



Rockjumper Birding Tours

Worldwide Birding Adventures

Madagascar Comprehensive I

6th – 27th October 2007

Masoala Extension

26th October – 1st November 2007



Long-tailed Ground Roller; Pitta-like Ground Roller

Trip Report compiled by Tour Leader Glen Valentine

Tour Summary

Our epic journey through Madagascar began in the capital city, Antananarivo where some of the group headed out to Lake Alarobia, a small water body within the city limits where we found Malagasy Pond Heron, African Openbill and many other common and widespread endemics.

The dry deciduous woodlands of Ampijoroa beckoned and on arrival provided us with immediate entertainment. Birds were popping out of every tree with gaudy Broad-billed Rollers, Lesser Vasa and Greater Vasa Parrots, various species of Vanga and the friendly Cuvier's Iguanid providing us with a wonderful opening experience to Madagascar. Wondering along the paths, we managed to pick up all the specials of the area. White-breasted Mesite came easily whilst Schlegel's Asity and Van Dam's Vanga gave us a bit of a run-around. Other noteworthy finds included Rufous Vanga, Coquerel's and Red-capped Couas and Madagascar Sparrowhawk for some, White-throated Rail, Madagascar Jacana,

Humblot's Heron, Grey-headed Lovebird and unbeatable views of Madagascar Fish Eagle. On the mammal front we enjoyed repeated views of the beautiful Coquerel's Sifaka whilst Milne-Edward's Sportive Lemurs were found poking their cute little faces out of tree trunks. The rare and seldom seen Mongoose Lemur was encountered after an early morning dash for Banded Kestrel. A night walk was productive and we enjoyed Grey Mouse Lemur, Western Avahi, Western Tufted Rat and Rhinoceros Chameleon.

After our stay at Ampijoroa we made the drive back to the coastal town of Mahajanga where we would embark the following day on a boat trip into the Betsiboka Delta in search of the extremely rare and localised Bernier's Teal which we found feeding on exposed tidal mudflats. The other target bird, Bernier's (Madagascar Sacred) Ibis was also seen as were good numbers of waders.

We flew back to Tana and hastily moved on to the legendary eastern rainforest site of Perinet. Like most rainforest sites, Perinet and Mantadia require a lot of hard work, perseverance and patience but in so doing, offer great reward at the same time. Highlights in these forests included several point blank views of the stunning male Velvet Asity whilst Madagascar Flufftail ran around our feet like a miniature bantam. Pitta-like Ground Roller showed well as did the comical Cuckoo Roller with its distinctive display flight and call. Red-fronted coua was bold and demonstrative whereas Red-breasted Coua and Nuthatch Vanga proved particularly tricky but good views were ultimately obtained of both these species. We had crippling views of Madagascar Pygmy Kingfisher whilst Grey-crowned Tetraka and Wedge-tailed Jery were unusually confiding. A Henst's Goshawk flew overhead at one stage and most of the group managed a view of the elusive Scaly Ground Roller. Staying out late one night proved to be a wise decision as it produced the rare Madagascar Long-eared Owl and Rainforest Scops Owl. Mammals are an attractive feature of these forests and we had numerous sightings of some of Madagascar's most prized lemurs. Indri with its deafening howls and the rare Diademed Sifaka stole our hearts and Greater Dwarf, Eastern Grey Bamboo, Red-bellied, Common Brown and Eastern Woolly Lemurs entertained us through the days.

Moving on to Anjozorobe, we were over-awed by the scenery and amount of pristine habitat that remains in these parts. Birding in the extensive rainforest saw us racking up Crossley's Babbler, Common Sunbird-Asity and the inexplicably secretive Brown Emutail for some. The nearby marsh gave us Madagascar Rail, Madagascar Snipe and Meller's Duck, a bird that's numbers seem to be decreasing at an alarming rate. A night walk in the forest was extremely productive for "herps" and we had several close-up views of Short-horned, Band-bellied, Parson's and stump-tailed Chameleons. One of the prize finds of the trip was an adequately named Fantastic Leaf-tailed Gecko hanging off a twig next to the path.

Bidding farewell to the botanical wonderland of Anjozorobe, we plane-hopped from Tana to Fort Dauphin and then hit the bumpy road to Berenty. Huge stands of sisal plantations as far as the eye could see stood ahead of us and when we finally arrived at the gallery woodland of the reserve, a sigh of relief enveloped the bus. The next morning was hot and sunny with Ring-tailed Lemurs sitting up in trees with their meditation-like stance catching the first rays of light. Verreaux's Sifakas were soon seen bounding across the open sand in front of the breakfast area in their typical bipedal sideward movement. Several special bird species that are seldom-seen elsewhere are relatively easily found at Berenty. These include Madagascar Cuckoo-Hawk, which was extraordinarily easy to find, Madagascar Sandgrouse, Giant and Green-capped Coua and White-browed Hawk Owl. All were seen



brilliantly at close quarters. The ever so cute White-footed Sportive Lemur was found during the day and Grey and Reddish-Grey Mouse Lemur appeared at night. These tiny creatures move rat-like through the canopy but the thrill of seeing one is immense.

