the forest endemics and were eventually rewarded with brilliant views of a pair of Short-legged Ground-Roller. We also enjoyed repeated views of Forest Fody – the males of which were seen sporting their immaculate scarlet breeding dress. A pond at the forest edge produced Madagascar Grebe and a troop of Black and White Ruffed Lemur trying their best to dry out in the forest canopy. Later that morning we were pleased to find Scaly Ground-Roller, which showed well for all. While traversing the forest trails we bumped into Madagascar Pygmy Kingfisher, a very smart little kingfisher, whilst Wedge-tailed Jery, Nuthatch Vanga and White-throated Rail proved to be unusually confiding. We scoured the area for any movement and slowly picked up goodies like Dark Newtonia, Red-tailed and Tylas Vanga, Ward's Flycatcher, showy Blue Coua, Madagascar Blue Pigeon and Madagascar Spinetail. We also made some worthy stops along the road to Mantadia and managed to find two of the island's scarce endemics, Madagascar Rail and Greater Vasa Parrot. Mammals are an attractive feature of these forests and we enjoyed sightings of some of Madagascar's most prized lemurs. Indri with its deafening howls enthralled us throughout the days and the rare Diademed Sifaka stole our hearts, whilst Eastern Grey Bamboo and Common Brown Lemur provided us



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with ample excitement. One of the biggest and most unexpected highlights during our time in Mantadia came in the form of a Lowland Streaked Tenrec that scurried around the trail right in front of us – what a treat and a due reward for our perseverance. Highlights at Perinet included Rainforest Scops Owl on the day roost, a troop of Indri and a rare sighting of a Madagascar Crested Ibis on the night roost - awesome!

Mantadia provided a great deal of special experiences but it was time to move on and leave the rain behind us as we departed for our final destination of Anjozorobe. Extensive mid-altitude rainforest and pristine marshes is a feature of this wonderful area. We enjoyed an extremely successful morning in the forest adding Crossley's Babbler, which popped up from the undergrowth and waltzed in front of us without a care in the world. A flashy male Sunbird-Asity showed really well soon afterwards and the calls of Henst's Goshawk added further excitement to the walk. We followed the piercing calls down the valley and eventually found a nest where we were rewarded for our efforts with good views of this elusive, endemic raptor. We were lucky to bump into a beautiful male Madagascar Partridge on the track as well as a flock of three Meller's Duck flying overhead. The nearby marsh gave us Madagascar Rail, Madagascar Snipe and the secretive Grey Emutail, whilst a night walk in the forest was very enjoyable and productive as we scored with further looks at Rainforest Scops Owl and Brown Mouse Lemur. The walk also yielded two new mammals, Greater Dwarf and Weasel Sportive Lemur. A Madagascar Blue Pigeon was seen on the nest and we enjoyed several close-up views of Short-horned, Nose-horned, Band-bellied and stump-tailed (*Brookesia thieli*) Chameleons.

Alas, it was time to make our way back to Antananarivo after an enthralling three weeks on the "eighth continent". Thank you to everyone for making this yet another highly successful and extremely enjoyable trip to Madagascar!

Annotated Checklists of Birds, Mammals and "Herps"

Nomenclature and taxonomy follows Morris, P. & Hawkins, F. (1998) *A Photographic Guide to the Birds of Madagascar*, with the notable exception of a few of the recent taxonomic changes; Garbutt, N. (1999) *Mammals of Madagascar* with recent changes as adopted by Mittermeier *et al* (2006) *Lemurs of Madagascar*, and, Glaw, F. & Vences, M. (1994) *A Field Guide to the Amphibians and Reptiles of Madagascar*. Insect names were derived from various sources.

BIRDS

178 species

Key to abbreviations:

E: an endemic species

NE: a near-endemic species (i.e. occurring in the Malagasy region only)

BE: a breeding endemic species

I: an introduced species

e: an endemic subspecies

ne: a near-endemic subspecies

be: a breeding endemic subspecies

CONSERVATION STATUS

C: critical

En: endangered

V: vulnerable

NT: near-threatened

Guineafowl *Numididae*

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Helmeted Guineafowl (I)

Numida meleagris

Two birds were encountered at Berenty with a further sighting of a flock in the Isalo area.

NOTE: This African species was probably introduced to Madagascar by early colonists.

Pheasants, Fowl & Allies Phasianidae

Madagascar Partridge (E)

Margaroperdix madagascarensis

Wonderful views of a single male were enjoyed at Anjozorobe.

Ducks, Geese & Swans Anatidae

White-faced Whistling Duck

Dendrocygna viduata

Large numbers were recorded at freshwater wetlands throughout the island.

Knob-billed (Comb) Duck

Sarkidiornis melanotos

Several individuals were seen at Lake Alarobia.

African Pygmy Goose

Nettapus auritus

Good scope views were obtained of a flock of at least 30 birds at a lake near Mahajanga.

Meller's Duck (E) (En)

Anas melleri

Three birds were seen in flight with a further pair encountered at Anjozorobe. This species' numbers seem to continue to decline.

Bernier's (Madagascar) Teal (E)(En)

Anas bernieri

The greatest prize of our adventurous trip into the Betsiboka Delta. We wasted no time in finding this species perched up in the mangroves.

Red-billed Teal (Duck)

Anas erythrorhyncha

Probably the commonest duck and widespread in freshwater wetlands across the island.

Hottentot Teal

Anas hottentota

A small flock were seen at wetlands south of Ifaty.

