



*Subdesert Mesite (Craig Robson)*

# ULTIMATE MADAGASCAR

10 – 30 OCTOBER 2017

**LEADER: CRAIG ROBSON**

This year's tour delivered an impressive selection of Malagasy specialities. Iconic species like the ground rollers, asities, and mesites were all seen well, and other highlights included feeding Bernier's Teal, several Humblot's Herons, Madagascar Grebe, Madagascar Cuckoo-Hawk and Madagascar Sparrowhawk at their nests, Madagascar Fish Eagle, nest-building Madagascar Wood Rails, Madagascar Plover, Madagascar Snipe, Madagascar Sandgrouse, 10-11 species of coua, roosting Madagascar Owl and Collared Nightjar, Cuckoo Roller, Madagascar Pygmy Kingfisher, 20 species of vanga, including Crossley's and the much-

wanted Helmet, Red-tailed Newtonia, both Brown and Grey Emutails, White-throated Oxylabes on the nest, Wedge-tailed Jery, Appert's Tetraka, and Madagascan Yellowbrow.

We also saw a very respectable 35 species of mammal. 25 species of lemur were headlined by the impeccable Indri, and the likes of Diademed Sifaka, while Lesser Hedgehog Tenrec, the lovely Ring-tailed Mongoose, and scores of Humpback Whales are also worthy of a mention. The lucky few, even had brief views of a road-crossing Fossa. For those with a more in-depth and wide-ranging love of wildlife, there were 34 species of reptiles and amphibians to be appreciated, and numerous interesting plants and insects, from Giraffe-necked Weevils to Hissing Cockroaches.



*Brown Mesite can be extremely tame (Craig Robson)*

The tour began with a long drive from the capital, Antananarivo, to Ranomafana National Park. There was little for us to see on the way, though we did gain a strong impression of what much of interior Madagascar looks like. A number of common endemics were seen for the first time: Madagascan Lark, Madagascan Cisticola, Madagascan Stonechat, Madagascan Wagtail, and Red Fody. Stopping at a very interesting marshy area, at dusk, we just had time to get some really great views of Madagascan Snipe. We were happy to finally reach our accommodation just outside the park boundary.

We had the following two days and an early morning to search for all of the specialities in and around this rainforest reserve. We visited the higher ridges of the Vohiparara area the most. With our guides scuttling off in various directions, we were able to see an unbelievably confiding pair of Brown Mesites, several nice Madagascan Blue Pigeons and Blue Couas, a Red-fronted Coua that was tempted across the trail, a singing Rufous-headed Ground Roller, a dazzling Madagascan Pygmy Kingfisher, Dark Newtonia, our first Red-tailed Vangas, the amazing ground-dwelling Crossley's Vanga, Ward's Flycatcher, a tree-top Cryptic Warbler

(living-up to its name), flock-loving Grey-crowned Tetrakas, super-skulkers like Brown Emutail and Madagascar Yellowbrow, the very secretive Wedge-tailed Jery, and Forest Rock Thrushes near their nest. There was no nest known for Yellow-bellied Sunbird Asity during our visit, and our considerable efforts only brought a couple of Common Sunbird Asities. Several beautiful male Velvet Asities were very confiding, but a couple of Madagascar Ibises were skittish along the trail ahead of us. Beyond Vohiparara, we were taken to some very interesting heathland with boggy areas. The tricky Madagascar Flufftail and Grey Emutail both performed really well here, and we also saw our only Forest Fodies of the trip. Flight views of Madagascar Partridge and a distant Malagasy Harrier were both completely unexpected.

Lower down, near the park headquarters, we explored the trails at Telatekely. Even here, the terrain was very undulating, but our walking effort was rewarded with a nest-building pair of Madagascar Wood Rails, fine views of Pitta-like Ground Roller, and we eventually all caught up with Pollen's Vanga, which was harder to get onto than the more widespread Tylas Vanga, our first of many Hook-billed Vangas, Rand's Warbler, and Madagascar Starlings. This was also the best area for mammals, with a tame Ring-tailed Mongoose on the main trail, and both Golden and Greater Bamboo Lemurs. The latter species is considered to be Critically Endangered, with only around 500 animals left.



*Benson's Rock Thrush at Isalo (Craig Robson)*

From Ranomafana, we drove to a very nice hotel in the central highlands at Isalo, amidst some stunning scenery. Exploring a number of nearby sites the following morning, we found two pairs of the shy Madagascar Partridge, as well as our first Madagascar Buttonquails and, finishing off at the Isalo Museum before breakfast, two nice Benson's Rock Thrushes - an interior endemic that is sometimes lumped in Forest Rock Thrush.

After a very enjoyable breakfast, we travelled the relatively short distance to Zombitse-Vohibasia National Park. We checked in and met our guides, and then we were off on a circuit through the forest. First a couple

of roosting White-browed Owls, followed by a pair of Appert's Tetrakas, feeding in the leaf-litter and lower storey, totally unconcerned by our presence. A pair of Madagascar Buttonquails were seen at close range on the ground, our first Coquerel's Coua was a tame one, we enjoyed the amazing Cuckoo Roller for the first time, and a brooding Hook-billed Vanga on its nest in a baobab was neat. Mammals were represented by our first Verreaux's Sifakas and a roosting Hubbard's Sportive Lemur. We had a picnic lunch back at headquarters, and were joined by two super-tame Giant Couas!



*Appert's Tetraka at Zombitse-Vohibasia NP (Craig Robson)*

From Zombitse, we headed towards the coast, and the coral-rag plateau of La Table. We were soon joined by our local guide Mosa, who led us off down a narrow trail, whistling the song of Red-shouldered Vanga as he went. Before too long there was a distant response, then closer, and closer still, until we were enjoying superb close-ups of this rare and only relatively recently discovered vanga. Although collected in 1947, it was not described as a distinct species until 1997. There were several other good birds at La Table. Both Running and Verreaux's Couas showed well, a very responsive female Lafresnaye's Vanga gave excellent close views, and we saw our first Subdesert Brush Warbler. A short drive took us to our hotel in Toliara (Tulear).

Early the following morning we drove south-east from Toliara to some coastal flats with a number of freshwater pools. This was one of the old sites for Madagascar Sandgrouse, and Mosa thought it was worth a try. Right on cue, at almost exactly the specified time, a pair flew in and alighted in the open, allowing a fairly close approach. By one of the small pools, we also enjoyed nice scope views of the local form of

Three-banded Plover, that some authorities are splitting-off as a distinct species, Madagascan Three-banded Plover. It was then time to drive to the harbour, where 'zebu chariots' were waiting to transport us to a speedboat, which in turn transported us across the clear blue waters to the island of Nosy Ve. After an uneventful journey in calm seas, we finally arrived at the island, and then walked to the famous breeding colony of Red-tailed Tropicbirds. These stunning birds showed to perfection, both in flight, where they put on some amazing aerial displays, and under the bushes where they were nesting. The only other bird of real note on the island was a single Common House Martin, which turned out to be a new species for Madagascar! A short boat ride then took us to the coastal village of Anakao where our target bird, Littoral Rock Thrush, was quickly found after we had enjoyed a cold drink. A large number of Sakalava Weavers were raiding cooking rice behind the small houses. Cutting inshore in our boat, we returned to Toliara and enjoyed a good lunch at our hotel.



