



## MADAGASCAR, the 8<sup>th</sup> Continent!

Species List November 17-30, 2016, with extension Nov. 30-Dec. 5, 2016

Alastair Kilpin, Guide (Birding Africa) with local guide Fidson Albert, Peg Abbott, Tour Host, and 10 participants:  
Helge, Dave, Peter, Pat, Michael, Gail, John, Brenda, Elaine and Elaine.

- (E) Endemic to Madagascar
- (RE) Regional endemic Madagascar and surround Indian Ocean Islands
- (#) Number of days seen
- ↗ Seen on extension only (15 species)

Reference Locations appear at end of this list

### BIRDS:

#### Anatidae: Ducks, Geese & Swans – 4 species

- **White-faced Whistling-Duck** *Dendrocygna viduata* – At least 400 seen at Lac Alarobia, perched and flying, mixed in with other waterfowl species. (1)
- **(E) Meller's Duck** *Anas melleri* – Five individuals (groups of 2 and 3) seen on the two ponds at Lac Alarobia. We also had a pair at the small quarry lake in Mantadia National Park where we got very good views. (2)
- **Red-billed Teal** *Anas erythrorhyncha* – Very common at Lake Alarobia, equal numbers with the whistling ducks, at least 300 seen on our visit. (1)
- **Hottentot Teal** *Anas hottentota* – Fewer in number but still present with an estimated 100 seen, many in the quieter back pond near the reed beds. (1)

#### Numididae: Guineafowl – 1 species, feral or domestic

- **Helmeted Guineafowl** *Numida meleagris* – Peg saw two near the extensive hotel kitchen garden at Jardin du Roy in Isalo. We passed a couple at a small village en route to the extension, both coming and going, either feral or domesticated. (1 + E)

#### Phasianidae: Pheasants & Allies – 1 species

- **(E) Madagascar Partridge** *Margaroperdix madagascarensis* – Our first morning at Isalo we flushed two up a small draw between the dramatic rock features, David and Peter had a good spot on them and tried to direct us – a few got looks at them on the ground but for most it was just a flight view. With luck and a bit of persistence that afternoon, we had two out in the open in short grass on our sunset walk back through the grasslands. (1)

#### Podiicipedidae: Grebes – 2 species

- **Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis* – Seen on the drive from Ifaty back to Toliara, we took a walk for an hour or so back to a small lake, where 80 is perhaps the low number for this species count. There were several breeding plumage pairs, some accompanied by a light plumaged chick, and then many non-breeding plumage individuals in both the reeds and the open water. (1)
- **(E) Madagascar Grebe** *Tachybaptus pelzelinii* – To our delight we found a pair at the small lake in Mantadia National Park, watching them all through the time of our picnic lunch. We discovered they were building a nest, the female would sit and arrange leaves brought by the male. They did quite a bit of calling and greeting and eventually mated. Quite a view into the lives of a secretive and declining species. (1)

### Phaethontidae: Tropicbirds – 1 species

- **Red-tailed Tropicbird** *Phaethon rubricauda* – Stunning views at Nosy Be, in flight at close range, and two birds were seen on their nests. (1)

### Phalacrocoracidae: Cormorants – 1 species

- **Long-tailed (Reed) Cormorant** *Microcarbo africanus* – One individual seen flying over the flooded fields and stream corridor by the Andasibe Bay Hotel. (1)

### Anhingidae: Darters & Aningas – 1 species

- ♂ **African Darter** *Anhinga rufa* – One individual perched up on a dead snag at Lac Ravelobe, seen from the bridge in the scope. (E-1)

### Scopidae: Hamerkop – 1 species

- **Hamerkop** *Scopus umbretta* – Three individuals seen on our travel day from Isalo to Ranomafana through extensive highland rice fields. We found them again on our next big travel day leaving Ranomafana. Four were together and we stopped the bus, getting good looks at their crazy raised head feathers. (4+E) Extension: A few seen in flooded fields leaving Tana.