It was time to head for the spiny desert where a variety of delectable birds are on offer. This unique habitat of giant Baobabs that are hundreds of years old and several species of didierea, pachypodium and Euphorbia support the only populations of the mega Long-tailed Ground Roller and Subdesert Mesite in the world, two of the most sought-after birds on any tour to Madagascar. We had incredibly satisfying views of both species along with a number of other range-restricted endemics such as Lafresnaye's Vanga, Subdesert Brush Warbler, Archbold's Newtonia, Thamnornis with its characteristic song, Running Coua and Banded Kestrel which everyone finally caught up with. The spiny desert becomes unbearably hot by mid-morning and the idea of going snorkelling sounded like the only sensible plan. The coral reef off Ifaty teems with the most amazingly colourful fish and swimming in these tropical waters amongst them was an amazing experience. Whilst in transit from Tulear to Ifaty, a yell from the back of the bus was heard and the cry of "buttonquail" filled the air. We slammed on breaks and were treated to three Madagascar Buttonquails scurrying into the thickets. Some plovers were noticed in the burnt field where we stopped and they turned out to be Madagascar Plover, a rare, localised and highly desirable bird.

After cleaning up all the target birds we made for Tulear, the largest town in the south-west from where we would depart on a boat voyage of a lifetime. The island of Nosy Ve lies just off the coast and is the home of breeding Red-tailed Tropicbirds and supports over-wintering Crab Plovers and a variety of Terns. Our trip out to our Littoral Rock Thrush site was fairly calm with a slight breeze picking up, we found the Thrush and made for the island and had scope views of a small flock of Crab Plovers whilst the tropicbirds soared over our heads. Little time was spent snorkelling as the sea had become fairly choppy but we did find a fantastic Lion Fish. The wind was picking up so we retreated to the mainland, enjoying the wall of spray along the way.

Driving north to our final destination, Ranomafana, we enjoyed an overnight stay at Isalo where we found the localised Benson's Rock Thrush. En route to Isalo, we stopped at Zombitse Forest, a small patch of deciduous woodland that holds the inexplicably localised Appert's Tetraka of which we had wonderful close-up views. Hubbard's Sportive Lemur and the outrageous Phelsuma Standingi, an electric-looking day gecko were two more localised species that were seen and we had our final encounters of Verreaux's Sifaka in these forests. Whilst travelling to Ranomafana we were extremely fortunate to bump into the very rare and vulnerable Madagascar Harrier quartering the vast grasslands of the southern plateau, which entertained us during this long drive.

Ranomafana National Park protects a fairly large tract of pristine mid to high-altitude rainforest that once covered the entire area. The proclamation of the park was due to the discovery of Golden Bamboo and Greater Bamboo Lemurs, which are still only known from the national park and its immediate surrounds. Many extremely elusive and sought-after endemic bird species occur in the forests of Ranomafana and high on the priority list are Yellow-bellied Sunbird Asity, Rufous-headed Ground Roller, Pollen's Vanga, Madagascar Yellowbrow and Brown Mesite of which we saw all except for the Ground Roller which was unfortunately only heard during our limited stay here. Milne-Edward's Sifaka was a great find and we had good views of an individual bounding through the forest canopy. We also bumped into several Ring-tailed Mongoose and some of the group were fortunate to have had



an intimate encounter with a Lowland Streaked Tenrec.



Indri; Diademed Sifaka

Those fortunate enough to have done the Masoala Extension were in for a rewarding experience. The Masoala National Park protects the largest tract of lowland rainforest on Madagascar and supports several very rare species restricted to this exotic and beautiful region. Several species such as Short-legged and Scaly Ground Roller are possibly easier to see here and we had cracking views of both species. The legendary Helmet Vanga, one of the world's most bizarre and striking birds was seen extremely well on a nest and some of the group had further views of another individual feeding in a mixed flock.

Other highlights on this remote part of the island included flocks of Madagascar Pratincole, a Common Noddy feeding in a mixed flock of terns, confiding Red-breasted Coua and the incomparable Red-ruffed Lemur. Several of these gorgeous mammals were encountered as were small groups of White-fronted Brown Lemur. Night walks in the area saw us adding Panther Chameleon to the reptile list whilst an unknown species of sportive lemur shows that Madagascar still needs much research to be done in its more remote areas.





Red-shouldered Vanga; Verreaux's Sifaka

Annotated Checklists of Birds, Mammals and “Herps”

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

BIRDS

193 species

Key to abbreviations:

E: an endemic species

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

BE: a breeding endemic species

I: an introduced species

e: an endemic subspecies

ne: a near-endemic subspecies

be: a breeding endemic subspecies

CONSERVATION STATUS

C: critical **En**: endangered **V**: vulnerable **NT**: near-threatened

Grebes Podicipedidae

Little Grebe (Dabchick)

Tachybaptus ruficollis

High numbers were found on the wetlands south of Ifaty with further encounters at Lake Alarobia.

Madagascar Little Grebe (E) (V)

Tachybaptus pelzelni

A beautiful breeding bird was seen well on a forest lake in Mantadia with another being present at Anjozorobe.

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



Tropicbirds *Phaethontidae***Red-tailed Tropicbird***Phaethon rubricauda*

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

Cormorants & Shags *Phalacrocoracidae***Reed (Long-tailed) Cormorant***Phalacrocorax africanu*

Uncommon in Madagascar; with 1 bird seen on our boat trip from Mosoala.

Darters *Anhingidae***African Darter***Anhinga rufa*

Uncommon in Madagascar, only recorded on Lake Ravelobe, Ampijoroa.

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

One was seen briefly at Lake Ravalobe with a further 3 being spotted at a wetland near Ifaty.

Black-crowned Night-Heron*Nycticorax nycticorax*

Large numbers recorded during the visit to Lake Alarobia, seen in smaller numbers throughout the tour thereafter.

