



MADAGASCAR

Endemics galore on the 8th Continent

November 18 - December 8, 2019

Tour leader: Josh Engel | Private Tour
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Madagascar is one of the world's ultimate birding and natural history destinations. It is often referred to as the 8th Continent due to its long-time isolation leading to incredible rates of endemism in every group of organisms on the island, from plants to insects to birds. We racked up 185 birds on this trip, which visited the dry forests of the northwest, the spiny forest of the southwest, the rainforest of the east, and various spots in between. Birds seen included the vast majority of the possible endemics along the route, totaling about 85% of all the endemics on the island. Among the endemic or near-endemic families, this includes all of the ground rollers, all of the mesites, every possible vanga, three species of asity, and every possible tetraka except one, and great views of pretty much all of them. In addition, we saw every possible hawk and eagle, a variety of other rare and endangered endemics, and some great migrants. As if that weren't enough, we saw 20 species of lemurs and 46 species of reptiles, including 13 species of chameleons, plus an assortment of wacky insects and unique plants. And as is usual on our trips, the birds were thoroughly eBirded and the lists were shared with the group.

Top 5 birds and non-birds, as voted by the group

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 (tie). Helmet Vanga | 1. Indri |
| 1 (tie). Schlegel's Asity | 2. Parson's Chameleon |
| 3 (tie). Henst's Goshawk | 3 (tie). Mossy Leaf-tailed Gecko |
| 3 (tie). Pitta-like Ground-Roller | 3 (tie). Madagascar Giant Swallowtail |
| 5 (tie). Crab Plover/White-browed Owl | 3 (tie). Goodman's Mouse Lemur |



Crested Coua. Photo by Josh Engel.

Day 1, November 18. Antananarivo (known as Tana).

The group arrived easily enough and settled into our lovely hotel not far from the airport. Despite our middle-of-the-night arrival, our birding started right away, when we heard **Torotoroka Scops-Owl** and **Barn Owl** before we had even made it to our rooms!

We had an easy first day with some local birding. We visited the best birding spot in Tana, Lac Alarobia, with its large numbers of waterbirds. Scanning through the masses of **Squacco Herons**, we found the endangered **Madagascar Pond-Heron**. There was just a single individual of this beautiful breeding endemic. We also scanned extensively through the **White-faced Whistling-Ducks** and **Red-billed Teal** looking for another endangered endemic, Meller's Duck, but they must have been biding on the island vegetation and we never did find them. But we knew we'd have more chances. Making our way around the island, we picked up plenty of other nice birds, including **Madagascar Brush Warbler**, **Madagascar Swamp Warbler**, **Madagascar Coucal**, and **Malagasy Kingfisher**, and we were especially pleased when a **White-throated Rail** sat preening on the path in front of us, giving everyone scope views. We also found our first chameleon of the trip—the impressively big **Oustalet's Chameleon**.



Madagascar Red Fody on our Tana hotel grounds. Photo by Josh Engel.

We also spent some time birding around the hotel, where birds were abundant in the lush oasis of the extensive grounds. We picked up plenty of common Malagasy birds, including **Madagascar Wagtail**, **Red Fody**, **Madagascar and Little Swifts**, and **Souimanga Sunbird**. After seeing **Madagascar Nightjar** at sunset, we headed back out after dark to try and see the owls we heard last night. We had great success with incredible views of **Barn Owls**, but the **scops-owl** stayed firmly ensconced in the dense treetops, out of view.

Day 2, November 19. Tana to Majunga.

We took an early morning flight to the northwest, picking up a freshly-arrived wintering **Sooty Falcon** as we walked across the tarmac to our plane. Our flight was on time, so we had a whole day in the coastal town of Majunga. In the morning we birded a wetland near the airport. Unfortunately, it was mostly dry this late in the dry season and held only a handful of common madding birds. Better was an African Openbill, which is quite rare in Madagascar, that circled overhead, perhaps having been flushed out of the wetland before we arrived. We found our first **Madagascar Cisticola** in the surrounding fields and found a large number of **Koch's Green Day Geckos** in the adjacent mango grove.

In the afternoon we went out of town to Lac Sacré (Sacred Lake). We enjoyed the antics of the local group of **Coquerel's Sifaka**, our first lemur of the trip. We added **Sakalava Weaver** and the breeding-endemic subspecies (and likely future split) of **Broad-billed Roller** in the area. There were fairly extensive wetlands adjacent to the Sacred Lake with ducks and herons flying around, but we couldn't find anything more interesting than **Black-winged Stilt**, **Common Greenshank**, and **Madagascar Coucal**.

Day 3, November 20. Betsiboka Delta.

After a breakfast that featured fresh tree-ripened mangos and freshly-baked bread and pastries, we took the short drive to the beach, met our boat, and took off across Betemboka Bay to the estuary of the Betsiboka River. Arriving to the mangrove islands of the delta, we soon found flocks of **Terek Sandpipers** and a few other scattered shorebirds and a couple of **Lesser Flamingo**. It didn't take long to find our first target, another endangered endemic, **Bernier's Teal**. We spent the next couple of hours searching for Madagascar Sacred Ibis. While searching, we noticed a large flock of flamingoes in the distance, so we headed that way. We found an impressive flock of 750 **Lesser Flamingos**, with a single **Greater Flamingo** among them providing a great size comparison. Glenn noticed a smaller bird in with the flamingos, and as we drifted closer we realized that it was a **Crab Plover**, and monotypic family and a much-desired migrant. We continued searching for the ibis, but never found it. We did find some other birds while we searched, including **White-headed Vanga**, our first vanga of the trip, along with **Greater Sandplover**, **Lesser Crested Tern**, and many more **Terek Sandpipers**.

Day 4, November 21. Ankarafantsika National Park.

After breakfast, we set off towards the famed dry forest of Ankarafantsika National Park. It was hot when we arrived in the mid-morning, but we wanted to get a start on the birds so after enjoying **Broad-billed Rollers** and **Lesser Vasa Parrots** around the headquarters, we set out for a walk. It didn't take long to encounter our first mixed flock and we encountered a few others, too. They typically contained **Madagascar Paradise-Flycatchers** of various plumage types, **Long-billed Bernieria**, **Common Jery**, and **Madagascar Cuckooshrike**. **Red-capped Coua** walked along the trails and a few people got lucky and saw a **Madagascar Ibis** cross the path.

We arrived to the territory of **Van Dam's Vanga**, another endangered endemic, and it didn't take us long to locate. But only part of the group got good views before it took off, so we

continued searching. This time it took quite a bit longer to relocate, but eventually everyone saw it, even if they didn't get great views.



Sickle-billed Vanga. Photo by Josh Engel.

