



Rockjumper Birding Tours

Worldwide Birding Adventures

MADAGASCAR

Comprehensive II:

1st to 22nd November 2009



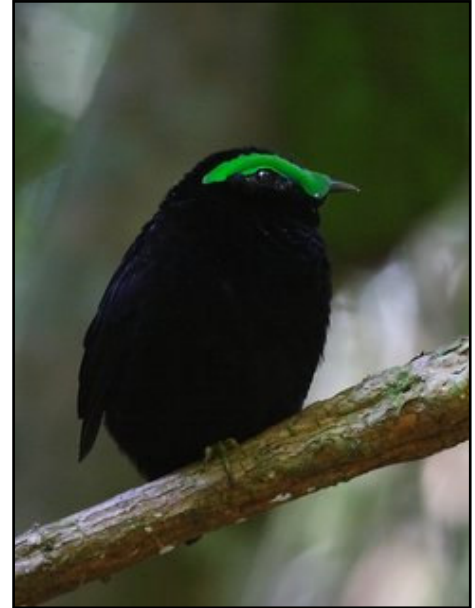
Trip report compiled by tour leader Keith Valentine

Tour Summary

Madagascar just keeps on producing the goods year after year, and this particular 2009 season was exceptional as we racked up unbeatable views of all five Ground-Rollers, all four Asities (including all the males in full breeding plumage), all three Mesites and the very rare Slender-billed Flufftail. We also

enjoyed a remarkable 25 species of fabulous lemurs and a host of chameleons and other interesting wildlife.

Our tour kicked off in blazing fashion as we transferred straight to two of the best eastern rainforest sites in Madagascar, Analamazaotra Special Reserve and Mantadia National Park. Our start to Madagascar birding at Mantadia National Park could not have begun in more perfect fashion as on arrival we were immediately chasing the call of one of the areas most sought-after species, Short-legged Ground Roller. We came up trumps with brilliant views before striking out for the forest trails where we located a superb assortment of the regions best birds. On show were the stunning Scaly and Pitta-like Ground Rollers, Cuckoo Roller, Velvet Asity, Red-tailed, Hook-billed and Blue Vangas, Dark Newtonia, Madagascar Cuckooshrike, Wedge-tailed Jery, Rand's Warbler, Madagascar Starling and Madagascar Mannikin. During the heat of the day we visited a small forest pond where a lovely pair of Madagascar Grebe was located. We also found our only Forest Fody of the tour here, and had the most outrageous views of Madagascar Flufftail to boot. In the afternoon our rallid luck continued as we located both White-throated and Madagascar Rails. The lemur sightings in Mantadia and Analamazaotra were simply brilliant, and we were blown away with no less than nine different species on our very first day in Madagascar! In Mantadia we had very good looks at Diademed Sifaka, Eastern Grey Bamboo Lemur, Black-and-white Ruffed Lemur, Red-bellied Lemur, Common Brown Lemur, Eastern Avahi and Indri. Later, while on the night walk at Analamazaotra we found both Furry-eared Dwarf Lemur and Goodman's Mouse Lemur.



In the Analamazaotra Special Reserve we enjoyed a number of great highlights. We began with a fantastic experience following a group of Indri and having them call directly above our heads; their piercing cries almost deafening us with their sheer intensity. On the forest trails we had mind blowing views of the usually shy Madagascar Wood Rail, Madagascar Blue Pigeon, Red-fronted Coua, Common Sunbird-Asity, White-headed and the tricky to locate Nuthatch Vanga, Ward's Flycatcher and Malagasy Green Sunbird.



An overnight stop at the wonderful retreat in the Anjozorobe Mountains was very fruitful. The pristine marshes here produced a number of Madagascar's most threatened species – Madagascar Snipe, Meller's Duck, Madagascar Rail and Grey Emutail. We were also extremely fortunate to have very good views of the near mythical Slender-billed Flufftail. In the early morning around our lodge we were entertained royally by a pair of Madagascar Partridge before heading off into the surrounding ridge-top forest. This

area also produced a wonderful array of key species and we enjoyed crippling views of Henst's



Goshawk, Rufous-headed Ground Roller, Crossley's Babbler, White-throated Oxylabes, the scarce Madagascar Yellowbrow and lovely Forest Rock Thrush in full voice.

It was now time to mix things up a bit and head for the hot and dry southern regions of Madagascar. Our flight from Tana arrived at Fort Dauphin on the coast in good time and we immediately began our drive on the now non-existent road to Berenty Private Reserve. A short stop in the spiny forest gave our bodies a rest from the bumpy ride and also produced a great sighting of Lafresnaye's Vanga. We did very well with our target species as we had excellent views of Madagascar Cuckoo-Hawk, France's and Madagascar Sparrowhawk, Madagascar Buttonquail, Madagascar Sandgrouse, Barn and Torotoroka Scops Owl, the striking White-browed Hawk-Owl, Madagascar Hoopoe, Running, Giant and Green-capped Couas, and Subdesert Brush Warbler. Our walks in the small patches of spiny forest near Berenty were also good for night species of Lemur in the form of White-footed Sportive Lemur and the delightfully cute Grey-brown Mouse Lemur. A visit to this private reserve would not be complete without numerous casual observations of the resident Ring-tailed Lemurs, Red-fronted Brown Lemurs and Verreaux's Sifakas.

Continuing our Madagascar adventure, we headed for the south-west of the country and the weird and wonderful landscape of the baobab clad Spiny Desert! In this hot, arid region the early bird catches the worm, and this was certainly the case. A memorable morning was spent in the Spiny Forest, and with the aid of our local guides we had great views of Sickle-billed Vanga, Greater Vasa Parrot, Archbold's Newtonia, Thamnornis, the mythical Sub-desert Mesite, Banded Kestrel and the charismatic Long-tailed Ground Roller. The flat plains near our accommodations produced excellent looks at the endangered Madagascar Plover, while an afternoon visit to some inland lakes between Ifaty and Toliara yielded Red-knobbed Coot, the elusive Baillon's Crake and Little Bittern.



Our departure from Ifaty was an early one as we ventured out to La Tabla not far from the bustling port town of Toliara. Here we braved the harsh 'coral rag scrub', a very dense and prickly vegetation type, in efforts to locate the two major, range-restricted endemics of the region. Our endeavours were very successful and after an hour or so of searching, we had observed both Verreaux's Coua and the recently discovered Red-shouldered Vanga at close range.

