

Madagascar: Birding the Eighth Continent

October 20 - November 13 2024

Northeastern Extension: *Oct 20-24*

Helmet Vanga Extension: *Nov 10-13*

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The fourth largest island in the world has many reasons any naturalist would hope to visit it someday. For 90 million years Madagascar has remained in isolation, and in its solitude it has allowed an incredible amount of diversity and endemism to evolve. Of the estimated 200,000 species of living organisms around 150,000 are endemic to the island, an incredible 75%! This high level of species richness means there is something for every nature loving explorer in the world. There are 117 endemic bird species, which make up 5 endemic families. For mammal watchers there are the endemic euplerids, also known as the malagasy carnivores, and the adorable tenrecs, which represent some of the best living examples of convergent evolution. However, the most famous group of mammals are the lemurs which are a group that currently contain 112 living species.

This high level of primate diversity has placed Madagascar as the second most diverse country for primates, bested only by Brazil. The herpetofauna, which refers to the reptiles and amphibians, are only another major reason to visit this epicenter of evolutionary oddities. Even people that don't consider themselves "reptile enthusiasts" are flabbergasted by the array of chameleons, the iconic camouflage of the leaf-tailed geckos, or the gentle power of the malagasy boas. The frogs alone would be reason enough to visit Madagascar, which currently has over 300 described species and an estimated 200 additional undescribed species. This year's tour was another incredible journey and we witnessed 170 species of birds and over 30 species of mammals!

Northwestern Extension**20 October- Antananarivo to Ankarafantsika**

While all of us were eager to explore the 8th continent on our first full day, we had to hold off from delving too deep. As an underdeveloped nation, the roads in Madagascar get worse every rainy season and so we had to dedicate the whole first day to driving from the capital city of Antananarivo to arrive in Ankarafantsika before it got too late. In the past this drive would take 9 hours, but today it can take up to 12 hours. While it may seem intimidating it's an important part of the journey for several reasons. First, you get a true understanding of how large Madagascar is. Second, you see several communities and get an immediate understanding on how the poverty and conservation issues in the country are intertwined. The third reason, and most important, is the birds! Despite a long drive we managed to sneak in a few pit stops to see birds we wouldn't see again on the main tour. The first notable stop was along some freshly burnt patches of grassland. In these rolling hills we searched for and found the only **Malagasy Harrier** of the trip!

We continued down the road for several more hours and arrived to the Betsiboka Bridge. Here we walked along the bridge for around 20 minutes, and it was well worth it. The highlight was getting the only **Madagascar Pratincoles** of the trip, which everyone enjoyed in the viewing scopes. In the midst of watching these strange birds, both myself and our local fixer let out a loud gasp of excitement as three **Madagascar Flying Foxes** flew over head and gave us epic views! These behemoths are becoming more scarce every year as the pressures of illegal hunting and habitat destruction tighten the noose around their future. Before arriving to the our accommodation we made one final stop at some ponds along the highway, here we searched for the **African Pygmy Goose and Humblot's Heron**. The goose eluded us but we did manage to find **Humboldt's Heron**, although the setting sun and far distance did not permit the best views. We finally arrived

to Tia Asity Lodge in time for dinner, and went straight to bed afterwards so we could be fully charged the next day.

21 October- Ankarafantsika National Park

We met early in the morning for some pre-birding breakfast, everyone was rested and ready for their first morning in the rainforests of Madagascar. In the northwestern forests of Madagascar the humidity and heat can be intense but the open tangles are home to one of the best birds on the island, the **Schlegel's Asity**. After a discussion with our local guide the previous night, it was determined that it was best to prioritize finding this bird first thing in the morning. We headed into the forests and were greeted with our first looks at several common endemics like the **Common Newtonia**, **Crested Drongo**



and **Malagasy Bulbul**. Suddenly as we were walking our local guide exclaimed and ran back to us, “Asity!”. We all hurried over to him and all had quick views of a female and young male **Schlegel’s Asity** foraging in the canopy. While the bird was seen by everyone it was clear we were eager for more, perhaps a view of an adult male to see the famous “lava lamp” eye wattle. As we continued in the open deciduous interior forests of the park we were delighted to find an active **Frances’s Sparrowhawk** nest. The initial silence was quickly interrupted by the calls of both a male and female **Frances’s Sparrowhawk** which gave us several great looks as they investigated us as a potential threat. However, the highlight of the morning wasn’t a bird but in fact the first lemur of the trip. Our local guide spotted two critically endangered **Mongoose Lemurs** up in a tree! These lemurs are incredibly rare, and according to our guide we were the only the third group to see them this year. Sadly they approach closer to extinction with the passing of each year.

With the warmer temperatures quickly encroaching on us we decided to retry for the **Schlegel’s Asity** the following morning and instead focus in on getting another important target, the **Van Dam’s Vanga**. Last year this bird proved to be difficult, but we were thrilled to learn that this year some local guides had already located an active nest. Upon arriving at the main park headquarters we immediately were thrilled to see a troop of the endangered **Coquerel’s Sifaka**, a gorgeous lemur we would not see again once we left Ankarafantsika. Delighted by our views of the lemurs we headed on to the tails and towards the **Van Dam’s Vanga** nest. Within a few minutes of arriving at the nest we watched the male **Van Dam’s Vanga** arrive and sit on the nest for a few minutes. The immediate satisfaction of seeing a top notch target was very rejuvenating and refueled us to continue on. As the morning progressed we came across many epic birds like the **Rufous Vanga**, “**Torotoroka**” **Scops-Owl**, **Madagascar Hoopoe**, and **Broad-billed Roller**. The other major highlights from the morning was the abundance and diversity of couas. By the end of the morning we had seen **Coquerel’s Coua**, **Red-capped Coua**, and

Crested Coua! An epic way to end the morning. By 11:00am the heat had gotten to be a bit intense for not only us but the birds as well, so we returned to Tia Asity for lunch.

After lunch and an afternoon break we returned to the park, this time we loaded up into a smaller boat and set out on Lake Ravelobe. The large lake here can be an epic location for waterfowl, waders and even a few endemics. As we took the boat across the water we found **Squacco Herons**, **Purple Heron**, **Olive Bee-eaters** (previously known as **Madagascar Bee-eater**), and **Malagasy Kingfisher**. All of these birds were fun to see but the excitement was reignited when we spotted our first **Madagascar Jacana!** Once much more widespread, the jacanas are becoming alarmingly scarce. Despite not being a “northwestern endemic”, this bird is only seen on the extension. The



Madagascar Jacana gave us the best views I've had of this species, and posed for several minutes on large lily pads. After taking some great photos we continued down the lake to search for our other major target, the **Madagascar Fish-Eagle**. It took a bit of extended effort but before we knew it we were watching two of these critically endangered raptors perched on some open branches along the lake's shore.

We finished up our boat ride and readied ourselves for our first night walk of the trip. The forests of Madagascar change their casts completely at night and we were excited to see what would reveal itself. Within the first 10 minutes we had already seen 5 **Spearpoint Leaf-tailed Geckos (*Uroplatus eburni*)** and our first looks at **Golden-brown Mouse Lemur!** As we continued down the trail we saw a few more awesome herps like the **Mahajanga Velvet Gecko (*Blaesodactylus ambonihazo*)**, **Western Bright-eyed Frog (*Boophis doulioti*)**, and the localized **Rhinoceros Chameleon (*Furcifer rhinoceratus*)**. We headed back after these epic encounters and enjoyed our dinner before bed.

22 October- Ankarafantsika National Park to Majunga

After an epic first day in the park we decided to retry for better views of **Schlegel's Asity**. While everyone had briefly seen it the previous day there were many people who signed up for the extension just because of this odd passerine. We were on the trails by day break and while it was an early morning, it was well worth it. After 30 minutes of searching we were rewarded with three **Schlegel's Asities** as they foraged in the canopy. While the distance from them was similar to the previous day, the views were much better and people were thrilled to see the iconic eye wattle.

With a much better **Schlegel's Asity** encounter down we refocused on one last major target in the park, the **White-breasted Mesite**. As we searched for these strange and elusive birds we saw our first **Long-billed Berniera** and **Malagasy Turtle-Dove**. As we continued down the trails the silence was broken by the distinctive calls of the mesite!

While these birds did not make viewing easy, we all managed to see them after some extra effort. Along the way back to the cars we managed to see two day roosting lemurs! Both **Western Woolly Lemur** and **Milne-Edwards Sportive Lemur** offered us great views. We continued to head back to the vehicles when we were forced to stop in the middle of our tracks. Perched in front of the group and protected by the shadows of the trees was the **Madagascar Pygmy Kingfisher**. This bird was quite challenging last year, but this individual must have thought he was a model with the amount of posing he allotted for us. With plenty of pictures and big smiles we finally returned to the vehicles only to be stopped once again by some **Sickle-billed Vanga** drama. Their unique calls came ringing out of the trees over the vehicles and soon a pair came flying in. While not uncommon the **Sickle-billed Vanga** can be tough to see well in this park, making this experience much more memorable. As we drove back to the hotel to have lunch we stopped once more to check a nearby fruiting tree. It was well worth the detour since we managed to see the **Lesser Vasa Parrot** and the nomadic **Madagascar Green Pigeon**.

We returned to Tia Asity for lunch and retrieved our bags. We then loaded up the vehicles and began our 2-3 hour drive to Majunga. Along the way we stopped and picked up **Sakalava Weaver**, **Malagasy Palm-Swift** and **Black Heron** for the trip. We completed the drive and settled into our gorgeous accommodation at Karibu Lodge, which has a lovely pool with a stunning view of the Mozambique Channel. We had a lovely dinner and rested for the next day's activity.

23 October- Betsiboka Bay

Today was focused around two major endemic targets, the **Bernier's Teal** and **Malagasy Sacred Ibis**. Much of the day is based around the tides of the estuary and so we didn't board our small boat until 8:30 am. Once loaded we set out to explore the Betsiboka Estuary for our targets and any other birds that may be around. Within the first 20 minutes we had found **Crab-Plovers**, an odd shorebird that is the sole member of the family

Dromadidae. Last year we were unable to locate these birds so it was a thrill to see them this year! As we enjoyed the **Crab-Plovers** we had a quick fly over of two **Greater Flamingos**, the only ones of the trip. It didn't take too long until we located our first **Malagasy Sacred Ibises** which were foraging on the mudflats in the open. Along with them were **Madagascar Gray Herons (a subspecies of the Gray Heron)**, **Whimbrels**, and **Dimorphic Little Egrets**.

The quest for the teals continued on and proved to be very difficult. As we searched we saw over a hundred **Lesser Flamingos**, **Curlew Sandpipers**, **Greater Sand-Plovers**, **Common Sandpiper**, **Common Greenshank**, **Whiskered Tern** and **Lesser Crested Tern**. At one point we had epic views of **Humblot's Heron**, as an adult flew right towards the boat to show off. This encounter was much better than our previous poorly lit one. As the hours continued to pass it seemed we were out of luck for the **Bernier's Teal**. Then suddenly our captain received a phone call from another tour



boat. The **Bernier's Teals** had finally been found but were 20 minutes away. There was no time to waste and our skillful captain quickly maneuvered us around sandbanks, mangrove roots and mudflats until we could see the distant shape of two ducks. At last! These ducks are interesting for their foraging method. Unlike most ducks they rarely dabble for food while sitting on the water's surface, instead they walk the mudflats by foot and dabble more like a shorebird. We got epic views of a pair of the endangered **Bernier's Teals** and were spoiled with prolonged views of their unique feeding behavior. Well worth the effort!

After a long day on the water we were all eager to return to our seaside paradise hotel and rest for the next day's activity. After all, it was another long day of traveling.