*A male Red-shouldered Vanga at La Table (Craig Robson)*

Moving on north to Ifaty, our next stop was the habitat of the rare Madagascan Plover on the desiccated salt flats by some pools. A pair of tame plovers was soon located by Mosa. The pools held our first stately Humblot's Heron, and we also saw Kittlitz's and White-fronted Plovers and a range of commoner shorebirds. Afterwards, we drove a short distance to our wonderful hotel, located by the beach, for a two-night stay.

With more-or-less two days to explore the spiny forest near Ifaty, we set about finding our target birds. Most of our birding was done in the Mosa Family Reserve, which forms part of a site known as Forêt de baobabs. The birding was unbelievably good, and thanks to our local guide Mosa and his helpers we had more or less cleaned up by the end of the morning on the following day. New birds kept coming hot on the heels of each other: the uncommon Madagascan Sparrowhawk perched-up near its nest, a brooding Madagascan Nightjar

in the leaf-litter, Greater Vasa Parrot, *Thamnornis* tracked down singing from a *Didiera* tree, and a pair of Archbold's *Newtonias* that eventually settled down and gave fine views. We also saw the local form of Crested Coua, which is sometimes treated as a distinct species now, Rufous-vented Coua, and we had brief but initial views of the amazing Sickle-billed Vanga. Two of the most memorable birds however, were a Subdesert Mesite sitting motionless on a spiny branch and giving superb views, and a wonderful Long-tailed Ground Roller at very close quarters - surely the avian symbol of the spiny forest. One bird gave us the run-around though, right until the last minute, and that was Brown-capped Coua, a local species that is generally split-off from the more widespread Red-capped. Fortunately, some quick-thinking by Mamy took us to a small reserve near Toliara, where a pair were confiding and easily seen.



*Long-tailed Ground Roller (Craig Robson)*

On the mammal front, we were shown the as yet undescribed Black-shouldered Sportive Lemur, as well as a fantastic Lesser Hedgehog Tenrec, and the guides showed us a fascinating range of other wildlife, including the amazing Conehead Katydid and Madagascar Hissing Cockroach.

Wetlands to the south of Ifaty were also of interest, with Great Flamingos, another (or perhaps the same) Humblot's Heron, a good range of shorebirds, and lots of Madagascar Mannikins.

Our plane to Fort Dauphin departed after lunch and, on arrival at our hotel, we just had enough time to get taxis down to the cape. Several Madagascar Gulls (a likely split from Kelp Gull) were seen distantly, while Humpback Whales showed beautifully just offshore.

Very early the next morning we headed inland to remote Andohahela National Park, in search of the rare Red-tailed Newtonia. After a tortuous two-hour drive, we made it to the place, and then followed our local guides along a forest trail. Fortunately, once we reached the first well-known territory of the bird, it didn't take too long to find an obliging newtonia. We didn't stay long here, but other good highlights included the rare Collared Brown Lemur and a Madagascan Tree Boa living-up to its name.



*Ring-tailed Lemur (Craig Robson)*

Following more terrible roads, with a pause for our picnic lunch, we eventually found our way to the Berenty Reserve. For the remainder of the afternoon and the following morning, we were led around a large part of the site by our park guide. Berenty is probably most famous for its Ring-tailed Lemurs and Verreaux's Sifakas, but it is also home to some really good birds. Our only Madagascan Cuckoo-Hawk (actually a baza) of the tour was seen very well at its nest, and we also had good views of France's Sparrowhawk, Madagascan Green Pigeon, Giant Coua, Western Barn, Torotoroka Scops and White-browed Owls, and Grey-headed Lovebirds. It only took a relatively short night-walk to get brilliant views of multiple Grey-brown Mouse and White-footed Sportive Lemurs.

After another night in Fort Dauphin, we had some time before our flight to Antananarivo. A couple of hours exploring vantage points around the cape resulted in no further sightings of Madagascan Gull, but we reckoned to have seen more than 50 Humpback Whales. Surely this is one of the best places to views this species from dry land anywhere in the World.

After arriving back in Antananarivo, delayed somewhat as usual, we drove east to Andasibe (Perinet), arriving at our very nicely situated hotel after dark.

Andasibe is the focus-point for several protected areas, most of which we visited during our stay. Closet to the village was the V.O.I. M.M.A. Community Reserve, where we spent a good deal of our time following our

very experienced local guide, Patrice. Exhaustive searches for the elusive Red-breasted Coua drew a complete blank, even when we employed extra guides. Madagascar Ibis showed somewhat better than before, we had a couple of good flight views of Madagascar Harrier-Hawk, another Madagascar Pygmy Kingfisher, and excellent views of White-headed, Blue and Nuthatch Vangas. Here, we also had our first encounter with the wonderful Indri, a lemur that calls like a gibbon. Across the road, Patrice found us a brilliant roosting Madagascar Owl, and a night-walk produced Rainforest Scops Owl at point-blank range, Goodman's Mouse Lemurs and Greater Dwarf Lemurs.



*Our Short-legged Ground Roller at Andasibe-Mantadia NP (Craig Robson)*

Some of our most memorable sightings however, were at Mantadia (in Andasibe-Mantadia National Park), where we spent the best part of a day. A Red-breasted Coua was seen crossing the road by our front vehicle and, on arrival, we set about seeing our last two ground rollers, the tricky Short-legged and Scaly. Short-legged likes ridges, and when Patrice found one calling, we had to ascend a ridge to get to the bird. It wasn't too bad, and when we got up there, we were standing right underneath the bird! Amazing views. Scaly proved more difficult. We staked-out a nest-hole for a while, but it wasn't looking good. Fortunately, Patrice was able to locate a pair foraging further downstream. With some carefully manoeuvring by him and his son, we ended up getting brilliant views. A small secluded lake, one of many in the reserve apparently, was home to a lovely pair of Madagascar Grebes, and also our first Meller's Duck. Also of note at the reserve were a

Madagascan Ibis sitting tight on a nest, several Greater Vasa Parrots, and Spectacled Tetrakas. Mammals were brilliant too, as the reserve harbours both Black-and-white Ruffed Lemur and Diademed Sifaka, and we had great looks at both.

Andasibe-Analamazaotra Special Reserve forms the other part of Andasibe-Mantadia NP, and borders the property of Hotel Feon'ny Ala, where we stayed. Patrice led us to a superb Collared Nightjar on its nest here, and we had a long encounter with a family of Indris. Eastern Grey Bamboo Lemurs were noted in a small bamboo grove within the forest.



*Collared Nightjar on its nest (Craig Robson)*

The massive marshy plain at Torotorofotsy was deemed worthy of a visit, but we only managed to flush a handful of Madagascan Snipe during a late afternoon foray. Madagascan Rail was seen on several occasions closer to Andasibe, in the Vakona area.