From Ifaty we made an excursion to Nosy Vé. This island, off the coast near Anakao, is the breeding ground for a small population of Red-tailed Tropicbirds, and these elegant birds treated us to unforgettable encounters. Other specials during the day were a large flock of Malagasy Black Swift, a single Humblot's Heron at the cliffs near St. Augustine and another at Nosy Ve, a very showy male Littoral Rock Thrush, Lesser Crested Tern and a single Kelp Gull. The boat trip back to the mainland produced an unforgettable highlight when some of the folks on board began to shout whale! A few moments passed before the distinctive frame of an adult Humpbacked Whale was seen launching itself



out of the water. We then approached closer and had superb views of a mother and calf before returning to Toliara after a fine day in the sea and sun.

Our target endemics were now down to the bare minimum as we began our journey back to Antananarivo. First stop on our drive towards the scenic landscape of Isalo was Zombitse Forest. This remaining patch of dry, deciduous woodland is very special as it protects a key species found only in this area, Appert's Tetraka, which gave outstanding views, together with our first Coquerel's Coua. Our travels then took us through endless golden grasslands dotted with tall palm trees and the occasional Sapphire mining town to the majestic sandstone landscape of Isalo. Near our lodgings here we had good looks at the localized Benson's Rock Thrush and Madagascar Mannikin.



Ranomafana National Park was our penultimate site for our tour of the "eighth continent". Our lengthy drive to this wonderful reserve was punctuated with a stunning view of a male Malagasy Harrier. The rainforests in this area are located on some hilly terrain and we knew it would require a last physical effort in order to find the specials. We slowly worked away at our remaining targets, enjoying excellent sightings of the difficult Brown Mesite, a pair of Madagascar Pratincole, Madagascar Pygmy Kingfisher, awesome Velvet Asity, incredible male and female Yellow-bellied Sunbird-Asity, Green Jery, sneaky Brown Emutail, Cryptic Warbler and the scarce Pollen's Vanga. A large variety of other quality species were also noted and we enjoyed additional views of Madagascar Wood Rail, Pitta-like Ground Roller, Common Sunbird-Asity, White-headed and Tylas Vangas, Ward's Flycatcher, White-throated Oxylabes and Madagascar Starling. The other inhabitants of the rainforests were also well represented at Ranomafana and we found Eastern Red Forest Rat, Brown Mouse Lemur, Greater and Golden Bamboo Lemurs and Red-bellied Lemur!



Our journey continued to the north-west of the island where we explored the dry, deciduous forests of Ankarafantsika National Park near the village of Ampijoroa. Our morning flight got us into Mahajunga early and allowed us enough time for a wonderful boat trip up the Betsiboka Delta. Here we were highly successful in our quest for the localized endemics that call this area home. Searching the mudflats produced wonderful views of Bernier's Teal, Malagasy Sacred Ibis and Crab Plover, together with a variety of other shorebirds and a few Saunders's Tern. We arrived at Ankarafantsika N.P in the early evening eager to begin our explorations of this wonderful place. Our searching over the next couple of days produced the spectacular Schlegel's Asity, White-breasted Mesite, Red-capped Coua, and both Rufous and the range-restricted Van Dam's Vangas. The region's wetlands and lakes also hold numerous specials that



we managed to locate; namely Humblot's Heron, White-throated Rail, Allen's Gallinule, Greater Painted Snipe, Madagascar Jacana and the rare Madagascar Fish Eagle. Coquerel's Sifaka, Grey and Golden Brown Mouse Lemurs, Fat-tailed Dwarf Lemur, Mongoose Lemur and Milne Edward's Sportive Lemur were some of the mammalian highlights, while Nile Crocodile, Rhinoceros and Oustalet's Chameleons, Madagascar Day Gecko and Cuvier's Iguanid headed up the list of "herps" recorded.

What an amazing time we enjoyed together on this remarkable island! We recorded an astonishing 96% of the target endemic or near-endemic bird species, plus an impressive 25 lemur species. Well done to one and all!!!

Photo Credits (in order of appearance): Scaly Ground Roller, Velvet Asity, Verreaux's Sifaka, Verreaux's Coua, Pitta-like Ground Roller and Rhinoceros Chameleon all by Keith Valentine.

Annotated List of Birds

Nomenclature and taxonomy follows the IOC List of Birds of the World Recommended English Names. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press. Please cite the authors: Gill, F. and Wright, M. 2006 when you use their publication.

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

Helmeted Guineafowl (I)

Numida meleagris

This probably introduced species to Madagascar was encountered at Berenty.

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

Partridges, Quails & Pheasants Phasianidae

Madagascar Partridge (E)

Margaroperdix madagascarensis

We enjoyed superb views of a pair of birds feeding at extremely close range at Anjozorobe.

Ducks & Geese Anatidae

White-faced Whistling Duck

Dendrocygna viduata

A large flock was present on sandbars between Toliara and Ifaty with further sightings taking place at Isalo and Ampijoroa.



Knob-billed Duck*Sarkidiornis melanotos*

Our first views were along the Mandrare River at Berenty when a single female was sighted. Further views were enjoyed of males sporting large knobs on their bills together with females at Ampijoroa.

Meller's Duck (E) (En)*Anas melleri*

At the Anjozorobe marshes we had a total of four birds given us wonderful flyby views.

Bernier's Teal (E) (En)*Anas bernieri*

On our trip into the Betsiboka Delta from Mahajunga we were fortunate to find a single pair of this highly endangered species feeding at the edge of mudflats. The pair provided superb views.

NOTE: This globally threatened endemic, currently known only from a few inaccessible sites on the west coast of Madagascar, has rarely been recorded until its discovery at this site by Rockjumper Birding Tours in 1999. "Only significant recent counts are 60 on Masama Lake in 1970 and 61 on Bemamba Lake in 1973" Volume 1; HBW.

Red-billed Teal*Anas erythrorhyncha*

A common and widespread bird in Madagascar, we recorded this duck at most freshwater wetlands on the island.

Hottentot Teal*Anas hottentota*

This good-looking teal was seen at a wetland near Ifaty where at least 20 birds were found and later huge numbers were encountered at Lac Amboromalandy.

Grebes Podicipedidae**Little Grebe (Dabchick)***Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Large numbers were seen at the wetlands between Tulear and Ifaty.

Madagascar Grebe (E) (V)*Tachybaptus pelzelinii*

A pair of birds was sighted at a small forest pond in the Mantadia area.

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

Flamingos Phoenicopteridae**Lesser Flamingo***Phoenicopus minor*

We found a total of six birds on a sandbar between Ifaty and Toliara while some members of the group also recorded 5 birds flying over Lac Ravelobe in Ankarafantsika NP, a scarce species in Madagascar.

Ibises & Spoonbills Threskiornithidae**[Malagasy] Sacred Ibis (NE)***Threskiornis [aethiopicus] bernieri*

The mangroves and mudflats of the Betsiboka Delta produced good sightings of this species. A total of four birds were observed.