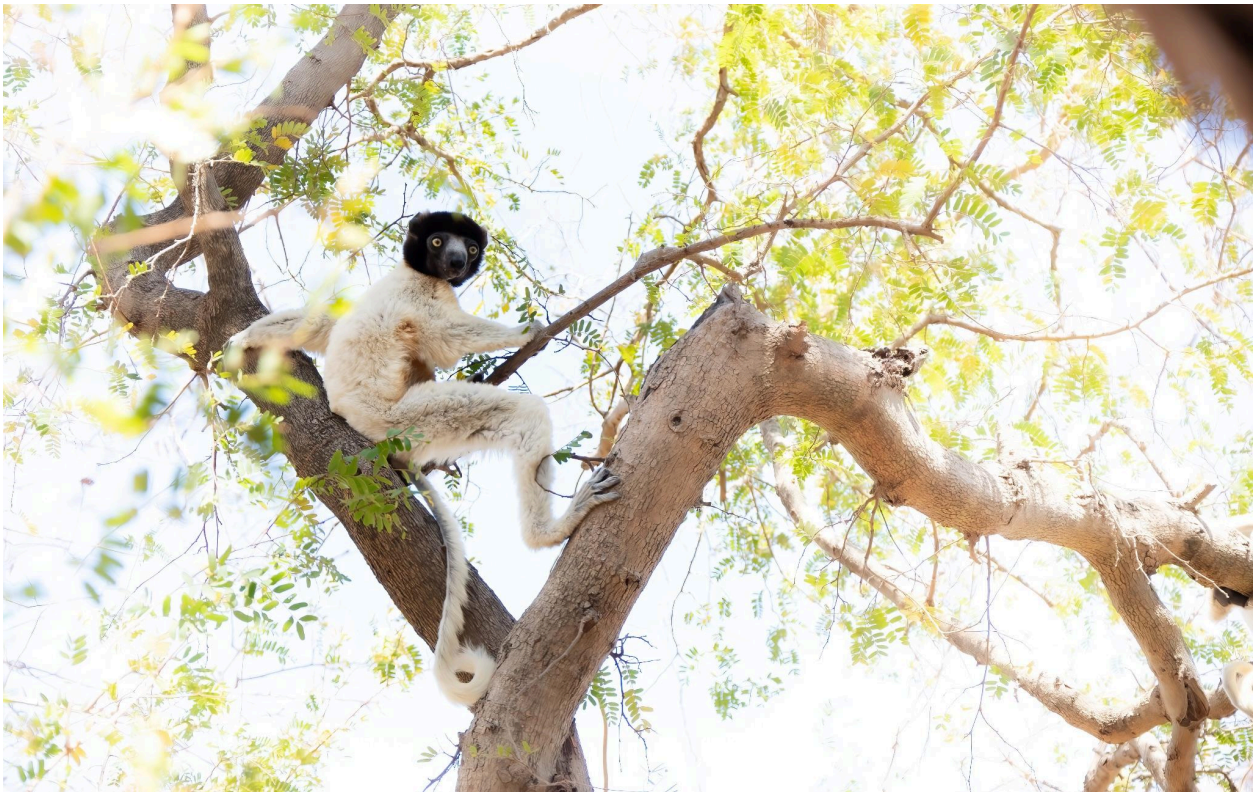
24 October- Majunga to Antananarivo

Usually flights on this day are in the morning, but today our flight was in the late evening. With some extra time to explore the area we arranged a day trip to Katsepy Lighthouse. Here there remains a small tract of forest which is home to the critically endangered **Crowned Sifaka**. We had a lovely breakfast and then loaded up into our boat from the previous day. We crossed the bay and met with some local drivers that would take us to the lighthouse.

As we rolled through the small fishing village we were once again reminded how quickly all of this habitat is disappearing in Madagascar. It's a sad reminder that little or none of what we see of this trip will be present in the next few decades. After passing bare land, agricultural fields and palm plantations we could see a small remnant forest take shape on the horizon, marked by the pinnacle silhouette of Katsepy Lighthouse. The small forest is kept safe by a few local guides, who protect this land and its animals in the hopes it will continue to bring tourism to their small village. With another group ahead of us in the queue we decided to walk around the visitor center as we waited. The wait was well rewarded with our first looks at **Common Brown Lemur**. A group of seven, which has been very habituated, came in close to investigate. There were moments where it seemed

the lemurs might actually leap on one of us, but luckily they stayed on the trees. One of the most memorable members of the troop was a mother and baby, who immediately won everyone's heart. After a wonderfully captivating wait our local guide was ready to take us to see the **Crowned Sifaka**.

The journey was short and easy, a positive result of a sad reality that there is simply little land for them to live in. The six members of the troop all seemed in good health, and the presence of a healthy baby playing among the branches left us all with some hope for the local group. After enjoying the group for a while we were brought to see the second troop which remained much higher in the canopy. To top off an already exciting day, some of us decided to venture up to the lighthouse where we marveled at the beauty of the coast. The contrast of the sacred land and mangled forest was once again a reminder that we were lucky to be here. This will be gone in our lifetime and if you hope to see it, visiting here soon is necessary. We returned back to our lodge and enjoyed the luxuries of our hotel before packing and leaving for our flight back to Tana.



The Main Tour

October 25: Antananarivo to Tulear

After a late arrival to Tana we wanted to allow people to rest a little bit before another day of travel. However, we did manage to find the time to visit Parc Tsarasaotra. This park is located in the middle of the busy capital city, but provides an important refuge for the local birds. The main lake in the park provided us with many **Red-billed Ducks**, **Blue-billed Teals**, **White-faced Whistling Ducks**, and even a female **Knob-billed Duck**. Easily, one of the most exciting finds was the endemic and endangered **Meller's Duck**. These ducks have been the victims of hunting and habitat destruction, so seeing several of them was both a relief and a thrill. As we continued down the grassy shoreline trails of the park we picked up **Malagasy White-eye**, **Madagascar Swamp Warbler** and had brief yet clear looks at the gorgeous **White-throated Rail!** Other common birds persisted during our visit and we had more views of **Red Fody**, **"Yellow-billed" Black Kite** and **Souimanga Sunbird**. We then hustled back to the bus and loaded up to leave for our flight to Tulear. The flight was easy and on time, and we arrived in Tulear in the afternoon. After an hour's drive to Ifaty we checked into the hotel and left for our first afternoon hike in the Spiny Forest.

The spiny forest ecosystems of the southwest are amongst Madagascar's most unique and iconic landscapes. The **Fody Baobabs**, **Silver Thicket Euphorbias**, and **Madagascar Octopus Trees** are all welcomed icons to the local plant diversity. Immediately into our hike we found the **Stripe-throated Jery**, a lovely passerine whose song is an essential staple to the local soundscape. We saw the elusive **Running Coua** and famous **Long-tailed Ground Roller**, both made possible by our local wildlife wranglers. We caught word of a **Madagascar Harrier-Hawk** nest and set off to see it. Along the way we saw the critically endangered **Spider Tortoise (*Pyxis arachnoides*)**, a species that has been decimated by the illegal pet trade. The walk to the nest also provided us with great looks of a roosting **Madagascar Nightjar**, **Hook-billed Vanga** and a stunning male

Chabert Vanga. The distinctive calls of the **Madagascar Harrier-Hawk** pierced the air and we soon witnessed two adults as they perched in the open for lovely photograph opportunities.

Rather than returning back to the hotel we opted to stay out to do a night walk. We were excited to see what the first night in the spiny forest had in store for us, and we were not disappointed. The first notable animal was the Lesser Hedgehog Tenrec, which belongs to the endemic tenrec order. Tenrecs are some of the best examples of parallel evolution in the world, with several representing hedgehogs, shrews and moles. The next mammals we saw were **Petter's Sportive Lemur** and **Grey Mouse Lemur**, luckily my red light allowed us to observe them foraging with minimal disruption. The mammals were great, but some of the reptiles were equally exciting. A large **Dumeril's Ground Boa (*Acrantophis dumerili*)** was found, and was very accommodating as a few of us held the gentle giant. We closed the night off with an endangered **Antimena Chameleon (*Furcifer antimena*)**, a species that had not been seen in the park for several years before this year.



October 26: Ifaty and the Spiny Forest

Yesterday was a phenomenal introduction to the local biota, but there were still many other animals to find. Since the heat in the spiny forest can make birding and wildlife viewing difficult after 9:00 am we opted to start right at day break. On the way in we saw several **Sakalava Weavers, Crested Coua, Namaqua Dove, and a pair of “White-bellied” Souimanga Sunbirds**. It wasn't long before one of our local wildlife spotters came running towards us yelling “Mesite! Come come!” We walked through the thick brushes and spiny tangles but were rewarded with a **Subdesert Mesite** perched in the open. This was the top target of the day and we had only been on the trails for 20 minutes! Feeling good about our most recent find, we continued further into the forest to search for other endemics. As we walked through the trails I played the song of the local tetraka, the **Thamnornis**. It didn't take too long before we found a beautiful individual that came in close to inspect the playback. Everyone got great looks and we left the bird to avoid any further stress. We continued to search for the **Archbold's Newtonia**, but they went without any signs for quite some time. Suddenly we found ourselves in the midst of a “vanga parade”! Within the course of 10 minutes we saw **Hook-billed Vanga, Red-tailed Vanga, Chabert Vanga** and the highly localized **Archbold's Newtonia**! The **Archbold's Newtonia** are tiny energetic vangas which make getting prolonged views difficult. However everyone got many clear and quick views, with many people even seeing the distinctive rufous eye-ring that sets this species apart from the similar **Common Newtonia**. With most of our local targets acquired we focused on the recently split **Olive-capped Coua**, which is a local resident to the southwestern spiny forest. Right as it seemed the heat had gotten to be too intense we found one beautiful **Olive-capped Coua** perched high in a **Madagascar Octopus Tree**. Everyone got great views and the photographers were more than happy!

After a wonderfully productive morning we returned for an 8:30 breakfast and allowed everyone to take a break until lunch. After lunch we returned to the birding and

headed straight to the Ifaty Salt Pans. Here we were searching for the endemic Madagascar Plover. The old birder's saying "If there's turds, there's birds" was incredibly applicable to this birding spot, as it unfortunately doubled as the town's bathroom. Carefully maneuvering around the local "landmines" we managed to pick up birds like **Striated Heron, Ruddy Turnstone**, and several **Kittlitz's Plover**. Within 20 minutes our local guide had found both a **Madagascar Plover** and a **White-fronted Plover** next to each other! With those two birds down we left the local sanitation destination and headed over to Belalanda Wetlands. As we walked the surrounding marshes we were thrilled to see our first **Madagascar Cisticola**! Soon we had our second, and our third, and then before we knew it we had seen a total of 14. We continued to the main marsh and saw **Blue-billed Teals, Red-billed Ducks**, and our first **Black-winged Stilts** foraging in the water. Our local wildlife spotters dispersed into the reeds in the hopes of flushing a **Baillon's Crake** for the group. As they marched through



the marsh we had two Little Bitterns fly out and pass by closely. Suddenly a **Baillon's Crake** ran out of the reeds. A few folks missed the bird but it was quickly followed by several more. Before we knew it we had a total of 12 **Baillon's Crakes** on the checklist. We were happy to have seen so many crakes but suddenly a pair of **Greater Painted-Snipes** flew out into the open, another great addition to the list!

After a successful run at Belalanda Wetlands we began to return to our lodge for dinner. However we had one last stop to make. We stopped along the road to check for the **Madagascar Three-banded Plover**, which is currently a subspecies that could be split in the near future. It didn't take long before I found this one as well, a perfect way to end an already epic day of birding. A few of us opted to go for one last night walk in the area. We saw a lot less on this second night but some of the high lists were a "**Torotoroka**" **Madagascar Scops-Owl**, several scorpion species, an endemic katydid (*Colossopus grandidieri*) and the stunning **Madagascar Ground Gecko** (*Paroedura picta*).