We finally made it to the hotel, checked in, and rested during the heat of the afternoon. Arriving back to the park after our rest, our local guide took us to see roosting Western Woolly Lemurs, which had a couple of babies with them and posed beautifully for photos, low in the trees and in good light. In the late afternoon we took a boat ride on Lac Ravelobe. We were especially looking for **Humblot's Heron** and **Madagascar Fish-Eagle**. It didn't take long—very soon after setting out we had great views of a **Humblot's Heron** sunning itself in the shallow water. Then we spotted an adult **fish-eagle** in a tree, which showed very nicely perched and in flight. Best of all was an incredibly obliging juvenile **fish-eagle**, just one month fledged, that sat on a branch low over the lake, in excellent light, as cameras clicked. It was heartening to see a successful nesting, given that there are estimated to be between 100-150 breeding pairs of the species.

A few of us who got to dinner early enjoyed seeing three of Jupiter's moons in the spotting scope before the sky clouded over. Storms rolled in overnight, accompanied by impressive lightning and thunder.

Day 5, November 22. Ankarafantsika National Park.

Our first mission this morning was to find **Schlegel's Asity**, a rare specialty of dry forests of the west of Madagascar. Birds were plentiful in the merciful cool of the early morning, including our first **Greater Vasa Parrot**, a female in breeding "plumage," with a mostly featherless, orange-

toned head. We were happy to get excellent views of another dry forest specialist, **Coquerel's Coua**, and a few **Madagascar Green Pigeons** also sat out nicely. But the asity was proving hard to find. We made numerous loops of the trails around known territories, including near an active nest, but only the local guide got a glimpse when he was scouting away from the group. It was getting hot as the morning wore on, so we decided to do one more loop near the nest before moving on. All of the sudden he exclaimed "There!" And sure enough, an incredible male **Schlegel's Asity** was perched at eye level, just under the nest, and it sat there for several minutes, allowing great photo opportunities. The bird was maybe 10 yards away, and scope views revealed every detail of the amazing blue and green facial skin.



Schlegel's Asity. Photo by Josh Engel.

Elated, we moved on to a different area of the park, hoping to get better views of **Van Dam's Vanga**. On the way, we found **Madagascar Ibis** in the same area as yesterday, and this time it was much more cooperative, giving everyone excellent views as it fed on the trail. We also had further excellent views of **Red-capped Coua**, including one that led us along the trail for 100 yards or more. Again we found **Van Dam's Vanga** pretty quickly, but unlike yesterday we got incredible views, watching the male peel away wood from a rotting branch as it searched for insects. It was so cooperative that we left before it did.

We had a nice rest after lunch (where we watched a Sooty Falcon hunting aerial insects over the lodge grounds), before returning to the forest in the afternoon. With all of our bird targets in the bag, we took some time to enjoy interesting Malagasy creatures like **Fish-scaled Gecko**, **Sakalava Velvet Gecko**, **Coquerel's Sifaka**, **Common Brown Lemur**, **Giant Hog-nosed Snake**, **Oustalet's Chameleon**, **Giant Pill Millipedes**, and **Madagascar Hissing Cockroach**, along with common birds that were getting more and more familiar.

We stayed out after dark, taking a nighttime walk on the edge of the park to look for nocturnal critters. Before we found any nocturnal animals, though, we spotted couple of roosting Common Jery. Life was abundant and active after dark. We saw many **Golden-brown Mouse-Lemurs** and a couple of **Fat-tailed Dwarf-Lemurs**. Reptiles included **Rhinoceros** and **Oustalet's Chameleon**, **Günther's Leaf-tailed Gecko**, **Dwarf Gecko**, and another **Sakalava Velvet Gecko**. A gruesome highlight was watching a **Cat-eyed Snake** devour a frog that it had just caught.

Day 6, November 23. Ankarafantsika to Tana.

Today was a long driving day as we drove from the northwest back to the capital. But we had a few birding stops planned and knew to keep our eyes out along the road for a few others birds. Our first target was **Madagascar Jacana**. The first wetland we checked was fruitless (we did find our fifth species of snake for the trip, a **Four-lined Snake**), but at the next one we quickly spotted one jacana, then another, and another. We had excellent views here of adults and a juvenile, along with many **Eurasian Moorhens**. After another bit of driving, we stopped as we crossed the Betsiboka River to look for the breeding endemic **Madagascar Pratincole**. We soon spotted several flying in the distance and soon after that found some perched on rocks closer to our vantage point.

We took a lunch break in a town before continuing on towards Tana. By some miracle, Joe spotted **Madagascar Partridges** by the roadside and everyone was able to get good views of a pair of this bird, which is not rare but is hard to find on a tour. Not too far from the capital we made our last birding stop, this time to look for the endangered **Madagascar Harrier**. As we looked for the harrier, we had our first views of **Madagascar Cuckoo** (yet another breeding endemic), which we had heard several times previously. Then Joe came through again, spotting a **harrier** flying in the distance. Fortunately it came close as it flew past, but we had to wait a bit for it to make another pass before everyone had satisfactory views of this beautiful hawk.

We were very happy to make it back to the familiar hotel in Tana at the end of a long day.

Day 7, November 24. Tana to Ifaty.

We had an early flight from Tana to Toliara, in the southwest. Our bus was waiting for us upon landing, and we headed north along the coast. We stopped a few times for shorebirds in roadside ponds and along the coastal mudflats, finding **Curlew Sandpiper**, **Kittlitz's Plover**, **Terek Sandpiper**, **Greater Sandplover**, and even a **Lesser Flamingo**. We arrived to our beautiful beachfront hotel for lunch.

In the late afternoon we set out for our first visit to the spiny forest. The spiny forest is a unique habitat, with many birds and animals found nowhere else. And we nearly cleaned up on spiny forest specialties that first afternoon! Our local guides expertly showed us **Running Coua**, **Thamnornis**, and a **Lafresnaye's Vanga** on a nest. Best of all were our first ground-roller of the trip, the fantastic **Long-tailed Ground-Roller**, and a female **Subdesert Mesite** in defensive posture, sitting motionless in a shrub. The **Long-tailed Ground-Rollers** had a chick with them,

which was remarkable to see. We were also pleased to get good views of the rare **Madagascar Sparrowhawk**, after a bit of work tracking them through the forest.



Long-tailed Ground-Roller. Photo by Josh Engel.

Day 8, November 25. Ifaty.

We spent the morning and the afternoon back in the spiny forest. We only had a couple of target birds left—**Green-capped Coua** and **Archbold's Newtonia**—both of which we got excellent views of. We also spent some time looking at other critters—**dwarf gecko**, **velvet geckos**, **Standing's Day Gecko**, **Spider Tortoise**, a **Petter's Sportive Lemur** roosting in octopus tree, **Mahafaly Sand Snake**, the incredible Conehead Katydid (aka "kung fu cricket"), and various other reptiles and insects. We also visited ponds nearby where we found the endangered endemic **Madagascar Plover** and the endemic subspecies of **Three-banded Plover**, which is a likely future split.

Day 9, November 26. Toliara area.