(Common) Squacco Heron*Ardeola ralloides*

Widespread and common in a variety of wetland habitats across the island, from rice paddies to tidal mudflats. Highest number was at Lake Alarobia.

Madagascar Pond-Heron (BE) (V)*Ardeola idae*

Small numbers, mainly singletons, at scattered localities across the island, with the first sightings from Lake Alarobia, including many in magnificent nuptial plumage.

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

Cattle Egret*Bubulcus ibis*

Common throughout and recorded daily in open and semi-open habitats. Large numbers breeding at Ampijaroa and at Lac Alarobia.

Green-backed (Striated) Heron*Butorides striatus*

Small numbers at most freshwater and marine wetlands.

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

Black Egret (Heron)*Egretta ardesiaca*

First seen at Lake Alarobia where we found good numbers on the island. Encountered regularly thereafter.

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

Widespread and common throughout Madagascar.

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

Great (White) Egret*Ardea alba*

Small numbers at wetlands throughout.

Purple Heron*Ardea purpurea*

Peak numbers of three at Lake Amboromalandy and wetlands around Ampijoroa, small numbers at various other wetland localities.

Gray Heron*Ardea cinerea*

Mainly in western wetland where we found several birds.



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

We were very fortunate in obtaining sightings of this sometimes difficult species. First sighted at the lake in Ampijoroa and later seen flying at Ifaty.

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

Hamerkop Scopidae**Hamerkop** *Scopus umbretta*

Small numbers in roadside rice paddies on the drives from Tana to Perinet and in the south of the island. Their enormous nest structure was seen on several occasions.

Storks Ciconiidae**African Openbill** *Anastomus lamelligerus*

True to form a lone bird at Lac Alarobia put in an appearance during our visit, a rare species in Madagascar.

Ibises & Spoonbills Threskiornithidae**Bernier's (Madagascar Sacred) Ibis (NE)** *Threskiornis [aethiopicus] bernieri*

One of the prizes of our speedboat adventure up the Betsiboka Delta, a total of 5 individuals, and even the diagnostic blue eye colour was seen.

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

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

We found several at Lac Ravelobe in Ampijoroa.

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

We enjoyed magnificent views of a pair in Perinet Special Reserve. This was an extremely lucky encounter.

Ducks & Geese Anatidae**Fulvous Whistling Duck** *Dendrocygna bicolor*

We were fortunate to find five individuals of this uncommon species in Madagascar while birding Lake Alarobia in Tana.

White-faced Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna viduata*

Large numbers were recorded at freshwater wetlands around Tana, Ampijoroa and south of Ifaty.

Comb (Knob-billed) Duck *Sarkidiornis melanotos*

Recorded at wetlands close to Ampijoroa with further sightings at Lake Alarobia.

African Pygmy Goose *Nettapus auritus*

5 of these attractive ducks showed briefly at Lake Amboromalandy.

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

We were very lucky to enjoy several great flight views of at least 3 individuals at Anjozorobe. This species' numbers seem to continue to decline.

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

The greatest prize of our adventurous trip into the Betsiboka Delta. We wasted no time in finding this species. Within minutes of arriving in the delta we found our first birds feeding on mudflats.

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

Red-billed Teal (Duck) *Anas erythrorhyncha*

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

Hottentot Teal *Anas hottentota*

A singleton was encountered on our first visit to Lake Alarobia. We also had good views of several at wetlands south of Ifaty.

Hawks & Eagles Accipitridae

Madagascar Cuckoo-Hawk *Aviceda madagascariensis*

Luck was on our side with this one when we had great views of a pair without even beginning the usual long and tiring search for this species. We also found a single bird at Ampijoroa.

Black (Yellow-billed) Kite *Milvus migrans*

Common and conspicuous in open habitats, particularly in the west. Small numbers at the roadside on most road journeys, very common on the drive from Isalo NP to Ranomafana.

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

Fine studies of 2 of these critically endangered, endemic eagles at the edge of Lake Ravelobe, Ampijoroa.

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

Madagascar Harrier-Hawk (E) *Polyboroides radiatus*

Small numbers encountered at several sites.

Madagascar Harrier (NE) (V) *Circus macroscelus*

We were VERY fortunate to find this seldom seen species. Our drive between Isalo and Ranomafana produced 2 separate sightings.

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

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

Sightings were had at Mantadia, Anjozorobe and Ranomafana.

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

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

Some of the group were extremely fortunate to briefly observe this seldom-seen raptor at Ampijoroa.

Frances' Sparrowhawk (NE) *Accipiter francesii*

Our only sighting was of a female at Mantadia NP.

Madagascar Buzzard (E) *Buteo brachypterus*

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

Falcons Falconidae

Madagascar (Newton's) Kestrel (NEe) *Falco newtoni*

Very common in open and semi-open habitats throughout. Recorded almost daily, regularly at the roadside and at most birding sites.

Banded Kestrel *Falco zoniventris*

Some of the group obtained views at Ampijoroa. We later caught up with another of this rarely seen endemic at Ifaty where the entire group obtained amazing views.

Partridges, Quails & Pheasants Phasianidae

Madagascar Partridge (E) *Margaroperdix madagascariensis*

Cracking views of a male and female were had at Anjozorobe. This is one of the most frequently missed birds during a tour to Madagascar.

Common Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

A single bird was heard calling en route from Ranomafana to Tana.



Guineafowl *Numididae***Helmeted Guineafowl (I)***Numida meleagris*

One individual was seen briefly at Berenty.