### Ardeidae: Herons & Bitterns – 11 species

- **Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea* – One individual seen on the beach at Nosy Ve. (1)
- ♂ (E) **Humboldt's Heron** *Ardea humbloti* – Peg spotted one individual across the lake on our first afternoon in Ankarafantsika. We scanned from the lakeshore as Fidson went for our local guide. We did not see it the next day on our boat trip, so were glad we made the effort right away. (E-1)
- **Purple Heron** *Ardea purpurea* – One individual in flight moving towards the small pond at our hotel in Isalo. We had a lone individual poised to hunt on a small peninsula at the Feony'ala pond adjacent to Andasibe National Park where we enjoyed an afternoon coffee. (2+E) Extension: We had 6 in Lac Ravelobe at the extension, best views were from the boat trip eye-to-eye.
- **Great Egret** *Ardea alba* – Seen right away in rice fields around Tana, then at Lac Alarobia an estimated 120, with maybe 80 on the back rookery and the rest feeding or flying about. We saw them infrequently on the travel day from Isalo to Ranomafana when passing through the highland rice fields, 2-3 that day. We saw more in the rice fields leaving Ranomafana, one section that also hosted a heronry had over twenty in one field. (6+E) Extension: Twenty or so seen at the Betsiboka River Delta. One individual at Lac Ravelobe, some in adjacent fields and seen in flooded fields coming and going.
- **Little (Dimorphic) Egret** *Egretta garzetta dimorpha* – Almost all white phase, a few with mixed, in huge number nesting and resting at Lac Alarobia, 600+. Also, nesting in smaller numbers with Cattle Egrets at the Zoo. Some on the ocean side of our drive from Ifaty to Toliara, near mangroves. Leaving Ranomafana, we passed a small town with a heronry right in town, in a mix of introduced pines and some native trees, this species mixed with Cattle Egrets, a couple hundred in total. (7+E) Extension: This was the dominant heron seen on the Betsiboka River Delta, with many dark phase birds being present here. They showed a white patch on the forewing in flight, breeding plumage.
- **Black Heron** *Egretta ardesiaca* – Eight seen at Lac Alarobia, none in the characteristic feeding posture of mantling, most were resting on the island of the rookery or in the back reed bed of the second, quieter pond. (1)
- **Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis* – Seen flying over Hotel Au Bois Vert, in the rice fields around the city of Tana and Ivato and present in big numbers at the Zoo (nesting, wild) and at Lac Alarobia. Seen while traveling north from Toliara roadside. We saw them on all our big travel days in small number, and in a heronry near a village about 2 hours out of Ranomafana heading north. (7+E) Extension: A hundred or so seen in mangroves at the B. Delta and a very large rookery at Lac Ravelobe. Birds were in prime plumage and the boat trip afforded us some great photo opportunities.
- **Squacco Heron** *Ardeola ralloides* – Big numbers at Lac Alarobia, at least 600+, some in luscious caramel colored breeding plumage. Many had chicks of different ages, lots of commotion on the nest areas. Nesting at both the Zoo and the Lac. Seen on our travel days, one village seemed to have a large rookery of this species and cattle egret as we headed north from Ranomafana. (2+E) Extension: Present at Lac Ravelobe but in much smaller number than the Cattle Egret, probably fewer still than the Malagasy Pond Herons numerous there, though we did not check and count all distant birds.

- **(RE) Madagascar Pond-Heron** *Ardeola idae* – Peg scanned through the hordes of Squacco Herons and found one bright breeding plumage (white with bright blue bill) adult of this species that we could all use as a textbook example. We also saw a clear immature in flight, likely there were others but we did not take time for thorough review. 2 birds also seen at Isalo between the riverine forest and the rice paddies (2+E) Extension: They were quite numerous at Lac Ravelobe and were mixed in with the Cattle Egret rookery. Here we had a good number of immature birds feeding on the water hyacinth and some breeding plumage adults active at the rookery.
- **Striated Heron** *Butorides striata* – One flying at Lac Alarobia. Another crossed the road on our travel day north from Ranomafana. There was one by Andasibe Hotel we would see in passing to and from our outings. At the last lunch served out on the patio it came in to land for all to view. (5+E) Extension: We saw a half dozen or so at Lac Ravelobe.
- **Black-crowned Night-Heron** *Nycticorax nycticorax* – First seen flying over the hotel at dusk, half a dozen or so, but then common at Lac Alarobia, adult and juveniles, estimate of 50 at the lake, and then another dozen or so at the Zoo. We had one fly over the Hotel Residence Madalief on our early morning walk. (3)