Grebes Podicipedidae

Little Grebe (Dabchick)

Tachybaptus ruficollis

Large numbers were found on the wetlands south of Ifaty.

Madagascar Grebe (E) (V)

Tachybaptus pelzelinii

A pair was encountered at a small pond in Mantadia NP.

NOTE: Globally threatened and declining due to habitat loss, introduction of exotic fish, and competition (and possibly hybridization) with Little Grebe.

Flamingos Phoenicopteridae

Greater Flamingo

Phoenicopterus roseus

A small flock numbering around 10 individuals was seen on mudflats south of Ifaty.

Storks Ciconiidae

Yellow-billed Stork

Mycteria ibis

A single juvenile bird was scoped at Lake Ravelobe. Two adults were also seen in flight at the same site the next day.

Ibises & Spoonbills Threskiornithidae

Sacred (Madagascar Sacred/Bernier's) Ibis (NE) *Threskiornis [aethiopicus] bernieri*

Another prize of our speedboat adventure up the Betsiboka Delta, several individuals were seen in flight and perched in the mangroves.

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NOTE: A globally threatened species restricted to largely inaccessible wetlands in western Madagascar and Aldabra Island.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

Good numbers were found at Lac Ravelobe and in the rice paddies around Amboromalandy near Ampijoroa.

Madagascar (Crested) Ibis (E) (NT) *Lophotibis cristata*

We enjoyed magnificent scope views of a single bird on the night roost near Andasibe.

Bitterns & Herons *Ardeidae*

Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Large numbers recorded at various wetlands on several days of the tour.

Striated (Green-backed) Heron *Butorides striatus*

Small numbers were seen at most freshwater and marine wetlands.

NOTE: Represented in Madagascar by the race B. s. rutenbergi, which tends to be darker than its African counterpart, with a reddish neck reminiscent of the American B. s. virens (Green Heron).

(Common) Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*

Widespread and common in a variety of wetland habitats across the island, from rice paddies to tidal mudflats.

Malagasy Pond Heron (BE) (V) *Ardeola idae*

A few adults in immaculate breeding plumage were seen at the Tsimbazaza Zoo with further magnificent scope views obtained at Lake Alarobia.

NOTE: A regional endemic breeder that is considered vulnerable and declining due to competition with Common Squacco Heron.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

Common throughout and recorded daily in open and semi-open habitats.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

A handful of birds were encountered at scattered sites throughout the trip.

Humblot's (Madagascar) Heron (E) (V) *Ardea humbloti*

Wonderful views were had of a pair at Lake Ravelobe with further encounters at a pan near Mahajanga and in the Betsiboka Delta.

NOTE: A globally threatened species, essentially restricted to Madagascar but with vagrant records elsewhere

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

A few individuals were seen at Lake Ravelobe.

Great (White) Egret *Ardea alba*

Small numbers were recorded at wetlands throughout the country.

Black Heron (Egret) *Egretta ardesiaca*

Commonly encountered throughout the island with an especially memorable sighting of a flock of at least 40 birds canopy-feeding at a pan near Mahajanga,

Dimorphic (Mascarene Reef) Egret (NE) *Egretta [garzetta] dimorpha*

A widespread and common species throughout Madagascar with all three colour morphs being encountered.

NOTE: This species is sometimes lumped by authorities as a distinct subspecies of the widespread Little Egret, Egretta garzetta. Clements treats it as a subspecies of Little Egret.

Tropicbirds *Phaethontidae*

Red-tailed Tropicbird *Phaethon rubricauda*

We enjoyed intimate encounters with these most elegant birds on the island of Nosy Ve.

White-tailed Tropicbird *Phaethon lepturus*

Good flight views were had of a single bird on one occasion at the island of Nosy Ve. This beautiful species is a rare wonderer to the Madagascan coastline.

Hamerkop *Scopidae*

Hamerkop

Scopus umbretta

Small numbers of these unique, stork-like birds were encountered in roadside rice paddies throughout the tour.

Aningas *Anhingidae*

African Darter

Anhinga rufa

An uncommon species in Madagascar, which was only recorded on Lake Ravelobe, Ampijoroa.

Falcons *Falconidae*

Malagasy (Madagascar) Kestrel (NEe)

Falco newtoni

A very common endemic occurring in open and semi-open habitats throughout the island. This raptor was seen on nearly every day of the trip.

Sooty Falcon

Falco concolor

A single adult bird was seen in flight on the drive from Ranomafana to Tana.

Kites, Hawks & Eagles *Accipitridae*

Madagascar Cuckoo-Hawk

Aviceda madagascariensis

This extremely scarce, endemic forest raptor that was scoped at Berenty.

Black (Yellow-billed) Kite

Milvus migrans

Another common and conspicuous raptor of open habitats, particularly in the west.

Madagascar Fish-Eagle (E) (C)

Haliaeetus vociferoides

Brilliant, close views of a pair of these critically endangered, endemic eagles at the edge of Lake Ravelobe, Ampijoroa.

NOTE: This is one of the world's rarest raptors, with a total global population of no more than 120 birds.

Frances' Sparrowhawk (NE)

Accipiter francesii

A female was scoped at Tsimbazaza Zoo on the first morning of the trip. A further female was encountered in the woodland at Ampijoroa with more sightings of a male and female at Berenty.

Henst's Goshawk (E) (NT)

Accipiter henstii

After hearing this scarce species at Anjozorobe we had a single bird fly over us and then land in a large tree near its nest which showed fairly well for those who could make the steep descent into the valley.

NOTE: A scarce endemic that occurs at low densities; usually detected by its far-carrying and distinctive calls.