October 27: Ifaty to Tulear.

With all of our major target species down we decided to prioritize a few species that would only become more difficult along the tour. Today the two most important targets were **Gray-headed Lovebirds**, **Greater Vasa Parrot** and **Subdesert Brush-Warbler**. As we walked to the entrance of the park we spotted a small covey of **Madagascar Button Quails**, an odd shorebird relative, which gave us some great views before flushing. We continued down the trail and searched for our targets. Along the way we saw another **Running Coua**, this time in a tree. A little later we found another **Olive-capped Coua** as well. We got word of a **Greater Vasa Parrot** nest and began to head in that direction. A few green blobs flew out of a nearby tree and landed in front of us in full view, **Gray-headed Lovebirds** at last! We watched the pair of lovebirds forage for a few minutes before flying off. One down, two to go.

Eventually we found ourselves in the area of the nest and suddenly heard the deeper and coarser screech of the **Greater Vasa Parrot**. The beast was perched high on a tree only 35 meters away, allowing us to get great looks through our binoculars. As we were enjoying the **Greater Vasa Parrot** a pair of **White-headed Vangas** perched over the trail, another epic addition to the day. We were thrilled to have seen two of our biggest targets and a few bonus birds, but we realigned our focus and went for the **Subdesert Brush-Warbler**. We searched the nearby scrub for this shy little endemic warbler. Along the way we saw a massive **Huntsman Spider** (*Damastes* sp.) and a **Malagasy Violet-tip Butterfly** (*Colotis zoe*). Suddenly the call notes of the **Subdesert Brush-Warbler** came from a nearby bush. Further investigation revealed our desired target and despite their secretive nature everyone saw the bird well.

The morning came to an end, so we returned to the hotel to collect bags and enjoy breakfast. We loaded our bus and headed to our next accommodation, the lovely



Arboretum d'Antsokay. The Arboretum acts as both a lovely accommodation and a wildlife refuge, who could ask for more? Upon arrival we were ecstatic to look up and immediately see two new trip birds, the **Madagascar Martin** and **Malagasy Swift!** We enjoyed a lovely lunch as our rooms were prepared and then took a break. We reunited after a few hours to head over to a new locality to nab a few more endemic species. The brushy scrub of the La Table area is home to three key targets; **Red-shouldered Vanga**, **Verreaux's Coua**, and **LaFresnaye's Vanga**. We explored the surrounding habitat, which was very unwelcoming with thorns and roots around most corners. Luckily our pain was not in vain and we eventually got on a pair of **Red-shouldered Vanga**. These small vireo-like vangas must have known what we endured since they gave us the encounter of a lifetime. One male sat at eye level in the open less than 20 feet away. Many photos were taken, views were appreciated, and perhaps a few joyful tears were shed. After a truly memorable encounter with this "Vulnerable" endemic we continued to our coua quest. Luckily it didn't take much longer until we found a distant **Verreaux's Coua** calling from a bush. The views were not nearly as good as the **Red-shouldered Vanga** views, but everyone saw and counted the bird. Exhausted by the heat we decided to try for **LaFresnaye's Vanga** the following day at a more productive spot for them.

October 28: Nosy Ve and La Table

Today we were meeting at a port in Tuléar for our boat ride to the remote Nosy Ve. The island's name roughly translates to "Island Yes or No?", this is because of its smaller size and the vast difference the tides have on its appearance. The main reason for our arrival here was to see the **Red-tailed Tropicbirds**, which use Nosy Ve as a nesting colony. Currently these birds use 13 different islands for nesting, so seeing them here was quite special since it is rare to see them near land away from a nesting site. It took only a few minutes before our local guide had shown us several nests. After the tropicbirds some people decided to cool off with a swim, while the rest continued to see a local **Little Egret**

rookery. We loved our time on the island but reloaded the boat to have lunch in the beach town of Anakao.

After ordering our food we went for a quick walk to some nearby coastal euphorbia shrubs. Here we found the endemic **Littoral Rock-Thrush**, our first of the malagasy rock-thrushes. We watched this beauty sing from a few perches for several minutes before returning to lunch. We returned to our hotel for a break and then afterwards went to La Table to find our last southwestern endemic, the **LaFresnaye's Vanga**. We searched for quite some time, but fortunately our luck continued and everyone saw a pair of **LaFresnaye's Vangas**. We returned back to the arboretum for our last night's stay.

October 29: Tulear to Zombitse NP to Isalo NP

Today was going to be a long travel day and we had a lot of birding to do along the way. To ensure we had the best birding opportunities and didn't arrive at our final destination too late we left the arboretum at 5:00am. The reason was to find the endemic **Madagascar Sandgrouse**, which is only found on route to Zombitse along this itinerary. Due to constant worsening conditions of the road it is hard to predict how long the drive will take, but usually it takes between 2.5-3.5 hours. We arrived at the sandgrouse spot in good time, thanks to our talented driver. A group of local guides were happy to help us find the sandgrouse. We searched for over an hour and just when it seemed all hope for the sandgrouse was lost we all saw one male fly overhead. The looks were good yet brief, leaving us hungry for more. Luckily we opted to spend an additional 20 minutes searching and were delighted to get prolonged scope views from a far distance.

We were on a tight schedule today so we continued the drive towards Zombitse National Park. We arrived and were immediately greeted by a troop of **Verreaux's Sifakas**! While enjoying the presence of these endangered lemurs another endemic emerged from the surrounding woods, a massive **Giant Coua**. This massive bird was hard to miss as it stuck around the trail for several minutes. We then took our lunch break and

prepared to reenter the forest. As we moved through the forest we found **Red-tailed Vanga, Rufous Vanga,** and more **Malagasy Swifts.** Our local guides had masterfully scouted and found a **White-browed Owl** roosting, making it an easy and memorable encounter. We were desperate to find the endemic **Appert's Tetraka,** which is localized to the forests protected by the park. We searched and found a **Zombitse Sportive Lemur** sleeping in a tree cavity, another animal restricted to forests of Zombitse National Park.

Then the unexpected occurred, an out of season thunderstorm. As the rains came in it seemed we had lost our opportunity to see the **Appert's Tetraka.** Our local park guides continued to search as the group took shelter from the storm. After 15 minutes one of the guides came running back, they had found the tetraka. We ran in after them to find this shy endemic. We did quite a bit of bushwhacking, but after a lot of effort we had a pair of **Appert's Tetrakas** foraging just feet away from us. Thrilled to have seen this bird we reloaded the bus and headed straight to our hotel.



October 30: Isalo NP to Ranomafana NP

Another full day of driving was ahead of us, a total of 12 hours. We didn't have much time to bird the area but we headed straight over to a nearby lake at around 6:00 am to look for the endemic **Madagascar Partridge**. These birds are incredibly tough to see, but after an hour of effort we managed to flush several individuals which provided very brief views. We returned to the hotel for breakfast and made a speedy departure. We had missed the unique "**Benson's**" **Forest Rock-Thrush** on the hotel grounds, so we made a brief stop at a local museum where they are known to frequent as well. We called ahead of time and the local museum employee had gone out and found one for us, so upon arrival we all got great looks at this endemic subspecies! We were thrilled to get these targets on the trip checklist and continued straight to Anja Reserve.

Anja Reserve is a lovely local community reserve where all the members of the community benefit from the income of the park. The park certainly gets a lot of visitation too since it hosts the largest population of wild maki, better known as the **Ring-tailed Lemur**. The lemurs are critically endangered and gone from most of their range, making this small forest that much more special. We saw dozens of **Ring-tailed Lemurs** at a close distance, many of them had babies as well. Our time here was limited but luckily everyone was very satisfied with their experience here. We drove the rest of the day and arrived at Hotel Thermal, our accommodation for the next 4 nights.

October 31: Ranomafana NP

At last we had arrived in Ranomafana, our gateway to the eastern rainforests. The rainforests of eastern Madagascar are the epicenter of the country's diversity, and we had a total of 4 days here. Our first stop at the park was Talatakely, a trail that would take us through the park's lower elevation forest. The first 10 minutes in the parking lot were hinting towards a productive day. As **Malagasy Palm-Swifts** fly overhead the distant calls of a **Rand's Warbler** were detected. With some investigation we found the small tetraka high in the canopy. We got the scope on him and realized that there was also a

Madagascar Starling below the **Rand's Warbler!** People were thrilled to see two lifers in one scope view.

Afterwards we ventured into the proper forests, where we almost immediately found one of the island's most famous invertebrates. The **Giraffe-necked Weevil** is as odd as it gets when it comes to beetles, its strange elongated thorax gives it a giraffe-like appearance. We continued down the trails and managed to see several new birds like **Forest Fody, Velvet Asity, Ward's Flycatcher, Madagascar Cuckooshrike** The trails at Ranomafana can be very challenging due to constant inclines and declines, and muddy conditions. Luckily we all took our own pace and everyone managed fine with the tricky trails. As we wined up and down, we eventually came across our first lemurs in the park, the **Golden Bamboo Lemur**. These lemurs were discovered in 1986 and were the main reason Ranomafana was established as a national park. Sadly, the rate of deforestation has slowed rather than halted and today there are less than 1,000 individuals. We were thrilled to watch three individuals forage in the bamboo and left with many good looks.



Our guide was excited to take us to an active **Scaly Ground Roller** nest, which was a large cavity in the clay along the trail. We searched the nearby ravines and got several epic views of this stunning endemic. As we continued down the trails we caught word of another endangered lemur, the **Milne-Edwards Sifaka**. These black and white lemurs were one of the most fun lemur encounters we had this tour. We saw several adults and babies foraging and playing in the trees just above eye level. As we were enjoying the family dynamics of these lemurs another incredible thing happened. The critically endangered **Greater Bamboo Lemur** was found! While there are currently 1,000 left in the wild population, there is only one individual left in this part of the park.



The fact that we found the last **Greater Bamboo Lemur** in Talatakely was an honor as much as it was saddening. Just as we remembered from the woods and back on the trail we heard from another group that a troupe of **Lesser Eastern Bamboo Lemurs** had been seen feeding in a nearby patch of bamboo. We rushed off to find them and were thrilled to

get great looks at this species as well. It was truly epic to see four species of lemurs within 40 minutes!

Suddenly the nearby call of a **Pita-like Ground Roller** came from nearby, so we ran off to find him. The ground roller gave us a little trouble but everyone got great views of the bird perching and singing in the forest's thick understory. We headed back into some pristine habitat and heard the haunting song of the **Crossley's Vanga**. This odd denizen of the understory is uncannily similar to babblers, though it is just a prime example of parallel evolution. While it remained only as a voice for several minutes, eventually a pair emerged from the safety of the shadows and gave us great views of their stunning black and white patterns.

We continued up hills and searched for mixed flocks to find more bird species. The silence was broken after some time with the calls of drongos and vangas. We immediately got great views of **Green Jery**, **Tylas Vanga**, **Madagascar Blue Pigeon**, **Spectacled Tetraka**, and even **Blue Coua** briefly joined the party! We stopped to have lunch after seeing so many exciting new trip birds. As we ate our local guide, William, left to check a nearby **Henst's Goshawk** nest. Right as we finished our sandwiches William emerged from the woods with a big smile on his face, that was a good sign. We packed up and headed towards the nest and made some tricky maneuvering off trail to get a "clear view" of the nest. The effort was worth it since everyone got to see this rare forest raptor sitting on the edge of her nest. After a long day of hiking we began our walk back to the bus. It seemed there was nothing left to see with such a productive day, but we should have known better. As we approached the entrance the calls of a **Red-fronted Coua**! With minimal playback the gorgeous ground cuckoo leaped on a log and boasted its beautiful plumage to the whole group!