#### Threskiornithidae: Ibises and Spoonbills – 3 species

- ♂ **Glossy Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus* – Extension only. About 25 spotted feeding and flying in groups at Lac Ravelobe. (E – 2)
- **(E) Madagascar (Crested) Ibis** *Lophotibis cristata* – We had good looks at this increasingly rare species along the trail that parallels a small pond at Andasibe National Park. It fed in the leaf litter and generally walked the path ahead of us, all eventually getting good looks and even some photos. (1 + E) Extension: We saw this rare and beautiful species on a nest, a lone individual high in branches of a mature crowned tree nestled down in the stick construction.
- ♂ **(RE) (Malagasy) Sacred Ibis** *Threskiornis aethiopicus* – One individual found after 2 hours or so of searching the mangrove margins of the B. River Delta. We could scope it to see the pale eye, and its full bustle indicated we might have a breeding adult. (E – 1)

#### Accipitridae: Kites, Hawks & Eagles – 8 species

- **(E) Madagascar Harrier-Hawk** *Polyboroides radiatus* – This bird came flying in at speed over our heads as we waited on a ridgeline of Ranomafana's lower elevation section to see the Yellow-bellied Sunbird Asity male. As a result, some of us saw it from our prone positions. It took a moment to sort as we had just heard and seen a Madagascar Buzzard, this was a chase scene going on and the more dominant harrier-hawk chased the buzzard away. With luck, we found another pair that we could scope from our hotel grounds, a large nest high in a pine. We could see one of the adults tending the nest, then both came in, one appeared to be incubating. We could see the head and back color and colorful cere, but heard no vocalizations. (2)
- **(E) Madagascar Cuckoo Hawk** *Avecida madagascariensis* – We had an excellent sighting of a perched individual, then chased off by an angry Sickle-billed Vanga, at the spiny forest walk at Ifaty. We then had another in flight on the road north of Antsirabe, getting good looks at the outer primaries and overall shape to compare to the local, also endemic, buzzard. (2)
- ♂ **(RE) Reunion (Madagascar) Harrier** *Circus maillardi* – Fidson spotted a male as we drove through hills and gullies of the highlands, about two hour out of Tana. We hopped out and got great looks at a male, coursing either side of a gully dotted with pines and grassland. Later Pat spied another flying up one of the high ridges. (E – 1)
- **(RE) Frances's Goshawk** *Accipiter francesiae* – A leader only bird at Ranomafana, our local guide Fidson had a good look at one crossing the river and disappearing into the forest as we all photographed a leaf gecko down on the river shore... (1)
- **(E) Madagascar Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter madagascariensis* – In the spiny forest near Ifaty, one very alert adult watched us intently from a perch, and then flew a short way to its large stick nest. The other adult must have been off hunting, we did not linger long to give it a break, but long enough to admire this impressive species. (1)
- **Black (Yellow-billed) Kite** *Milvus migrans parasiticus* – Hotel Au Bois Verts, one flew over the grounds in the first evening sky. Several flew above the shopping frenzy that greeted us when we returned from our walk in the spiny forest near Ifaty. One seen as we drove from Ifaty to Toliara. They were more numerous around Isalo where we saw several per day, flying over the grasslands. In the Tapia woodland, we explored, Gail found a nest. One looked quite regal flying over the massive granite domes we passed en route to Ranomafana. We had them again on our travel day; one circled over as we were searching for snipe. (7 + E) Extension: We had one on the road feeding on a dead xx Cat and it did not want to go far from this treasure. They were present at Lac Ravelobe, and seen in flight on travel days 4-6 birds at varied locations each day.

- **↗ (E) Madagascar Fish-Eagle *Haliaeetus vociferoides*** – Two of this majestic eagle were present at Lac Ravelobe. They perched mainly on the far side, but made a flight to the road side, perching a bit closer, then one flew the length of the lake, buzzed by a Sooty Falcon. We heard their vocalizations as well, wonderful to see this rare species with such ease! (E – 2)
- **(E) Madagascar Buzzard *Buteo brachypterus*** – One seen at in the area of the hotel at Isalo, back by the garden area. We heard them several times, then got a quick view on the ridge at Ranomafana before it was chased away by a Madagascar Harrier Hawk. At the “snipe stop” we finally got excellent views. One flew right over our head, screaming, and a Cuckoo Roller was also in the sky to give it comparative proportions. Elaine then saw one perched and Peg got the scope on it, nice to see it so well. We had them again in Andasibe and Mantadia, seen in flight. (7) Extension: We had one screaming overhead as we observed a mixed group of vangas in Ankarafantsika on the Coquerel Loop trail, seen briefly from the Belle Vue point.