Madagascar Buzzard (E)

Buteo brachypterus

Common and widespread, with small numbers recorded from almost all wooded sites.

Mesites *Mesitornithidae*

White-breasted Mesite (E) (V)

Mesitornis variegata

Ampijoroa produced a great sighting of a pair of these wonderful endemic beauties. Their distinctive, piercing duet was heard on several occasions in the forest.

Brown Mesite (E) (V)

Mesitornis unicolor

Unbeatable, walk away views were enjoyed of a pair of these richly-coloured endemics at Ranomafana NP.

Subdesert Mesite (E) (V)

Monias benschi

An early morning start enabled us to locate this elusive species in the Spiny Desert at Ifaty. We all enjoyed exceptional scope views of a male on the nest.

Flufftails *Sarothruridae*

Madagascar Flufftail (E) *Sarothrura insularis*

A species which is always particularly difficult to see. Its characteristic call was heard on many occasions but we were unable to coax them into view.

Rails, Crakes & Coots *Rallidae*

Madagascar Wood Rail (E) *Canirallus kioloides*

This can be a devilishly hard bird to see! We had reasonably good views of this secretive forest rallid at Ranomafana, Perinet & Anjozorobe.

Madagascar Rail (E) *Rallus madagascariensis*

We had fantastic views of this shy rallid en route to Mantadia NP and at Anjozorobe.

White-throated (Cuvier's) Rail (NE) *Dryolimnas cuvieri*

A pair of these large, striking rails were finally seen at the road edge in Mantadia NP after hearing them on many occasions.

NOTE: Some authorities consider the nominate Madagascar race of this bird as distinctive from the near-flightless Aldabra Island race, making this another endemic rallid to Madagascar.

Baillon's Crake *Porzana pusilla*

Wonderful views were had of this handsome species in the early afternoon at a wetland south of Ifaty.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Small numbers were encountered at several wetland sites with particularly large numbers at Lake Alarobia.

Buttonquails *Turnicidae*

Madagascar Buttonquail (E) *Turnix nigricollis*

This can often be a tricky bird to find and see well. We achieved excellent views of a pair at Berenty with further views in the spiny forest at Ifaty and La Table.

Stilts *Recurvirostridae*

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

First seen in the Betsiboka Delta with further sightings on the south western coastline.

Plovers *Charadriidae*

Grey (Black-bellied) Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Several birds were seen near Ifaty and on the mudflats at Tulear.

Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

We found several on mudflats throughout the Ifaty area.

Madagascar Plover (E)(NT) *Charadrius thoracicus*

This scarce, localized and boldly-patterned endemic wader was seen near Ifaty.

Kittlitz's Plover *Charadrius pecuarius*

Seen near Mahajanga and in the south around Ifaty where large numbers were observed.

Three-banded Plover *Charadrius tricollaris*

This striking wader was seen near Mahajanga and at various small pans in the Ifaty area.

White-fronted Plover *Charadrius marginatus*

This delicately beautiful wader was seen on Nosy Ve Island.

Greater Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii*

Small numbers were scoped on mudflats in the Ifaty/Tulear area.

Jacanas *Jacanidae*

Madagascar Jacana (E) *Actophilornis albinucha*
A few birds were scoped at quite a distance near Ampijaroa.

Snipes & Sandpipers *Scolopacidae*

Madagascar Snipe (E)(NT) *Gallinago macrodactyla*
This species is becoming rare and extremely local on the island due to habitat destruction. We had flight views of several birds at Vohipara/Ranomafana with further views at Anjozorobe.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*
A singleton was scoped on a mudflat near Ifaty.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*
This species was fairly common on tidal flats in the Betsiboka Delta and around Tulear and Ifaty.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*
Another common wader, this species was regularly seen at the wetlands in the Tulear and Ifaty area. Also seen in the Betsiboka Delta.

Terek Sandpiper *Tringa cinerea*
We had good numbers in the Betsiboka Delta.

Common Sandpiper *Tringa hypoleucos*
Small numbers in freshwater and brackish wetland habitats throughout our tour.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*
Seen in the Tulear/Ifaty area and on the island of Nosy Ve.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*
Several birds were found on mudflats south of Ifaty.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*
The commonest Calidrid, seen on the tidal flats in the Betsiboka Delta and in the Ifaty and Tulear areas.

Pratincoles *Glareolidae*

Madagascar Pratincole (BE) *Glareola ocularis*
Brilliant scope views were enjoyed of a pair on rocks in the river at Ranomafana.

Gulls & Terns *Laridae*

Lesser Crested Tern *Sterna bengalensis*
A huge flock was encountered on a sand-spit just off Nosy Ve.

Swift (Greater Crested) Tern *Sterna bergii*
A common and widespread species that was recorded in the Betsiboka Delta and around Nosy Ve.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*
An extremely widespread species. Several birds were seen around Nosy Ve.

Sandgrouse *Pteroclididae*

Madagascar Sandgrouse (E) *Pterocles personatus*
A few flocks were seen extremely well in the fields at Berenty. We enjoyed great scope views of these large, colourful sandgrouse.

Pigeons & Doves *Columbidae*

Common (Rock) Pigeon (I) *Columba livia*
Widespread in urban areas.

Malagasy (Madagascar) Turtle Dove (NEe) *Columba picturata*

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This very common endemic was seen on most days of the trip.

Namaqua (Long-tailed) Dove *Oena capensis*

Widespread and common in drier areas.

Madagascar Green Pigeon (NE) *Treron australis*

This woodland species was seen at several localities.