We got an early start to head to the area near La Table, outside of the city of Toliara. This area is especially famous among birders as the only accessible location where one can find **Red-shouldered Vanga**. And find it we did, getting jaw-dropping views of a pair. It took a little longer to find our second target birds for the morning, **Verreaux's Coua**, but we also eventually get excellent views of one sitting out in the open for us. We finished the morning along the city's shore, checking out shorebirds as the tide receded. They were present in good numbers, including our first **Bar-tailed Godwits** of the trip, along with **Whimbrel**, **Common Ringed Plover**, **Black-bellied Plover**, **Common Greenshank**, and **Ruddy Turnstone**.

For the afternoon we visited the wetlands around Lac Belalanda. Almost as soon as we arrived we heard a **Baillon's Crake** calling from the reed-filled wetlands. It took a bit of effort, but everyone eventually got good views of the shy little rail. Another wetland area held a flock of **Lesser Flamingos**, plenty of **Little Grebes**, and a number of shorebirds, including our first **Little Stint** for the trip.



Verreaux's Coua. Photo by Josh Engel.

Kittlitz's Plovers were abundant. Nicky spotted a bigger bird with a flock of plovers and I was shocked when I put my binoculars up and saw a pratincole! And then the one pratincole turned into three! Any pratincole here is rare; once we worked out that it wasn't Madagascar Pratincole, we knew it was something very special. After getting good views and workable photos, we figured out that they were **Oriental Pratincoles**, perhaps the first record ever for Madagascar. The rarities weren't done yet. We spotted a tern feeding over the wetlands, where Whiskered Tern is the only likely species. But it wasn't Whiskered Tern, it was **White-winged Tern**! There are only a few previous records in Madagascar. The surprise birds made for an exciting afternoon.

Day 10, November 27. Nosy Ve and Anakao.

We got to sleep in slightly this morning before eating breakfast and heading to the Toliara harbor. We took zebu carts a short distance to our ride for the day, a speedy boat that would take us south to the small island of Nosy Ve and the adjacent village of Anakao. On the way

down we stopped by some cliffs near the town of St. Augustin, where we had great views of **Madagascar Swifts**, which seemed to be nesting on the cliffs, as well as a **Peregrine Falcon** and a pair of **Humblot's Heron**.

We got to Nosy Ve and disembarked. The islands famous **Red-tailed Tropicbirds** were flying around overhead. But before enjoying the tropicbirds we wanted to check out the tern flock at the opposite end of the island. We trekked down, only to find them roosting on sandbars too far away to get good views. So we hired a pirogue, the local boat of choice, to take us closer. It was a great decision, because we ended up getting awesome views of a flock of **Crab Plovers** along with a large flock of **Lesser Crested and Great Crested Terns**. The shorebird flock included our first **Sanderlings** of the trip.



Crab Plover flock on Nosy Ve. Photo by Josh Engel.

Some people returned to the south end of the island to admire the nesting tropicbirds, which included a big fluffy chick under one of the island's few dense bushes. Meanwhile, those who stayed back had the **Crab Plovers** come back to the main island and even watched one catch and eat a crab.

We then headed to the adjacent mainland, where some welcome shade, refreshing cold soda, and a delicious fresh fish lunch awaited us in a beachfront hotel. This area is also home to yet another local endemic bird, **Littoral Rock-Thrush**. We set out searching in the early afternoon heat. Luckily one of the hotel workers knew where a nest was and the female was sitting on it. We never did find another one.

We returned north to Toliara and the welcome of an air conditioned hotel. Glenn had missed yesterday's visit to Lac Belalanda, so a couple of us returned there in the late afternoon. We pretty easily found our main targets, the same three **Oriental Pratincoles** as yesterday and **Baillon's Crane**, getting great views of an adult and juvenile. We also saw the **White-winged Tern** again, along with a large flock of **Barn Swallows**, **Little Stint**, and **Hottentot Teal**, **Red-billed Duck**, and **White-faced Whistling-Duck**.

Day 11, November 28. Toliara to Zombitse Forest to Isalo.

It was time to start out journey eastward across the island. Our first stop was to a specific area to look for **Madagascar Sandgrouse**. We were met there by a whole group of local boys and men who took us a short distance and there were the birds. It seemed an unremarkable spot, but we got great views of the sandgrouse both on the ground and in flight. We were surprised when they told us there was an owl nest in the area, too, and they took us to see it. We ended up with wonderful views of **White-browed Owl**, one on the nest in a tree cavity and the other in the tree above.



White-browed Owl. Photo by Josh Engel.

After the sandgrouse interlude, we continued on to our main birding destination of the morning, Zombitse-Vohibasia National Park. Here we were met again by local guides, who took us right into the dry forest. It didn't take long to find **Appert's Tetraka**, which is almost endemic to the park. The guides showed us one on a nest; after watching it there for a bit, it got off the nest, flew towards us, and fed in the forest understory practically at our feet. Not a bad way to see a lifer. After spending some time watching **Verreaux's Sifakas** eating flowers, we went in search of **Giant Coua**. The guides eventually found one and told us to wait. Then they did the Madagascar guides' trick of herding the bird to us until it was practically running over our shoes.

We did well with other new birds there as well. We had excellent views of **Cuckoo-roller**, one of the Malagasy region's endemic families. As we ate our picnic lunch, Glenn picked out a very distant raptor. It seemed to disappear before we were able to identify it, but then it reappeared over the forest at fairly close range—a **Madagascar Cuckoo-Hawk**! It was a really nice surprise to see this rare raptor, especially since this was our last opportunity to see it. After a break to eat our lunch, we added yet another endemic raptor, a **Frances's Sparrowhawk**. We also added the local endemic **Zombitse Sportive-Lemur** to our growing mammal list and **Madagascar Plated Lizard** to our growing reptile list.

We made it to our beautiful hotel on the edge of Isalo National Park in the early afternoon. After a break, we walked around the grounds and the adjacent canyons. It's a stunning area, with **Dumeril's Madagascar Swifs** (the lizard kind of 'swift') abundant on the rocks and buildings, but we didn't find the **Forest Rock-Thrush** that we were after. We did see our first **Helmeted Guineafowl** of the trip, heard a **Torotoroka Scops-Owl** singing, and saw **Broad-billed Roller**, many **Madagascar Kestrels**, and other familiar birds.



Verreaux's Sifika mama and baby. Photo by Josh Engel.

Day 12, November 29. Isalo to Ranomafana.

It was a beautiful, peaceful, even cool, morning. It took a little effort, but we finally found the local Benson's subspecies of **Forest Rock-Thrush** as the sun rose over its gorgeous canyon home. We returned to the hotel for a delicious breakfast before hitting the road eastward again. Our next stop was Anja Community Reserve, where we had two targets of vastly

different difficulty levels. The first, to see **Ring-tailed Lemurs**, was easy, and we had close encounters with several groups. The second, to see **Madagascar Buttonquail**, proved significantly more challenging. Local guides set out through the forest and found them several times, but each time the birds flushed to parts unknown. It wasn't until we gave up and started walking back through the forest to the vehicle that a more encouraging report reached us. We set off after it and, amazingly, everybody got decent looks at a female buttonquail before she got nervous from the attention and flew off. With that great find, we continued on our way to the rainforest of Ranomafana, stopping for lunch and a visit to a handmade paper workshop along the way.