Most of one day was also spent exploring part of the extensive Andasibe-Antavalobe Community Reserve, in the hope of finding the amazing Helmet Vanga. This proved to be quite an expedition but, thanks to our guide Mamy, we had great views of one that we thought may have come in to investigate a calling Cuckoo Roller. We never expected to get another look-in with Yellow-bellied Sunbird Asity, but this turned out to be a good site for it, with three of these incredible beauties coming to feed on tube-shaped red flowers. The scarce Bernier's Vanga turned out to be super-scarce during our visit, but a couple of us were lucky enough to see a Henst's Goshawk that had been heard calling from a hillside.

After our last morning session around Andasibe, we drove back to Antananarivo, with lunch en route. Before arriving at our hotel, we paid a visit to Lac Alarobia. Situated right in the city, it is really quite amazing what this tiny reserve holds. The twin lakes provide a safe haven for large flocks of waterfowl, and also support a considerable large waterbird breeding colony. Amongst the numerous Red-billed Teals and White-faced

Whistling Ducks we found several Hottentot Teals, as well as at least eight Meller's Ducks, and four hulking Knob-billed Ducks. Dotted amidst the thronging masses of Western Cattle and Dimorphic Egrets, Black, Black-crowned Night and Squacco Herons, we spotted several attractive Malagasy Pond Herons in full breeding plumage. We also had superb close views of a White-throated Rail and several Malagasy Kingfishers.



*Knob-billed Duck (Craig Robson)*

After a good night's sleep, we embarked on the long drive up to Ankarafantsika National Park in the north-west. We had time for a few birding stops along the way. The first, on an upland ridge with views across grassy slopes and marshy valleys, brought the desired male Malagasy Harrier floating in over a distant hill. After a sit-down lunch, we stopped at a bridge over the Betsiboka River. Bizarre rocky formations along the river-course provided habitat for the localised Madagascan Pratincole, and we saw three here. Marshy pools about an hour before our destination held a small number of African Pygmy Geese.

Ankarafantsika is a regionally and nationally important protected area, that safeguards a large expanse of dry tropical forest, and our simple accommodation was situated right in the habitat. Jackie and his colleague were our guides here, and we had a full day and a morning to explore the park. The first morning began with a search for the renowned Schlegel's Asity in a grid system adjacent to Lac Ravelobe. Our guides soon found a couple of females feeding on berries, and then there was a male - what a bird! Behind the accommodation and restaurant, a trail system snaked-up onto a plateau, with the impressive Ankarafantsika Gorge on the other side. Navigating the numerous trails, we were shown several nice White-breasted Mesites, lots of tame Red-capped Couas, one or two Coquerel's Couas, and good numbers of both the

localised Van Dam's and more widespread (but more attractive) Rufous Vanga. Ankarafantsika Gorge turned-out to be a breeding site for the distinctive local form of Peregrine Falcon, and we scoped an adult and two fledged youngsters on the far rim.

As well as exploring the forest, we took a boat ride around Lac Ravelobe. Along the far edge, we managed to get very close to a Madagascan Jacana. Then, following the shore around into a secluded bay, we flushed a Reed Cormorant, and then there was our main target, the stately Madagascan Fish Eagle. It allowed a very close approach, seemingly unperturbed. Sharp eyes also picked out another eagle, as well as yet another Humblot's Heron.



*An amazing male Schlegel's Asity (Craig Robson)*

Around the HQ clearing Sickle-billed Vangas were easily seen, and Cynthia even found a nest. This was also the place to see the local Coquerel's Sifaka family. At night, the sound of Milne-Edwards's Sportive Lemurs and Torotoroka Scops Owls abounded, and we saw both by torchlight. During a couple of excellent night-walks along a track at the edge of the reserve, we were shown Grey Mouse, Golden-brown Mouse, Fat-tailed Dwarf and Mongoose Lemurs.

We left Ankarafantsika and drove up to Mahajanga (Majunga), enjoying our last full night in Madagascar in a hotel. The Betsiboka Estuary was our final birding port-of-call, and not long after sunrise the following day we headed out there by speedboat. An hour later, as the tide dropped to reveal extensive mangrove fringing

mudflats, we were watching our two Endangered targets, five Bernier's Teal (with a population of only 1500 birds), and 20 Malagasy Sacred Ibises (only c.3000 left). There were also very good numbers of Lesser Flamingos, with at least 60 noted, and some very nice Terek Sandpipers. We needed to get back to Mahajanga in good time, as we had a very long drive ahead of us, all the way back to Antananarivo in fact. Due to unforeseen circumstances, we had been forced to take this boat trip on our last day, but it certainly seemed worthwhile at the time!



*Bernier's Teal on the falling tide (Craig Robson)*

There was little of note on the return journey, apart from another male Malagasy Harrier, not far from the one that we had seen on the way up, and by the time we reached the hotel, it was well after nightfall.

It had been a hell of an adventure, covering a significant part of the island in just three weeks, but for anyone who wants to see as much of Madagascar's amazing birds and wildlife as possible, it was certainly worth the effort!

## SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

Species which were heard but not seen are indicated by the symbol (H).

**White-faced Whistling Duck** *Dendrocygna viduata*

**Knob-billed Duck** *Sarkidiornis melanotos* Four at Lac Alarobia, and five at Lac Amboromolandy.

**African Pygmy Goose** *Nettapus auritus* Six in wetlands about an hour before Ankarafantsika.

**Meller's Duck** *Anas melleri* One at Andasibe-Andasibe-Mantadia NP; eight at Lac Alarobia.



*Meller's Duck (Craig Robson)*

**Bernier's Teal (Madagascar T)** *Anas bernieri* Close views of five at the Betsiboka Estuary.

**Red-billed Teal** *Anas erythrorhyncha*

**Hottentot Teal** *Anas hottentota*

**Helmeted Guineafowl (introduced)** *Numida meleagris*

**Madagascar Partridge** *Margaroperdix madagarensis* Two pairs in the Isalo area. Some very close views.

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

**Madagascar Grebe** *Tachybaptus pelzelni* A pair at Andasibe-Mantadia NP; single juvenile Lac Alarobia.

**Greater Flamingo** *Phoenicopterus roseus* At least six at Belalanda Wetlands, near Ifaty.

**Lesser Flamingo** *Phoenicopterus minor* A high count of 60 at the Betsiboka Estuary.

**Red-tailed Tropicbird** *Phaethon rubricauda* Great views on Nosy Ve, where about 20 were seen.

**Malagasy Sacred Ibis** *Threskiornis bernieri* 20 at the Betsiboka Estuary.

**Madagascar Ibis (M Crested I)** *Lophotibis cristata* 2 Ranomafana NP; 1 V.O.I.; 1 on nest Andasibe-Mantadia NP.

**Black-crowned Night Heron** *Nycticorax nycticorax* 150+ at Lac Alarobia, a few elsewhere.

**Striated Heron** *Butorides striata*

**Squacco Heron** *Ardeola ralloides*

**Malagasy Pond Heron** *Ardeola idae* Several breeding at Lac Alarobia.

**Western Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis*

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea* A few sightings; endemic *firasa*.