NOTE: A globally threatened species restricted to largely inaccessible wetlands in western Madagascar and Aldabra Island. This species is often considered merely a race of the widespread Sacred Ibis of the African mainland and is treated as such by Clements and the IOC.

Glossy Ibis*Plegadis falcinellus*

Large numbers of this species were observed at wetland sites and rice paddies in north-west Madagascar.

Hérons Ardeidae**Little Bittern***Ixobrychus minutus*

An amazing six birds were recorded at a wetland near Ifaty where excellent views were obtained of the birds perched on top of the reeds during the late afternoon.



Black-crowned Night-Heron*Nycticorax nycticorax*

The Tsimbazaza Zoo in Tana was the only site on the tour where this extremely widespread species was encountered.

Striated Heron*Butorides striatus*

Small numbers were seen at most freshwater wetlands throughout the tour.

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).

Squacco Heron*Ardeola ralloides*

Good numbers were sighted at Tsimbazaza Zoo and at wetlands in the north-west.

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

A pair was present at Lac Ravelobe and at the Tsimbazaza Zoo while singles were encountered at Analamazoatra and the wetlands around Ifaty.

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

[Western] Cattle Egret*Bubulcus ibis*

Common throughout the tour and recorded on most days.

Grey Heron*Ardea cinerea*

First recorded in the Toliara/Ifaty area, we found this species again breeding on cliffs near Tulear and in the north-west of the country.

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

This large, attractive heron was observed at extremely close range on Lac Ravelobe while our initial sighting was from the cliffs en route to Anakao and Nosy Ve.

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

Purple Heron*Ardea purpurea*

Ankarafantsika NP produced many sightings of this attractive heron with scattered records elsewhere on the island.

[Western] Great Egret*Ardea alba*

Recorded throughout the tour in good numbers.

Black Heron*Egretta ardesiaca*

Encountered in small numbers across the island and occasionally observed using their famous canopy feeding technique. Three birds were seen at Lac Ravelobe, a couple at the Tsimbazaza Zoo and a few in flight over the Ifaty wetlands.

Dimorphic Egret*Egretta dimorpha*

Fairly common and widespread throughout Madagascar with peak numbers at the coastal sites in the south and north-west of Madagascar and in Tana.

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*

These truly elegant birds on the island of Nosy Ve treated us to fantastic views in flight and on the ground at nesting sites. A total of around ten birds were seen.

Hamerkop Scopidae

Hamerkop*Scopus umbretta*

Pairs were sighted on a few occasions from the bus on drives through rice growing areas on the central highlands.

Anhingas Anhingidae**Darter***Anhinga melanogaster*

We found a single bird on our boat excursion around Lac Ravelobe.

Falcons Falconidae**Malagasy Kestrel (NEe)***Falco newtoni*

Recorded almost daily throughout the tour in open habitats, forest edge and urban areas.

Banded Kestrel (E)*Falco zoniventris*

We were fortunate to have two memorable encounters with this scarce species on the tour. Fantastic close-up views of a single bird were enjoyed from the bus at Zombitse Forest while our initial sighting came from the spiny woodland near Ifaty.

Sooty Falcon*Falco concolor*

This sleek falcon was sighted only once at the airport in Tana where good scope views were had of a perched bird.

Hawks & Eagles Accipitridae**Madagascar Cuckoo-Hawk (E)***Aviceda madagascariensis*

This scarce endemic was seen very well in the riverine woodland at Berenty Private Reserve where superb scope views were enjoyed of a single bird.

Black Kite*Milvus migrans*

A fairly common bird during the tour, we observed the yellow-billed form of this species throughout the island.

NOTE: This species is sometimes split into two, Yellow-billed and Black Kite. We observed the Yellow-billed form throughout Madagascar. This split is currently not recognized by Clements or the IOC.

Madagascar Fish-Eagle (E) (C)*Haliaeetus vociferoides*

We had excellent, prolonged views of this regal bird at Lac Ravelobe during our boat cruise.

NOTE: This is one of the world's rarest raptors, with a total global population of no more than 60 pairs.

Malagasy Harrier (E) (V)*Circus macrosceles*

The grasslands to the north of Isalo produced an impressive male bird flying alongside the bus. This is a seldom seen species and we were extremely fortunate with the views that we obtained.

NOTE: This species, which occurs in Madagascar and the Comoros, differs from the Reunion Harrier (Circus maillardi) in its smaller size and darker plumage, and is now considered a separate species by the IOC.

Madagascar Harrier-Hawk (E)*Polyboroides radiatus*

Our first sighting of this smart raptor was two birds cruising over our heads in the spiny forest near Ifaty. Later on in Ankarafantsika NP we enjoyed superb flight and perched views of a few individuals.

Frances's Sparrowhawk (NE)*Accipiter francesii*

Good views were had of this small raptor at Berenty Private Reserve.

Madagascar Sparrowhawk (E) (NT)*Accipiter madagascariensis*

A single bird which showed good qualities of being this species was observed in the riverine woodland at Berenty.

Henst's Goshawk (E) (NT)*Accipiter henstii*

We had breath-taking views of an individual at Anjozorobe.



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

Madagascar Buzzard (E) *Buteo brachypterus*

We enjoyed both perched and flight views of this good-looking raptor at close quarters on many occasions.

Mesites Mesitornithidae

White-breasted Mesite (E) (V) *Mesitornis variegata*

Ankarafantsika NP produced great sightings of this beautiful species; three birds were sighted in total.

Brown Mesite (E) (V) *Mesitornis unicolor*

A memorable encounter was had with a single bird in Ranomafana NP of this usually the toughest mesite to find.

Subdesert Mesite (E) (V) *Monias benschi*

We were fortunate to locate a female bird of this elusive species in the spiny forest at Ifaty during an early morning walk. Fine views were enjoyed.

Flufftails Sarothruridae

Madagascar Flufftail (E) *Sarothrura insularis*

This gorgeous little bird was seen very well at close quarters in Mantadia NP.

Slender-billed Flufftail (E) (En) *Sarothrura watersi*

This species has obtained near mythical status through habitat destruction and by being just plain rare. Very few birdwatchers have ever had the opportunity to view this species and we were extremely fortunate to have incredible views of a single male at Anjozorobe. We became aware of its presence and position in the wetland when a single male began calling after a light rain shower seemed to be the catalyst in getting the bird to vocalize. What an incredible moment!

Rails & Gallinules Rallidae

Madagascar Wood Rail (E) *Canirallus kiolooides*

We had an excellent sighting of a single bird at Analamazaotra as it crossed the trail a few times in front of us and later found a pair of birds in Ranomafana N.P.