We returned for dinner and then set out to have our first night walk in the area. The first find of the night was an epic look at the **Rufous Mouse Lemur**, a tiny primate that was very interested in some nearby fruits. We were thrilled with our looks and then

continued down the road to search for more critters. It wasn't long before we found our first **Cryptic Chameleons** (*Calumma crypticum*), which was quickly followed by **Deceptive Chameleons** (*Calumma fallax*). The chameleons were great but we were blown away to see an absolute behemoth, the **O'Shaughnessy's Chameleon** (*Calumma oshaughnessyi*). The night walk was so fun it was over before we knew it! We returned to Hotel Thermal to rest before another full day in the field.

November 1: Ranomafana NP Day 2

For our second day we visited the high elevation site of Vohiparara to search for high elevation species. We ate an early breakfast and hit the trails by 7:00am. We started the day by walking the road where we got epic views of a group of **Green Jery and a male Forest Rock-Thrush**. Afterwards we headed down the trail to search for our high elevation targets. As we entered the forest we almost immediately found our first **Madagascar Forest-Rails and more Blue Couas**. As we approached a small bridge we heard the calls of the **Common Sunbird-Asity** overhead! We searched and struggled, but eventually got some looks at this stunning endemic.



We continued up the trail towards the area known for **Rufous-headed Ground Roller**, though we still had some ways to go. Along the way our local guide ventured into some nearby bushes and then signaled for us to follow one at a time. Sitting camouflaged in the leaves at the base of a tree was the stunning **Collared Nightjar**, our last nightjar we needed for the trip! We continued to the ground roller spot but were treated to several wonderful “pit stops” along the way; presenting us with some stunning weevils (*Lixus gigas*), and a brief view of the **Forest Water Snake** (*Thamnosophis infrasignatus*). Suddenly the distinct song of the endemic **Dark Newtonia** rang out of a nearby tangle. This energetic little vanga did not want to stay put for very long, but luckily everyone saw it after some extended effort.

Eventually we arrived at a Pandanus swamp where the guides had recently seen the **Rufous-headed Ground Roller**. We lined up and remained motionless as we taped for this elusive endemic. When a shadow was seen skulking in the bushes we all focused in. Suddenly the shadow emerged and in its place stood the vast array of colors that make up the legendary **Rufous-headed Ground Roller**. Everyone saw the bird and we made our way back to the main trail, despite a few misplaced feet that found their way in thick mud or deep holes. We took our lunch break in an open area surrounded by pristine rainforest. The birds clearly didn't respect the idea of a “break”, because a pair of Gray-crowned Tetrakas proceeded to feed around us. A very welcomed interruption.

We began to head back to the vehicle and tried several other endemics like the **Madagascar Yellowbrow**, **Wedge-tailed “Jery”** (not a jery at all, instead it is a tetraka), **Cryptic Warbler** and **Pollen's Vanga**. It seemed we had run out of luck until our guide brought us to an active **Brown Mesite** nest, which gave off great looks at our last of three mesites. As we approached the end of the day we finally heard the call of the elusive **Madagascar Yellowbrow**. We tried some tape but decided it was better to go to the bird, down a hill into the bamboo and vines of the forest. We assembled at the bottom of the hill and could feel our chances of seeing the **Madagascar Yellowbrow** dissipate as the time

since its last call grew longer. I tried the call of **Madagascar Flufftail** to see if we could ruffle up any consolation prizes while we were down there. An explosive response came from a mere few feet away and the small shape of a flufftail emerged from the bramble. This difficult bird must have missed out on the “flufftail memo” because it came out in the open and circled the group several times, ensuring everyone had top notch looks of this bird. Feeling rewarded for our efforts we returned to the main trail and eventually the bus. We had missed some birds but luckily we would have time to try again.

November 2: Ranomafana NP Day 3

This morning we focused on some marsh birds along the Amboditanimena Trail. The open marshes gave us some surprisingly good views of the **Blue Coua**, which was sitting in the canopy of the forest edge. As we walked through the tall grasses we found our first **African Stonechats** and caught glimpses of the **Ornate Girdled Lizard** (*Zonosaurus ornatus*), which boasts an impressive array of green and black colors. The



skies were filled with **Madagascar Martins** flying at eye level as they hunted on the wing. The song of the **Gray Emutail** filled the air, and with a little playback a few individuals perched in the open for everyone to see. A nearby call revealed the presence of another tough endemic, the **Madagascar Rail**. This bird required a lot of focused effort, but by the end of our time searching for it everyone got views of it skulking between reeds.

This evening we entered the park to search for **Pollen's Vanga** and **Wedge-tailed Jery**, both of them continued to elude us. However, a troop of **Red-bellied Lemurs** welcomed us right at the entrance! "Herp" nerds were overjoyed to see two **Satanic Leaf-tailed Geckos (*Uroplatus phantasticus*)**, which are perhaps the most famous reptilian residents on the island. Our guides brought us to an opening in the forest and placed bait to try and lure the enigmatic **Fanaloka**, a small carnivoran that is infamous for its shy nature. Despite waiting 45 minutes in the dark we remained "Fanalokless". We got back to our hotel and rested for one last morning in the park.

November 3: Ranomafana NP to Antsirabe

This morning was jarring, we had 5 birds left to find in less than three hours to search due to a long day of driving ahead of us. **Pollen's Vanga, Cryptic Warbler, Wedge-tailed Jery, Brown Emutail, and Madagascar Yellowbrow** were our last targets we needed, and essentially a guide's nightmare list. Any of these birds could take all day, and none of them were guaranteed due to their extremely difficult nature. This was communicated to the group and we all understood that seeing even one or two would be considered lucky. However, we were all prepared to stay extremely focused and essentially ignore any other birds to ensure we had maximum time available for these birds. It was "go time". We hustled through the first sections of the trail with the coordination and persistence of a military squad. I trolled for our targets as we weaved along the winding trail. Suddenly the distant response to a **Cryptic Warbler** call caught

the ears of the guides. We changed our direction and headed straight to the call's origin. As we came into the opening of a field I played the call of the **Cryptic Warbler** once again. Suddenly the bird flew in and landed just feet away at eye level. We all got on the bird immediately and enjoyed its subtle colors and entertaining movements. One down, four to go.

We continued down the trail and went 45 minutes without any responses from the other targets. Then out of thin air a **Pollen's Vanga** appeared at eye level, offering the best views I'd ever had of the bird. Two down, three to go! We crossed the threshold of the thick forest and into an opening, allowing for a quick water break. As the group rested for a minute I played the calls of the **Wedge-tailed Jery**. Like a mirage in the desert, the **Wedge-tailed Jery** appeared a mere 4 feet away and perched in the open



several times. We could not believe our luck. We had seen three of our targets and had another 30 minutes before we needed to return to the van. There was little time to bask in the glory of our morning and so we marched onwards to a territory for the Madagascar **Yellowbrow**. We arrived at an area shrouded in the darkness of the thick bamboo that dominated it. Then the faint calls of the **Madagascar Yellowbrow** were heard. I asked the group to stay silent and completely still as I attempted to record the bird's call. With the call successfully captured on my phone I played the call back. A large blob immediately flew into the open, and there stood one of the island's most difficult birds.

Few images exist of this bird, and after watching the **Madagascar Yellowbrow** for several minutes everyone understood why. With the permission of the photographerless group I managed to take a few minutes to try and photograph it, which resulted in a photo I was thrilled about. As we walked back with smiles stretched across our faces we attempted a few more times for the final target, the **Brown Emutail**. The emutail never responded or appeared, but with such exceptional luck everyone was more grateful with the four beautifully seen targets rather than the single one we missed. The rest of the day was spent driving 10 hours to Antsirabe, although a **Hamerkop** was a welcomed addition to the trip list.

November 4: Antsirabe to Andasibe NP

The worsening conditions of the road meant we spent all day today traveling to Andasibe-Mantadia NP. No new birds were seen today but we were thrilled to be settled into Mantadia Lodge for the next 5 days, where we had no more significant drives for the remainder of the tour.

November 5: Andasibe NP Day 1

After two long days of traveling everyone was excited to get back into the forest.

We started our time at Analamazaotra Forest Station. Within the first 5 minutes we got great looks at one of the top targets of the day, the **Nuthatch-Vanga!** This odd vanga has an uncanny similarity to nuthatches, and it sure acts like one too. We were beyond thrilled and then headed on to the proper trails of the park. A large group of 6 **Madagascar Blue Pigeons** in a distant tree allowed for great scope views, and a small group of **Nelicourvi Weavers** were a wonderful addition. The hard to detect **Red-breasted Coua**, the last coua we needed to see, was one of the best finds this morning as a beautiful adult crossed the path several times at a distance.

The symphonic calls of **Indri** caught our attention and we headed in their direction. As the largest living lemurs, the **Indri** are always one of the most memorable animals we encounter on this tour. The local troop did not disappoint, and we found ourselves watching several for about 20 minutes. A mother with an adventurous baby was perhaps the most memorable member of the “conspiracy”, the proper term for a



group of lemurs. A small group of **Madagascar Forest-Rails** then emerged and gave us much better views compared to our previous encounter. We began to mull our way back over to the entrance when we intercepted a small mixed flock. **Madagascar Blue Vangas and White-headed Vangas** are hard to ignore, so we spent several minutes watching the group forage along the branches of nearby trees.

Before we knew it, it was lunch time. So we returned to our lovely lodge and took a break to rest up for an afternoon adventure and night walk. We entered a local community run reserve and went searching for **Madagascar Ibis** and other targets. We watched **Common Newtonia, Red-tailed Vanga, and a male Malagasy Sunbird**. As we approached a small river our guide spotted a massive male **Parson's Chameleon**, the heaviest chameleon in the world! We then heard about a **Madagascar Ibis** that had just been located so we rushed over to spot the elusive bird. We unfortunately only saw the ibis for a moment before it flushed and disappeared into the forest. Luckily we were compensated with great looks at a nearby roosting "**Rainforest**" **Madagascar Scops-Owl**. We stayed until it got dark and went searching for nocturnal critters.

The night walk started with a bang, as everyone had exceptional looks at the **Gmelin's or Eastern Woolly Lemur (*Avahi laniger*)**. Our luck continued with great looks at the highly localized **Goodman's Mouse Lemur**, known only for Andasibe-Mantadia National Park! We continued on for another hour and had several awesome herps; **Green Bright-eyed Frog (*Boophis viridis*)**, **Brown Leaf Chameleon (*Brookesia supercillias*)**, and **Madagascar Bright-eyed Frog (*Boophis madagascariensis*)**.

November 6: Andasibe NP Day 2

With a productive day in Analamazoatra behind us we were eager to enter Mantadia for its primary forest species. Before beginning the two hour drive we made a quick pit stop in a local pine tree patch. Here we found our last endemic owl species, the massive **Madagascar Owl**. It was perched high in the pines, but everyone enjoyed clear views.

With another major target checked off the list we reloaded the cars and headed to Mantadia National Park. We made a few stops along the way and had much better views of **Madagascar Starling, Malagasy Sunbird, and Mascarene Martins**. As the cars continued down the road our local guide suddenly jumped out of the vehicle and dove into some bushes on the side of the road. He emerged with one of the most difficult mammals in hand, the **Lowland Streaked Tenrec**. Sympathetic to the stress this little oddity was experiencing I immediately asked the guide to release him, although everyone still managed to see the tenrec very well.

We continued into the primary forest and ventured off trail in several areas. By doing this we managed to get great looks of our final ground roller species, the **Short-legged Ground Roller**. As we continued down we made another sudden stop and ran into the woods. We had found a troop of **Diademed Sifaka**, one of the most colorful



lemurs in the world. We watched several members of the troop leap from trees before disappearing. We arrived at the main forest trail and had lunch before continuing on our morning adventure. Almost immediately we came across an active pair of **Crossley's Vanga** which moved subtly in the understory. Suddenly the iconic call of a **Cuckoo-Roller** rang out closely overhead.