Ring-tailed Lemur. Photo by Josh Engel.

Day 13, November 30. Ranomafana National Park.

We got up early and set out, excited at the prospect of our first day in the rainforest of eastern Madagascar with its different birds and animals. We quickly started seeing new birds, with a **Rand's Warbler** singing from the parking area and a pair of **Nelicourvi Weavers** on the walk into the park. But the real excitement came when, just after we started walking, we came across a **Pitta-like Ground-Roller** on the path in front of us. We all managed excellent views. Incredibly, it would turn out to be one of five individuals that we would see over the course of the morning, including one that seemed to be carrying nesting material.

Another great find was a male **Velvet Asity**, its green facial skin glowing in the dark forest understory. A small understory flock revealed our first **Spectacled Tetraka** and we were able to call in a **Wedge-tailed Tetraka** that was with the flock. As we tried to track down a calling **White-throated Oxylabes**, a male **Crossley's Vanga** emerged, showing off to us at close range,

with something in its beak. We followed it with our binoculars and it led us to a female sitting on a nest.

We also tracked down the park's flagship animal, the critically endangered **Golden Bamboo Lemur**, as they rested in the giant bamboo forest. **Red-fronted Lemurs** also showed incredibly well; at one point a female with a young one on her belly came right up to the edge of the path on the ground to check out her human admirers.

We ate our picnic lunch with a **Banded Chameleon** watching from the bushes, before returning to the bus. We had one more stop for the day, an area of short forest and wetlands in a higher area of the park. As we walked to the wetlands, we came across our first **Green Jery** and **Forest Fody** (along with several of the electric red **Red Fody**). Once we got to the wetlands, we tried taping for a **Gray Emutail**, and before too long we were getting incredible views of this normally shy bird. We then found a pair of the endangered **Meller's Duck** in a small river area. Our last goal was to find **Madagascar Snipe**; before even getting to the wetlands to look for it, one burst out nearly from underfoot, where the people towards the front of the group got to see it. Very happy with our efforts, we returned to the hotel for the evening.

Day 14, December 1. Ranomafana National Park.

We had another full day in Ranomafana to explore the higher elevation forests. We entered the forest and had soon found a **Red-fronted Coua**, getting excellent looks at this beautiful rainforest cuckoo. **Blue Coua** eventually followed suit, improving on our views from yesterday, and we found a flock of **Madagascar Blue Pigeons** feeding on berries. We got to an area where the local guide knew of a **Short-legged Ground-Roller** territory, and one responded distantly to playback. It wasn't coming closer, so we went to it, bushwhacking our way through the forest understory. And then there it was—sitting in the canopy, as they do, very still, allowing for nice views.

We climbed in elevation as the trail continued, where we started looking for birds like **Brown Emutail** and **Rufous-headed Ground-Roller**. We were temporarily distracted when the guide's assistants located **Yellow-browed Oxylabes**. They did an incredible job of staying with the birds until we arrived and making sure both birds and birders were in position to encounter each other. We returned to our ground-roller quest where we had heard one calling earlier. Soon enough it was calling at close range, then the guides spotted it. It took a bit of effort but eventually everyone in the group had tremendous views of **Rufous-headed Ground-Roller**, our fourth species of this endemic family of five. A **Brown Emutail** toyed with us in the same area, singing at close range, but only a lucky few glimpsed it as it skulked. **Madagascar Flufftail** toyed with us too, but that one was more cooperative and we all got decent enough views of this super secretive bird when it crossed the path, then crossed back.

We took a well-earned lunch break at the stone picnic table in the forest, before heading back down the mountain. Birds had gotten pretty quiet in the middle of the day. We did find some

Milne-Edward's Sifakas and **Red-fronted Lemurs** on the way, along with two new geckos for the trip, **Peacock Day Gecko** and **Lined Day Gecko**.

After an afternoon rest back at the hotel, we headed back to the edge of the park for a night walk. After seeing a couple of chameleons and an **Elephant Weevil**, we waited for a **Rufous Mouse Lemur** to come in for its daily banana treat, which it eventually did. Meanwhile, we got to see a **Madagascar Tree Boa** and a bunch of **chameleons**, including **Blue-legged**, **O'Shaugnessy's**, **Carpet**, and **Short-horned**. A couple people in the group also saw a **dwarf lemur**, with the local species thought to be undescribed.



Cuckoo-roller. Photo by Josh Engel.

Day 15, December 2. Ranomafana to Antsirabe.

We had a long drive today, so we only birded a little bit on the way out from Ranomafana, along the main road through the park. We looked again for Cryptic Warbler after our distant views yesterday, but couldn't find it. We did get nice views of **Stripe-throated Jery** and **Blue Coua**. We made it to Antsirabe in the late afternoon and settled in to our lovely hotel.

Day 16, December 3. Antsirabe to Andasibe.

We had another long driving day today. We stopped on the outskirts of Tana to trade in our bus for 4x4 vehicles. As we made our way to the rainforest of Andasibe, we stopped along the way for **Hamerkop** in roadside rice paddies and for a couple of large falcons flying around, but our views of insufficient to tell if they were Sooty or Eleonora's Falcon. We figured we could stop by the spot again on the reverse trip. We arrived to yet another lovely hotel, situated on a hilltop adjacent to the forest, for a four night stay. We were greeted upon our arrival by **Madagascar**

Starlings in the parking lot, improving on our previous distant views. We ate dinner and prepared for our big day ahead.

Day 17, December 4. Iaroka Community Reserve.

With three full days in the Andasibe-Matnadia area, we decided to go all in on our first day and get the most physically demanding day out of the way. We had a very early departure, driving over very bumpy dirt roads, eventually arriving to Iaroka Community Reserve, where we had one goal in mind: to see the spectacular, endangered **Helmet Vanga**. Almost immediately upon getting out of the car, we heard **Cryptic Warbler**, and tracked it down for vastly improved views from our very distant looks a few days prior. Our first **Malagasy Spinetails** were also flying over the forest. But we knew Helmet Vanga wouldn't be so easy, so we started walking, led by our local birding guide and multiple local forest guides. We stopped again when we heard **Common Sunbird-Asity** in an area with a multitude of mistletoe flowers and with a bit of effort everyone got decent looks at these diminutive birds.

We continued trekking through the forest, basically off trail most of the way, crossing small streams over homemade wooden bridges. At some point one of the guides who had gone off scouting came back to get us; we split up into a faster group and a slower group. We all met up after climbing a forested slope to learn that there were three fledgling **Helmet Vangas** in view, with the parents were occasionally coming to feed them. We watched on in astonishment as the blue-billed parents dropped into the understory to feed the chicks, which were brown and had dark, not fully grown bills. We were lucky enough to get to spend an extended time watching them, not least because it provided a good rest for our weary legs.