Madagascar Rail (E) *Rallus madagascariensis*

First sighted at a wetland near Mantadia N.P, we later enjoyed further views at Anjozorobe.

White-throated Rail (E) *Dryolimnas cuvieri*

This species was seen very well on two occasion on tour, the first being at Mantadia NP and again at Lac Ravelobe.

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. This is accepted by the IOC.

Baillon's Crake *Porzana pusilla*

We found a single bird at a wetland en route to Ifaty from Toliara in south-west Madagascar that extremely well in the late afternoon.

Allen's Gallinule *Porphyrio alleni*

This usually scarce and somewhat shy species was sighted at Lac Ravelobe where we enjoyed prolonged looks of around 15 birds.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Small numbers were encountered at several sites including Lac Ravelobe, the Ifaty wetlands and at Analamazaotra.



Red-knobbed Coot*Fulica cristata*

This rare bird in Madagascar was seen at a wetland site near Ifaty, a total of seven were found.

Buttonquails Turnicidae**Madagascar Buttonquail (E)***Turnix nigricollis*

We had good sightings of these small birds in the Berenty area along the airstrip initially and again in the spiny forest.

Crab-Plover Dromadidae**Crab-plover***Dromas ardeola*

A flock of 10 birds were observed at the Toliara mudflats where excellent views were enjoyed. We also had additional sightings of two birds in flight on our boat trip back from Nosy Ve and again in flight during our boat trip up the Betsiboka Delta.

Avocets & Stilts Recurvirostridae**Black-winged Stilt***Himantopus himantopus*

Recorded at several wetland sites, both coastal and inland in the south and north-west of the island.

Plovers Charadriidae**Grey Plover***Pluvialis squatarola*

This migrant was observed on the mudflats in the port at Tulear and on mudflats up the Betsiboka Delta.

Common Ringed Plover*Charadrius hiaticula*

This species was sighted at wetlands near Tulear and on mudflats in the Betsiboka Delta.

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

This striking endemic was seen very well near Ifaty.

Kittlitz's Plover*Charadrius pecuarius*

Small numbers recorded at Lac Amboromalandy and in the Tulear area.

Three-banded Plover*Charadrius tricollaris*

First found at a roadside wetland near Ifaty and again on the shores of Lac Ravelobe.

White-fronted Plover*Charadrius marginatus*

Half-a-dozen of these shorebirds were seen on the beach at Nosy Ve while our first views were from mudflats between Toliara and Ifaty.

Greater Sand Plover*Charadrius leschenaultii*

Sightings were had on the mudflats of the Betsiboka Delta and near Tulear and Ifaty.

Painted Snipes Rostratulidae**Greater Painted Snipe***Rostratula benghalensis*

We had cracking scope views of two males and one female at Lac Amboromalandy in the north-west of Madagascar.

Jacanas Jacanidae**Madagascar Jacana (E)***Actophilornis albinucha*

A total of two of these striking endemics were found at Lac Revelobe.



Sandpipers & Allies Scolopacidae

Madagascar Snipe (E) (NT)

Gallinago macrodactyla

a total of four birds were flushed and seen very well in flight at Anjozorobe.

Bar-tailed Godwit

Limosa lapponica

Two birds were initially scoped at an area of extensive mudflats between Toliara and Ifaty. Further views of many birds were had on the mudflats at Toliara harbour.

Whimbrel

Numenius phaeopus

Large numbers were observed on tidal flats of the Betsiboka Delta and in the Toliara area.

Common Greenshank

Tringa nebularia

This common wader was seen regularly at various wetland and coastal sites during the tour.

Terek Sandpiper

Xenus cinereus

This distinctive species was seen on the mudflats of the Betsiboka Delta and along the coastline north of Toliara.

Common Sandpiper

Tringa hypoleucos

Small numbers recorded in freshwater and brackish wetland habitats throughout our tour.

Ruddy Turnstone

Arenaria interpres

Peak numbers of this attractive shorebird were found in south-west Madagascar.

Sanderling

Calidris alba

Small numbers seen along the coast in the south-west of the island.

Curlew Sandpiper

Calidris ferruginea

Seen on the tidal flats in the Ifaty and Toliara areas and on the mudflats of the Betsiboka Delta.

Pratincoles Glareolidae

Madagascar Pratincole

Glareola ocularis

Our intensive search for this species along the lower Mana River eventually came up trumps with a superb sighting of a pair of birds.

Gulls & Terns Laridae

Kelp Gull

Larus dominicanus

A single adult was observed around the harbor of Fort Dauphin and strangely a single juvenile was sighted on the island of Nosy Ve.

Lesser Crested Tern

Sterna bengalensis

We had a few birds around the island of Nosy Vé and also on our boat trip up the Betsiboka Delta.

Swift (Greater Crested) Tern

Sterna bergii

Small numbers recorded at Nosy Vé and the Betsiboka Delta.

Saunders' Tern

Sterna saundersi

This diminutive tern was seen near the mudflats of the Betsiboka Delta.

Sandgrouse Pteroclididae

Madagascar Sandgrouse (E)

Pterocles personatus

A total of 13 birds were seen at Berenty Private Reserve. We enjoyed fabulous views of a group of these special birds feeding near the spiny forest.



Pigeons & Doves Columbidae

Common Pigeon (I)

Columba livia

Widespread and fairly common in urban areas throughout the island.

Madagascar Turtle Dove (NEe)

Columba picturata

These birds were seen almost daily throughout the island in both dry deciduous forest and rainforest areas.

Namaqua Dove

Oena capensis

Good numbers were seen in the north-west and in the dry south of the country.

Madagascar Green Pigeon (NE)

Treron australis

Ankarafantsika NP produced several sightings of this beautiful species, while additional views were obtained at Analamazaotra, Berenty and the coral rag scrub near Toliara.

Madagascar Blue Pigeon (E)

Alectroenas madagascariensis

Analamazaotra Special Reserve and Mantadia National Park gave us good views of this attractive endemic. We also enjoyed additional views at Anjozorobe and Ranomafana N.P.

Parrots Psittacidae

Gray-headed Lovebird (E)

Agapornis canus

A delightful little parrot, it was seen on a daily basis around Berenty, Ifaty and Ankarafantsika NP.

Greater Vasa Parrot (NE)

Coracopsis vasa

Sightings of this species were had in the spiny forest near Ifaty.

Lesser Vasa Parrot (NE)

Coracopsis nigra

This raucous parrot species was seen regularly throughout our trip with peak numbers in the camp at Ampijoroa.