**Humblot's Heron** *Ardea humbloti* Two singles at wetlands south of Ifaty (same bird?); another at Lac Ravelobe.

**Purple Heron** *Ardea purpurea*

**Great Egret** *Ardea alba*

**Black Heron** *Egretta ardesiaca* Present at several wetlands. Breeding at Lac Alarobia.

**Dimorphic Egret** *Egretta dimorpha*

**Hamerkop** *Scopus umbretta* Occasional sightings, with two close-ups on a roadside pond.

**Reed Cormorant (Long-tailed C)** *Microcarbo africanus* Just one at Lac Ravelobe.



*Humblot's Heron near Ifaty (Craig Robson)*

**Madagascan Harrier-Hawk** *Polyboroides radiatus* Two at V.O.I. M.M.A. CR, and one at Andasibe-Antavalobe.

**Madagascan Cuckoo-Hawk** *Aviceda madagascariensis* One scoped nicely at Berenty; with a nest.

**Frances's Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter francesiae* A few seen; including one eating a gecko at close range.

**Madagascan Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter madagascariensis* Great views at Forêt de baobabs.

**Henst's Goshawk** *Accipiter henstii* Heard at Ranomafana NP and Antavalobe; seen at the latter by Carol and Neil.

**Malagasy Harrier** *Circus macroscelus* One at Ranomafana & single males on the way to, and from Ankarafantsika.

**Yellow-billed Kite** *Milvus aegyptius*

**Madagascan Fish Eagle** *Haliaeetus vociferoides* Two at Lac Ravelobe, where we had close perched views.

**Madagascan Buzzard** *Buteo brachypterus* Not uncommon.

**White-breasted Mesite** *Mesitornis variegatus* Great views at Ankarafantsika NP.

**Brown Mesite** *Mesitornis unicolor* Extremely close views of a pair at Ranomafana NP.

**Subdesert Mesite** *Monias benschi* Seen very well at Forêt de baobabs.



*Madagascan Fish Eagle surveying Lac Ravelobe (Craig Robson)*



*Madagascan Sparrowhawk near its nest at Ifaty (Craig Robson)*



*Adult and juvenile France's Sparrowhawk (Craig Robson)*

**Madagascar Wood Rail** *Canirallus kiolooides* A pair nest-building Ranomafana; three around Andasibe (Perinet).  
**Madagascar Flufftail** *Sarothrura insularis* Seen well at Ranomafana. Many heard.  
**Madagascar Rail** *Rallus madagascariensis* One or two showed quite well near Andasibe (Perinet).  
**White-throated Rail** *Dryolimnas cuvieri* Several good sightings, notably at Andasibe and Lac Alarobia.



*A confident White-throated Rail (Craig Robson)*

**Baillon's Crake** *Porzana pusilla* (H) Heard near Toliara (Tulear).  
**Common Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*  
**Red-knobbed Coot** *Fulica cristata* (H) Called briefly at Belalanda Wetlands.  
**Madagascar Buttonquail** *Turnix nigricollis* Excellent views at Zombitse-Vohibasia and Ankarafantsika NP's.  
**Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus*  
**Grey Plover (Black-bellied P)** *Pluvialis squatarola*  
**Common Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*  
**Madagascar Plover** *Charadrius thoracicus* Two adults near Ifaty. At the 'stinky ponds'.  
**Kittlitz's Plover** *Charadrius pecuarius*  
**Three-banded Plover (Madagascar T-b P)** *C. [tricoloris] bifrontatus* One scoped whilst waiting for the sandgrouse.  
**White-fronted Plover** *Charadrius marginatus* Noted at coastal sites.  
**Greater Sand Plover** *Charadrius leschenaultii*  
**Madagascar Jacana** *Actophilornis albinucha* One at close range along the far shore of Lac Ravelobe.  
**Madagascar Snipe** *Gallinago macrodactyla* One seen well Ankazomivady NR, five flushed at Torotorofotsy.

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica* Two at Toliara (Tulear).  
**Whimbrel (Eurasian W)** *Numenius [phaeopus] phaeopus*  
**Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*  
**Terek Sandpiper** *Xenus cinereus* Ten at the Betsiboka Estuary.  
**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*  
**Ruddy Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*  
**Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*



*Madagascar Plovers were tame (Craig Robson)*

**Madagascar Pratincole** *Glareola ocularis* Three seen very well at the Betsiboka Bridge, east of Maevatanana.  
**Kelp Gull (Madagascar G)** *Larus [dominicanus] melisandae* Several distantly in flight at Fort Dauphin.  
**Lesser Crested Tern** *Thalasseus bengalensis* Just one seen well en route to Nosy Ve.  
**Madagascar Sandgrouse** *Pterocles personatus* Two came to drink near the Bakuba Hotel, SE of Toliara.  
**Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon)** *Columba livia*  
**Malagasy Turtle Dove** *Nesoenas picturatus* Regularly seen in various forested areas.  
**Namaqua Dove** *Oena capensis* Common in arid country.  
**Madagascar Green Pigeon** *Treron australis* Best seen at Berenty.  
**Madagascar Blue Pigeon** *Alectroenas madagascariensis* Seen well a few times, at Ranomafana and Andasibe.  
**Malagasy Coucal** *Centropus toulou* Fairly common and widespread.  
**Crested Coua** *Coua cristata* Several seen well at Ankarafantsika NP.  
**Crested Coua (Chestnut-vented C)** *Coua [cristata] pyropyga* Small numbers in dry forests near Ifaty & at Berenty.  
**Verreaux's Coua** *Coua verreauxi* Good views of three at La Table.  
**Blue Coua** *Coua caerulea* Several good encounters in the rainforest.  
**Red-capped Coua** *Coua ruficeps* Common and easily seen at Ankarafantsika NP.  
**Red-capped Coua (Brown-c C)** *Coua [ruficeps] olivaceiceps* Tricky this year, but tame pair at Antsokay Arboretum.



*Most Couas were very confiding, like these Giant and Red-capped's (Craig Robson)*



Owls. Clockwise from top left: Rainforest Scops, Totooroka Scops, Madagascan and White-browed (Craig Robson)