#### Mesitornithidae: Mesites – 3 species

- **↗ (E) White-breasted Mesite *Mesitornis variegatus*** – Extension only. Good views but too fast for photos in the deep dry forest trail we walked at Ankarafantsika National Park. (E – 1)
- **(E) Brown Mesite *Mesitornis unicolor*** – This was a species we would never have seen without Emile and his team of local guides. They tried several times to find one, whistling and in some cases getting a call back, only to have them out of range. Finally, as we were heading back they had a closer response. Emile got very excited and the crew dashed down slope. They moved them up towards us until the pair were within 20 yards, then closer, veering off finally when a few yards away. Few of us had been exposed to this cowboy style of birding, it was gentle but purposeful, short in duration and perhaps the only way to reveal this very secretive species. (1)
- **(E) Subdesert Mesite *Monias benschi*** – Though it took some time and particularly intent searching by our local guides, we had both a male and female in excellent view, able to put scopes on them, and to photograph them in their queer, frozen, alert posture, head slightly down and both atop a vine-clad medium height shrub. Both were silent. (1)

#### Rallidae: Rails, Crakes & Coots – 4 species

- **(E) White-throated Rail *Dryolimnas cuvieri*** – Gail spotted a female with three chicks, two still on the nest, while we walked the dike between the two ponds at Lac Alarobia, wow! We had all the time we wanted to view her feed, she went quite a way from the chicks, who were also off the nest when we returned for a second pass by the dike. This was the bird of the day for us! We heard one later in the trip while stopped at a small lake leaving Ranomafana, where we found Madagascar Snipe. At Andasibe, walking the trail that parallels a long thin lake, we had two adults with two chicks come down and walk the water’s edge. (3 + E)
- **↗ Allen’s Gallinule *Porphyrio alleni*** – Extension only. From the shore, and then again from the boat ride but in a different part of the lake, we spotted this species at Lac Ravelobe. (E-2)
- **Eurasian (Common) Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*** – A half dozen or so seen at Lac Alarobia, mingling with the mix of waterfowl species. We had an adult with several small chicks on the small pond at Mantadia National Park. (2)
- **Red-knobbed Coot *Fulca cristata*** – At least two individuals seen in Lac Alarobia reserve at Tana. (1)

#### Sarothruridae: Flufftails- 1 species

- **(E) Madagascar Flufftail *Sarothura insularis*** – Heard on our walk at the Vohiparara district of Ranomafana NP. We then tried for them with playback just outside Mantadia National Park and had one respond just a few feet away, it poked out to look and crossed in and out of grassy mounds, all got a very good view. (1)

#### Recurvirostridae: Stilts & Avocets – 1 species

- **Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*** – Eight or so individuals seen on small ponds as we drove the 30 km north from Toliara to our hotel. They were putting on a fine feeding display with exaggerated sweeping motions. We saw them on Lake Antsokay, which we walked in to as we drove from Ifaty to Toliara in the southwest part of the country. (2)

#### Charadriidae: Plovers – 6 species

- **Black-bellied (Grey) Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola* – A roadside find near Ifaty, one individual. (2+E) Extension: Three seen on the mudflats of the B. Delta from our boat tour.
- **Kittlitz's Plover** *Charadrius pecuarius* – We had four at the first pond we stopped at driving north out of Toliara, but then at the second stop where we hoped to find the far less common Madagascar Plover, a colorful one gave us a start – two Kittlitz at this second pond location. We had several in various ponds and at Lake Antsokay in the southwest near Ifaty. Three were in the field as we searched for sandgrouse near the hotel at Toliara. (3)
- **Common Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula* – Pat spotted one individual on the near side of a small pond that we stopped at roadside, coming north from Toliara. A few individuals in ponds on our return from Ifaty to Toliara. (2+E) Extension: Three seen together on the same mudflat at the B. River Delta on our boat trip.
- **(E) Madagascar Plover** *Charadrius thoracicus* – Our second stop near the village watering hole was successful, it was Gail that spotted two plovers at close range. We got great looks, and even our two that had made a vigorous walk with the guide to find them were able to return. There were three individuals, one a juvenile, and they were in short grass, moving off towards the salt ponds. (1)
- **Three-banded Plover** *Charadrius tricollaris* – A bright individual was on the far side of the pond as we stopped on our drive north of Toliara, and it was there again the next day as we returned. One individual was at Ankazomivady Reserve, where we found the snipe as we left Ranomafana. (3 + E)
- **White-fronted Plover** *Charadrius marginatus* – A pair was scoped and most cooperative on the beach with all the beautiful shells at Nosy Ve. (1+E) Extension: Two seen on a mudflat with many new mangrove shoots emerging on the B. River Delta on our boat trip.