Cuckoos, Couas & Coucals Cuculidae

Malagasy Coucal (NEe)

Centropus toulou

Common and widespread, this bird was recorded in small numbers on most days of the tour.

Crested Coua (E)

Coua cristata

This attractive species was recorded at Ankarafantsika NP, Berenty and Ifaty.

Verreaux's Coua (E) (NT)

Coua verreauxi

Excellent views of this localized species were had in the coral rag scrub near La Tabla. We recorded a total of four birds.

Blue Coua (E)

Coua caerulea

We had good sightings of this colourful bird at Mantadia N.P and many at Ranomafana N.P.

Red-capped Coua (E)

Coua ruficeps

A total of eight birds were seen very well in the dry deciduous forest in Ankarafantsika NP.

NOTE: See notation under Green-capped Coua.

Green-capped Coua (E)

Coua [ruficeps] olivaceiceps

The spiny forests at Berenty and Ifaty produced good sightings of this species.

NOTE: This 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 many other authorities consider this form to be a subspecies of Red-capped Coua.

Red-fronted Coua (E)

Coua reynaudii

We put in a serious hill climbing quest for this species that proved to be well worth the effort as we got good looks at a calling bird. This was to also be our only decent views on the tour as the calling birds we encountered in Ranomafana NP were only glimpsed.



Coquerel's Coua (E)*Coua coquereli*

The dry, deciduous forests of Ankarafantsika NP and Zombitse were sites for this coua.

Running Coua (E)*Coua cursor*

The spiny forests at Berenty and Ifaty produced a couple of great sightings of this gorgeous coua.

Giant Coua (E)*Coua gigas*

The largest of the couas was easily found at Berenty Private Reserve.

Madagascar Cuckoo (BE)*Cuculus rochii*

We recorded this species at most sites throughout the tour. Our best views however were from Ifaty and Ankarafantsika NP. One of the most common background calls on the island.

Barn Owls Tytonidae**Barn Owl***Tyto alba*

A single bird was seen at Berenty Private Reserve.

Typical Owls Strigidae**Torotoroka Scops Owl (E)***Otus madagascariensis*

Berenty produced great views of two roosting birds.

Madagascar (Rainforest) Scops Owl (NE)*Otus rutilus*

This species was heard calling on numerous occasions at Analamazaotra and Ranomafana NP

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

White-browed Hawk-Owl (E)*Ninox superciliaris*

Berenty produced amazing views of this attractive species. We also found another bird in Zombitse Forest.

Nightjars Caprimulgidae**Madagascar Nightjar (NE)***Caprimulgus madagascariensis*

Common and widespread on Madagascar, we had numerous sightings during the tour at most sites.

Swifts Apodidae**Madagascar Spinetail (NE)***Zoonavena grandidieri*

Recorded Mantadia N.P, Berenty and Zombitse Forest.

African Palm Swift*Cypsiurus parvus gracilis*

This elegant swift was recorded at various sites with suitable habitat on the island.

Alpine Swift*Tachymarptis melba*

A single bird was sighted in amongst a large group of Malagasy Black Swift at Anjozorobe.

Malagasy Black Swift (NE)*Apus balstoni*

Recorded at scattered localities throughout the tour with peak numbers at Anjozorobe and the St. Augustine Cliffs south of Tulear.

NOTE: These Malagasy birds are usually considered a species distinct from the African Black Swift (A. barbatus), however no dedicated research has been done.

Rollers Coraciidae**Broad-billed Roller***Eurystomus glaucurus*

This beautiful breeding migrant from the African mainland was recorded at Analamazaotra, Mantadia, Zombitse and Ampijoroa.



Ground Rollers Brachypteraciidae

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

Mantadia NP produced a superb sighting of a pair on our first morning on the island. We were treated to great views!

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

Another secretive ground roller, it was found in the forest undergrowth of Mantadia NP, again excellent views.

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

We found several of these beautiful birds in Mantadia NP and exceptional numbers and views in Ranomafana NP.

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

We enjoyed cracking looks at this tough species in ridge top forest at Anjozorobe.

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

The Spiny Forest at Ifaty was the site for this magnificent bird where one of the local guides tracked down a stunning individual.

Cuckoo-Rollers Leptosomidae

Cuckoo Roller (NE) *Leptosomus discolor*

A strange and extremely vocal species, it was seen throughout our tour of the island.

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*

Mantadia NP produced only a glimpse of this gem however we were eventually rewarded with lovely views of a single bird at Ranomafana NP!

Malagasy Kingfisher (NE) *Alcedo vintsioides*

Recorded at most freshwater and marine wetlands throughout the tour.

Bee-eaters Meropidae

Olive (Madagascar) Bee-eater *Merops superciliosus*

Despite it being very common and recorded from most sites during the tour, it was always a pleasure to view these birds.

Hoopoes Upupidae

Madagascar Hoopoe (E) *Upupa marginalis*

We encountered this striking species at Ankarafantsika NP, Berenty and Zombitse NP.

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

Asities Philepittidae

Velvet Asity (E) *Philepitta castanea*

This rainforest special was seen brilliantly at Ranomafana NP while our initial sighting in Mantadia NP was of a female bird.



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

The deciduous forests of Ankarafantsika NP gave us several sightings of this gorgeous species.

Common Sunbird-Asity (E)*Neodrepanis coruscans*

Our first views were of a single male at Analamazaotra while Ranomafana NP certainly produced the goods as a further two gorgeous males were sighted at there favorite feeding source in the Vohiparara area.

Yellow-bellied Sunbird-Asity (E) (En)*Neodrepanis hypoxanthus*

A short wait at a specific site on the Vohiparara ridge produced good views of first the female bird and then a little later on an exquisite male who sat perched for an extended period allowing for a detailed study of this incredible highly endangered species!

Vangas Vangidae**Red-tailed Vanga (E)***Calicalicus madagascariensis*

One of the most common vangas in Madagascar, we enjoyed views of birds at Mantadia NP, Anjozorobe, Zombitse and Ranomafana NP.

Red-shouldered Vanga (E) (V)*Calicalicus rufocarpalis*

This recently described and highly localized endemic is a great find for any tour to Madagascar and we were fortunate to have an up close and personal experience with a pair in the “coral rag” scrub near La Tabla.

Hook-billed Vanga (E)*Vanga curvirostris*

Definitely filling the niche of the African bushshrikes in Madagascar. This species was seen well at Analamazaotra and Berenty.

Lafresnaye's Vanga (E)*Xenopirostris xenopirostris*

This striking and fairly localized vanga was first found in the spiny forest near Berenty however we also enjoyed a further sighting of a pair at Ifaty.