**Red-fronted Coua** *Coua reynaudii* One seen well at Ranomafana NP.

**Coquerel's Coua** *Coua coquereli* One at Zombitse-Vohibasia, and two at Ankarafantsika NP.

**Running Coua** *Coua cursor* Seen well in the south-western dry forests.

**Giant Coua** *Coua gigas* Excellent views at Zombitse and Berenty.

**Red-breasted Coua** *Coua serriana* One crossed the road en route to Mantadia. Otherwise elusive around Andasibe.

**Madagascar Cuckoo** *Cuculus rochii* Often heard, occasionally seen.

**Western Barn Owl** *Tyto alba* Two roosting at Berenty (*poensis*).

**Torotoroka Scops Owl** *Otus madagascariensis* Seen very well at Berenty and Ankarafantsika.

**Rainforest Scops Owl** *Otus rutilus* Seen well in the Andasibe (Perinet) area.

**White-browed Hawk-Owl** *Ninox superciliaris* Good sightings at Zombitse and at Berenty.

**Madagascar Owl (M Long-eared O)** *Asio madagascariensis* A roosting adult at Andasibe. Heard at night at V.O.I.

**Collared Nightjar** *Caprimulgus enarratus* One on a nest at Andasibe-Analamazaotra Special Reserve.

**Madagascar Nightjar** *Caprimulgus madagascariensis* On a nest at Forêt de baobabs; often heard.

**Madagascar Spinetail** *Zonavena grandidieri* Two at Forêt de baobabs, and three at Andasibe-Antavalobe.

**African Palm Swift** *Cypsiurus parvus* Widespread in mostly small numbers.

**Alpine Swift** *Tachymarptis melba* A couple of sightings.

**Malagasy Black Swift** *Apus balstoni* Scattered sightings.



*Scaly Ground Roller (Craig Robson)*

**Cuckoo Roller** *Leptosomus discolor* Often heard, and seen very well on several occasions.

**Broad-billed Roller** *Eurystomus glaucurus* Fairly widespread, and especially easy to see at Ankarafantsika NP.

**Short-legged Ground Roller** *Brachypteracias leptosomus* Great views at Mantadia. Heard at Analamazaotra.

**Scaly Ground Roller** *Geobiastes squamiger* Two seen very well at Andasibe-Mantadia NP.

**Pitta-like Ground Roller** *Atelornis pittoides* Great views at Ranomafana NP. Heard around Andasibe.

**Rufous-headed Ground Roller** *A. crossleyi* Close views of 1 Ranomafana-Vohiparara. Heard Andasibe-Antavalobe.

**Long-tailed Ground Roller** *Uratelornis chimaera* Superb views of this iconic species at Forêt de baobabs.

**Madagascan Pygmy Kingfisher** *Corythornis madagascariensis* Singles at Ranomafana and Andasibe.

**Malagasy Kingfisher** *Corythornis vintsioides* Widespread sightings.

**Olive Bee-eater** *Merops superciliosus* Widespread and often common, especially in the west.

**Madagascan Hoopoe** *Upupa marginata* Occasional in dry forests, particularly at Ankarafantsika NP.

**Malagasy Kestrel** *Falco newtoni* Common and widespread.

**Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus* An adult and two fledged juveniles at Ankarafantsika Gorge (endemic *radama*).

**Greater Vasa Parrot** *Coracopsis vasa* Quite widespread, but less common than the next species.

**Lesser Vasa Parrot** *Coracopsis nigra* Widespread and quite common.

**Grey-headed Lovebird** *Agapornis canus* Fairly common in the western dry forest.

**Velvet Asity** *Philepitta castanea* Cracking views of males at Ranomafana, also at Andasibe (Perinet).

**Schlegel's Asity** *Philepitta schlegeli* A superb male, and also two females, at Ankarafantsika NP.

**Common Sunbird-Asity** *Neodrepanis coruscans* Two close-up singles at Ranomafana NP.

**Yellow-bellied Sunbird-Asity** *Neodrepanis hypoxantha* Three beauties at Andasibe-Antavalobe.



*A scintillating Blue Vanga (Craig Robson)*

**Red-tailed Vanga** *Calicalicus madagascariensis* Seen a handful of times, including nice males.

**Red-shouldered Vanga** *Calicalicus rufocarpalis* Great views of a pair at La Table.

**Hook-billed Vanga** *Vanga curvirostris* Widespread. One on a nest in a baobab at Zombitse.

**Lafresnaye's Vanga** *Xenopirostris xenopirostris* One at extremely close range at La Table.

**Van Dam's Vanga** *Xenopirostris damii* Not uncommon at Ankarafantsika NP.

**Pollen's Vanga** *Xenopirostris polleni* A few sightings at Ranomafana NP. Quite a tough one.

**Sickle-billed Vanga** *Falcula palliata* Easily seen at Ankarafantsika (Cynthia found a nest); also Forêt de baobabs.

**White-headed Vanga** *Artamella viridis* Small numbers at Andasibe (Perinet) and Ankarafantsika NP.

**Chabert Vanga** *Leptopterus chabert* Widespread. The commonest vanga.



*Lafresnaye's, Rufous and Sickle-billed Vangas (Craig Robson)*

**Blue Vanga** *Cyanolanius madagascarinus* A stunner! Best seen at Ankarafantsika NP.  
**Rufous Vanga** *Schetba rufa* This very smart vanga was fairly common at Ankarafantsika NP.  
**Helmet Vanga** *Euryceros prevostii* Thanks to Mamy, we saw a corker at Andasibe-Antavalobe.  
**Tylas Vanga** *Tylas eduardi* Small numbers at the rainforest sites; best seen at Ranomafana.  
**Nuthatch Vanga** *Hypositta corallirostris* Good views around Andasibe, but first seen at Ranomafana-Vohiparara.



*The remarkable Nuthatch Vanga was frequently encountered at Andasibe (Craig Robson)*

**Dark Newtonia** *Newtonia amphichroa* Seen well at Vohiparara, but just a couple.  
**Common Newtonia** *Newtonia brunneicauda* Common in wooded areas.  
**Archbold's Newtonia** *Newtonia archboldi* Good views of a pair at Forêt de baobabs.  
**Red-tailed Newtonia** *Newtonia fanovanae* A singing bird was seen well at Andohahela.  
**Ward's Flycatcher** *Pseudobias wardi* A few of these neat birds in the rainforest canopy.  
**Crossley's Vanga** *Mystacornis crossleyi* Superb close views at Ranomafana NP.  
**Madagascan Cuckooshrike** *Coracina cinerea* Several sightings; widespread.  
**Crested Drongo** *Dicrurus forficatus* Often common and very widespread.  
**Malagasy Paradise Flycatcher** *Terpsiphone mutata* Common in wooded areas.  
**Pied Crow** *Corvus albus* Common in open country throughout.  
**Madagascan Lark** *Eremopterix hova* Common in arid country.  
**Malagasy Bulbul** *Hypsipetes madagascariensis* Fairly common and very widespread.  
**Mascarene Martin** *Phedina borbonica* Widespread.

**Brown-throated Martin (Plain M) *Riparia paludicola*** A few sightings in the east.  
**Common House Martin *Delichon urbicum*** A single (presumed juvenile) at Nosy Ve, was a first for Madagascar.  
**Malagasy Brush Warbler *Nesillas typica*** Often heard and regularly seen except in the arid south-west.  
**Subdesert Brush Warbler *Nesillas lantzii*** Often heard with a few seen well in the arid south-west.  
**Madagascan Swamp Warbler *Acrocephalus newtoni*** Noted a few times in well-vegetated wetlands.  
**Brown Emutail *Bradypterus brunneus*** Quite good views of this notorious skulker at Ranomafana-Vohiparara.  
**Grey Emutail *Amphilais seebohmi*** Performed really well at Ranomafana-Amboditanimena Trail.  
**White-throated Oxylabes *Oxylabes madagascariensis*** Seen well at Ranomafana; on a nest!!