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

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

Ampijoroa produced great sightings; we had superb views of a pair of these beautiful birds and also heard their shrill duet.

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

We all had very close encounters with a pair of these skulking birds at Ranamofana NP.

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

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

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

This can often be a tricky bird to find and see well. Our bus came to a grinding halt on the way to Ifaty when 3 birds were seen in a burnt patch next to the road. We saw a few more thereafter in the Ifaty area.

Rails & Gallinules *Rallidae***Madagascar Flufftail (E)***Sarothrura insularis*

A species which can often prove particularly elusive, we had stupendous views of a male at Mantadia NP and thereafter heard its characteristic call at many sites.

Madagascar Wood Rail (E)*Canirallus kioloides*

This can be a devilishly hard bird to see! We recorded several birds at various forest sites.

Madagascar Rail (E)*Rallus madagascariensis*

Our only views of this shy rallid were had at Anjozorobe.

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

We were treated to superb views of a pair at Ampijoroa. We had further views at several sites thereafter.

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

Common Moorhen*Gallinula chloropus*

Small numbers were encountered at several sites including Lake Alarobia and lake Ravelobe.

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

Only in wetlands of the northwest, where birds were seen at Lac Ravelobe.

Crab Plover *Dromadidae***Crab Plover***Dromas ardeola*

A highlight of the trip for many! We enjoyed scope views of these strange waders at Nosy Ve, so unusual in fact that they are placed in their own family *Dromadidae*.



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

Recorded at several sites, both coastal and inland, with peak numbers found in wetlands between Tulear and Ifaty.

Coursers & Pratincoles *Glareolidae***Madagascar Pratincole (BE)***Glareola ocularis*

We had views of a single bird on a sandbank in the river at Ranomafana. Large numbers were thereafter encountered at Mosoala.

Plovers *Charadriidae***Common Ringed Plover***Charadrius hiaticula*

We found several on mudflats throughout the Ifaty area.

Kittlitz's Plover*Charadrius pecuarius*

Largest numbers recorded at brackish lakes near Ifaty.

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

This scarce, localized endemic was observed at close quarters in burnt, degraded habitat in the Ifaty area.

Three-banded Plover*Charadrius tricollaris*

Recorded at roadside wetlands near Ifaty.

White-fronted Plover*Charadrius marginatus*

We enjoyed sightings of this coastal species in the area of Tulear and again on mudflats near Maroantsetra.

Greater Sand Plover*Charadrius leschenaultii*

Common on mudflats in the Betsiboka Delta and Tulear, also recorded near Maroantsetra.

Gray (Black-bellied) Plover*Pluvialis squatarola*

This species was fairly common on tidal flats around Tulear and our hotel in Ifaty.

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

Brilliant views were had at a wetland near Ifaty. This striking bird is in its own monotypic family.

Sandpipers & Allies *Scolopacidae***Madagascar Snipe (E) (NT)***Gallinago macrodactyla*

We had good flight views of several birds at Anjozorobe Marsh.

Bar-tailed Godwit*Limosa lapponica*

8 birds were seen on the tidal mudflats between Tulear and Ifaty.

Whimbrel*Numenius phaeopus*

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

Common Greenshank*Tringa nebularia*

Another common wader, this species was regularly seen in the wetlands in the Tulear and Ifaty.

Wood Sandpiper*Tringa glareola*

1 bird was seen briefly near Tana on our last day of the trip.

Terek Sandpiper*Tringa cinerea*

We had views of good numbers in the Betsiboka Delta.

Common Sandpiper *Tringa hypoleucos*

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

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Fairly common on tidal flats around Tulear and Ifaty.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Several of this cosmopolitan birds were seen on tidal flats around Ifaty.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

The commonest Calidrid, seen on the tidal flats in the Ifaty and Tulear areas.

Terns *Sternidae*

Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia*

Several were seen at wetlands in the south-west.

Greater Crested (Swift) Tern *Sterna bergii*

Recorded at most coastal sites in small numbers.

Lesser Crested Tern *Sterna bengalensis*

We had good views of several at Nosy Ve, Tulear and at Masoala.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

Several were seen in mixed feeding flocks in the Bay of Antongil on the Masoala Peninsula.

Saunders's Tern *Sterna saundersi*

A single bird was seen at mudflats near Ifaty.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida*

Recorded at fresh water wetlands in the west.

Common Noddy *Anous stolidus*

We were thrilled to find a single bird in a mixed feeding flock in the Bay of Antongil on our Masoala extension.

Sandgrouse *Pteroclididae*

Madagascar Sandgrouse (E) *Pterocles personatus*

Our first sighting was of a singleton at the Mandrare Rivert at Berenty, later we also had a brief flyby near La Table.

Pigeons & Doves *Columbidae*

Rock Pigeon (I) *Columba livia*

Widespread in urban areas.

Madagascar Turtle Dove (NEE) *Columba picturata*

First seen at Ampijoroa, with numerous subsequent sightings at almost all sites. Particularly tame and conspicuous at Berenty and Ampijoroa.

Namaqua (Long-tailed) Dove *Oena capensis*

Widespread and common in drier areas.

Madagascar Green Pigeon (NE) *Treron australis*

This species was seen well at Ampijoroa and at several other sites.

Madagascar Blue Pigeon (E) *Alectroenas madagascariensis*

This beautiful bird is fairly common in eastern rainforest, we had superb scope views of several at Perinet Special Reserve and Mantadia.