#### Jacaniidae: Jacanas – 1 species

- ♂ (E) **Madagascar Jacana** *Actophilornis albinucha* – Extension only. One individual spotted by our keen-eyed boatman on Lac Ravelobe, we were able to watch it for quite some time. (E-1)

#### Scolopacidae: Sandpipers & Snipes – 9 species

- **Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus* – Peg spied a flock of ten coming towards us, and we watched them land on the salt ponds north of Toliara just before sunset. Seen on the beach at both hotels at Ifaty and Toliara. (4+E) Extension: Four seen on the boat trip on the B. River Delta boat trip.
- **Ruddy Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres* – Two individuals seen by the salt ponds as we watched Madagascar Plover, between Ifaty and Toliara, near the village watering hole. Another 2 seen on our beach walk at Nosy Ve. (2)
- **Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea* – Twenty or so around a good-sized pond that we scanned, getting out of the bus on our way north from Toliara. Three at the lake at Antsokay, and two at the small pond we hiked out to, two at the bay with mangroves. (2 + E) Extension: Many present on the mudflats and mangrove edges of the B. River Delta, the main shorebird species present there.
- **Sanderling** *Calidris alba* – One individual joined the tern and Crab Plover flock on the tip of the peninsula of sand at Nosy Ve. (1 + E) Extension: A half dozen seen on the B. River Delta.
- **Little Stint** *Caladris minuta* – A few seen feeding at the lake edge near Ifaty. Three small busy peeps at the edge of a group of twenty or more Curlew Sandpiper on a mudflat of the Betsiboka River Delta were judged to be this species, but scope viewing was a challenge in the rocking boat! (1 +E)
- **(E) Madagascar Snipe** *Gallinago macrodactyla* – We had really good looks, four individuals in total, of this species at Ankazomivady Reserve, a community reserve about two hours out of Ranomafana going north. (1)
- ♂ **Terek Sandpiper** *Xenus cinereus* – Extension only. Two spotted at different locations while on the boat trip on the B. River, likely others present but these two were clear. (E-1)
- ♂ **Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos* – Extension only. A dozen or so regularly scattered on the B. River Delta, seen from the boat trip. (E-1)
- **Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia* – A dozen or so individuals at the salt ponds by the small village we stopped at late in the day driving from Toliara, obviously coming in to roost for the night. Several at a roadside stop between Ifaty and Toliara. (2+E) Extension: One seen on the boat trip on the B. River Delta.

#### Turnicidae: Buttonquail – 1 species

- **(E) Madagascar Buttonquail** *Turnix nigricollis* – Great looks on the trail at Arboretum Antsokay, found by our local guide, who then kept it in the area for all to see, slowly moving it from path to path. In the end, we let it be, but all

got quite good looks, not easy with buttonquail to do. It was dust bathing for some time amid all the flurry. We had another pair working the leaf litter at the Tapia woodland we explored near Isalo. (3)

#### Dromadidae: Crab Plover – 1 species

- **Crab Plover** *Dromas ardeola* – 41 seen in a group resting on the sand point of Nosy Ve, excellent looks at this large shorebird, mixed in with several species of terns. (1)

#### Glareolidae: Coursers & Pratincoles – 1 species

- **(E) Madagascar Pratincole** *Glareola ocularis* – One individual was found on rocks in a large river, we got the scope on it as we left Andasibe National Park. (1 + E) Extension: At least 30 perched on rocks of the roaring channels of the B. River Delta where the water was thick as mud careening over a steep gorge.

#### Laridae: Gulls & Terns – 5 species

- **Bridled Tern** *Onychoprion anaethetus* – Peg spotted these as we left the island on the boat, she called and we made another pass back by, but only those on the side facing the peninsula at the time got to see these long-winged beauties make a pass by, continuing on down the island. (1)
- **Saunders's Tern** *Sternula saundersi* – Nosy Ve, in with the other terns resting on the sand peninsula. (1)
- **Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo* – Six or so individuals were mixed in with the more abundant Lesser Crested Terns on Nosy Ve, seen in flight and roosting. (1)
- **Great Crested (Swift) Tern** *Thalasseus bergii* – A couple of individuals seen on the beach at Nosy Ve with the flock of Lesser Crested Terns and Crab Plovers. (1 + E)
- **Lesser Crested Tern** *Thalasseus bengalensis* – Numerous on the sand peninsula at Nosy Ve, 80 or more. (1 + E) Extension: A dozen or so seen resting, perhaps twice that many in the distance feeding, on the B. River Delta boat tour.