*Brooding White-throated Oxylabes at Ranomafana (Craig Robson)*

**Long-billed Bernieria (L-b Greenbul, Common Tetraka) *Bernieria madagascariensis*** Seen quite regularly.  
**Cryptic Warbler *Cryptosylvicola randrianasoloi*** Good views of a singing bird at Vohiparara. Heard at Andasibe.  
**Wedge-tailed Jery *Hartertula flavoviridis*** Seen very well at Vohiparara; thanks again to Mamy.  
**Thamnornis (T Warbler) *Thamnornis chloropetoides*** Great views at Forêt de baobabs; a couple.  
**Spectacled Tetraka (Short-billed T, S Greenbul) *Xanthomixis zosterops*** Best seen at Andohahela and Andasibe.  
**Appert's Tetraka (A Greenbul) *X. apperti*** Super-close views of the most confiding Tetraka at Zombitse; a pair.  
**Grey-crowned Tetraka (G-c Greenbul) *Xanthomixis cinereiceps*** A small flocks at Ranomafana NP.  
**Madagascan Yellowbrow *Crossleyia xanthophrys*** Two seen very well at Ranomafana-Vohiparara.  
**Rand's Warbler *Randia pseudozosterops*** Small numbers singing from tree-tops at the rainforest sites.  
**Common Jery *Neomixis tenella*** Widespread, with some strongly differing races. See notes.

**Green Jery** *Neomixis viridis* Several encounters in the rainforest.

**Stripe-throated Jery** *Neomixis striatigula* One of the commonest rainforest birds, at least by voice.

**Madagascan Cisticola** *Cisticola cherina* Fairly common in arid brush country.

**Malagasy White-eye** *Zosterops maderaspatanus* Widespread.

**Common Myna (introduced)** *Acridotheres tristis*

**Madagascan Starling** *Hartlaubius auratus* A handful at Ranomafana. Heard at Andasibe.

**Madagascan Magpie-Robin** *Copsychus albospectularis* Common and widespread.

**Littoral Rock Thrush** *Monticola imerina* A showy male at Anakao.

**Forest Rock Thrush** *Monticola sharpei* A pair were nesting at Ranomafana-Vohiparara.

**Forest Rock Thrush (Benson's R T)** *Monticola [sharpei] bensoni* Two cooperative males at Isalo.

**Madagascan Stonechat** *Saxicola sibilla* Well-scattered in the highlands. A nest with chicks in a pine tree!!

**Souimanga Sunbird** *Cinnyris sovimanga* Common and widespread.

**Malagasy Green Sunbird (Long-billed G S)** *Cinnyris notatus* A handful at various sites.

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus* Only seen at Mahajanga.

**Nelicourvi Weaver** *Ploceus nelicourvi* Good numbers at rainforest sites, and some nests noted.

**Sakalava Weaver** *Ploceus sakalava* Common in the south-west, a few elsewhere.

**Red Fody** *Foudia madagascariensis* Fairly widespread, sometimes common, mostly female-like birds.

**Forest Fody** *Foudia omissa* Only a couple seen at Ranomafana, a scarce species.

**Madagascan Mannikin (M Bibfinch)** *Lemuresthes nana* Noted at several sites, and in good numbers.

**Madagascan Wagtail** *Motacilla flaviventris* Occasional in the east.



*Madagascan Buttonquail at Ankarafantsika (Craig Robson)*

## MAMMALS

**Lesser Hedgehog Tenrec** *Echinops telfairi* One was shown to us by our guides at Forêt de baobabs.

**Madagascar Flying Fox** *Pteropus rufus* A good-sized roost at Berenty.

**Grey Mouse Lemur** *Microcebus murinus* One was identified during the first night-walk at Ankarafantsika NP.

**Brown Mouse Lemur *Microcebus rufus*** One coming to Banana-goo at Ranomafana.  
**Golden-brown Mouse Lemur (Golden M L) *Microcebus ravelobensis*** Common at Ankarafantsika NP.  
**Grey-brown Mouse Lemur (Reddish-grey M L) *Microcebus griseorufus*** Four at Berenty.  
**Goodman's Mouse Lemur *Microcebus lehilahytsara*** Two close-up during our first night-walk at Andasibe (Perinet).  
**Greater Dwarf Lemur *Cheirogaleus major*** Two at the roadside during our first night-walk at Andasibe (Perinet).  
**Fat-tailed Dwarf Lemur *Cheirogaleus medius*** Two at Ankarafantsika.  
**Milne-Edwards's Sportive Lemur *Lepilemur edwardsi*** Common at Ankarafantsika. Several seen (night and day).  
**Hubbard's Sportive Lemur *Lepilemur hubbardi*** One was shown to us at Zombitse.  
**White-footed Sportive Lemur *Lepilemur leucopus*** Quite common at Berenty.  
**Black-shouldered Sportive Lemur *Lepilemur sp. nov.*** One at Forêt de baobabs. Yet to be formally described.  
**Eastern Grey Bamboo Lemur (Grey B L) *Hapalemur griseus*** A handful in the Andasibe area.



*Greater Bamboo Lemur (Craig Robson)*

**Golden Bamboo Lemur *Hapalemur aureus*** Four at Ranomafana NP.  
**Greater Bamboo Lemur *Hapalemur simus*** Just two of these Critically Endangered lemurs at Ranomafana.  
**Ring-tailed Lemur *Lemur catta*** Common at Berenty.  
**Mongoose Lemur *Eulemur mongoz*** A handful seen very well at Ankarafantsika NP.  
**Red-bellied Lemur *Eulemur rubriventer*** Small numbers at rainforest sites.  
**Common Brown Lemur *Eulemur fulvus*** A few at Ankarafantsika NP and Andasibe (Perinet).  
**Red-fronted Brown Lemur *Eulemur rufus*** At Ranomafana (eight) and at Berenty (common). Introduced at the latter.  
**Collared Brown Lemur *Eulemur collaris*** A troupe of about eight at Andohahela NP.

**Black-and-white Ruffed Lemur** *Varecia variagata* Good views at Andasibe-Mantadia NP.  
**Western Avahi (Western Woolly Lemur)** *Avahi occidentalis* A couple seen nicely, roosting at Ankarafantsika.  
**Diademed Sifaka** *Propithecus diadema* A beauty at Mantadia.  
**Verreaux's Sifaka** *Propithecus verreauxi* Close encounters at Zombitse-Vohibasia NP, and Berenty.  
**Coquerel's Sifaka** *Propithecus coquereli* Great views at Ankarafantsika NP.  
**Indri** *Indri indri* This iconic lemur was seen several times around Andasibe (Perinet).  
**Fossa** *Cryptoprocta ferox* (NL) Some of the group saw a young one cross the road, en route to Ankarafantsika.