Van Dam's Vanga (E) (En)*Xenopirostris damii*

Ankarafantsika NP produced good views of this highly range restricted species.

Pollen's Vanga (E) (NT)*Xenopirostris polleni*

Ranomafana NP gave us awesome views of this often tricky to find vanga.

Sickle-billed Vanga (E)*Falcula palliata*

We were entertained on a daily basis in Ankarafantsika NP by these bizarre, fantastic birds. We also found a few birds at Ifaty.

White-headed Vanga (E)*Artamella viridis*

Recorded at a number of sites throughout the tour, our best sightings being at Analamazaotra, Ankarafantsika and Ranomafana N.P.

Chabert's Vanga (E)*Leptopterus chabert*

Catholic in its choice of habitats, this vanga, was recorded regularly during the tour.

Blue Vanga (NE)*Cyanolanius madagascarensis*

An absolutely gorgeous bird seen brilliantly at Mantadia NP and Ankarafantsika NP.

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 species was observed in the dry woodland of Ankarafantsika NP where both the female and male were seen very well.



Tylas Vanga (E)*Tylas eduardi*

Excellent views were had of this fairly vocal species on the Vohiparara ridge in Ranomafana NP.

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

Nuthatch Vanga (E)*Hypositta corallirostris*

Whilst in Analamazoatra Special Reserve, we found a total of 3 birds in a mixed feeding flock in the forest across from our accommodation. Later on we also found a single bird in a mixed flock while walking the deep forest trails in the same reserve.

Dark Newtonia (E)*Newtonia amphichroa*

Singles of this ridge top specialist were seen in Mantadia NP, Anjozorobe and Ranomafana NP.

Common Newtonia (E)*Newtonia brunneicauda*

This species was recorded regularly in small numbers during the tour usually in mixed feeding flocks.

Archbold's Newtonia (E)*Newtonia archboldi*

A real special for the southern region of Madagascar, we had excellent views of a calling bird in the Spiny Forest near Ifaty.

Ward's Flycatcher (E)*Pseudobias wardi*

Small numbers of this smart species were seen in the forests of Analamazoatra Special Reserve and Ranomafana NP.

Crossley's Babbler (E)*Mystacornis crossleyi*

This gorgeous bird was sighted in the undergrowth along one of the interior trails at Anjozorobe. We had a memorable encounter with a pair that showed very well in response to tape playback.

Cuckooshrikes Campephagedae**Madagascar Cuckoo-shrike (NE)***Coracina cinerea*

Small numbers were recorded at Mantadia NP, Analamazoatra and Anjozorobe.

Drongos Dicruridae**Crested Drongo (NE)***Dicrurus forficatus*

This charismatic bird with its punk hairdo was observed on most days of the tour.

Monarchs Monarchidae**Malagasy Paradise Flycatcher (NE)***Terpsiphone mutata*

Common and widespread in a variety of wooded and semi-wooded habitats, we managed to find all the colour morphs of this very attractive species.

Crows & Jays Corvidae**Pied Crow***Corvus albus*

Common and widespread in open habitats, with peak numbers in Berenty and en route from Tulear to Isalo.

Swallows & Martins Hirundinidae**Mascarene Martin (BE)***Phedina borbonica*

Madagascar's most common hirundine and a regional breeding endemic, it was recorded at most sites. Excellent perched views were obtained at Ankarafantsika NP.

Barn Swallow*Hirundo rustica*

A very uncommon summer visitor to Madagascar, we had a single adult bird on the island of Nosy Ve.



Larks Alaudidae

Madagascar Lark (E) *Mirafra hova*
Common and widespread in the drier regions of the island.

Cisticolas & Allies Cisticolidae

Madagascar Cisticola (NE) *Cisticola cherinus*
This bird was commonly recorded in a variety of habitats throughout the tour.

Family Uncertain

Common Jery (E) *Neomixis tenella*
Recorded throughout the tour at most sites.

Green Jery (E) *Neomixis viridis*
A fairly nondescript bird, it was seen at very close range at Ranomafana NP.

Stripe-throated Jery (E) *Neomixis striatigula*
We found good numbers of this common songster in the east and south of Madagascar.

Bulbuls Pycnonotidae

Madagascar Bulbul (NE) *Hypsipetes madagascariensis*
Common and ubiquitous, we found these birds on almost every day of the tour.

Old World Warblers Sylviidae

Grey Emutail (E) *Dromaeocercus seebohmi*
A denizen of the wetlands of the highlands, we had good views of one bird at the Anjozorobe marsh.

Brown Emutail (E) *Dromaeocercus brunneus*
An incredible skulker, we had fantastic views of this species creeping about like a mouse only centimeters from us in the ridge-top forests of Ranomafana NP.

Malagasy Brush Warbler (NE) *Nesillas typica*
Another denizen of the undergrowth, this species was recorded at various localities during the tour.

Subdesert Brush Warbler (E) *Nesillas lantzii*
Several birds found in the spiny forest at Berenty and Ifaty. This species replaces Madagascar Brush Warbler in the south-west of the island.

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

Madagascar Swamp Warbler (E) *Acrocephalus newtoni*
The marshes near Mantadia, Anjozorobe and marshes near Tulear produced sightings of this species.

White-throated Oxylabes (E) *Oxylabes madagascariensis*
A secretive endemic of the understorey in forests, two birds were seen very well at Anjozorobe with further views of a single bird at Ranomafana NP.

Long-billed Bernieria (E) *Bernieria madagascariensis*
Seen very well in Ankarafantsika NP, we earlier had sightings at most other forest sites.

Cryptic Warbler (E) *Cryptosylvicola randrianasoloi*
Ranomafana produced great views of this recently described species in full voice.

Wedge-tailed Jery (E) (NT) *Hartertula flavoviridis*
A pair of these rather shy birds were very well seen in Mantadia NP.



Thamnornis (Warbler) (E)*Thamnornis chloropetoides*

In the Spiny Forest near Ifaty we found a foraging pair that were extremely vocal.

Spectacled Tetraka (E)*Xanthomixis zosterops*

Small numbers of this rainforest specialist were seen at all rainforest sites.

Appert's Tetraka (E) (V)*Xanthomixis apperti*

A couple of birds were seen feeding low down in the undergrowth at Zombitse Forest. This species is extremely range restricted and only confined to the small Zombitse/Vohibasia forest bloc.

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

This very scarce and secretive species was seen well at Anjozorobe and later heard calling at Ranomafana NP.

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*

Usually located by its characteristic call, we had several of these warblers in the eastern rainforest sites of Mantadia NP and Ranomafana NP.

White-eyes Zosteropidae**Madagascar White-eye (NE)***Zosterops maderaspatana*

Regularly recorded throughout the tour at most sites except in the Ifaty area.