#### Columbidae: Pigeons & Doves – 5 species

- **Rock Pigeon** *Columba livia* – Common in Tana. Seen in Toliara. Seen in almost all small towns large enough to have a modern gas station on both the main tour and extension. (8+E)
- **(E) Madagascar Turtle-Dove** *Streptopelia picturata* – Two seen at the far side of the lake, in the pasture with a couple of horses grazing. One flew through the trail system of Arboretum Antsokay, a sighting for those that intersected its quick pass through. David and Peter out early had one at Isalo. (7+E) Extension: Seen and heard in small numbers in Ankarafantsika.
- **Namaqua Dove** *Oena capensis* – One female seen on the side of the road as we left the Arboretum Antsokay at Toliara. Several were on the road as we turned into our hotel, Caliente Beach, at Toliara. They were present around Isalo in the grasslands in small numbers, seen around the pond by the hotel. (5)
- **♂ (E) Madagascar Green-Pigeon** *Treron australis* – Five seen perched in the open in a sparsely-leaved tree on a wooded trail in Ankarafantsika. (E-1)
- **(E) Madagascar Blue-Pigeon** *Alectroenas madagascariensis* – Three individuals flew in and posed for some time on a dead snag visible in the scope from the Mirador at Ranomafana. They really are a striking pigeon. John and Gail got more good views on their hike the following day in the higher section of the park. Also seen at Mantadia. (3)

#### Cuculidae: Cuckoos – 11 species (and one probable split)

- **(E) Crested Coua** *Coua cristata* – At least two pair put on a good show at the spiny forest near Ifaty. We heard them at La Table south of Toliara. (2+E)
- **(E) Verreaux's Coua** *Coua verreauxi* – We worked for this species, listening and watching intently on our walk up La Table, eventually we got good looks and hear the calling of a pair down in a small drainage. Flight views and perched of this smaller coua. (1)
- **(E) Blue Coua** *Coua caerulea* – Great looks at two individuals on our walk in Ranomafana, where there are NO flat trails, but birding is amazing. Both occurred with mixed flocks. We had a couple of sightings and several additional birds noted as heard, in the Vohiparara district of Ranomafana the following day. One flew in as we watched the Common Sunbird Asity in the lower section of Ranomafana. In the darker light of the forest understory its rich blue

color really shone well. We had them as we waited for the Rufous-headed Vanga, nice to see this large and colorful species well. (5)

- **↗ (E) Red-capped Coua** *Coua ruficeps* – Extension only: One sighting along the path as we walked the Coquerel Loop trail at Ankarafantsika NP, a few others heard there. (E-1)
  - **(E) Green-capped Coua** *Coua ruficeps olivaceps* – Fantastic looks at an individual that had a large insect in its beak. We encountered it at Arboretum Antsokay on the trails. Again, the local staff seemed comfortable trying to keep it with us, for a secretive species we got good views. (1)
- **(E) Red-fronted Coua** *Coua reynaudii* – This species started calling loudly as we searched through a great mixed flock our first day at Ranomafana. Chantelle pulled those wanting to see it away, and down slope we pitched, getting some glimpses of it in thick vegetation. Finally, it perched up for a pretty good view, then disappeared into the thickness of understory shrubs. We had another come to us calling as we waited the second day with Emile to see the Brown Emutail, but we'd worked hard and that species and did not dare move! (5)
- **(E) Coquerel's Coua** *Coua coquereli* – Two were seen also in Zombitse, a smaller version of the Giant Coua, seen feeding in the dense vegetation. We also noted their call. (1+E) Extension: Several good sightings in Ankarafantsika National Park.
- **(E) Running Coua** *Coua cursor* – We had a very good opportunity to view one at length, in the early morning hours (having left our hotel at 5AM) at the spiny forest at Ifaty. It was perched up and gave us scope views. (1)
- **(E) Giant Coua** *Coua gigas* – Three individuals were seen and heard on our walk with local guides at Zombitse in the forest. (1)
- **(E) Red-breasted Coua** *Coua serriana* – Two individuals were found on our final day walk at Antasibe National Park, one in thick understory and the second walking along a quiet path for some very nice views. We had heard them the two days previously, all in Andasibe/Mantadia area. (3)
- **(RE) Madagascar Coucal** *Centropus tolou* – A pair was hanging out at the hotel, coming into the water feature and causing a big commotion with the small bird species around. We had another individual at Lac Alarobia. They were present along the roadside north of Toliara and at Arboretum Antsokay. Eight were noted at the spiny forest walk near Ifaty, one posing for photos. We saw them at Zombitse, near our hotel and at Ranomafana, pretty much this was an everyday bird either by sight or sound for us throughout the trip. (14 + E) Extension: Seen or heard daily.
- **(E) Madagascar Cuckoo** *Cuculus rochii* – Heard only while at our hotel, one morning at dawn from Au Bois Vert. Our local guide had this bird as the ring tone on his hone, causing a few false alarms to pay attention to this call! We had a good look at one in the Tapia Woodland patch near Isalo, then heard them at Zombitse, at Ranomafana, near our hotel and at the community reserve with wetlands north of Ranomafana. Waiting for us back in the gardens at Au Bois Vert in Tana. (9+E) Extension: Seen or heard daily, one of the first and last species to call.