Helmet Vanga feeding a chick. Photo by Josh Engel.

Eventually, the three chicks flew off, one after another, and the parents followed. Almost as soon as that happened, we started hearing the calls of other vangas. A flock was moving through right where we were standing, which meant Bernier's Vanga could be around. As the flock moved through—**Tylas, Blue, White-headed**—Jimmy spotted a **Nuthatch Vanga**. It was cooperative and we got good views, especially thanks to our elevated perch on the hillside. At the same time, we started hearing the call of **Bernier's Vanga** from below us. Before we knew it there it was, then a second, then a third; all were female. The whole group got excellent views of this rare vanga, also endangered, and one we held little hope of seeing.

After the excitement died down, we started the long walk back to the vehicles and were relieved to finally make it to them. The local guides were invaluable in our efforts, so we thanked them and dropped them near their home as we made our way to another targeted birding stop, this time for **Madagascar Rail**. Yet another Madagascar endemic, another endangered species, came out and showed off for us in an area where the wetlands were taking over the dirt track. We made one final stop on the way to the hotel, for a roosting **Malagasy Scops-Owl**, before making it back and enjoying a well-deserved cold beer and some time in the refreshing pool.



Madagascar Pygmy-Kingfisher with prey. Photo by Josh Engel.

Day 18, December 5. Andasibe-Mantadia National Park.

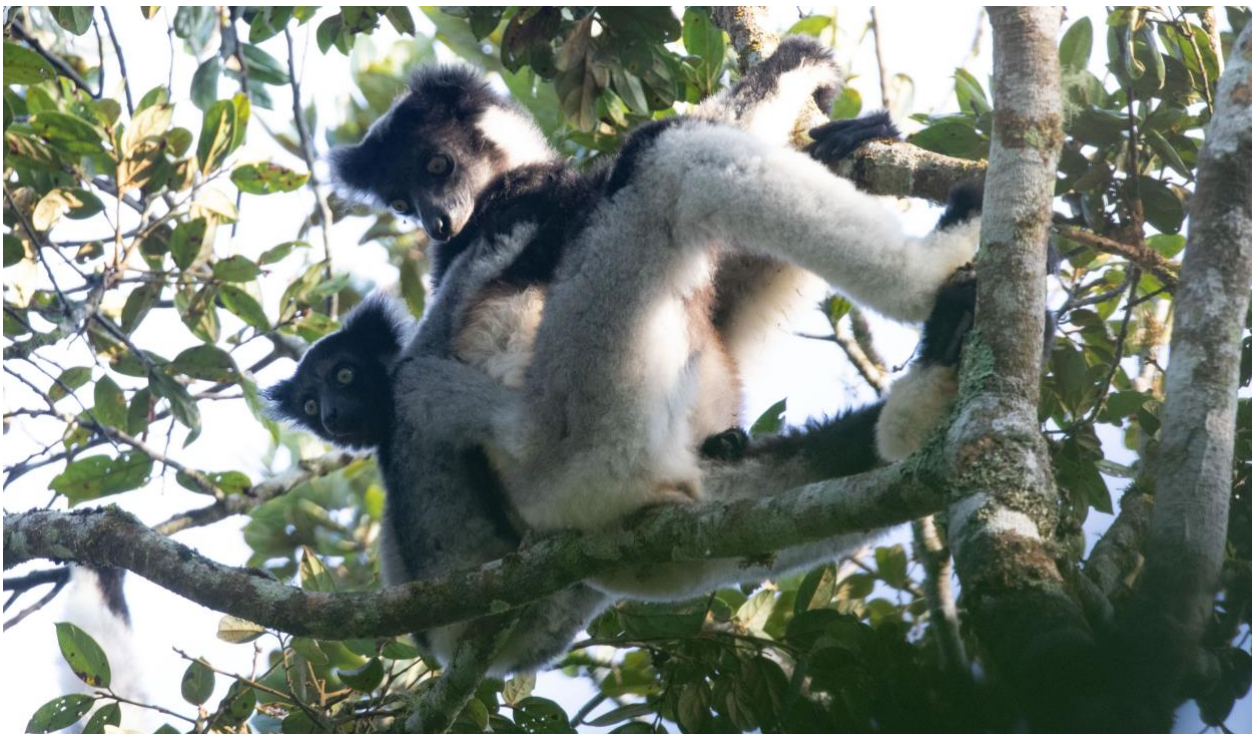
We set out early again, this time to go deep into Mantadia National Park. We made a few stops to look for Scaly Ground-Roller, without success. After the relative ease with which we saw the other four ground-roller species, we were due for a challenge. We did find **Madagascar Grebe** easily and had nice views of **Black-and-white Ruffed Lemur** and **Diademed Sifaka**, while **Indris** were often audible in the distance. Some people were lucky enough to see a **Lowland Streaked Tenrec**, a strange small mammal, hurry away through the leaf litter. After lunch, we made one

more attempt for **Scaly Ground-Roller**, and a couple of people saw it whiz past us in flight, but we lost it after it landed. We returned out of the forest to buy our tickets for the park for the following day and finally saw our first **Ward's Flycatchers** around the parking lot, along with **Short-horned** and **Big Nose Chameleons**.

Day 19, December 6. Andasibe-Mantadia National Park.

We returned to the national park for another morning to give another try for Scaly Ground-Roller. It proved difficult again, with the shy birds not willing to show themselves. We took a break from our search to walk a short distance up a hill in the same area to look for **Henst's Goshawk**. We found it almost immediately and got tremendous views of the beastly forest hawk as it flew around and perched over us in the canopy.

We descended the slope again, back into **Scaly Ground-Roller** territory, when our local guide got excited—there it was! He gathered everyone around and this time the bird cooperated; we watched it tossing leaves out of the way as it foraged for prey on the forest floor, showing off its intricate plumage. Having worked hard for it, seeing it so well was all the sweeter.



Indri mama and baby. Photo by Josh Engel.

It was still early, so we left the national park and went to VOIMMA Community Reserve. We soon saw **Indri** for the first time after hearing it regularly over the last day and a half. We had excellent views of **Madagascar Ibis** feeding along the stream the reserve. We also came across an excellent mixed flock, where we got great views of **Blue**, **White-headed**, and **Red-tailed**

Vangas, Ward's Flycatcher, Rand's Warbler, and several others. Our local guide got a phone call from a friend in the reserve that he had just located **Red-breasted Coua**, one of our remaining targets, so we headed that way and they were able to herd the bird to us for great looks. This meant we had seen every species of coua in Madagascar, and we had seen them all extremely well.