Madagascar Blue Pigeon (E) *Alectroenas madagascariensis*

This beautiful bird is fairly common in eastern rainforest, we had good views at Perinet and Mantadia National Parks and at Anjozorobe, including a nesting bird on a night walk.

Parrots *Psittacidae*

Grey-headed Lovebird (E) *Agapornis canus*

This small parrot was first found in the campsite at Ampijoroa and later seen again in strong numbers throughout the south of the island.

Greater Vasa Parrot (NE) *Coracopsis vasa*

A much scarcer bird than Lesser Vasa Parrot. We first saw this species en route to Berenty with further encounters near Andisibe and Mantadia NP.

Lesser Vasa Parrot (NE) *Coracopsis nigra*

A widespread and common bird and exceedingly vocal, this bird was regularly recorded in good numbers throughout our trip.

Cuckoos *Cuculidae*

Madagascar Coucal (NEe) *Centropus toulou*

Common, widespread and recorded in small numbers virtually daily during our tour.

Crested Coua (E) *Coua cristata*

This species was first recorded at Ampijoroa. We continued to enjoy views throughout the drier regions of the country.

Verreaux's Coua (E) (NT) *Coua verreauxi*

A secretive and exceedingly localized species that was seen in the coral rag scrub near La Table.

Blue Coua (E) *Coua caerulea*

Fairly common in the eastern forests. Strangely turaco-like and one of the world's great "Blue Birds"!

Red-capped Coua (E) *Coua ruficeps*

We enjoyed great views of a very confiding bird at Berenty. This refers to the green-capped race of the species.

NOTE: The southern, khaki-capped form of Red-capped Coua is considered to be a full species in Sinclair I. and Langrande O. Birds of the Indian Ocean Islands however most other authorities consider this form to be a subspecies of Red-capped Coua.

Red-fronted Coua (E) *Coua reynaudii*

We had good views of this forest-dwelling endemic at Ranomafana. The species was also heard on several occasions at Perinet, Mantadia and Anjozorobe.

Coquerel's Coua (E) *Coua coquereli*

Commonly heard at Ampijoroa, and several individuals seen exceptionally well. Also heard in Zombitse NP.

Running Coua (E) *Coua cursor*

We all had exceptionally good views of this dry-country coua in the spiny desert at Ifaty.

Giant Coua (E) *Coua gigas*

Common at Berenty where we had numerous sightings of these amazingly relaxed birds. Heard again at Zombitse Forest.

Red-breasted Coua (E) *Coua serriana*

This is an extremely tough bird to see outside the Masoala Peninsula. We heard it in the distance on a

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few occasions in Mantadia NP.

Madagascar Lesser Cuckoo (BE)

Cuculus rochii

Very common and one of the dominant sounds in wooded and semi-wooded habitats throughout but difficult to see. We finally had great views of a few birds in the spiny forest at Ifaty.

Barn Owls *Tytonidae*

Barn Owl

Tyto alba

Brilliant views of this cosmopolitan species on a day roost at Berenty.

Owls *Strigidae*

Torotoroka Scops Owl (E)

Otus madagascariensis

This recently split species of Scops Owl (pronounced “Toorotoorook”, an onomatopoeic name) was seen brilliantly at Ampijoroa.

NOTE: These Scops Owls have recently been split, based on morphological and vocal differences and habitat preferences.

Rainforest (Malagasy) Scops Owl (NE)

Otus rutilus

We had superb views of a bird on the day roost in Perinet NP with a further sighting on the night walk at Anjozorobe.

White-browed (Hawk-) Owl (E)

Ninox superciliaris

Crippling views were had of this beauty at Berenty and at Zombitse.

Madagascar (Long-eared) Owl (E)

Asio madagascariensis

We unfortunately only heard this uncommon endemic on two occasions near Andisibe.

Nightjars *Caprimulgidae*

Madagascar Nightjar (NE)

Caprimulgus madagascariensis

We saw this common nightjar on many occasions throughout the tour and were treated to their “bouncing marble” calls on most nights.

Swifts *Apodidae*

Madagascar Spinetail (NE)

Zoonavena grandidieri

Small groups were encountered over the rainforest at Mantadia NP and at Anjozorobe.

African Palm Swift

Cypsiurus parvus gracilis

Common in suitable palm habitat throughout the island.

Alpine Swift

Tachymarptis melba

A few birds were seen in flight on the drive from Isalo to Ranomafana.

Malagasy (Black) Swift (NE)

Apus balstoni

We had several sightings of these large swifts throughout the trip.

NOTE: These Malagasy birds are usually considered a species distinct from the African Black Swift (A. barbatus), however no dedicated research has been done. There seems to be two distinct sizes of all black swifts in Madagascar, and these may represent two or more species.

Little Swift

Apus affinis

A few birds were seen during the first day of the tour in Tana.

Rollers *Coraciidae*

Broad-billed Roller

Eurystomus glaucurus

A widespread, common and gaudy breeding migrant from the African mainland, which we observed at close proximity at Ampijoroa.

Ground-Rollers *Brachypteraciidae*

Short-legged Ground-Roller (E) (V) *Brachypteracias leptosomus*

Often the most difficult of the ground-rollers to find, we were treated to absolutely sensational views of a pair after a long, hard and intense search through the rainforest at Mantadia.

Scaly Ground-Roller (E) (V) *Brachypteracias squamigera*

Another elusive and retiring species. We had great views of a single bird in the open for ages at Mantadia NP. This usually scarce and secretive bird was formerly considered to be restricted to the forests of the Masoala Peninsula.