Starlings Sturnidae**Common Myna (I)***Acridotheres tristis tristis*

This introduced species was common in open habitats throughout the island.

Madagascar Starling (E)*Hartlaubius aurata*

An uncommon bird, it was seen well on our first day at Mantadia NP and then again by some of the group at Ranomafana NP.

Chats, Old World Flycatchers Muscicapidae**Madagascar Magpie-Robin (E)***Copsychus albospecularis*

Seen throughout the tour on most days, this bold and confiding species entertained royally.

Eurasian Stonechat*Saxicola torquatus*

Fairly common in open habitats of the eastern highlands, seen at Mantadia, Anjozorobe and Ranomafana NP.

Littoral Rock Thrush (E)*Pseudocossyphus imerinus*

The dune scrub near Anakao, south of Tulear, produced a brilliant sighting of this rock thrush.

Forest Rock Thrush (E)*Pseudocossyphus sharpei*

A ridge top forest specialist that was very well seen at Anjozorobe. A single bird was also heard calling in Ranomafana NP.

Benson's Rock Thrush (E) (NT)*Pseudocossyphus bensoni*

We had superb views of a pair near Isalo NP.

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.)



Sunbirds Nectariniidae**Souimanga Sunbird (NE)***Nectarinia souimanga*

Madagascar's most common sunbird and one of the most common birds on the island as well.

Malagasy Green Sunbird (NE)*Nectarinia notata*

A large, attractive sunbird, it was seen at several sites during the tour with the best views in Ranomafana NP of a gorgeous male.

Weavers Ploceidae**Nelicourvi Weaver (E)***Ploceus nelicourvi*

Seen regularly during the trip in the eastern rainforests of Perinet, Mantadia & Ranomafana.

Sakalava Weaver (E)*Ploceus sakalava*

Common in the drier regions of Madagascar; first sighted near Berenty and later in the south at Ifaty and again at Ampijoroa.

(Madagascar) Red Fody (E)*Foudia madagascariensis*

A gorgeous bird in breeding plumage, it was recorded at most sites in good numbers during the tour.

Forest Fody (E)*Foudia omissa*

This species is much rarer than the previous species and was only sighted once when a calling male was located at Mantadia NP.

Waxbills Estrildidae**Madagascar Mannikin (E)***Lonchura nana*

Peak numbers of 20+ were seen at a wetland near Isalo, otherwise it was recorded at our hotel in Tana and at Mantadia NP.

Wagtails & Pipits Motacillidae**Madagascar Wagtail (E)***Motacilla flaviventris*

Another attractive endemic, it was observed at most sites on most days during the tour.

Annotated list of Mammals

Garbutt, N. (1999) *Mammals of Madagascar* with recent changes as adopted by Mittermeier *et al* (2006) *Lemurs of Madagascar*.

Old World Fruit Bats Pteropodidae**Madagascar Flying Fox***Pteropus rufus*

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

Sheath-tailed Bats Emballonuridae**Mauritian Tomb Bat***Taphozous mauritanus*

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

Old World Leaf-nosed Bats Hipposideridae**Commerson's Leaf-nosed Bat***Hipposideros commersoni*

On our evening walks at Ankarafantsika NP we had a number of these large bats flying about above our heads and through the torch beams.

Old World Rats and Mice *Muridae*

- Eastern Red Forest Rat** *Nesomys rufus*
This attractive forest rat was recorded from Ranomafana NP on a number of occasions.
- Western Tufted Rat** *Eliurus myoxinus*
We found one of these arboreal rats on a night walk in Ankarafantsika NP.
- Brown Rat** *Rattus norvegicus*
We found a few of these introduced rats around the harbor of Fort Dauphin.

Mouse and Dwarf Lemurs *Cheirogaleidae*

- Gray Mouse Lemur** *Microcebus murinus*
We enjoyed great sightings on our night walks at Ampijoroa.
- Brown Mouse Lemur** *Microcebus rufus*
Excellent views were enjoyed on night walks in Ranomafana NP.
- Golden-brown Mouse Lemur** *Microcebus ravelobensis*
We were extremely fortunate to find this tiny, localized species during our early morning walk in Ankarafantsika NP.
- Gray-Brown Mouse Lemur** *Microcebus griseorufus*
This newly described species, taxonomic, was found in the spiny forest habitat of Berenty.
- Goodman's Mouse Lemur** *Microcebus lehilahytsara*
Very localized and confined only to the forests of Analamazaotra. We found an amazing number of these tiny lemurs on night walks through this area.
- Greater Dwarf Lemur** *Cheirogaleus major*
One participant found one in Ranomafana NP near the cabins where we were staying.
- Furry-eared Dwarf Lemur** *Cheirogaleus crossleyi*
We spotted a total of six of these creatures on night walks near our lodge in Analamazaotra SR.
- Fat-tailed Dwarf Lemur** *Cheirogaleus medius*
Only active during the wet season, this lemur was seen on a night stroll in Ankarafantsika NP.

Sportive Lemurs *Megaladapidae*

- Milne-Edwards's Sportive Lemur** *Lepilemur edwardsi*
A single of these vocal sportive lemurs was recorded in the dry forests at Ampijoroa.
- Hubbard's Sportive Lemur** *Lepilemur hubbardi*
At Zombitse Forest we found a single lemur during the day at a resting spot.
- White-footed Sportive Lemur** *Lepilemur leucopus*
Fairly common in the small patches of spiny forest at Berenty.

"True" Lemurs *Lemuridae*

- Eastern Gray Bamboo Lemur** *Haplemur griseus griseus*
This attractive species was found during our day visit to Mantadia NP, Analamazaotra SR and Ranomafana NP.
- Golden Bamboo Lemur** *Haplemur aureus*



This fairly new addition (1986) to the Madagascar mammal list was very well seen in the lower elevation forest of Ranomafana NP.

Greater Bamboo Lemur *Hapalemur simus*

This, one of Madagascar's most endangered lemurs was seen very well in Ranomafana NP.

Ring-tailed Lemur *Lemur catta*

We encountered many families of these delightful but mischievous lemurs at Berenty.

Mongoose Lemur *Eulemur mongoz*

This is a very uncommon species and we were treated to incredible views of first a pair on a night walk and then a family group of six the following morning in Ankarafantsika NP.

Red-bellied Lemur *Eulemur rubiventer*

Excellent views were enjoyed on the Vohiparara Ridge, Ranomafana NP and initially at Mantadia NP.

Common Brown Lemur *Eulemur fulvus fulvus*

These lemurs were seen at Ankarafantsika NP and later in Mantadia NP.