After lunch, we returned to the forest. A **Malagasy Scops-Owl** was roosting in bamboo in a good spot to take its picture and our local guide took us to a **Collared Nightjar** roosting under a pandanus, another off our shrinking list of target birds. **Red-billed Ducks** and a family of **Eurasian Moorhens** were on the reserve's lake. **Eastern Bamboo Lemurs** showed nicely, including a mother with a new baby. We added another snake, a **Forest Madagascar Garter Snake**, as well as a couple of new frogs, including a beautiful **Betsileo Reed Frog**.

After taking a rest and a swim back at the hotel, we took a night walk in another local reserve. We saw three species of nocturnal lemurs, all of them seen extremely well: **Eastern Woolly Lemur, Crossley's Dwarf Lemur**, and the miniature **Goodman's Mouse Lemur**. We also saw quite a few frogs and chameleons, but not the hoped for Madagascar Owl.

Day 19, December 6. Andasibe to Tana.

We had a final morning in the forest before heading back to the capital. Our main target for the morning was **Madagascar Wood-Rail**, which we found easily, watching a family of two adults and three chicks on the forest floor (again with the assistance of local guides carefully herding them to us). We then located a family of **Indris** with a baby and got to hear their vocalizations as close range, which is an incredibly experience. We also watched in amazement as two of the Indris played and fought, often hanging from the trees by a single hand. We also came across a pair of **Parson's Chameleon**, one of the world's biggest chameleon, the male almost neon green thanks to the proximity of a female. We had nice views again of **Red-breasted Coua**, but once again the Madagascar Owl was a no-show.

We stopped on the way back to Tana where we had seen some large falcons that evaded identification on the way down. We were relieved to see they were still in the area, flying over the ridges and perching in tall eucalyptus on the edge of a small forest patch. This time we were able to get views and photos that confirmed them as **Eleonora's Falcon**, whose entire population spends the northern winter in Madagascar. We stopped for some souvenir shopping on our way in to Tana, before making it to our oasis of a hotel to celebrate the end of the trip.

Day 20, December 7. Tana and departure.

With our flight not until nighttime, we took advantage of the time to do some more Madagascar birding and sightseeing and shopping. We visited a few random lakes near Tana, but didn't find much of interest, before returning to the sure bet birding spot in the area, Lac Alarobia, which we had also visited on the first day. The place was again, as usual, chock full of waterbirds. Ed, who joined the tour late, was able to see his first **Madagascar Pond-Heron**.

Unlike our first time there, we found a pair of **Meller's Ducks**, seeing them at much closer range than we had in Ranomafana. We also had great views of a **Humblot's Heron**—meaning we saw three endangered species at one small lake near the center of Madagascar's capital. We also saw our last **chameleon**, an **Oustalet's**, and our last gecko, a **Lined Day Gecko**, of the trip. We did some final souvenir shopping, including for local vanilla and spices, and downed a few final Three Horses Beers before it was finally time to head to the airport.

It had been a remarkable trip—we calculated that we saw 85% of all of the endemic birds of the island, including all of the most sought-after ones possible, along with 20 lemurs and a long list of reptiles, frogs, crazy insects, and cool plants. It was a once-in-a-lifetime trip to the Eighth Continent, superbly organized by the ground agent, that will linger in our memories for a long, long time.

BIRD LIST. 185 species (including 94 endemics, 23 regional endemics, 4 breeding endemics).

Taxonomy follows the Clements/eBird Checklist, 2019 update. Former or alternate English names are in parentheses. *=Madagascar endemic; ^=Indian Ocean regional endemic. (H) = heard only; (L) = tour leader only. The global IUCN red list status is listed for threatened and near-threatened species: CR=Critically Endangered, EN=Endangered, VU=Vulnerable, NT=Near-threatened.

White-faced Whistling-Duck	<i>Dendrocygna viduata</i>
Hottentot Teal	<i>Spatula hottentota</i>
*Meller's Duck (EN)	<i>Anas melleri</i>
Red-billed Duck	<i>Anas erythrorhyncha</i>
*Bernier's Teal (EN)	<i>Anas bernieri</i>
Helmeted Guineafowl	<i>Numida meleagris</i>
*Madagascar Partridge	<i>Margaroperdix madagarensis</i>
Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>
Lesser Flamingo (NT)	<i>Phoeniconaias minor</i>
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
*Madagascar Grebe (VU)	<i>Tachybaptus pelzelni</i>
Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>
^Madagascar Turtle-Dove	<i>Streptopelia picturata</i>
Namaqua Dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>
*Madagascar Green-Pigeon	<i>Treron australis</i>
*Madagascar Blue-Pigeon	<i>Alectroenas madagascariensis</i>
*White-breasted Mesite (VU)	<i>Mesitornis variegatus</i>
*Brown Mesite (VU)	<i>Mesitornis unicolor</i>
*Subdesert Mesite (VU)	<i>Monias benschi</i>
*Madagascar Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles personatus</i>

*Crested Coua	<i>Coua cristata</i>
*Verreaux's Coua (NT)	<i>Coua verreauxi</i>
*Blue Coua	<i>Coua caerulea</i>
*Red-capped Coua	<i>Coua ruficeps</i>
*Red-fronted Coua	<i>Coua reynaudii</i>
*Coquerel's Coua	<i>Coua coquereli</i>
*Running Coua	<i>Coua cursor</i>
*Giant Coua	<i>Coua gigas</i>
*Red-breasted Coua	<i>Coua serriana</i>
^Madagascar Coucal	<i>Centropus toulou</i>
Madagascar Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus rochii</i>
*Collared Nightjar	<i>Gactornis enarratus</i>
^Madagascar Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus madagascariensis</i>
^Malagasy Spinetail	<i>Zoonavena grandidieri</i>
Alpine Swift	<i>Apus melba</i>
^Madagascar Swift	<i>Apus balstoni</i>
Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>
African Palm-Swift	<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>
*Madagascar Wood-Rail	<i>Mentocrex kioloides</i>
*Madagascar Flufftail	<i>Sarothrura insularis</i>
*Madagascar Rail (VU)	<i>Rallus madagascariensis</i>
^White-throated Rail	<i>Dryolimnas cuvieri</i>
Eurasian Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Red-knobbed Coot (H)	<i>Fulica cristata</i>
Baillon's Crake	<i>Zapornia pusilla</i>
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
Black-bellied Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>
Greater Sand-Plover	<i>Charadrius leschenaultii</i>
Kittlitz's Plover	<i>Charadrius pecuarius</i>
Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>
*Madagascar Plover (VU)	<i>Charadrius thoracicus</i>
Three-banded Plover	<i>Charadrius tricollaris</i>
White-fronted Plover	<i>Charadrius marginatus</i>
*Madagascar Jacana (NT)	<i>Actophilornis albinucha</i>
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
Bar-tailed Godwit (NT)	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>
Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>
Curlew Sandpiper (NT)	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>
Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>