Pitta-like Ground-Roller (E) *Atelornis pittoides*

We were rewarded with excellent views of this gaudy and highly sought-after endemic at Ranomafana.

Rufous-headed Ground-Roller (E) (NT) *Atelornis crossleyi*

This rainforest species was unfortunately only heard in Ranomafana NP.

Long-tailed Ground-Roller (E) (V) *Uratelornis chimaera*

A single bird was seen well at Ifaty. This is undoubtedly one of the star birds of the spiny forest.

Cuckoo-Roller *Leptosomidae*

Cuckoo-Roller (NE) *Leptosomus discolor*

This spectacular and bizarre endemic was seen at several forest sites, the first being Ampijoroa.

NOTE: some authorities such as Sinclair I. and Langrande O., consider the Comoros form of this bird to be a separate species from that occurring in Madagascar.

Kingfishers *Alcedinidae*

Madagascar Pygmy Kingfisher (E) *Ispidina madagascariensis*

We were treated to amazing scope views of this brilliantly-coloured species in Mantadia NP.

Malagasy Kingfisher (NE) *Alcedo vintsioides*

Fairly common at freshwater and marine wetlands throughout.

Bee-eaters *Meropidae*

Olive (Madagascar) Bee-eater *Merops superciliosus*

This common but extremely striking bee-eater was seen on most days of the trip.

Hoopoes *Upupidae*

Madagascar Hoopoe (E) *Upupa marginalis*

We first found this charismatic species at our hotel in Tana with further sightings in the west and south of the country.

NOTE: This form is usually considered distinct from the African Hoopoe, based on vocal and morphological differences.

Asities *Philepittidae*

Velvet Asity (E) *Philepitta castanea*

Our first sighting of this electrically vivid species was of a male in Ranomafana NP. We enjoyed further views of females in Ranomafana and Mantadia.

Schlegel's Asity (E) (NT) *Philepitta schlegeli*

Another extremely attractive and highly localized forest endemic that was seen exceptionally well at Ampijoroa.

Common Sunbird-Asity (E) *Neodrepanis coruscans*

We were finally rewarded with cracking views of a male at Anjozorobe after hearing this species at Ranomafana and briefly seeing one at Perinet.

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Yellow-bellied Sunbird-Asity (E) (En)

Neodrepanis hypoxanthus

This stunning and elusive endemic will undoubtedly hold a very special place in everyone's hearts. After much patience and effort we were treated to magical views of a pair in Ranomafana NP.

Vangas Vangidae

Red-tailed Vanga (E)

Calicalicus madagascariensis

A fairly common vanga occurring in wooded habitats throughout the island, which was seen fairly regularly in the eastern rainforest.

Red-shouldered Vanga (E) (V)

Calicalicus rufocarpalis

After a fairly lengthy and search in the "coral rag" scrub near La Table we were treated to good views of a pair. This is one of Madagascar's most localized endemics, which was only very recently discovered.

Hook-billed Vanga (E)

Vanga curvirostris

Several sightings were had of this large vanga.

Lafresnaye's Vanga (E)

Xenopirostris xenopirostris

Scope views were obtained of this spiny forest endemic en route to Berenty. We also heard this species at Ifaty.

Van Dam's Vanga (E) (En)

Xenopirostris damii

We had saturation views of this extremely localized and uncommon species at Ampijaroa after a concerted search.

Pollen's Vanga (E) (NT)

Xenopirostris polleni

A scarce and local denizen of eastern forests, we heard this species on a few occasions but they proved to be frustratingly uncooperative and would not show themselves.

Sickle-billed Vanga (E)

Falcula palliata

One of Madagascar's great birds and wonderfully common in the dry west and south of the country. Particularly common and conspicuous at Ampijaroa, where we saw our first individuals.

White-headed Vanga (E)

Artamella viridis

Seen at several of the forest sites with our first views at Ampijaroa.

Chabert's Vanga (E)

Leptopterus chabert

The commonest vanga, occurring in habitats ranging from pristine rainforest to degraded scrub. First seen at Ampijaroa, where observed daily.

Blue Vanga (E)

Cyanolanius madagascarensis

We encountered small numbers at various scattered localities. Another one of the world's great "Blue Birds"!

NOTE: Sinclair I. and Langrande O., consider the Comoros race of this species to be distinct, resulting in the Madagascar Blue Vanga being another Madagascar endemic. This stance is not widely accepted.

Rufous Vanga (E)

Schetba rufa

This robust and striking bird was enjoyed in the forest at Ampijaroa and was heard on a few occasions at Ranomafana.

Tylas Vanga (E)

Tylas eduardi

A fairly common member of mixed species flocks in the eastern rainforest. We observed them at Ranomafana and Mantadia.

NOTE: Recent DNA evidence suggests that this "vanga" is more closely related to the cuckoo-shrikes.

Nuthatch Vanga

Hypositta corallirostris

A small flock was seen fleetingly as they moved through the forest at Perinet. We were later treated to fantastic views of a flock of these elusive vangas in Mantadia National Park.

Dark Newtonia (E)

Newtonia amphichroa

A rather dull and non-descript endemic that was heard and seen on a few occasions in the eastern rainforest.

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Common Newtonia (E)

Newtonia brunneicauda

Common and widespread in wooded and semi-wooded habitat throughout our tour.

Archbold's Newtonia (E)

Newtonia archboldi

This species is best noted for its distinctive call and was seen well en route to Berenty.