*Ring-tailed Mongoose (Craig Robson)*

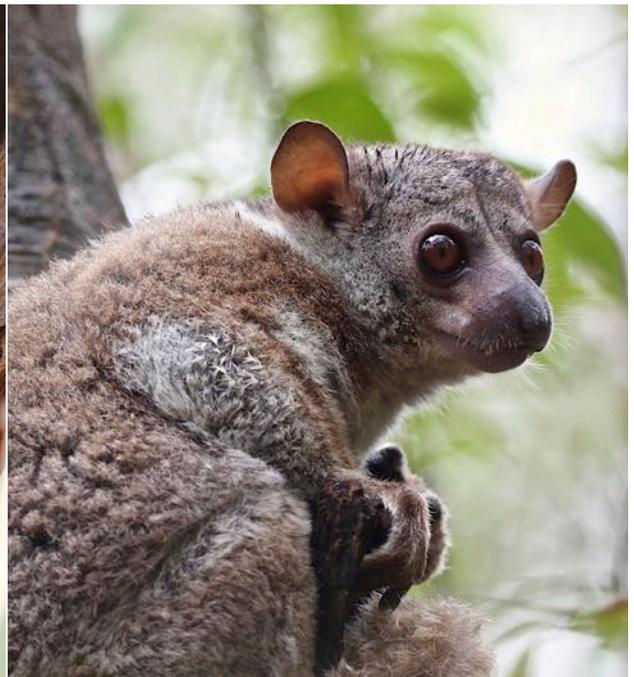
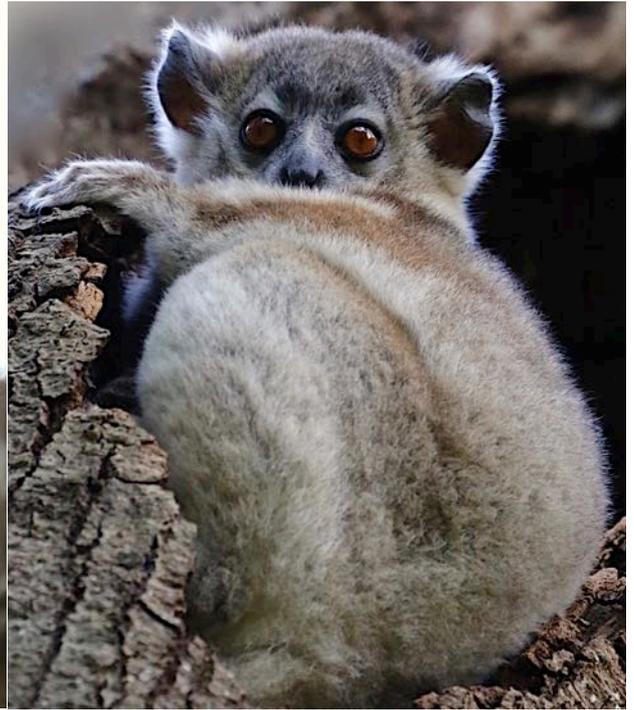
**Ring-tailed Mongoose** *Galidia elegans* A very tame individual at Ranomafana NP.  
**Eastern Red Forest Rat** *Nesomys rufus* A few seen at Ranomafana.  
**Western Tuft-tailed Rat** *Eliurus myoxinus* The nocturnal rats at Ankarafantsika; but we couldn't see the tuft!  
**Black Rat (introduced)** *Rattus rattus* A couple at Ranomafana.  
**Brown Rat (introduced)** *Rattus norvegicus* One at Toliara (Tulear).  
**Humpback Whale** *Megaptera novaengliae* Superb views of numerous animals off Fort Dauphin; 50+.



*Diademed Sifaka and Red-fronted Brown Lemur (Craig Robson)*



*Amazing mouse Lemurs. Clockwise: Brown, Golden-brown and Grey-brown (Craig Robson)*



*Sportive Lemurs. Clockwise from top left: Black-shouldered, White-footed, Milne-Edwards's & Hubbard's (Craig Robson)*

## NOTES TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST

### **Knob-billed Duck** *Sarkidiornis melanotos*

Old World and New World forms are now regarded as separate species, the names Knob-billed Duck and Comb Duck have in the past been used interchangeably for the enlarged species but the latter is now reserved for New World *S. sylvicola*.

### **Malagasy Sacred Ibis** *Threskiornis bernieri*

This distinctive form is sometimes lumped in African Sacred Ibis *T. aethiopicus* with the name Sacred Ibis being used for the enlarged species.

### **Dimorphic Egret** *Egretta dimorpha*

This species is sometimes lumped in Western Reef Heron *E. gularis*, or in Little Egret *E. garzetta*.

### **Malagasy Harrier** *Circus macroscelus*

This species was formerly lumped in Reunion Harrier *C. maillardi* with the name Malagasy or Madagascar Harrier being used for the enlarged species

### **Three-banded Plover (Madagascar T-b P)** *Charadrius [tricoloris] bifrontatus*

Some recent authors, including Birdlife/HBW, have split-off the endemic *bifrontatus* form as Madagascar Three-banded Plover *C. bifrontatus*, on the basis of several small differences in head and breast pattern and colour.

### **Whimbrel (Eurasian W)** *Numenius [phaeopus] phaeopus*

The IOC World List and many other authors use the name Whimbrel for this species. However, other authors split-off the North American form *hudsonicus* under the name Hudsonian Whimbrel.

### **Kelp Gull (Madagascan G)** *Larus [dominicanus] melisandae*

This taxon has a complex taxonomic history that is still not fully resolved. Traditionally, one species, Kelp Gull *L. dominicanus*, has been considered to account for all of the black-backed gulls breeding in the southern hemisphere. More recently some authors have separated southern African populations, including those in Madagascar, as Cape Gull *L. vetula*, based mainly on the somewhat different appearance of mainland African birds from those in South America (though preliminary genetic studies are confusing and, for example, show South African birds grouping with those in Chile but not Argentina). However, birds from Madagascar are still very poorly known, few specimens are available for study and their genetic profile has not yet been assessed. It is increasingly clear though that they look distinctly different from birds in southern Africa, being relatively small and slim-billed, in having yellow (sometimes bright yellow, not greyish-green) legs and pale eyes. In many regards, some look much more like a Lesser Black-backed Gull *L. fuscus* than *vetula*. Support for recognition as a separate taxon is strong. Some (including IOC) treat this form as a race of the enlarged Kelp Gull *L. dominicanus*, some as a race of Cape Gull *L. vetula* and, more recently, as a separate species altogether. Madagascan Gull only breeds in the south and south-west of the island, where it appears to be rather scarce (the largest flock ever recorded only contained 90 birds) and very localised.

### **Crested Coua (Chestnut-vented C)** *Coua [cristata] pyropyga*

Birdlife/HBW split-off this south-western form as a distinct species.

### **Red-capped Coua (Brown-capped C)** *Coua [ruficeps] olivaceiceps*

IOC and some other authors lump this form, which is found in the dry forests of the south-west, in Red-capped Coua *C. ruficeps*.