Parrots *Psittacidae*

(Greater) Vasa Parrot (NE)*Coracopsis vasa*

This is the less common of the two Vasa Parrots in Madagascar, and we enjoyed good views at Ampijoroa.

Black (Lesser Vasa) Parrot (NE)*Coracopsis nigra*

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

Gray-headed Lovebird (E)*Agapornis canus*

This small parrot was first found in the campsite at Ampijoroa and later seen again in strong numbers near Tulear and Ifaty.

Cuckoos, Couas & Coucals *Cuculidae*

Madagascar Lesser Cuckoo (BE)*Cuculus rochii*

Very common and one of the dominant sounds in wooded and semi-wooded habitats throughout. We had views on several occasions.

Giant Coua (E)*Coua gigas*

Common at Berenty where we had numerous sightings of fantastically relaxed birds. More views were had at Zombitse

Coquerel's Coua (E)*Coua coquereli*

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

Running Coua (E)*Coua cursor*

After intense searching in the spiny desert at Ifaty we were all eventually rewarded with good views of this beautiful bird.

Red-breasted Coua (E)*Coua serriana*

We were lucky to get good views at Perinet. Later at Masoala, they were common and obliging.

Red-fronted Coua (E)*Coua reynaudii*

We had superb views several birds at Perinet.

Red-capped Coua (E)*Coua ruficeps*

We enjoyed great views of numerous birds at Ampijoroa.

NOTE: See notation under Green-capped Coua

Green-capped Coua (E)*Coua[ruficeps] olivaceiceps*

A single bird was seen very well at Berenty with further close-up views at the arboretum near Tulear.

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

Crested Coua (E)*Coua cristata*

This species was first recorded at Ampijoroa with many individuals being seen during our stay there. We continued to enjoy views throughout the drier regions of the country.

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

We enjoyed superb views of this rare and localized species in coral rag scrub on La Table. The most localized member of this endemic sub-family.

Blue Coua (E)*Coua caerulea*

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

Madagascar Coucal (NEe)*Centropus toulou*

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



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

A single bird was seen flying off the road en route to Mantadia.

Typical Owls *Strigidae***Madagascar (Rainforest) Scops Owl (NE)***Otus rutilus*

This recently split form of the Madagascar Scops Owl was seen well when we stayed until dark at Mantadia.

Torotoroka Scops Owl (E)*Otus madagascariensis*

This new species of Scops Owl (pronounced “Toorotoorook”, an onomatopoeic name) was seen at Ampijoroa and again at Berenty.

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

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

Crippling views were had of this beauty at Berenty.

Madagascar Long-eared Owl (E)*Asio madagascariensis*

Reasonable views were obtained when a bird flew over our heads in the evening at Mantadia NP.

Nightjars *Caprimulgidae***Collared Nightjar (E)***Caprimulgus enarratus*

We had fantastic views of a pair roosting during the day in Perinet Special Reserve. A rare endemic restricted to the eastern forests.

Madagascar Nightjar (NE)*Caprimulgus madagascariensis*

The common nightjar on Madagascar. Our first sighting was of one sitting on the wall next to the swimming pool at our hotel in Tana. Every night we were treated to their “bouncing marble” calls.

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

Recorded over forest at Perinet, Mantadia and Masoala.

African Palm Swift*Cypsiurus parvus gracilis*

Common in suitable palm habitat.

Alpine Swift*Tachymarptis melba*

Recorded in a mixed flocks during several drives with a highest count between Isalo and Ranomafana.

Madagascar (Black) Swift (NE)*Apus balstoni*

Recorded at scattered localities throughout the tour.

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

Little Swift*Apus affinis*

2 birds were seen on our first day in Tana. A scarce and localized bird in Madagascar.

Kingfishers *Alcedinidae***Madagascar Malachite Kingfisher (NE)***Alcedo vintsioides*

Fairly common at freshwater and marine wetlands throughout.

Madagascar Pygmy Kingfisher (E)*Ispidina madagascariensis*

3 of these delightful kingfishers was seen at the roadside in Mantadia with further views for some on Mosoala.



Bee-eaters *Meropidae***Madagascar (Olive) Bee-eater***Merops superciliosus*

Common, widespread in semi-open areas and recorded from almost all sites.

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

Widespread and common breeding migrant from the African mainland. First recorded this brightly coloured species in large numbers at Ampijoroa.

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

The most difficult of the Ground-Rollers to find, we were treated to absolutely sensational views at Masoala after only hearing it at Mantadia.

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

Another elusive and retiring species. We had brief views of a pair near the nest sight. A scarce and secretive bird, formerly considered to be restricted to the forests of the Masoala peninsula where we had crippling views on a night roost.

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

Our first sighting was on our first morning in Mantadia. Despite being the commonest of the ground-rollers, this magnificent creature is justifiably one of the most sought-after birds on Madagascar.

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

Alas this groundroller was only heard in the distance at Ranomafana.

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

We salivated over superb views of one cooperative individual in the Spiny Desert at Ifaty after the local guides shepherded the bird in our direction.

Cuckoo-Rollers *Leptosomidae***Madagascar Cuckoo-Roller (E)***Leptosomus discolor*

This spectacular endemic was seen at all forest sites, the first being seen at Ampijoroa.

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

Hoopoes *Upupidae***Madagascar Hoopoe (E)***Upupa marginalis*

Commonly recorded at all western sites.

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

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

We enjoyed superb views of this electric species in Mantadia and Ranomafana. The only asity to lek.