This bird had become an unexpected nemesis for us this tour. As I struggled to get a view of the canopy I saw its silhouette disappearing, though it seemed it would stop soon. I told the group to stay and ran after the bird. A few minutes later it began to sing again. I frantically searched for a clear view and finally found the taxonomic oddity singing in the open. Without a moment to spare I came running back and assembled the group in a quick fashion. We returned to where I had seen the bird and was relieved it was still there. After many failed attempts throughout the tour it was an epic find. After enjoying the bird, me and the local guide checked a nearby creek where we found one of Madagascar's most colorful frogs, the **Baron's Mantella**. This parallel to the New World dart frogs is a beautiful mosaic of green, black and orange. You don't have to be a frog nerd to drool over this beauty! We were satisfied with the day and began heading back to the cars when the call of a **White-throated Oxylabes** caught our attention. After some focused effort everyone saw this mysterious endemic.

November 7: Andasibe NP Day 3

We had missed the critically endangered **Black-and-white Ruffed Lemur** the previous day, so opted to return back to the forest to find them. Along the way we stopped at the sight of some swifts overhead. We were thrilled to finally see the endemic **Malagasy Spinetail**, our last endemic swift. Thrilled with our recent checklist addition we continued into the park. We hit the trails and spent a few hours hiking and hoping for the lemurs but had no sign of them. Towards the end of our time available for the morning we finally heard a nearby group of the **Black-and-white Ruffed Lemurs!** We went off the

trail and followed their voices until finally we found a pair. We watched for 10 minutes before they disappeared. We returned to the cars to get back for lunch. On the way back we found another pair right along the road, which gave us much better and prolonged views.

We returned for lunch and allowed the group to enjoy a nice long afternoon break, or at least that was the intention. An hour into our break we got a call that the **Madagascar Ibis** was seen and it was an all hands on deck situation. Me and the local guide ran to all the rooms and assembled the group. We then hopped into the cars and set off to find our nemesis. It had been 20 minutes already and we feared the bird would be gone, luckily that wasn't true! The ibis was still there foraging, and we watched the bird as it fed, flew and preched for about 30 minutes. Some of us stayed for one last night walk and we found a few new species for the trip. One of the highlights was the



Furry-eared Dwarf Lemur, which moved seamlessly through the branches. The forest was incredibly dry but we managed to see a few frogs, the most exciting was **Goudot's Bright-eyed Frog (*Boophis goudoti*)**, a lifer for the tour leader! Another epic find was the cryptic **Mossy Leaf-tailed Gecko (*Uroplatus sikorae*)** which has evolved some of the best camouflage in the natural world. An epic way to end the night.

November 8: Andasibe NP Day 4

Having seen all of our major targets for the area we opted to try a new locality for the **Slender-billed Flufftail**, an incredibly tough endemic bird. Last year we didn't have the time to even try for this bird, so it was exciting to just have the opportunity to look. The marshes of Torotorofotsy were historically one of the best locations to try for this bird. We left our hotel after an early breakfast and arrived at Torotorofotsy an hour later. We entered the marsh and realized things were terribly wrong in the park. The marsh was bone dry and the surrounding agricultural pressure had moved further in around the park. It had been a year since our local guides had traveled there, so they were also shocked. We tried our best to search for the flufftail but never even heard it. On the upside we did have close to a dozen **Madagascar Snipe** encounters, as they would flush from nearby reeds and grasses. The most memorable snipe was a male that took to a sharp ascent and proceeded to do several aerial displays to the whole group's enjoyment. Another exceptional encounter was a pair of **Madagascar Swamp Warblers**, which we had already seen but got much better looks this time.

We came to terms that the habitat destruction and intense dryness of the surrounding marsh were essentially guarantees that the flufftails were not present. We departed the opening of the marsh and headed into some nearby pandanus swamps in search of the gem-like **Golden Mantella**, a small bright orange frog. Me and two other local guides spent the next two hours bushwacking and trying our very best to find the critically endangered frog, but the dry conditions worked against us. The frog remained

unfound but we were rewarded with some epic views of a nearby **Madagascar Blue Pigeon** nest! We watched the pair for about 15 minutes before we left to return to the vehicles. We returned to the hotel for lunch and then proceeded back to the local community reserve for some relaxed birding. Some of the highlights were **Indri**, **Frances's Sparrowhawk** and **Malagasy Paradise-Flycatchers**.

November 9: Andasibe NP to Tana

Today was the last day of the main tour, and we had to prioritize getting back to Tana before it got too late. However, we still had time to visit the Analamazoatra Forest Station one last time. We all wanted to see if we could obtain better views of the critically endangered **Diademed Sifaka**. We walked down the trails and got to see **African Stonechat, Madagascar Blue Vanga, and Common Newtonia**. We walked up the trails and immediately saw a troupe of **Diademed Sifakas**, with several of them nearby and at eye level. We stayed with the lemurs for roughly 20 minutes and watched them forage, play, and leap from branch to branch. It was a phenomenal way to not only end our time in Andasibe-Mantadia NP, but end the main tour. We got to Tana after a few hours of driving, and allowed everyone to do a bit of souvenir shopping.



Helmet Vanga Extension

November 10: Tana to Masoala NP

With the main tour over, the final extension was set to begin. The post-tour extension is based around finding the most incredible Malagasy bird, the **Helmet Vanga**. This large toucan-like vanga is found patchily throughout the eastern rainforests, but the most reliable location is the Masoala Peninsula. The peninsula can be difficult to access, and so the process of getting there is a fun journey. We arrived at the domestic airport in Tana at 7:00am and boarded a small privately chartered plane. The plane is small, fitting only 10 passengers. We took off on time and could see the truly devastating impacts agriculture and deforestation has had on the landscape, seeing parks like Zahamena National Park along the way. We landed in Maroantsetra where we met up with some representatives from Masoala Lodge. We then loaded up into a van which took us 35 minutes away to the coast. We arrived at a small port owned by the hotel and loaded into a boat which took us an hour across Antongil Bay, the largest bay in Madagascar. From July to September the bay acts as the breeding and calving grounds for Humpback Whales. The whales were not present for a few months past the end of the season, but along the way we saw **Reed Cormorants, Lesser Crested Terns** and **Whimbrels**.

The boat ride was incredible and everyone was able to see what makes Masoala so special, its isolation. As we rode through the bay the village was replaced by beautiful primary forest. We arrived at the beach of your newest accommodation where we were given “welcome juice” and an orientation. We all left to settle and then reunited for an afternoon walk. The activity in the late afternoon was non-existent, and with 2.5 hours of little to no bird activity we were concerned about the success of the extension. We spoke with our local guide and were assured an early morning would be different. So we returned to our rooms and rested for an early morning.

November 11: Masoala NP Day 1

We met for a wonderful early breakfast alongside the ocean. Coffee and the sound of waves crashing is always a great way to start a day! We finished breakfast and loaded into a smaller motor boat. We took the boat about 20 minutes north to a beach with an accessible trail. This is where we would access the primary forest of Masoala National Park. As we walked along the beach to get to the trailhead the irruptive calls of the peninsula endemic **Red Ruffed Lemur** boomed overhead. The lemurs jumped erratically overhead, allowing several views of either leaping lemurs or concealed lemurs. We continued up the trail eager to find our legendary **Helmet Vanga**, and hopefully better views of the **Red Ruffed Lemur**. The trails of Masoala National Park can be difficult, with a lot of ascending. Luckily everyone went at their own pace and along the way we saw **White-headed Vanga**, **Spectacled Tetraka**, and **Long-billed Bernieria**. Another group of **Red Ruffed Lemurs** appeared and so we focused on them while our local guide searched for mixed flocks. The lemurs were giving us much better looks when Pescal, our local guide, came running down with a big smile. He had found the **Helmet Vanga**! We quickly gathered our things and went running in behind him until he brought us to where the birds were. It took a few minutes of searching but eventually a female **Helmet Vanga** appeared just 4 feet away from us at eye level, with a beak full of nesting material. She flew off and we hustled after her, following her right back to a nearby nest. We were so thrilled to spend the next 40 minutes staking out and watching both a male and female **Helmet Vanga** leave and return several times with nesting material as they constructed their nest.

It was hard to walk away but we wanted to see if we could find our final bird target for the trip, the **Bernier's Vanga**. We continued into the national park and ended up intersecting another mixed flock with a third **Helmet Vanga**! Another exciting find was a **Scaly Ground Roller** which was foraging near a small river. During one creek crossing we found a new *Mantella* frog species for the trip, **Madagascar Brown Mantella**

(*Mantella ebenau*). We continued searching for **Bernier's Vanga** but didn't find it that day. We took the boat back to the hotel where we had a chance to relax before dinner. Some of us decided to use our free time for snorkeling. Some of the animals that were seen while snorkeling were **Indo-Pacific Sergeant Major, Moorish Idol, Giant Moray Eel, Cushion Sea Star, Indian Lionfish and Yellow Boxfish.**

As we were meeting for dinner our local guide came running over, he had found a group of **Northern Bamboo Lemurs** feeding nearby. We walked less than 2 minutes and came across the group as they sat in some tall bamboo. Only a few moments later a group of **White-fronted Brown Lemurs** came out, a local endemic we still needed to see! We began to walk back, talking about how lucky we were to see two species before dinner when we spotted a **Masoala Sportive Lemur**. Absolutely incredible! We found most of our remaining lemur targets in the 10 minutes before dinner. We ate dinner and then went for a quick night walk which presented us with our last endemic lemur target, the **Masoala Woolly Lemur**. Exhausted by the day, we returned to our rooms for the night.



November 12: Masoala NP Day 2

For our second day in the park we focused on getting the last vanga, **Bernier's Vanga**. We hiked south of the lodge for a few hours and headed into some pandanus swamps which the bird is known to reside in. We saw **Madagascar Blue Vanga**, **Red-tailed Vanga** and **White-headed Vanga** as we inspected mixed flocks. As we were continuing down the trails a pair of **Red-breasted Coua** emerged from the brush and revealed they were constructing a nest. We watched the pair leave and return several times before continuing on. Eventually we arrived at an open pasture where we scanned the forest edges for **Bernier's Vanga**. We found **Souimanga Sunbird**, **Malagasy Kingfisher**, and soaring **Madagascar Pratincoles**.

Our local guide left to check a spot off trail and allowed the group to rest for a few moments and continue scanning the edge. After 20 minutes we returned from the forest and told us he had found a pair of **Bernier's Vangas**! We quickly followed him back into the forest and weaved between branches and vines. The vangas did not make finding them easy, but after 30 minutes of searching we eventually found a male **Bernier's Vanga**. It was both a relief and a monumental achievement, we had gotten all of our endemic targets for the trip. We returned back to the lodge for lunch and took a much more relaxing afternoon activity, a boat ride down the river. Along the river we saw **Malagasy Kingfishers**, **White-fronted Brown Lemurs**, and an active **Madagascar Ibis nest**! It was a phenomenal ending to an incredible 26 day tour.

Bird List

Taxonomy follows eBird/Clements online checklist v.2024

Anatidae (Ducks & Geese)**White-faced Whistling-Duck**

- Seen first at Parc de Tsarasaotra

Dendrocygna viduata

Fulvous Whistling-Duck

- Seen first at Parc de Tsarasaotra

Dendrocygna bicolor

Knob-billed Duck

- Seen first at Parc de Tsarasaotra

Sarkidiornis melanotos

Blue-billed Teal

- Seen first at Parc de Tsarasaotra

Anas hottentota

Red-billed Duck

- Seen first at Parc de Tsarasaotra

Anas erythrorhyncha

Bernier's Teal (E)

- Endangered. Seen first at Betsiboka (NW Extension)

Anas bernieri

Meller's Duck (E)

- Endangered. Seen first at Parc de Tsarasaotra

Anas melleri

Numididae (Guineafowl)**Helmeted Guineafowl**

- Seen first in multiple towns and around urbanized areas.