### **Torotoroka Scops Owl** *Otus madagascariensis*

#### **Rainforest Scops Owl** *Otus rutilus*

Torotoroka Scops Owl was only recently recognised and described as a distinct species. Prior to that all scops owls on Madagascar fell under the title of Madagascar Scops Owl *O. rutilus*. More recently still, the justification for the split has been questioned by some authors who query whether the vocal differences are as clear cut as previously claimed.

**Malagasy Black Swift** *Apus balstoni*

Some authors lump this species in African Black Swift *A. barbatus*.

**Madagascan Hoopoe** *Upupa marginata*

This species is sometimes lumped in African Hoopoe *U. africana*. *U. africana* is in turn sometimes lumped in Eurasian Hoopoe *U. epops*, with the name Hoopoe being used for the enlarged species.

**Common Jery** *Neomixis tenella*

We saw the following forms, some of which show vocal distinctions: Ranomafana (*orientalis*); SW dry forests (*decarleyi*); Andohahela & Berenty (*debilis*); Andasibe & Ankarafantsika (nominate).

**Forest Rock Thrush (Benson's R T)** *Monticola [sharpei] bensoni*

IOC include this form (which is often split-off as a distinct species) in Forest Rock Thrush *P. sharpei*. Recent research has cast doubt on the ecological separation of the two forms, something that was previously used as justification for a split. Even so, they are vocally distinct and largely geographically separated.

**Madagascan Stonechat** *Saxicola sibilla*

This is a recent split from African Stonechat *S. torquatus*, which previously also included forms from across Eurasia, with the name Common Stonechat being used for the greatly enlarged species.



'Spiny forest' at Forêt de baobabs, near Ifaty (Craig Robson)

## APPENDIX - Other fauna & flora recorded

### AMPHIBIANS

Spiny Rain Frog *Scaphiophryne spinosa* Ranomafana.

Marbled Rain Frog *Scaphiophryne marmorata* Andasibe V.O.I. M.M.A. CR M.M.A.

Madagascar Jumping Frog *Aglyptodactylus madagascariensis* Andasibe area.

Baron's Mantella *Mantella baroni* Ranomafana.

Boulenger's Madagascar Frog *Gephyromantis boulengeri* Andasibe V.O.I. M.M.A. CR M.M.A.



*Baron's Mantella* (Craig Robson)

### REPTILES

Nile Crocodile *Crocodylus niloticus* Ankarafantsika.

Short-horned Chameleon (Elephant-eared C) *Calumma brevicorne* Andasibe V.O.I. M.M.A. CR M.M.A.

Cryptic Chameleon *Calumma crypticum* Six at Ranomafana.

O'Shaughnessy's Chameleon *Calumma oshaughnessyi* Ranomafana.

Nose-horned Chameleon (Bignose C) *Calumma nasutum* Andasibe V.O.I. M.M.A. CR M.M.A.

Oustalet's Chameleon *Furcifer oustaleti* Zombitse-Vohibasia, Lac Alarobia, and Ankarafantsika.

Warty Chameleon *Furcifer verrucosus* Berenty Reserve.

Rhinoceros Chameleon *Furcifer rhinoceratus* Ankarafantsika.

Madagascar Spiny-tailed Iguana *Oplurus cuvieri* Common in the north.

Three-eyed Lizard *Chalarodon madagascariensis* Zombitse-Vohibasia, Forêt de baobabs, Berenty Reserve.

Broad-tailed Girdled Lizard *Zonosaurus laticaudatus* Ankarafantsika.

Madagascar Girdled Lizard *Zonosaurus madagascariensis* Ranomafana.

Elegant Mabuya *Trachylepis elegans* Ankarafantsika.

Giant Madagascan Velvet Gecko *Blaesodactylus sakalava* Forêt de baobabs & Ankarafantsika.

Four-clawed Gecko *Gehyra mutilata* Feon'ny Ala, Andasibe.

Gray's Leaf-toed Gecko *Hemidactylus mercatorius* Feon'ny Ala, Andasibe, Ankarafantsika etc.

Mossy Leaf-tailed Gecko *Uroplatus sikorae* Andasibe.

**Spearpoint Leaf-tailed Gecko** *Uroplatus ebenau* Ankarafantsika.  
**Satanic Leaf-tailed Gecko** *Uroplatus phantasticus* Ranomafana.  
**Giant Madagascar Day Gecko** *Phelsuma madagascariensis* Ankarafantsika.  
**Standing's Day Gecko** *Phelsuma standingi* Zombitse-Vohibasia.  
**Malagasy Day Gecko** *Phelsuma modesta* Forêt de baobabs & Fort Dauphin.  
**Lined Day Gecko** *Phelsuma lineata* Andasibe.  
**Madagascan Tree Boa** *Sanzinia madagascariensis madagascariensis* Andohahela National Park.  
**Malagasy Cat-eyed Snake** *Madagascarophis colubrinus* Ankarafantsika.  
**Andasibe (Perinet) Night Snake** *Ithycyphus Andasibe perineti* Seen twice in the Andasibe area.  
**Slender Smooth Snake** *Liopholidophis rhadinaea* Ranomafana.  
**Bernier's Striped Snake** *Dromicodryas bernieri* Forêt de baobabs & Ankarafantsika.  
**Common Big-eyed Snake** *Mimophis mahfalensis* Forêt de baobabs.



*Madagascar Spiny-tailed Iguana (Craig Robson)*



*Oustalet's (top) and Cryptic Chameleons (Craig Robson)*

## BUTTERFLIES & MOTHS

Citrus Swallowtail *Papilio demodocus* En route to Ranomafana.

Madagascar Giant Swallowtail *Pharmacophagus antenor* La Table, Forêt de baobabs etc.

Red Clearwing *Acraea masamba* Lunch-time at Andasibe-Antavalobe etc.

Blue Pansy *Junonia orithya* Andasibe.

Malagasy Chocolate Pansy *Junonia goudotii* Andasibe.

Madagascar Banded Commodore *Precis andremiaja* Lunch-time at Andasibe-Antavalobe.

Plain Tiger *Danaus chrisippus* Widespread.

Comet Moth *Argema mittrei* This spectacular endemic moth came to the restaurant lights at Andasibe (Perinet).

Walker's Owl *Erebus macrops* On the café wall at Ranomafana.

## BEETLES

Giraffe-necked Weevil *Trachelophorus giraffe* A few in the eastern rainforests.

## GRASSHOPPERS & ALLIES

Conehead Katydid *Colossopus grandidieri* Forêt de baobabs.

## GIANT COCKROACHES

Madagascar Hissing Cockroach *Gromphadorhina portentosa* Forêt de baobabs.



*Conehead Katydid in the spiny forest at Forêt de baobabs (Craig Robson)*

## PLANTS

Low's Cynorkis *Cynorkis lowiana* Ranomafana NP.

Pink Oeonia *Oeonia rosea* Ranomafana.

Darwin's Orchid *Angraecum sesquipedale* Ranomafana.

orchid *Aerengis sp.* Andasibe V.O.I. M.M.A. Community Reserve.



*Giraffe-necked Weevil and Madagascar Hissing Cockroach (Craig Robson)*



*Attractive scenery during the drive from Isalo to Toliara (Craig Robson)*