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

After considerable effort and intensive searching we were finally rewarded by one of the most amazing moments of the trip when we picked up their highpitched calls which led us to a loose group of no less



than 6 individuals, an unprecedented number of this mega endemic.

Common Sunbird Asity (E) *Neodrepanis coruscans*

We had a great sighting of a pair of these delightful birds at Anjozorobe with further sightings at Ranomafana.

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

After a long afternoon of searching in the ridge-top forest at Vohiparara some scored with views of a male near a nest site. They were very lucky indeed.

Larks *Alaudidae*

Madagascar (Hova) Lark (E) *Mirafra hova*

Common in all dry country and open habitats.

Swallows & Martins *Hirundinidae*

Mascarene Martin (NE) *Phedina borbonica*

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

Brown-throated (Plain Sand) Martin *Riparia paludicola*

This high plateau wetland hirundine was observed mostly *en route* including on the way to Perinet and from Anjozorobe to Tana.

Wagtails & Pipits *Motacillidae*

Madagascar Wagtail (E) *Motacilla flaviventris*

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

Cuckooshrikes *Campephagedae*

Ashy (Madagascar) Cuckoo-shrike (NE) *Coracina cinerea*

The only cuckoo-shrike on the island of Madagascar, we first recorded this species in the forests of Ampijoroa associating with a mixed flock. Observed regularly throughout the tour thereafter.

Bulbuls *Pycnonotidae*

Madagascar Bulbul (NE) *Hypsipetes madagascariensis*

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

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

Widespread in Madagascar, we first encountered this species in good numbers at Ampijoroa and heard and saw it regularly in forest sites thereafter.

Spectacled Greenbul (E) *Phyllastrephus zosterops*

Restricted to eastern forests, where it is the commonest of the "small greenbuls".

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

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

Gray-crowned Greenbul (E) (NT) *Phyllastrephus cinereiceps*

Uncommon in eastern rainforest, mainly at altitudes above the range of Spectacled Greenbul. We saw it at Mantadia and Ranomafana.



Vangas Vangidae

Red-tailed Vanga (E)*Calicalicus madagascariensis*

A fairly common and regularly encountered denizen of wooded and semi-wooded habitats, particularly once its “wolf-whistle” call is recognized.

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

After long searching we eventually had superb close studies of a male and female of this recently described and highly localized endemic, in “coral rag” scrub on La Table. This species can be particularly hard to find and we were very fortunate to get such good views.

Rufous Vanga (E)*Schetba rufa*

This handsome bird was recorded in the forest of Ampijoroa.

Hook-billed Vanga (E)*Vanga curvirostris*

This often heard and infrequently observed species was seen at few times at scattered localities throughout the tour.

Lafresnaye's Vanga (E)*Xenopirostris xenopirostris*

This species was first seen en route to and from Berenty with a further sighting in the Spiny Desert at Ifaty.

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

A scarce and local denizen of eastern forests, some of the group had brief views of a pair at Ranomafana.

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

We were rewarded with superb views at Ampijoroa where we observed a pair after considerable effort and patience in the oppressive heat of Ampijoroa. The most localized of the vangas after the recently discovered Red-shouldered.

Sickle-billed Vanga (E)*Falcula palliata*

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

White-headed Vanga (E)*Artamella viridis*

Seen very well daily in small numbers at Ampijoroa, often in the campsite, and in the eastern rainforest.

Chabert's Vanga (E)*Leptopterus chabert*

The commonest vanga, occurring in habitats ranging from pristine rainforest to degraded scrub. First seen at Ampijoroa, where observed daily, this species was also regularly observed throughout the trip, especially in the dry south.

(Madagascar) Blue Vanga ([N]E)*Cyanolanius madagascarensis*

Our first encounter with this species was several at Ampijoroa. Another one of the world's great “Blue Birds”!

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

Coral-billed (Nuthatch)Vanga (E)*Hypositta corallirostris*

After considerable effort we finally caught up with a pair at Perinet.

Tylas (Vanga) (E)*Tylas eduardi*

Several seen and many more heard in Perinet Special Reserve and Mantadia NP, with further sightings at Masoala.

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

Helmet Vanga (E)*Euryceros prevostii*

A MEGA indeed, we had scope views of a bird on the nest while some of the more intrepid members of the group had unbeatable views further up the trail. A Masoala specialty and one that makes the



extension well worth doing.

Thrushes *Turdidae*

Littoral Rock Thrush (E)

Pseudocossyphus imerinus

3 bird was found in dune scrub behind Anakao; a most peculiar habitat for a Rock Thrush.

Forest Rock Thrush (E)

Pseudocossyphus sharpei

We heard this forest-dweller at Anjozorobe.

Benson's Rock Thrush (E) (NT)

Pseudocossyphus bensoni

We had superb views of at least 5 birds in Isalo NP.

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

Madagascar Magpie-Robin (E)

Copsychus albospecularis

This species was seen throughout the tour almost daily and is a rather bold and confiding species. Both white-bellied and dark-bellied races were noted during the course of the tour.

African Stonechat

Saxicola axillaries

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

Babblers *Timaliidae*

White-throated Oxylobes (E)

Oxylobes madagascariensis

A secretive endemic of the understorey of eastern rainforest and unbelievably difficult to see. Most of the group had at least some type of a view at Mantadia.

Madagascar Yellow-brow (E) (NT)

Crossleyia xanthophrys

A scarce, localized and incredibly skulking and secretive rainforest endemic seen in the dense undergrowth of Ranomafana NP.