Numida meleagris

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse & Allies)**Madagascar Partridge (E)**

- Seen first near Isalo National Park

Margaroperdix madagarensis

Phoenicopteridae (Flamingos)**Greater Flamingo**

- Seen first at Betsiboka (NW Extension)

Phoenicopterus roseus

Lesser Flamingo

- Seen first at Betsiboka (NW Extension)

Phoeniconaias minor

Columbidae (Pigeons & Doves)**Rock Pigeon**

- Seen in most urbanized areas

Columba livia

Malagasy Turtle-Dove

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Nesoenas picturatus picturatus

Namaqua Dove

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Oena capensis aliena

Madagascar Green-Pigeon (E)

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Treron australis

Madagascar Blue-Pigeon (E)

Alectroenas madagascariensis

- Seen first at Ranomafana

Mesitornithidae (Mesites)**White-breasted Mesite (E)**

- **Vulnerable.** Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Brown Mesite (E)

- **Vulnerable.** Seen first at Ranomafana

Subdesert Mesite (E)

- **Vulnerable.** Seen first at Ifaty

*Mesitornis variegatus**Mesitornis unicolor**Monias benschi***Pteroclididae (Sandgrouse)****Madagascar Sandgrouse (E)**

- Seen first on route to Zombitse

*Pterocles personatus***Cuculidae (Cuckoos)****Crested Coua (E)**

- **Vulnerable.** Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Verreaux's Coua (E)

- **Near Threatened.** Seen first at La Table

Blue Coua (E)

- Seen first at Ranomafana

Red-capped Coua (E)

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Olive-capped Coua (E)

- Seen first at Ifaty

Red-fronted Coua (E)

- Seen first at Ranomafana

Coquerel's Coua (E)

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Running Coua (E)

- Seen first at Ifaty

Giant Coua (E)

- Seen first at Zombitse

Red-breasted Coua (E)

- Seen first at Andasibe-Mantadia

Malagasy Coucal

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Madagascar Cuckoo

- Seen first at Ranomafana

*Coua cristata**Coua verreauxi**Coua caerulea**Coua ruficeps**Coua olivaceiceps**Coua reynaudii**Coua coquereli**Coua cursor**Coua gigas**Coua serriana**Centropus toulou toulou**Cuculus rochii***Caprimulgidae (Nightjars & Allies)****Collared Nightjar (E)**

- Seen first at Andasibe-Mantadia

Madagascar Nightjar*Gactornis enarratus**Caprimulgus m. madagascariensis*

- Seen first at Bois Vert hotel

Apodidae (Swifts)**Madagascar Spinetail (E)**

- Seen first at Andasibe-Mantadia NP

Malagasy Swift (E)

- Seen first at the La Table Arboretum

Malagasy Palm-Swift

- Seen first at Ifaty

*Zoonavena g. grandidieri**Apus b. balstoni**Cypsiurus gracilis***Sarothruridae (Flufftails)****Madagascar Forest-Rail (E)**

- Seen first at Ranomafana

Madagascar Flufftail (E)

- Seen first at Ranomafana

*Mentocrex kioloides**Sarothrura insularis***Rallidae (Rails & Allies)****Madagascar Rail (E)**

- **Vulnerable.** Seen first at Ranomafana

White-throated Rail

- Seen first near Parc de Tsarasaotra

Eurasian Moorhen

- Seen first at Parc de Tsarasaotra

Baillon's Crake

- Seen first at Bellalanda Wetlands

*Zoonavena g. grandidieri**Dryolimnas c. cuvieri**Gallinula chloropus pyrrhorhoa**Zapornia pusilla***Recurvirostridae (Stilts)****Black-winged Stilt**

- Seen first at Bellalanda Wetlands

*Himantopus himantopus***Charadriidae (Plovers & Lapwings)****Black-bellied Plover**

- Seen first at Nosy Ve

Greater Sand-Plover

- Seen first at Nosy Ve

Kittlitz's Plover

- Seen first at Ifaty Salt Pan

Madagascar Plover (E)

- Seen first at Ifaty Salt Pan

Three-banded Plover

- Seen first near Ifaty

*Pluvialis squatarola**Charadrius leschenaultii**Charadrius pecuarius**Charadrius thoracicus**Charadrius tricollaris bifrontatus*

White-fronted Plover

- Seen at Ifaty Salt Pan

*Charadrius marginatus tenellus***Jacanidae (Jacanas)****Madagascar Jacana (E)**

- Seen at Ankarafantsika

*Actophilornis albinucha***Scolopacidae (Sandpipers & Allies)****Whimbrel**

- Seen first at Betsiboka (NW Extension)

*Numenius phaeopus***Ruddy Turnstone**

- Seen first at Betsiboka (NW Extension)

*Arenaria interpres***Curlew Sandpiper**

- Seen first at Betsiboka (NW Extension)

*Calidris ferruginea***Sanderling**

- Seen first at Betsiboka (NW Extension)

*Calidris alba***Madagascar Snipe (E)**

- Seen at Ranomafana

*Gallinago macrodactyla***Common Sandpiper**

- Seen first at Betsiboka (NW Extension)

*Actitis hypoleucos***Common Greenshank**

- Seen first at Betsiboka (NW Extension)

*Tringa nebularia***Marsh Sandpiper**

- Seen first at Betsiboka (NW Extension)

*Tringa stagnatilis***Terek Sandpiper**

- Seen first at Nosy Ve

*Xenus cinereus***Turnicidae (Buttonquail)****Madagascar Buttonquail (E)**

- Seen first at Ifaty

*Turnix nigricollis***Dromadidae (Crab-Plover)****Crab-Plover**

- Seen first at Betsiboka (NW Extension)

*Glareola ocularis***Glareolidae (Pratincoles)****Madagascar Pratincole**

- Seen first at Betsiboka River Overlook (NW Extension)

*Glareola ocularis***Laridae (Gulls & Terns)****Whiskered Tern**

- Seen first at Betsiboka (NW Extension)

Chlidonias hybrida

Lesser Crested Tern

- Seen first at Betsiboka (NW Extension)

*Thalasseus bengalensis***Phaethontidae (Tropicbirds)****Red-tailed Tropicbird**

- Seen first at Nosy Ve

*Phaethon rubricauda***Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants)****Reed Cormorant**

- Seen first on boat to Masoala NP (Helmet Vanga Extension)

*Microcarbo africanus***Scopidae (Hamerkop)****Hamerkop**

- Seen first on route to Ranomafana

*Scopus umbretta***Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets & Bitterns)****Little Bittern**

- Seen first at Bellalanda Wetlands

*Ixobrychus minutus***Gray Heron**

- Seen first at Betsiboka (NW Extension)

*Ardea cinerea firsas***Humblot's Heron (E)**

- **Endangered.** Seen on route to Ankarafantsika

*Ardea humbloti***Purple Heron**

- Seen on route to Ankarafantsika

*Ardea purpurea madagascariensis***Great Egret**

- Seen on route to Ankarafantsika

*Ardea alba***Little (Dimorphic) Egret**

- Seen first at Parc de Tsarasaotra

*Egretta garzetta dimorpha***Black Heron**

- Seen first at Parc de Tsarasaotra

*Egretta ardesiaca***Cattle Egret**

- Seen first on route Ankarafantsika

*Bubulcus ibis***Squacco Heron**

- Seen first at Parc de Tsarasaotra

*Ardeola ralloides***Malagasy Pond-Heron**

- **Endangered.** Seen first at Parc de Tsarasaotra

*Ardeola idae***Striated Heron**

- Seen first at Parc de Tsarasaotra

*Butorides striata***Black-crowned Night-Heron**

- Seen first at Parc de Tsarasaotra

*Nycticorax nycticorax***Threskiornithidae (Ibises & Spoonbills)**

Glossy Ibis

- Seen first on route to Ankarafantsika

*Plegadis falcinellus***Madagascar Ibis (E)**

- **Near Threatened.** Seen first at Andasibe-Mantadia

*Lophotibis cristata***Malagasy Sacred Ibis (E)**

- **Endangered.** Seen first at Parc de Tsarasaotra

*Threskiornis bernieri***Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles & Kites)****Madagascar Harrier-Hawk (E)**

- Seen first at Ifaty

*Polyboroides radiatus***Malagasy Harrier**

- Seen first on route to Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

*Circus macroscelus***Frances's Sparrowhawk**

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

*Accipiter f. francesiae***Henst's Goshawk (E)**

- **Vulnerable.** Seen first at Ranomafana

*Accipiter henstii***Black "Yellow-billed" Kite**

- Seen first on route to Ankarafantsika

*Milvus migrans***Madagascar Fish-Eagle (E)**

- **Critically Endangered.** Seen first at Ankarafantsika

*Haliaeetus vociferoides***Madagascar Buzzard (E)**

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

*Buteo brachypterus***Tytonidae (Barn Owls)****Western Barn Owl (E)**

- Seen first at Bois Vert (Helmet Vanga Extension)

*Tyto alba***Strigidae (Owls)****"Rainforest" Scops-Owl (E)**

- Seen first at Andasibe-Mantadia

*Otus rutilus rutilus***"Torotoroka" Scops-Owl (E)**

- Seen first at Ifaty

*Otus rutilus madagascariensis***White-browed Owl (E)**

- Seen first at Zombitse

*Athene superciliaris***Madagascar Owl (E)**

- Seen first at Andasibe-Mantadia

*Asio madagascariensis***Leptosomidae (Cuckoo-Roller)****Cuckoo-Roller**

- Seen first at Andasibe-Mantadia

*Leptosomus discolor discolor***Upupidae (Hoopoes)****Madagascar Hoopoe (E)***Upupa marginata*

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)**Malagasy Kingfisher**

- Seen first at Ranomafana

Madagascar Pygmy Kingfisher (E)

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Meropidae (Bee-Eaters)**Olive Bee-Eater**

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Coraciidae (Rollers)**Broad-billed Roller**

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Brachypteraciidae (Ground Rollers)**Scaly Ground-Roller (E)**

- Seen first at Ranomafana

Short-legged Ground-Roller (E)

- Seen first at Andasibe-Mantadia

Long-tailed Ground-Roller (E)

- Seen first at Ifaty

Pitta-like Ground-Roller (E)

- Seen first at Ranomafana

Rufous-headed Ground-Roller (E)

- Seen first at Ranomafana

Falconidae (Falcons)**Malagasy Kestrel**

- Seen first at Ifaty

Psittaculidae (Old World Parrots)**Greater Vasa Parrot**

- Seen first at Ifaty

Lesser Vasa Parrot

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Gray-headed Lovebird (E)

- Seen first at Ifaty

Philepittidae (Asities)**Velvet Asity (E)**

- Seen first at Ranomafana

Corythornis v. vintsioides

Corythornis madagascariensis

Merops superciliosus

Eurystomus g. glaucurus

Geobiastes squamiger

Brachypteracias leptosomus

Uratelornis chimaera

Atelornis pittoides

Atelornis crossleyi

Falco newtoni

Coracopsis v. vasa

Coracopsis n. nigra

Agapornis canus

Philepitta castanea

Schlegel's Asity (E)

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Common Sunbird-Asity (E)

- Seen first at Ranomafana

Campephagidae (Cuckooshrikes)**Madagascar Cuckooshrike (E)**

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Vangidae (Vangas & Allies)**Archbold's Newtonia (E)**

- Seen first at Ifaty

Common Newtonia (E)

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Dark Newtonia (E)

- Seen first at Ranomafana

Tylas Vanga (E)

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Red-tailed Vanga (E)

- Seen first at Ranomafana

Red-shouldered Vanga (E)