*Madagascar Snipe (VU)	<i>Gallinago macrodactyla</i>
Terek Sandpiper	<i>Xenus cinereus</i>
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
*Madagascar Buttonquail	<i>Turnix nigricollis</i>
Crab-Plover	<i>Dromas ardeola</i>
Oriental Pratincole	<i>Glareola maldivarum</i>
Madagascar Pratincole (VU)	<i>Glareola ocularis</i>
Saunders's Tern	<i>Sternula saundersi</i>
White-winged Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>
Great Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bergii</i>
Lesser Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bengalensis</i>
Red-tailed Tropicbird	<i>Phaethon rubricauda</i>
African Openbill	<i>Anastomus lamelligerus</i>
Hamerkop	<i>Scopus umbretta</i>
Little Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>
Gray Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
^Humblot's Heron (EN)	<i>Ardea humbloti</i>
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Black Heron	<i>Egretta ardesiaca</i>
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>
Madagascar Pond-Heron (EN)	<i>Ardeola idae</i>
Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>
Black-crowned Night-Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
*Madagascar (Crested) Ibis (NT)	<i>Lophotibis cristata</i>
*Madagascar Harrier-Hawk	<i>Polyboroides radiatus</i>
*Madagascar Cuckoo-Hawk	<i>Aviceda madagascariensis</i>
^Madagascar Harrier (EN)	<i>Circus macroscelus</i>
^Frances's Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter francesiae</i>
*Madagascar Sparrowhawk (NT)	<i>Accipiter madagascariensis</i>
*Henst's Goshawk (NT)	<i>Accipiter henstii</i>
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>
*Madagascar Fish-Eagle (CR)	<i>Haliaeetus vociferoides</i>
*Madagascar Buzzard	<i>Buteo brachypterus</i>
Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>
*Malagasy Scops-Owl	<i>Otus rutilus</i>
*Torotoroka Scops-Owl	<i>Otus madagascariensis</i>

*White-browed Owl	<i>Athene superciliaris</i>
^Cuckoo-roller	<i>Leptosomus discolor</i>
*Madagascar Hoopoe	<i>Upupa marginata</i>
^Malagasy Kingfisher	<i>Corythornis vintsioides</i>
*Madagascar Pygmy-Kingfisher	<i>Corythornis madagascariensis</i>
Madagascar (Olive) Bee-eater	<i>Merops superciliosus</i>
Broad-billed Roller	<i>Eurystomus glaucurus</i>
*Short-legged Ground-Roller (VU)	<i>Brachypteracias leptosomus</i>
*Scaly Ground-Roller (VU)	<i>Brachypteracias squamiger</i>
*Pitta-like Ground-Roller	<i>Atelornis pittoides</i>
*Rufous-headed Ground-Roller (NT)	<i>Atelornis crossleyi</i>
*Long-tailed Ground-Roller (VU)	<i>Uratelornis chimaera</i>
^Madagascar Kestrel	<i>Falco newtoni</i>
Eleonora's Falcon	<i>Falco eleonora</i>
Sooty Falcon (VU)	<i>Falco concolor</i>
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
^Greater Vasa Parrot	<i>Coracopsis vasa</i>
^Lesser Vasa Parrot	<i>Coracopsis nigra</i>
*Gray-headed Lovebird	<i>Agapornis canus</i>
*Velvet Asity	<i>Philepitta castanea</i>
*Schlegel's Asity (NT)	<i>Philepitta schlegeli</i>
*Common Sunbird-Asity	<i>Neodrepanis coruscans</i>
*Madagascar Cuckooshrike	<i>Coracina cinerea</i>
*Archbold's Newtonia	<i>Newtonia archboldi</i>
*Common Newtonia	<i>Newtonia brunneicauda</i>
*Dark Newtonia	<i>Newtonia amphichroa</i>
*Tylas Vanga	<i>Tylas eduardi</i>
*Red-tailed Vanga	<i>Calicalicus madagascariensis</i>
*Red-shouldered Vanga (VU)	<i>Calicalicus rufocarpalis</i>
*Nuthatch-Vanga	<i>Hypositta corallirostris</i>
*Chabert Vanga	<i>Leptopterus chabert</i>
*Crossley's Vanga	<i>Mystacornis crossleyi</i>
^Blue Vanga	<i>Cyanolanius madagascarinus</i>
*Hook-billed Vanga	<i>Vanga curvirostris</i>
*Ward's Flycatcher	<i>Pseudobias wardi</i>
*Rufous Vanga	<i>Schetba rufa</i>
*Helmet Vanga (EN)	<i>Euryceros prevostii</i>
*Bernier's Vanga (EN)	<i>Oriolia bernieri</i>
*Sickle-billed Vanga	<i>Falculea palliata</i>
*White-headed Vanga	<i>Artamella viridis</i>

*Pollen's Vanga (NT)	<i>Xenopirostris polleni</i>
*Lafresnaye's Vanga	<i>Xenopirostris xenopirostris</i>
*Van Dam's Vanga (EN)	<i>Xenopirostris damii</i>
^Crested Drongo	<i>Dicrurus forficatus</i>
^Madagascar Paradise-Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone mutata</i>
Pied Crow	<i>Corvus albus</i>
*Madagascar Lark	<i>Eremopterix hova</i>
*Common Jery	<i>Neomixis tenella</i>
*Green Jery	<i>Neomixis viridis</i>
*Stripe-throated Jery	<i>Neomixis striatigula</i>
^Madagascar Cisticola	<i>Cisticola cherina</i>
^Madagascar Brush-Warbler	<i>Nesillas typica</i>
*Subdesert Brush-Warbler	<i>Nesillas lantzii</i>
*Madagascar Swamp Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus newtoni</i>
*Brown Emutail	<i>Bradypterus brunneus</i>
*Gray Emutail	<i>Amphilais seebohmi</i>
*White-throated Oxylabes	<i>Oxylabes madagascariensis</i>
*Long-billed Bernieria	<i>Bernieria madagascariensis</i>
*Cryptic Warbler	<i>Cryptosylvicola randrianasoloi</i>
*Wedge-tailed Jery (NT)	<i>Hartertula flavoviridis</i>
*Thamnornis (Warbler)	<i>Thamnornis chloropetoides</i>
*Yellow-browed Oxylabes (NT)	<i>Crossleyia xanthophrys</i>
*Spectacled Tetraka	<i>Xanthomixis zosterops</i>
*Appert's Tetraka (VU)	<i>Xanthomixis apperti</i>
*Rand's Warbler	<i>Randia pseudozosterops</i>
Plain Martin	<i>Riparia paludicola</i>
Mascarene Martin	<i>Phedina borbonica</i>
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Madagascar Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes madagascariensis</i>
^Madagascar White-eye	<i>Zosterops maderaspatanus</i>
Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>
*Madagascar Starling	<i>Hartlaubius auratus</i>
*Madagascar Magpie-Robin	<i>Copsychus albospecularis</i>
*Forest Rock-Thrush	<i>Monticola sharpei</i>
*Littoral Rock-Thrush	<i>Monticola imerina</i>
African Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquatus</i>
^Souimanga Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris sovimanga</i>
^Madagascar Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris notatus</i>
*Nelicourvi Weaver	<i>Ploceus nelicourvi</i>
*Sakalava Weaver	<i>Ploceus sakalava</i>

^Red Fody	<i>Foudia madagascariensis</i>
*Forest Fody	<i>Foudia omissa</i>
*Madagascar Munia	<i>Lonchura nana</i>
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
*Madagascar Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flaviventris</i>

MAMMAL LIST. 23 species. As there is no standardized list of English mammal names, the names used here are ones in common usage (with alternate names are in parentheses). (H) = heard only; (L) = tour leader only. The global IUCN red list status is listed for threatened and near-threatened species: CR=Critically Endangered, EN=Endangered, VU=Vulnerable, NT=Near-threatened.