Red-fronted Brown Lemur *Eulemur fulvus rufus*

Good numbers were seen in the gallery forest at Berenty where this species has been introduced. We were also fortunate to find a few groups in their natural habitat in the rainforests of Ranomafana NP.

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

This, the most vocal of all lemurs, was seen very well in the forest canopy in Mantadia NP.

Avahis, Sifakas and Indri Indriidae

Eastern Avahi (Woolly Lemur) *Avahi laniger*

We had a fabulous encounter with two at a day resting spot in a bird's nest fern in Mantadia NP.

Diademed Sifaka *Propithecus diadema diadema*

Widely considered to be one of Madagascar's most beautiful primates, we had good views of this magnificent creature in Mantadia NP.

Verreaux's Sifaka *Propithecus verreaux verreauxi*

The comical, bipedal locomotion of this lemur is undoubtedly one of the mammalian highlights of our trip to Madagascar. It was seen daily at Berenty with further views in Zombitse Forest.

Coquerel's Sifaka *Propithecus verreauxi coquereli*

This magnificent primate was common around the camp near the village of Ampijoroa.

Indri *Indri indri*

The territorial calls of this lemur are unforgettable, and the close encounter that we shared with a small family in Perinet/Analamazaotra will be etched in our memories forever!

Whales Balaenopteridae

Hump-backed Whale *Megaptera novaeangliae*

What an incredible surprise to find a mother and calf breaching in front of our boat on our return journey from Nosy Ve to Toliara.

Annotated list of Amphibians and Reptiles

Glaw, F. & Vences, M. (1994) *A Field Guide to the Amphibians and Reptiles of Madagascar*. Insect names were derived from various sources.



True Frogs Ranidae

Baron's Mantella

Mantella baroni

This multi-colored frog was found in the undergrowth of Ranomafana NP.

Madagascar Tree Frog

Boophis madagascariensis

A single was found calling on a night walk in Ranomafana NP.

Yellow-banded Tree Frog

Boophis tephraeomystax

Some participants had a few of these frogs in their accommodations at Ankarafantsika NP.

Gephyromantis sculpturatus

We found one of these frogs while on a walk through the lower elevations of Ranomafana NP.

Crocodiles Crocodylidae

Nile Crocodile

Crocodylus niloticus

This ancient reptile was seen in Lake Ravelobe during our stay in Ankarafantsika NP. The local people of the region believe that their ancestors were drowned in a massive flood and transformed into crocodiles. Thus, the crocodiles of this lake are protected.

Chameleons Chamaeleonidae

Greater Stump-tailed Chameleon

Brookesia superciliaris

On our night walk in Analamazoatra SR we found one of these 'large' stump-tailed Chameleons and enjoyed a further view of one during the day in Ranomafana NP.

Brookesia nasus

We found two of these tiny creatures on a night walk in Ranomafana NP.

Short-horned Chameleon

Calumma brevicornis

This common species was sighted in Analamazoatra SR.

Calumma crypticum

A newly described species that has been split from *C.brevicornis* and is found at the higher elevations in Ranomafana NP. We had good looks at a few of these chameleons while on night walks in Ranomafana NP.

Nose-horned Chameleon

Calumma nasuta

A small species that was seen in the rainforests of Analamazoatra and Ranomafana NP.

Band-bellied Chameleon

Calumma gastrotaenia

We recorded three of these chameleons at Analamazoatra and a further one at Ranomafana NP.

Calumma globifer

This species was sighted near our accommodations in the Anjozorobe Mountains.

Rhinoceros Chameleon

Calumma rhinoceratus

The dry forest around Ampijoroa produced three of these lovely chameleons.

O'Shaughnessy's Chameleon

Calumma oshaughnessyi

Brilliant views of two of this large species were found in Ranomafana NP.

Oustalet's Chameleon

Furcifer oustaleti

The most common chameleon seen during the tour, it was first observed in Zombitse and later in Ankarafantsika NP.

Warty Chameleon

Furcifer verrucosus

A single was found in the small patch of spiny forest at Berenty with our initial sighting taking place on the drive to Berenty from Fort Dauphin.

Furcifer balteatus



We had incredible looks at both a male and female of this superb chameleon at Ranomafana NP.

Iguanas Iguanidae

Three-eyed Lizard

Chalarodon madagascariensis

This attractive reptile was seen in Berenty, the spiny forest at Ifaty and Zombitse.

Cuvier's Iguanid

Oplurus cuvieri

What a fabulous creature! We observed many of these iguanids in Ankarafantsika NP, especially in the camp.

Double-banded Iguanid

Oplurus cyclurus

A single of these striking spiny tailed Iguanids was sighted in the spiny forest at Ifaty.

Four-striped Iguanid

Oplurus quadrimaculatus

In the Isalo Mountains we had numerous views of this species in amongst the rocks.

Geckos Gekkonidae

Sakalava Gecko

Homopholis sakalava

We found this largely nocturnal species in the spiny forest around Ifaty during the day.

Mercator Tropical House Gecko

Hemidactylus mercatorius

Sighted at a few lodgings around the country.

Madagascar Day Gecko

Phelsuma madagascarensis

Seen in the dry deciduous forests of Ankarafantsika NP.

Lineated Day Gecko

Phelsuma lineata

These beautiful day geckos were found at all eastern rainforest sites during the tour.

Standing's Day Gecko

Phelsuma standingi

A couple of these large, attractive reptiles were seen in the Ifaty spiny forest and Zombitse Forest.

Plated Lizards Gerrhosauridae

Lesser Plated Lizard

Tracheloptychus madagascariensis

We found one of these smart lizards in the dry spiny forest near Berenty.

Madagascar Plated Lizard

Zonosaurus madagascarensis

Initially seen at Analamazaotra, we had excellent views of a few really big examples of this species in Ankarafantsika NP.

Elegant Skink

Mabuya elegans

Seen well at Analamazaotra.

Boas Boidae

Madagascar Ground Boa

Sanzinia madagascarensis

This species was seen just once at Analamazaotra SR.

Typical Snakes Colubridae

Giant Hog-nosed Snake

Leioheterodon madagascariensis

One of these attractive snakes was seen very well during our stroll through Zombitse NP.

Red-bellied Snake

Liophidium rhodogaster

This beautiful species was very well in Ranomafana NP.

Liopholidophis stumpffi

This grass snake was well seen on two consecutive days in the Analamazaotra area.



Photo credits (in order of appearance): Scaly Ground Roller, Velvet Asity, Verreaux's Sifaka, Verreaux's Coua, Pitta-like Ground Roller and Rhinoceros Chameleon all by Keith Valentine.

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