- **Vulnerable.** Seen first at La Table

Nuthatch-Vanga (E)

- Seen first at Andasibe-Mantadia

Chabert Vanga (E)

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Crossley's Vanga (E)

- Seen first at Andasibe-Mantadia

Madagascar Blue Vanga (E)

- Seen first at Ranomafana

Hook-billed Vanga (E)

- Seen first at Ifaty

Ward's Flycatcher-Vanga (E)

- Seen first at Ranomafana

Rufous Vanga (E)

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Helmet Vanga (E)

- **Endangered.** Seen first at Masoala (HV Extension)

Bernier's Vanga (E)

- **Endangered.** Seen first at Masoala (HV Extension)

Sickle-billed Vanga (E)

- Seen first at Ifaty

White-headed Vanga (E)*Philepitta schlegeli**Neodrepanis coruscans**Coracina cinerea**Newtonia archboldi**Newtonia brunneicauda**Newtonia amphichroa**Tylas eduardi**Calicalicus madagascariensis**Calicalicus rufocarpalis**Hypositta corallirostris**Leptopterus chabert**Mystacornis crossleyi**Cyanolanius madagascarinus**Vanga curvirostris**Pseudobias wardi**Schetba rufa**Euryceros prevostii**Oriolia bernieri**Falculea palliata**Artamella viridis*

- Seen first at Ifaty

Pollen's Vanga (E)*Xenopirostris polleni*

- **Near Threatened.** Seen first at Ranomafana

Lafresnaye's Vanga (E)*Xenopirostris xenopirostris*

- **Near Threatened.** Seen first at La Table

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

- **Endangered.** Seen first at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

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

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Monarchidae (Monarch Flycatchers)**Malagady Paradise-Flycatcher***Terpsiphone mutata*

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Corvidae (Crows, Jays & Magpies)**Pied Crow***Corvus albus*

- Seen first on route Ankarafantsika

Alaudidae (Larks)**Madagascar Lark (E)***Eremopterix hova*

- Seen first at La Table

Cisticolidae (Cisticolas & Allies)**Common Jery (E)***Neomixis tenella*

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Green Jery (E)*Neomixis viridis*

- Seen first at Ranomafana

Stripe-throated Jery (E)*Neomixis striatigula*

- Seen first at Ifaty

Madagascar Cisticola*Cisticola cherina*

- Seen first at Bellalanda Wetlands

Acrocephalidae (Reed Warblers)**Malagasy Brush-Warbler***Nesillas t. typica*

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Subdesert Brush-Warbler (E)*Nesillas lantzii*

Seen first at Ifaty

Madagascar Swamp Warbler (E)*Acrocephalus newtoni*

- Seen first at Parc de Tsarasaotra

Locustellidae (Grassbirds & Allies)

Brown Emutail (E)

- Seen first Ranomafana. **Tour Leader Only.**

Gray Emutail (E)

- Seen first Ranomafana.

Bernieridae (Malagasy Warblers)**White-throated Oxylabes (E)**

- Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

Long-billed Bernieria (E)

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Cryptic Warbler (E)

- Seen at Ranomafana

Wedge-tailed Jery (E)

- Seen first at Ranomafana

Thamnornis (E)

- Seen first at Ifaty

Madagascar Yellowbrow (E)

- Seen first at Ranomafana

Spectacled Tetraka (E)

- Seen first at Ranomafana

Appert's Tetraka (E)

- Seen first at Zombitse

Gray-crowned Tetraka (E)

- Seen first at Ranomafana

Rand's Warbler (E)

- Seen first at Ranomafana

Hirundinidae (Swallows)**Madagascar Martin (E)**

- Seen first at Ranomafana

Mascarene Martin (E)

- Seen first on route to Ankarafantsika

Pycnonotidae (Bulbuls)**Madagascar Bulbul**

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

Zosteropidae (White-eyes & Allies)**Malagasy White-eye**

- Seen first at Parc de Tsarasaotra

Sturnidae (Starlings)**Common Myna (I)***Bradypterus brunneus**Bradypterus seebohmi**Oxylabes madagascariensis**Bernieria madagascariensis**Cryptosylvicola randrianasoloi**Hartertula flavoviridis**Thamnornis chloropetoides**Crossleyia xanthophrys**Xanthomixis zosterops**Xanthomixis apperti**Xanthomixis cinereiceps**Randia pseudozosterops**Riparia cowani**Phedina borbonica**Hypsipetes m. madagascariensis**Zosterops maderaspatanus**Acridotheres tristis*

- Seen first in Antananarivo

Madagascar Starling (E)

- Seen first at Ranomafana

*Hartlaubius auratus***Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)****Madagascar Magpie-Robin (E)**

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

*Copsychus albospecularis***Littoral Rock-Thrush (E)**

- Seen first at Anakao

*Monticola imerina***Forest Rock-Thrush (E)**

- Seen at Ranomafana

*Monticola sharpei sharpei***“Benson’s” Rock-Thrush (E)**

- Seen first at Isalo

*Monticola sharpei bensoni***African Stonechat**

- Seen first at Andasibe-Mantadia

*Saxicola torquatus sibilla***Nectariniidae (Sunbirds)****“Yellow-bellied” Souimanga Sunbird**

- Seen first at Ankarafantsika

*Cinnyris s. souimanga***“White-bellied” Souimanga Sunbird**

- Seen first at Ifaty

*Cinnyris s. apolis***Malagasy Sunbird**

- Seen first at Antananarivo

*Cinnyris n. notatus***Ploceidae (Weavers & Allies)****Nelicourvi Weaver (E)**

- Seen first at Ranomafana

*Ploceus nelicourvi***Sakkalava Weaver (E)**

- Seen first at Ifaty

*Ploceus sakalava***Red Fody**

- Seen first at Antananarivo

*Foudia madagascariensis***Forest Fody (E)**

- Seen first at Ranomafana

*Foudia omissa***Estrildidae (Waxbills & Allies)****Madagascar Munia (E)**

- Seen first at Ifaty

*Lepidopygia nana***Motacillidae (Wagtails & Allies)****Madagascar Wagtail (E)**

- Seen first at Antananarivo

Motacilla flaviventris

MAMMAL LISTCheirogaleidae (Mouse & Dwarf Lemurs)**Gray Mouse Lemur (E)**

- Seen at Ifaty

*Microcebus murinus***Rufous Mouse Lemur (E)**

- **Vulnerable.** Seen at Ranomafana

*Microcebus rufus***Golden-brown Mouse Lemur (E)**

- **Vulnerable.** Seen at Ankarafantsika

*Microcebus ravelobensis***Goodman's Mouse Lemur (E)**

- **Vulnerable.** Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

*Microcebus lehilahytsara***Crossley's Dwarf Lemur (E)**

- **Vulnerable.** Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

*Cheirogaleus crossleyi***Western Fat-tailed Dwarf Lemur (E)**

- **Vulnerable.** Seen at Ankarafantsika

*Cheirogaleus medius*Lepilemuridae (Sportive Lemurs)**Weasel Sportive Lemur (E)**

- **Vulnerable.** Seen first at Andasibe-Mantadia

*Lepilemur mustelinus***Milne-Edwards Sportive Lemur (E)**

- **Endangered.** Seen first at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

*Lepilemur edwardsi***Masoala Sportive Lemur (E)**

- **Endangered.** Seen first at Masoala (HV Extension)

*Lepilemur scottorum***Petter's Sportive Lemur (E)**

- **Endangered.** Seen first at Ifaty

*Lepilemur petteri*Lemuridae (True Lemurs)**Eastern Lesser Bamboo Lemur (E)**

- **Vulnerable.** Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

*Hapalemur griseus***"Ranomafana" Bamboo Lemur (E)**

- **Vulnerable.** Seen at Ranomafana

*Hapalemur g. ranomafanensis***Northern Bamboo Lemur (E)**

- **Vulnerable.** Seen at Masoala

*Hapalemur occidentalis***Golden Bamboo Lemur (E)**

- **Critically Endangered.** Seen at Ranomafana

*Hapalemur aureus***Greater Bamboo Lemur (E)**

- **Critically Endangered.** Seen at Ranomafana

*Prolemur simus***Ring-tailed Lemur (E)**

- **Critically Endangered.** Seen at Anja Reserve

*Lemur catta***Mongoose Lemur (E)**

- **Critically Endangered.** Seen at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

*Eulemur mongoz***Common Brown Lemur (E)***Eulemur fulvus*

- **Vulnerable.** Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia NP

Red-fronted Brown Lemur (E)*Eulemur rufus*

- **Vulnerable.** Seen at Ranomafana

White-fronted Brown Lemur (E)*Eulemur albifrons*

- **Vulnerable.** Seen at Masoala (HV Extension)

Red-bellied Lemur (E)*Eulemur rubriventer*

- **Vulnerable.** Seen at Ranomafana

Black-and-white Ruffed Lemur (E)*Varecia variegata*

- **Critically Endangered.** Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

Red Ruffed Lemur (E)*Varecia rubra*

- **Critically Endangered.** Seen at Masoala (HV Extension)

Indridae (Woolly Lemurs & Sifakas)**Masoala Woolly Lemur (E)***Avahi mooreorum*

- **Endangered.** Seen at Masoala (HV Extension)

Eastern Woolly Lemur (E)*Avahi laniger*

- **Vulnerable.** Seen at Ranomafana

Western Woolly Lemur (E)*Avahi occidentalis*

- **Vulnerable.** Seen at Ankarafantsika

Verreaux's Sifaka (E)*Propithecus verreauxi*

- **Critically Endangered.** Seen at Zombitse

Coquerel's Sifaka (E)*Propithecus coquereli*

- **Critically Endangered.** Seen at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

Diademed Sifaka (E)*Propithecus diadema*

- **Critically Endangered.** Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

Milne-Edwards Sifaka (E)*Propithecus edwardsi*

- **Endangered.** Seen at Ranomafana

Crowned Sifaka (E)*Propithecus coronatus*

- **Critically Endangered.** Seen at Ketspy Lighthouse (NW Extension)

Indri (E)*Indri indri*

- **Critically Endangered.** Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

Eupleridae (Malagasy Carnivores)**Ring-tailed Vontsira (E)***Galidia elegans*

- Seen at Ranomafana

Pteropodidae (Fruit Bats)**Madagascar Flying Fox (E)***Pteropus rufus*

- **Vulnerable.** Seen at Betsiboka River (NW Extension)

Tenrecidae (Tenrecs)

Lesser Hedgehog Tenrec (E)

- Seen at Ifaty

*Tenrec ecaudatus***Lowland Streaked Tenrec (E)**

- Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

*Hemicentetes semispinosus***Nesomyidae (African Rodents)****Eastern Red Forest Rat (E)**

- Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

*Nesomy rufus***REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS LIST****Testudinidae (Tortoises)****Spider Tortoise (E)**

- Critically Endangered. Seen at Ifaty

*Pyxis arachnoides***Chamaeleonidae (Chameleons)****Brown Leaf Chameleon (E)**

- Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

*Brookesia supercillias***Short-horned Chameleon (E)**

- Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

*Calumma brevicorne***Parson's Chameleon (E)**

- Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

*Calumma parsonii***O'Shaughnessy's Chameleon (E)**

- Seen at Ranomafana

*Calumma oshaughnessyi***Cryptic Chameleon (E)**

- Seen at Ranomafana

*Calumma crypticum***Deceptive Chameleon (E)**

- Seen at Ranomafana

*Calumma fallax***Antimena Chameleon (E)**

- Seen at Ifaty

*Furcifer antimena***Oustalet's Chameleon (E)**

- Seen at Ifaty

*Furcifer oustaleti***Warty Chameleon (E)**

- Seen at Ifaty

*Furcifer verrucosus***Rhinoceros Chameleon (E)**

- Seen at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

*Furcifer rhinoceratus***Opluridae (Malagasy Iguanas)****Three-eyed Lizard (E)**

- Seen at Ifaty

*Chalarodon madagascariensis***Merrem's Madagascar Swift (E)***Oplurus cyclurus*

- Seen at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

Dumeril's Madagascar Swift (E)

- Seen at Ifaty

Cuvier's Madagascar Swift (E)

- Seen at Isalo

*Oplurus quadrimaculatus**Oplurus cuvieri***Gekkonidae (Geckos)****Mahajanga Velvet Gecko (E)**

- Seen at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

Mahafaly Fish-scale Gecko (E)

- Seen at Arboretum de La Table. TL Only.