Lowland Streaked Tenrec - *Hemicentetes semispinosus*
 "Ankarafantsika" Dwarf Lemur - *Cheirogalus* sp.
 Crossley's (Furry-eared) Dwarf Lemur - *Cheirogalus crossleyi*
 Golden-brown mouse lemur (EN) - *Microcebus ravelobensis*
 Goodman's Mouse Lemur (VU) - *Microcebus lehilahytsara*
 Rufous (Brown) Mouse Lemur (VU) - *Microcebus rufus*
 Eastern Woolly Lemur (VU) - *Avahi laniger*
 Western Woolly Lemur (EN) - *Avahi occidentalis*
 Indri (CR) - *Indri indri*
 Coquerel's Sifaka (EN) - *Propithecus coquereli*
 Diademed Sifaka (CR) - *Propithecus diadema*
 Milne-Edwards's Sifaka (EN) - *Propithecus edwardsi*
 Verreaux's Sifaka (EN) - *Propithecus verreauxi*
 Common Brown Lemur (NT) - *Eulemur fulvus*
 Red-fronted Lemur (NT) - *Eulemur rufifrons*
 Golden Bamboo Lemur (CR) - *Hapalemur aureus*
 Eastern Gray Bamboo Lemur (VU) - *Hapalemur griseus*
 Ring-tailed Lemur (EN) - *Lemur catta*
 Black-and-white Ruffed Lemur (CR) - *Varecia variegata*
 Petter's Sportive Lemur (VU) - *Lepilemur petteri*
 Zombitse (Hubbard's) Sportive Lemur (EN) - *Lepilemur hubbardorum*
 Eastern Red Forest Rat (Island Mouse) - *Nesomys rufus*
 Black Rat - *Rattus rattus*

HERP LIST. ~46 species of reptiles, 6 amphibians. As there is no standardized list of English names for reptiles and amphibians in Madagascar, the names used here are (where available) from *Wildlife Guide to Madagascar* by Behrens & Barnes (with alternate names are in parentheses) or from iNaturalist.org. Some taxa are only identifiable to genus based on current knowledge. [(H) = heard only; (L) = tour leader only. The global IUCN red list status is listed for

threatened and near-threatened species: CR=Critically Endangered, EN=Endangered, VU=Vulnerable, NT=Near-threatened.]

Snakes (9 species, including 1 leader only)

Madagascar Tree Boa - *Sanzinia madagascariensis*

Giant Hognose Snake - *Leioheterodon madagascariensis*

Blonde Hognose Snake (L) - *Leioheterodon modestus*

Betsileo White-banded Tree Snake – *Parastenophis (Lycodryas) betsileanus*

Common Madagascar Cat-eyed Snake - *Madagascarophis colubrinus*

Forest Madagascar Garter Snake - *Thamnosophis infrasignatus*

Mahafaly Sand Snake - *Mimophis mahfalensis*

Four-striped Snake - *Dromicodryas quadrilineatus*

Collared Bright Snake (White-lipped Smooth Snake) - *Liophidium torquatum*

Chameleons (13 species)

Brown Leaf Chameleon - *Brookesia superciliaris*

Brygoo's Leaf Chameleon - *Brookesia brygooi*

Parson's Chameleon (NT) - *Calumna parsoni*

Big Nose Chameleon - *Calumna nasutum*

Short-horned (Elephant-eared) Chameleon - *Calumna brevicorne*

O'Shaughnessy's Chameleon (VU) - *Calumna oshaughnessyi*

Perinet (Band-bellied) Chameleon - *Calumna gastrotaenia*

Cryptic (Blue-legged) Chameleon - *Calumna crypticum*

Carpet Chameleon - *Furcifer lateralis*

Rhinoceros Chameleon (VU) - *Furcifer rhinocerotus*

Two-banded (Belted) Chameleon (EN) - *Furcifer balteatus*

Oustalet's Chameleon - *Furcifer oustaleti*

Jeweled Chameleon (VU) - *Furcifer campani*

Geckos (~13 species)

Sakalava Madagascar Velvet Gecko - *Blaesodactylus sakalava*

Ambonihazo Madagascar Velvet Gecko - *Blaesodactylus ambonihazo*

Dwarf gecko spp. - *Lygodactylus* spp (probably three different species)

Common House Gecko - *Hemidactylus frenatus*

Fish-scaled gecko sp. - *Geckolepis* sp.

Günther's Leaf-tailed Gecko - *Uroplatus guentheri*

Mossy Leaf-tailed Gecko - *Uroplatus sikorae*

Koch's (Madagascar) Day Gecko - *Phelsuma kocki*

Lined Day Gecko - *Phelsuma lineata*

Peacock (Four-spotted) Day Gecko - *Phelsuma quadriocellata*

Standing's Day Gecko - *Phelsuma stangi*

Other lizards (8 species)

Three-eyed Lizard - *Chalarodon madagascariensis*

Cuvier's Madagascar Swift - *Oplurus cuvieri*

Dumeril's Madagascar Swift - *Oplurus quadrimaculatus*

Gravenhorst's Skink - *Trachylepis gravenhorstii*

Elegant Skink - *Trachylepis elegans*

Madagascar Plated Lizard - *Zonosaurus madagascariensis*

Western Plated Lizard - *Zonosaurus laticaudatus*

Madagascar Keeled Plated Lizard - *Tracheloptychus madagascariensis*

Crocodiles (1 species)

Nile Crocodile - *Crocodylus niloticus*

Turtles (2 species)

Yellowbelly Mud Turtle - *Pelusios catanoides*

Spider Tortoise (CR) - *Pyxis arachnoides*

Frogs (6 species identified)

Betsileo Reed Frog - *Heterixalus betsileo*

Baron's Mantella - *Mantella baroni*

Bott's Bright-eyed Frog - *Boophis bottae*

Red-eyed Bright-eyed Frog - *Boophis luteus*

Madagascar jumping frog - *Aglyptodactylus madagascariensis*

Indian Bullfrog - *Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*



Spider Tortoise. Photo by Josh Engel.



Subdesert Mesite



Red-shouldered Vanga.



Parson's Chameleon



Madagascar Fish Eagle