Ward's Flycatcher (E)

Pseudobias wardi

This scarce rainforest endemic was first seen by some of the group at Ranomafana with further good views of a pair at Mantadia NP.

Crossley's Babbler (E)

Mystacornis crossleyi

This exceptionally attractive ground-dwelling vanga almost took our breath away when a very confiding individual was encountered at extremely close range at Anjozorobe. We also had views of a single less cooperative bird in Ranomafana NP.

Cuckooshrikes *Campephagedae*

Madagascar (Ashy) Cuckooshrike (NE)

Coracina cinerea

This species was regularly encountered in wooded habitat throughout the trip.

Drongos *Dicruridae*

Crested Drongo (NE)

Dicrurus forficatus

A common, noisy and highly conspicuous species of wooded habitat throughout the country.

Monarchs *Monarchidae*

Madagascar Paradise Flycatcher (NE)

Terpsiphone mutata

A flashy and extremely attractive species that is widespread in a variety of wooded and semi-wooded habitats. We enjoyed sightings on most days of the trip with both rufous and white morphs being noted.

Crows & Jays *Corvidae*

Pied Crow

Corvus albus

Common and widespread in open habitats throughout the island.

Swallows & Martins *Hirundinidae*

Mascarene Martin (NE)

Phedina borbonica

Madagascar's commonest hirundine and a regional breeding endemic. Recorded at almost all sites, on most days of the tour.

Brown-throated (Plain) Martin

Riparia paludicola

A few individuals were seen by some of the group at Vohiparara/Ranomafana NP.

Larks *Alaudidae*

Madagascar (Hova) Lark (E)

Mirafra hova

Extremely common in all dry country and open habitats.

Cisticolas & Allies *Cisticolidae*

Madagascar Cisticola (NE)

Cisticola cherinus

Common in open habitats throughout the island.

Family Uncertain *Incertae sedis*

Common Jery (E)

Neomixis tenella

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One of the island's most ubiquitous species, which was recorded on most days of the tour.

Green Jery (E) *Neomixis viridis*

Seen regularly in eastern forests where we encountered small numbers.

Stripe-throated Jery (E) *Neomixis striatigula*

This specie's scratchy call is a common background noise in the rainforests. We had regular sightings during the last half of the tour.

Bulbuls Pycnonotidae

Malagasy (Madagascar) Bulbul (NE) *Hypsipetes madagascariensis*

Common and ubiquitous, with daily sightings in a variety of wooded and semi-wooded habitats.

Old World Warblers Sylviidae

Grey Emutail (E) *Dromaeocercus seebohmi*

A pair of these highly secretive birds were seen at Anjozorobe.

Brown Emutail (E) *Dromaeocercus brunneus*

The entire group managed to see this "avian rodent" at Ranomafana – amazing!

Malagasy Brush Warbler (NE) *Nesillas typica*

Very common in dense cover of any kind in the east, where several recorded daily.

Subdesert Brush Warbler (E) *Nesillas lantzii*

A fairly common species that was seen on several occasions in thickets in the arid south of the island.

NOTE: Formerly considered conspecific with Madagascar Brush Warbler but vocally distinct and sympatric with that species.

Madagascar Swamp Warbler (E) *Acrocephalus newtoni*

A common species of wetland habitat throughout the country, ranging from highland marshes in the east to mangroves in the west.

White-throated Oxylabes (E) *Oxylabes madagascariensis*

An devilishly shy and secretive endemic of the understorey of eastern rainforest and usually unbelievably difficult to see. The entire group managed to obtain unbeatable views of an extremely responsive flock in Ranomafana NP. The species was also heard on several occasions throughout the eastern rainforest.

Long-billed Berniera (Greenbul) (E) *Phyllastrephus madagascariensis*

This widespread endemic was first encountered at Ampijoroa in the west with further regular sightings in the eastern rainforest.

Cryptic Warbler (E) *Cryptosylvicola randrianasoloi*

This recently described species was seen and heard in Ranomafana NP.

Wedge-tailed Jery (E) (NT) *Hartertula flavoviridis*

An uncommon and elusive endemic of eastern forests. We enjoyed close views of a pair of unusually confiding birds in Mantadia NP.

Thamnornis (Warbler)(E) *Thamnornis chloropetoides*

A very subtly attractive endemic restricted to the spiny forest where we heard its zesty call and saw a pair en route to Berenty.

Spectacled Tetraka (Greenbul) (E) *Phyllastrephus zosterops*

Restricted to eastern forests, where it is common.

Appert's Tetraka (Greenbul) (E) (V) *Phyllastrephus apperti*

We enjoyed superb encounters with this attractive and confiding species in Zombitse NP. A globally threatened bird that is restricted to two forests in south west Madagascar.

Grey-crowned Tetraka (Greenbul) (E) (NT) *Phyllastrephus cinereiceps*

A low-density bird of eastern rainforest. We unfortunately only heard this species on a single occasion

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in Mantadia NP.

(Madagascar) Yellow-brow (Oxylabes) (E) (NT) *Crossleyia xanthophrys*

A scarce, localized and incredibly skulking and secretive rainforest endemic. The entire group managed to obtain a view of this species in Ranomafana NP. The species was heard again later at Anjozorobe.

NOTE: Apart from its ground-loving habits, this species has little in common with the White-throated Oxylabes and is better retained in its own genus, with its own English name.

Rand's Warbler (E)

Randia pseudozosterops

A common eastern rainforest endemic that was heard daily and seen on a few occasions.

White-eyes *Zosteropidae*

Madagascar White-eye (NE)

Zosterops maderaspatana

Commonly seen in the east but occurring throughout the island.