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

Crossley's Babbler (E)

Mystacornis crossleyi

We enjoyed close views of this strikingly beautiful endemic at Anjozorobe with a further sighting at Ranomafana

Old World Warblers *Sylviidae*

Brown Emu-tail (E)

Dromaeocercus brunneus

Some of the group managed to see this "rat-like critter" at Anjozorobe with further audibles at Ranomafana.

Gray Emu-tail (E)

Dromaeocercus seebohmi

Heard at Anjozorobe with unbeatable views later at Ranomafana. An extreme skulker, we were very fortunate to have had such killer views of this elusive endemic.

Madagascar Brush Warbler (NE)

Nesillas typica

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

Subdesert Brush Warbler (E)

Nesillas lantzii

Replaces Madagascar Brush Warbler in the South West, where it was very common.

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



Madagascar Swamp Warbler (E)*Acrocephalus newtoni*

Fairly common in wetland habitat throughout, ranging from highland marshes in the east to mangroves in the west.

Thamnornis (Warbler) (E)*Thamnornis chloropetoides*

After eluding us for a while we eventually had intimate views of 3 in the spiny desert. A much more attractive bird than what drawings suggest.

Rand's Warbler (E)*Randia pseudozosterops*

Fairly common denizen of eastern rainforest, with small numbers seen and heard in the Perinet and Ranomafana areas. A bird vocalizing from a typical treetop perch in Mantadia was the first seen.

Dark Newtonia (E)*Newtonia amphichroa*

This smart little bird was found at Mantadia and Ranomafana NP.

Common Newtonia (E)*Newtonia brunneicauda*

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

Archbold's Newtonia (E)*Newtonia archboldi*

Seen at close quarters in the Spiny Desert near Ifaty, located by call.

Madagascar Cisticola (NE)*Cisticola cherinus*

Common in open habitats throughout, including rice paddies and the man-altered plateau grasslands.

Common Jery (E)*Neomixis tenella*

Common and ubiquitous. First seen at Ampijoroa and recorded almost daily throughout the trip.

Green Jery (E)*Neomixis viridis*

Seen regularly in eastern forests where we encountered small numbers daily.

Stripe-throated Jery (E)*Neomixis striatigula*

This specie's scratchy call is a common background noise in the rain forests.

Cryptic Warbler (E)*Cryptosylvicola randrianasoloi*

This recently described species was seen and heard on the way to Mantadia singing at the top of a tall tree.

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

An uncommon and elusive endemic of eastern forests. We enjoyed excellent views of this species at Mantadia NP and Ranomafana.

Puffback Flycatchers *Platysteiridae***Ward's Flycatcher (E)***Pseudobias wardi*

Fairly common in the Perinet and Mantadia reserves where it was recorded almost daily.

Monarch Flycatchers *Monarchidae***Madagascar Paradise Flycatcher (NE)***Terpsiphone mutata*

Common and widespread in a variety of wooded and semi-wooded habitats. First recorded at Ampijoroa, with subsequent sightings almost daily of both rufous and white phases.

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

By far the more common of Madagascar's sunbird species, occurring in a variety of wooded and semi-wooded habitats. First seen at Ampijoroa and virtually daily thereafter.

Long-billed Green (Madagascar) Sunbird (NE) *Nectarinia notata*

A very handsome and widespread but uncommon species. This species was seen in small numbers at sites throughout.



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

Common and widespread, though scarce in the southwest. First sightings at Ampijoroa and at most localities thereafter.

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

First recorded in Tana and seen in small numbers throughout the tour thereafter.

Sparrows passerida**House Sparrow***Passer domesticu*

Several were seen at Tamatave.

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

Regular only in eastern rainforest areas, where small numbers were seen.

Sakalava Weaver (E)*Ploceus sakalava*

This species was common in the drier regions of Madagascar and first sighted in Ampijoroa.

Madagascar Red Fody (E)*Foudia madagascariensis*

Common, ubiquitous and good numbers recorded almost daily.

Forest Fody (E)*Foudia omissa*

Scarce and can be tough to find, we found 2 non-breeding males at Perinet.

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

Unfortunately this common in open habitats throughout the island.

Madagascar Starling (E)*Hartlaubius aurata*

This species was first seen at Perinet and Mantadia with brilliant scope views obtained at Mosoala.

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

Common and highly conspicuous in a variety of wooded habitats throughout. First seen at Ampijoroa and almost daily in small numbers thereafter.

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

Common and widespread in open habitats.



MAMMALS

28 Species

ORDER: Chiroptera

Family *Pteropodidae* (Old World Fruit Bats)

Madagascar Flying Fox *Pteropus rufus*

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

Family *Emballonuridae*

Mauritian Tomb Bat *Taphozous mauritanus*

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

ORDER: Insectivora

Family *Tenrecidae* (Tenrecs and Otter Shrews)

Lowland Streaked Tenrec *Hemicentetes semispinosus*

Some of the group were very lucky to see this delightful creature at Ranomafana. A family group was seen by some on Masoala.

ORDER: Rodentia

Family *Muridae* (Old World Rats and Mice)

Eastern Red Forest Rat *Nesomys rufus*

Recorded from Mantadia and Ranomafana NP's.

Western Tuft-tailed Rat *Rattus norvegicus*

We were fortunate to see 2 at Ampijoroa.

Lesser Tuft-tailed Rat *Eliurus minor*

3 individuals were seen during our stay on Masoala Peninsula.