#### **Tytonidae: Barn Owls – 1 species**

- **Barn Owl** *Tyto alba* – Gail was our only group member to spot this species, in the pine woodland of the entry way in to Antsirabe, the lodge we stayed at which supports an orphanage, Residence Madalief. (1 + E) Extension: Heard only, while having dinner at the Blue Vanga Lodge.

#### **Strigidae: Owls – 5 species**

- **(E) Malagasy (Rainforest) Scops-Owl** *Otus rutilus* – Heard only, on our evening walk at Andasibe National Park. (1)
- **(E) Totoroka (Madagascar) Scops-Owl** *Otus madagascariensis* – With great luck this species came to see us, announcing its entry by uttering its namesake call. Peg and Alastair jumped up and found it in the tree just adjacent to the dining room, it perched for all to see – all agreed this was a great way to go owling! (1 + E) Extension: Two heard and one flew by us on our night walk in Ankarafantsika NP.
- **(E) Madagascar Long-eared Owl** *Asio madagascariensis* – Elaine found a feather of this species on the ridge in Ranomafana, as close as we came until Jean Claude found us one outside of Andasibe National Park. This one we climbed a steep slope into a known roost area, but rain the night before caused it to move. We found several skulls presumably of Forest Rat. And Jean Claude finally spotted it for scope views, though so high they were not “cracking” views... (1)
- **Marsh Owl** *Asio capensis* – Fidson walked parallel to us as we walked a dirt road through the grassland of Isalo, and flushed this beautiful species, which made a long swooping flight, so graceful! (1)

- **(E) White-browed Owl** *Ninox supercilialis* – On the easiest night walk possible at Isalo, there was one just outside Peg's cottage in a large ornamental tree that gave us good views. It called repeatedly, answering two others down in the stream bottom. (2)

#### Caprimulgidae: Nightjars – 2 species

- **(E) Collared Nightjar** *Gactornis enarratus* – The skill of local guides is often impressive, but knowing where to find this cryptic species on its day roost won Jean Claude much admiration. We had a steep descent through leaf litter to get there, but at the base of a giant pandanus there it was – wow. (1)
- **(E) Madagascar Nightjar** *Caprimulgus madagascariensis* – This might have been the bird of the day for our day 2, at Arboretum Antsoakay, the knowledgeable local guides with our group took us to one roosting, just off the path, seemingly oblivious to our attentions, it blended in so well the untrained eye could go right by it... Peter spotted one on the road as we drove down from La Table at dusk. (5 + E) Extension: We had one of the road at dusk on our long travel day to Mahanjunga.

#### Apodidae: Swifts – 3 species

- **(E) Malagasy Spinetail** *Zoonavena grandidieri* – Peter spied us two individuals circling above the forest canopy at the small quarry lake in Mantadia National Park. (1)
- **(E) Madagascar (Black) Swift** *Apus balstoni* – Two seen as we walked around the lake, spotted by Brenda. Dave had them at the airport as well. We had them over the grasslands at several spots on our travel day from Isalo, and at Isalo around the rock features, though African Palm Swift were more common there. (8+E) Extension: Seen on travel day over some of the ravines of the highway at mid-elevations.
- **African Palm-Swift** *Cypsiurus parvus* – As soon as we got into the Bismarckia palms near Isalo we found this species. Peg spied a nest on our morning walk from the hotel there. We heard them and got good views several times while in that area. The palms in front of our modern new hotel at Ranomafana, near the village, had nesting colonies circling about, perhaps 30 in all. (11+E) Extension: Seen among the palm grassland areas, the palm used for thatch for houses.