Starlings *Sturnidae*

Madagascar Starling (E)

Hartlaubius aurata

We enjoyed a very close sighting of this scarce, yet widespread endemic in Ranomafana NP.

Common Myna (I)

Acridotheres tristis tristis

A common but introduced species that was seen nearly every day of the trip.

Old World Flycatchers *Muscicapidae*

Madagascar Magpie-Robin (E)

Copsychus albospecularis

This species was seen throughout the tour almost daily and is a rather bold and confiding bird.

(African) Stonechat

Saxicola axillaries

Common in open habitats of the eastern highlands, where several were seen daily. This species was particularly common at Anjozorobe.

Littoral Rock Thrush (E)

Pseudocossyphus imerinus

Two gorgeous males were seen in dune scrub behind Anakao.

Forest Rock Thrush (E)

Pseudocossyphus sharpei

We had good views of this scarce forest-dweller at Ranomafana. The species was also heard at Anjozorobe.

Benson's Rock Thrush (E) (NT)

Pseudocossyphus bensoni

We had superb views of a single male in the Isalo area.

NOTE: A recent paper dealing with the systematics of the Madagascar rock thrushes suggested that Benson's Rock Thrush is merely a race of Forest Rock Thrush, based on DNA studies of specimens taken at the eastern and western limits of the species' range. However, these conclusions have recently been disputed, since no specimens of Benson's Rock Thrush were ever tested! (Dowsett and Dowsett-Lemaire pers. comm.) Furthermore, the two species are morphologically and, especially, vocally quite distinct.

Sunbirds *Nectariniidae*

Souimanga Sunbird (NE)

Nectarinia souimanga

By far the more common of Madagascar's sunbird species, occurring in a variety of wooded and semi-wooded habitats. This species was seen virtually daily on tour.

Malagasy Green (Madagascar) Sunbird (NE) *Nectarinia notata*

A very handsome and widespread but uncommon species. Small numbers were encountered at scattered sites.

Weavers *Ploceidae*

Nelicourvi Weaver (E)

Ploceus nelicourvi

A striking bird of the eastern rainforest areas, where small numbers were seen daily.

Sakalava Weaver (E)

Ploceus sakalava

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This species was commonly seen in the drier regions of Madagascar. Our first sighting was at Ampijoroa.

(Madagascar) Red Fody (E)

Foudia madagascariensis

Common, ubiquitous and good numbers recorded almost daily with several bright red males seen at Anjozorobe.

Forest Fody (E)

Foudia omissa

A scarce and usually tough endemic to find, we had wonderful views of several stunning males in full breeding plumage in Mantadia NP and at Anjozorobe.

Waxbills & Allies *Estrildidae*

Madagascar Mannikin (Munia) (E)

Lonchura nana

Several flocks were encountered at scattered localities throughout the tour.

Wagtails *Motacillidae*

Madagascar Wagtail (E)

Motacilla flaviventris

Common in the east and central plateau, where small numbers were seen regularly.

MAMMALS

25 Species

ORDER: Chiroptera

Family Pteropodidae (Old World Fruit Bats)

Madagascar Flying Fox

Pteropus rufus

We enjoyed good views of these handsome but noisy animals at their day roosts in gallery woodland at Berenty.

ORDER: Chiroptera

Family Emballonuridae

Mauritian Tomb Bat

Taphozous mauritanus

Close-up views were had at a day roost at Ampijoroa.

ORDER: Insectivora

Family Tenrecidae (Tenrecs and Otter Shrews)

Lowland Streaked Tenrec

Hemicentetes semispinosus

We were treated to amazingly close views of this bizarre species during the day in Mantadia NP.

ORDER: Rodentia

Family Muridae (Old World Rats and Mice)

Eastern Red Forest Rat

Nesomys rufus

This ground-dwelling species was seen in Ranomafana and Mantadia National Parks.

ORDER: Carnivora

Family Viverridae (Civets and Allies)

Fosa

Cryptoprocta ferox

One of the group members was exceptionally lucky to see and photograph this rare, secretive and seldom-seen predator at Ampijoroa.

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ORDER: Primates

Family Cheirogaleidae (Mouse and Dwarf Lemurs)

Grey Mouse Lemur *Microcebus murinus*

Several of these tiny lemurs were seen on our night walks at Ampijoroa.

Brown Mouse Lemur *Microcebus rufus*

We enjoyed wonderful views of this species during a night walk at Ranomafana.

Greater Dwarf Lemur *Cheirogaleus major*

Good views were had of a singleton on the night walk at Anjozorobe.

Fat-tailed Dwarf Lemur *Cheirogaleus medius*

We saw several on night walks at Ampijoroa. This species only becomes active in the warmer, wetter summer months as it hibernates in winter.

Family Megaladapidae (Sportive Lemurs)

Weasel Sportive Lemur *Lepilemur mustelinus*

One of these nocturnal lemurs was seen on the night walk at Anjozorobe.

Milne-Edwards's Sportive Lemur *Lepilemur edwardsi*

We enjoyed individuals on the day roost and on the night walk at Ampijoroa.

White-footed Sportive Lemur *Lepilemur leucopus*

This dry-country species was seen on the day roost at Berenty and their noisy calls were heard in the evening around the accommodation there.

Family Lemuridae ("True" Lemurs)

Eastern Grey Bamboo Lemur *Hapalemur griseus griseus*

These cute lemurs were seen on several occasions in the eastern rainforest.