ORDER: Carnivora

Family *Herpestidae* (Mongooses)

Ring-tailed Mongooses *Viverricula elegans*

2 brief sightings were had at Ranomafana.

ORDER: Primates

Family *Cheirogaleidae* (Mouse and Dwarf Lemurs)

Gray Mouse Lemur *Microcebus murinus*

Several of these tiny lemurs were seen on our night walk at Ampijoroa with further views at Berenty.

Reddish-Gray Mouse Lemur *Microcebus griseorufus*

This newly described species was found in the spiny forest habitat of Berenty.

Greater Dwarf Lemur *Cheirogaleus major*

We enjoyed fantastic views of this delightful creature outside our lodge at Perinet.

Family *Megaladapidae* (Sportive Lemurs)

Milne-Edwards's Sportive Lemur *Lepilemur edwardsi*



Several individuals were seen at Ampijoroa.

White-footed Sportive Lemur *Lepilemur leucopus*

Commonly seen at Berenty.

Weasel Sportive Lemur *Lepilemur mustelinus*

This species was found on our night walk at Anjozorobe.

Hubbard's Sportive Lemur *Lepilemur hubbardi*

Two of these exceedingly cute lemurs were seen at Zombitse.

Weasel/Seal's/Unknown Sportive Lemur

3 of these lemurs to which most authorities cannot place the species were seen well on Masoala peninsula.

Family Lemuridae ("True" Lemurs)

Eastern Gray Bamboo Lemur *Hapalemur griseus griseus*

This attractive species was found at Perinet and Mantadia.

Ring-tailed Lemur *Lemur catta*

The quintessential Malagasy mammal. We enjoyed prolonged encounters with numerous groups of these delightful animals, the most terrestrial of the lemurs, at Berenty.

Mongoose Lemur *Eulemur mongoz*

We were very fortunate to have good views of a this species at Ampijoroa. This is one of the most difficult lemurs to find in Madagascar.

Red-bellied Lemur *Eulemur rubriventer*

First seen at Mantadia and later found at Ranomafana.

Common Brown Lemur *Eulemur fulvus fulvus*

These playful lemurs were seen at Ampijoroa and in Perinet Special Reserve.

White-fronted Brown Lemur *Eulemur albifrons*

Excellent views of large groups of these lemurs were had at Masoala.

Red Ruffed Lemur *Varecia rubra*

One of the world's MEGA mammals, very vocal and remarkable to look at. We enjoyed many sightings of these fine beasts at Masoala.

Family Indriidae (Avahis, Sifakas and Indri)

Eastern Avahi (Woolly Lemur) *Avahi laniger*

We were fortunate to find this species at Perinet and Masoala.

Western Avahi (Woolly Lemur) *Avahi occidentalis*

This species is far more local and uncommon than its eastern counterpart, we recorded it at Ampijoroa during a night walk.

Diademed Sifaka *Propithecus diadema diadema*

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

Verreaux's Sifaka *Propithecus verreaux verreauxi*

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

Coquerel's Sifaka *Propithecus verreauxi coquereli*

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

Indri *Indri indri*

We had fantastic experiences with this incredible lemur. The territorial calls of this lemur, often



considered the largest extant species (but see Diademed Sifaka, above), is one of the world's great wildlife sounds.

Listing of amphibians and reptiles seen

34 Species

Amphibians

Family; *Ranidae* (True Frogs)

Tawny Tree Frog

Boophis luteus

Green Tree Frog

Boophis viridus

Madagascar Tree Frog

Boophis madagascariensis

Painted Mantella

Mantella madagascariensis

Reptiles

Family; *Crocodylidae* (Crocodiles)

Nile Crocodile

Crocodylus niloticus

Family; *Chamaeleonidae* (Chameleons)

Short-horned Chameleon

Calumma brevicornis

Nose-horned Chameleon

Calumma nasuta

Band-bellied Chameleon

Calumma gastrotaenia

Parson's Chameleon

Calumma parsonii

Rhinoceros Chameleon

Calumma rhinoceratus

Oustalet's Chameleon

Furcifer oustaleti

Panther Chameleon

Furcifer pardalis

Warty Chameleon

Furcifer Verrucosus

Brookesia thieli

Furcifer balteatus

Family; *Iguanidae* (Iguanas)

Three-eyed Lizard

Chalarodon madagascariensis

Cuvier's Iguanid

Oplurus cuvieri

Four-striped Iguanid

Oplurus quadrimaculatus

Family; *Gekkonidae* (Geckos)

Fantastic Leaf-tailed Gecko

Uroplatus phantasticus

Mercator Tropical House Gecko

Hemidactylus mercatorius

Madagascar Day Gecko

Phelsuma madagascarensis

Lineated Day Gecko

Phelsuma lineata

Brown Day Gecko

Phelsuma mutabilis

Pale-bellied Day Gecko

Phelsuma leigastor

Phelsuma standingi

Lygodactylus sp.



Family; Gerrhosauridae (Plated Lizards)

Madagascar Plated Lizard

*Zonosaurus madagascarensis**Zonosaurus laticaudatus*

Elegant Skink

*Zonosaurus elegans***Family; Scincidae** (Skinks)

Gravenhorst's Skink

Mabuya gravenhorstii

Elegant Skink

*Mabuya elegans***Family; Colubridae** (Typical Snakes)

Black-and-white Striped Snake

Liopholidophis lateralis

Mahafaly Sand Snake

*Mimophis mahfalensis**Dromicodryas bernieri*

Notable Insects and other Invertebrates

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

All photos by James Wakelin

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