Common House Gecko (I)

- Seen at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

Farquhar Half-toed Gecko (E)

- Seen at Mahajanga (NW Extension).

Robust Dwarf Gecko (E)

- Seen at Parc de Tsarasaotra

Grandidier's Dwarf Gecko (E)

- Seen at Ankarafantsika

Madagascar Ground Gecko (E)

- Seen at Ifaty

Koch's Day Gecko (E)

- Seen at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

Peacock Day Gecko (E)

- Seen at Isalo

Standing's Day Gecko (E)

- Seen at Ifaty

Thicktail Day Gecko (E)

- Seen at Arboretum de La Table

Lined Day Gecko (E)

- Seen at Ranomafana

Satanic Leaf-tailed Gecko (E)

- Seen at Ranomafana

Spearpoint Leaf-tailed Gecko (E)

- Seen at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

Mossy Leaf-tailed Gecko (E)

- Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

*Blaesodactylus ambonihazo**Geckolepis typica**Hemidactylus frenatus**Hemidactylus mercatorius**Lygodactylus pictus**Lygodactylus tolampyae**Paroedura picta**Phelsuma kochi**Phelsuma quadriocellata**Phelsuma standingi**Phelsuma mutabilis**Phelsuma lineata**Uroplatus phantasticus**Uroplatus eburni**Uroplatus sikorae***Gerrhosauridae (Plated Lizards)****Malagasy Keeled Lizard (E)**

- Seen at Ifaty

Tracheloptychus madagascariensis

Peter's Keeled Plated Lizard (E)

- Seen at Ifaty

Western Plated Lizard (E)

- Seen at Ankarafantsika

Ornate Plated Lizard (E)

- Seen at Ranomafana

Madagascar Plated Lizard (E)

- Seen first at Ifaty

*Tracheloptychus petersi**Zonosaurus laticaudatus**Zonosaurus ornatus**Zonosaurus madagascariensis***Scincidae (Skinks)****Gravenhurst's Skink (E)**

- Seen at Masoala (HV Extension)

Elegant Mabuya (E)

- Seen at Ifaty

Gold-spotted Mabuya (E)

- Seen at Arboretum de La Table

Malagasy Skink (E)

- Seen at Ranomafana

*Trachylepis gravenhorstii**Trachylepis elegans**Trachylepis aureopunctata**Madascincus melanopleura***Boidae (Boas)****Eastern Madagascar Tree Boa (E)**

- Seen at Ranomafana

Western Madagascar Tree Boa (E)

- Seen at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

Madagascar Ground Boa (E)

- Seen at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

Duméril's Ground Boa (E)

- Seen at Ifaty

*Sanzinia madagascariensis**Sanzinia volotany**Acrantophis madagascariensis**Acrantophis dumereli***Colubridae (Colubrid Snakes)****Perinet Night Snake (E)**

- Seen at Masoala (HV Extension)

White-lipped Smooth Snake (E)

- Seen at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

Madagascar Cat-eyed Snake (E)

- Seen at Ifaty

Sand Worm Snake (E)

- Seen at Arboretum de La Table. TL Only.

Southern Pencil Snake (E)

- Seen at Ifaty

Northern Pencil Snake (E)*Ithycyphus perineti**Liophidium torquatum**Madagascarophis colubrinus**Madatyphlops arenarius**Mimophis mahfalensis**Mimophis occulatus*

- Seen at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

Night Brook Snake (E)

- Seen at Masoala (HV Extension) TL Only.

Three-striped Ground Snake (E)

- Seen at Masoala (HV Extension) TL Only.

Striped Madagascar Garter Snake (E)

- Seen at Ranomafana

Forest Madagascar Garter Snake (E)

- Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

Pseudoxyrhopus heterurus

Pseudoxyrhopus tritaeniatus

Thamnosophis lateralis

Thamnosophis infrasignatus

Hyperollidae (Reed Frogs)**Starry Night Reed Frog (E)**

- Seen at Ranomafana

Blue-backed Reed Frog (E)

- Seen at Masoala (HV Extension)

Heterixalus albogutatus

Heterixalus punctatus

Microhylidae (Microhylid Frogs)**Slow-singing Microhylid (E)**

- Seen at Masoala (HV Extension)

Mahanoro Tree-hole Frog (E)

- Seen at Masoala (HV Extension)

Brown Rain Frog (E)

- Seen at Arboretum de La Table. TL Only

Anodonthyla moramora

Plethodontohyla notosticta

Scaphiophryne brevis

Mantellidae (Mantellid Frogs)**Madagascar Jumping Frog (E)**

- Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

Bott's Bright-eyed Frog (E)

- Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

Sandra's Bright-eyed Frog (E)

- Seen at Ranomafana

Madagascar Bright-eyed Frog (E)

- Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

Green Bright-eyed Frog (E)

- Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

Goudot's Bright-eyed Frog (E)

- Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

Copy-cat Bright-eyed Frog (E)

- Seen at Ranomafana

Reticulated Bright-eyed Frog (E)

- Seen at Ranomafana

Aglyptodactylus madagascariensis

Boophis bottae

Boophis sandrae

Boophis madagascariensis

Boophis viridis

Boophis goudoti

Boophis quasibohemi

Boophis reticulatus

Red-spotted Bright-eyed Frog (E)

- Seen at Ranomafana. TL Only

*Boophis tasymena***Western Bright-eyed Frog (E)**

- Seen at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

*Boophis doulioti***Baron's Mantella (E)**

- Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

*Mantella baroni***Madagascar Brown Mantella (E)**

- Seen at Masoala (HV Extension)

*Mantella ebenaui***Tsarafidy Pandanus Frog (E)**

- Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

*Guibemantis pulcher***Tornier's Mantellid (E)**

- Seen at Ranomafana

*Guibemantis tornieri***Tschenk's Madagascar Frog (E)**

- Seen at Ranomafana. TL Only.

*Gephyromantis tshenki***INVERTEBRATES LIST****Arachnida (Spider & Scorpions)****Darwin's Bark Spider**

- Seen at Parc de Tsarasaotra

*Caerostris darwini***Madagascar Rainforest Bark Spider**

- Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

*Caerostris extrusa***Madagascar Green Lynx Spider**

- Seen at Ranomafana

*Peucetia madagascariensis***Madagascar Huntsman Spider**

- Seen at Ifaty

*Damastes sp.***Madagascar Arrowhead Spider**

- Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

*Acrosomoides acrosomoides***Mediumwing Kitespider**

- Seen at Ranomafana

*Gasteracantha versicolor***Madagascar Hermit Spider**

- Seen at Parc de Tsarasaotra

*Teruelius olgae***Red-legged Silk Spider**

- Seen at Parc de Tsarasaotra

*Trichonephila inaurata***Madagascar Ogre-faced Spider**

- Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

*Asianopis madagascariensis***Ornamental Wandering Spider**

- Seen at Ifaty

*Viridasius fasciatus***Olga's Arrow-breasted Scorpion**

- Seen at Ifaty

*Teruelius olgae***Annulated Arrow-breasted Scorpion***Teruelius annulatus*

- Seen at Ifaty

“No English Name” Scorpion

- Seen at Ifaty

Paulina’s Spiny Forest Scorpion

- Seen at Arboretum de La Table

Coleoptera (Beetles)**Madagascar Click Beetle**

- Seen at Arboretum de La Table

Nine-spotted Scarab Beetle

- Seen at Ifaty

Giant Leaf Litter Weevil

- Seen at Ranomafana

Barber Leaf Litter Weevil

- Seen at Ifaty

Jeweled Wood Borer

- Seen at Ranomafana

Army Tiger Beetle

- Seen at Ranomafana

Giraffe-necked Weevil

- Seen at Ranomafana

Lepidoptera (Butterflies & Moths)**Citrus Swallowtail**

- Seen at Ankarafantsika

Blue-spotted Swallowtail

- Seen at Ranomafana

Blue-lined Swallowtail (E)

- Seen at Ranomafana

Malagasy Grass Yellow

- Seen at Ranomafana

Madagascar Orange-tip

- Seen at Ifaty

Madagascar Purple-tip (E)

- Seen at Ifaty

African Wood White

- Seen at Ankarafantsika

African Monarch

- Seen at Ankarafantsika

Brilliant Blue

- Seen at Parc de Tsarasaotra

Neogrosphus griveaudi

Palaeocheloctonus pauliani

Neolycoreus corpulentus

Epixanthis novempunctata

Lixus gigas

Lixus barbiger

Polybothris sumptuosa

Lophyra abbreviata

Trachelophorus giraffa

Papilio demodocus

Papilio epiphorbas

Papilio oribazus

Eurema f. floricola

Colotis evanthe

Colotis zoe

Leptosia alcesta sylvicola

Danaus chrysippus aegyptius

Junonia rhadama

Dark Blue Pansy

- Seen at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

Madagascar Mother-of-Pearl (E)

- Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

Madagascar Map Butterfly

- Seen at Ranomafana

Common Diadem

- Seen at Ankarafantsika

Kikideli Sailor (E)

- Seen at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

Madagascar Forest Glade Nymph (E)

- Seen at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

Betsimisaraka Leafwing (E)

- Seen at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

Mascarene Policeman

- Seen at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

Common Diadem

- Seen at Ankarafantsika

Kikideli Sailor (E)

- Seen at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

Madagascar Forest Glade Nymph (E)

- Seen at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

Perrot's Metalmark (E)

- Seen at Ranomafana

White-striped Satyr (E)

- Seen at Andasibe-Mantadia

Madagascar Sunset Moth (E)

- Seen at Masoala (HV Extension)

Madagascar Emperor Moth (E)

- Seen at Ranomafana

Miscellaneous Invertebrates**Coquerel's Hissing Cockroach**

- Seen at Ankarafantsika (NW Extension)

Grandidier's Hissing Cockroach

- Seen at Ifaty

Madagascar Hissing Cockroach

- Seen at Ifaty

Madagascar Jungleskimmer

- Seen at Ranomafana

Sakalava Fiery-backed Millipede*Junonia oenone epiclelia**Protogoniomorpha duprei**Cyrestis camillus elegans**Hypolimnas misippus**Neptis kikideli**Aterica rabena**Polyura betsimisaraka**Tekliades ramanatek**Hypolimnas misippus**Neptis kikideli**Aterica rabena**Saribia perroti**Heteropsis vola**Chrysidia rhipheus**Bunaea aslauga**Elliptorhina coquereliana**Gromphadorhina grandideri**Gromphadorhina portentosa**Thermorthemis madagascariensis**Aphistogoniulus sakalava*

- Seen at Ifaty

Ranomafana Fiery-backed Millipede

- Seen at Ifaty

Flatid Rose Leaf Bug

- Seen at Ankarafantsika

d'Urville's Fiddler Crab

- Seen at Betsiboka

Spiny Forest Ground Katydid

- Seen at Ifaty

Rainbow Milkweed Locust

- Seen at Anja Reserve

Red-knobbed Sea Star

- Seen at Nosy Ve

Magnificent Helicophanta

- Seen at Ranomafana

Aphistogoniulus cowani

Flatida rosea

Tubuca urvillei

Colossopus grandidieri

Phymateus saxosus

Protoreaster lincki

Helicophanta magnifica