Golden Bamboo-Lemur *Hapalemur aureus*

A small group of these extremely localized lemurs were seen exceptionally well on consecutive days in Ranomafana NP.

Greater Bamboo-Lemur *Hapalemur simus*

Fantastic views of this, one of the world's rarest mammals, were had in the rainforest at Ranomafana. The known world population of this lemur seems to be around 100 individuals!

Ring-tailed Lemur *Lemur catta*

The quintessential Malagasy mammal. We enjoyed prolonged encounters with numerous groups of these delightful animals at Berenty.

Red-bellied Lemur *Eulemur rubriventer*

Small troops of these beautiful lemurs were found at Ranomafana.

Common Brown Lemur *Eulemur fulvus fulvus*

These playful lemurs were seen at Ampijoroa, Berenty (where they have been introduced), Mantadia and Anjozorobe..

Red-fronted Brown Lemur *Eulemur fulvus rufus*

Large numbers were seen at Berenty (where they have been introduced) and at Ranomafana NP..

Black-and-white Ruffed Lemur *Varecia variegata variegata*

This is without a doubt one of Madagascar's most sought-after and attractive lemurs and we were lucky to have good views of a single troop in Mantadia NP.

Family Indriidae (Avahis, Sifakas and Indri)

Eastern Avahi (Woolly Lemur) *Avahi laniger*

Two of these nocturnal lemurs were seen on the day roost in Perinet NP.

Diademed Sifaka *Propithecus diadema diadema*

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We had outstanding encounters with this magnificent creature in Mantadia NP. Widely considered to be Madagascar's most beautiful primate, this is also the largest of the lemurs, with a number of specimens heavier than the largest Indri on record (Mittermeier et al 1994).

Verreaux's Sifaka

Propithecus verreaux verreauxi

This magnificent primate, with its soulful expressions and comical, bipedal locomotion, is undoubtedly one of the mammalian highlights of Madagascar. Common in Berenty, where seen daily.

Coquerel's Sifaka

Propithecus verreauxi coquereli

Common at Ampijoroa, where recorded daily, even within the confines of the camp.

Indri

Indri indri

We had a very memorable experience with this incredible lemur in Perinet NP. The territorial calls of this lemur is one of the world's great wildlife sounds. It is often considered the largest extant species (but see Diademed Sifaka, above),

Listing of amphibians and reptiles seen

38 Species

Amphibians

Family; *Hyperolilidae* (Reed Frogs)

Betsileo Reed Frog

Heterixalus betsileo

Family; *Ranidae* (True Frogs)

Madagascar Leaf-litter Frog

Aglyptodactylus madagascariensis

Madagascar Tree Frog

Boophis madagascariensis

Yellow-banded Tree Frog

Boophis Tephraemystrax

Boophis granulosus (guibei)

Gephyromantis (Mantidactylus) sculpturatus

Gephyromantis (Mantidactylus) luteus

Gephyromantis tschenki

Plethodontohyla bipunctata

Mantidactylus melanopleura

Mantidactylus betsileanus

Mantella madagascariensis

Platepelis grandis

Betsileo Leaf Frog

Painted Mantella

Giant Tree Frog

Reptiles

Family; *Crocodylidae* (Crocodiles)

Nile Crocodile

Crocodylus niloticus

Family; *Chamaeleonidae* (Chameleons)

Greater Stump-tailed Chameleon

Brookesia superciliaris

Brookesia thieli

Short-horned Chameleon

Calumma brevicornis

Nose-horned Chameleon

Calumma nasuta

Band-bellied Chameleon

Calumma gastrotaenia

Parson's Chameleon

Calumma parsonii

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Oustalet's Chameleon
Warty Chameleon
Oshaughnessy's Chameleon

Furcifer oustaleti
Furcifer verrucosus
Calumma oshaughnessyi
Calumma crypticum

Family; *Iguanidae* (Iguanas)

Three-eyed Lizard
Cuvier's Iguanid
Four-striped Iguanid

Chalarodon madagascariensis
Oplurus cuvieri
Oplurus quadrimaculatus

Family; *Gekkonidae* (Geckos)

Mercator Tropical House Gecko
Madagascar Day Gecko
Lineated Day Gecko
Four-spotted Day Gecko
Pale-bellied Day Gecko
Standing's Day Gecko

Hemidactylus mercatorius
Phelsuma madagascariensis
Phelsuma lineata
Phelsuma quadriocellata
Phelsuma Leiogastor
Phelsuma standingi
Lygodactylis sp.

Family; *Gerrhosauridae* (Plated Lizards)

Zonosaurus laticaudatus

Family; *Scincidae* (Skinks)

Elegant Skink

Mabuya elegans
Trachylepis aureopunctata

Family; *Colubridae* (Typical Snakes)

Black-and-White Striped Snake

Liopholidophis lateralis

Notable Insects and other Invertebrates

As if this staggering diversity of life forms was not enough, we also encountered a bewildering variety of invertebrates that ranged from the bizarre Giraffe-necked Weevil *Trachelophorus giraffa* to the immense super-homes of Golden Orb-web Spiders *Nephila madagascariensis*. Other notable "creepy-crawlies" included Giant Red Millipedes *Sphaerotherium sp.*, Flatid Leaf Bugs, and, of course, numerous spectacular moths and butterflies.

Photo credits: Scaly Ground-Roller, Coquerel's Coua, Madagascar Fish Eagle, Ring-tailed Lemur, Subdesert Mesite, Black and White Ruffed Lemur and Madagascar Pygmy Kingfisher. (All photographs by Glen Valentine).

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