#### Leptosomidae: Cuckoo-Rollers – 1 species

- **(RE) Cuckoo-Roller** *Leptosomus discolor* – All agreed, what a bird! Somewhat jay-like, it was larger than expected, highly vocal, and present in good number at Zombitse. We had several overhead, but finally got on to a perched individual that gave us scope views. We heard or saw them each day at Ranomafana, and on a roadside stop leaving the park we had one in flight next to a Madagascar Buzzard, seen well in flight. This species was heard often, getting a look other than when one hurled by in flight proved difficult. From the lookout point at Andasibe we had three calling one day without a view! (9)

#### Upupidae: Hoopoes – 1 species

- **(E) Madagascar Hoopoe** *Upupa marginata* – One seen at the village as we arrived at the spiny forest trail by Zebu-driven cart. We saw two on the walk, and then one was seen perched on a palm as we entered the road to our hotel in Toliara. A family of four between our cottages and the horse corrals were really fun to watch as parents fed two very large youngsters. (4+E) Extension: One seen at park headquarters at Ankarafantsika, and other spied on the travel day not too far out of the park.

#### Alcedinidae: Kingfishers – 2 species

- **(RE) Malagasy (Madagascar Malachite) Kingfisher** *Corythornis vintsioides* – Brenda spotted the first of 8 individuals seen at Lac Alarobia, we had just fantastic looks, and everyone was enchanted. They dipped into the water, catching small fish. There was also a wild pair at the Zoo by the bird cages. We had one near the pond, perched on a rock, as we walked out of seeing the Ring-tailed Lemurs in the lush oasis at Anja. On a morning walk from the hotel at Ranomafana we had good views of one along the stream. Also resident at our Andasibe hotel (10+E) Extension: Two seen at close range at Ankarafantsika NP, and another at a bridge where we viewed species on Lac Ravelobe ahead of the boat tour.
- **(E) Madagascar Pygmy-Kingfisher** *Corythornis madagascariensis* – Just after getting out of the bus for our walk at Andasibe National Park, Fidson heard the single note call of this species. We dashed between the Visitor Center

porch and the bathrooms hoping for a view, then heard its multi-syllable call leading us to find two on a branch, one being fed by the other. Lighting was difficult and not all got to see it, but for the main tour and extension, this was our only view. (1)

#### Meropidae: Bee-eaters -1 species

- **Madagascar (Olive) Bee-eater** *Merops superciliosus* – Peg had one very early at the hotel the morning, and then all got very good looks while dining at our delicious lunch at Arboretum Antsokay. Three were seen, high, as we walked the trail in the spiny forest near Ifaty. We saw them regularly near Isalo, with close views on our walk through the grasslands at sunset. They were less frequent at Ranomafana but were present in and around the hotel. Seen high and heard at Mantadia (10+E) Extension: Seen on our travel days at lower elevation where we had good shrub cover.

#### Coraciidae: Rollers – 1 species

- **Broad-billed Roller** *Eurystomus glaucurus* – This species liked the rocky areas at Isalo, a pair was present on the Orchid Trail and as we passed the pond walking back we had great views of one in flight, seeing all its finery and color. Loud vocalizations given made them easy to find. A few also noted this species over the parking lot near our picnic area at Zombitse. We found a pair on a nest at the small quarry lake at Mantadia National Park, providing us with our best views and a chance to listen to their wild array of vocalizations. (7+E) Extension: Surprisingly common at Ankarafantsika NP, where they were vocal in the parking area and seen around the lake. Their raucous calls gave away their presence, and they seemed to dive bomb the Coquerel's Sifakas.

#### Brachypteraciidae: Ground-Rollers – 4 species

- **(E) Scaly Ground-Roller** *Brachypteracias squamiger* – We had beautiful looks at two individuals of this species at Mantadia. The first was feeding quietly in the vicinity of its nest hole on a quiet trail near the primary forest upper trailhead. The second was hopping down the trail further along our hike. It had an injured leg and half its tail gone, but was feeding successfully and pretty mobile. Alastair thought perhaps it had tangled with a boa but got away. (1)
- **(E) Pitta-like Ground-Roller** *Atelornis pittoides* – Peter brought us this gem, picking up movement and calling it out, we all trained our bins that direction and wow, it popped up in clear view on a log, fed a bit in the litter and finally hopped off down a side trail at Ranomafana, lower elevations from the Interpretive Center. We had another in the upper section of the park at Vohiparara. (2)
- **(E) Rufous-headed Ground-Roller** *Atelornis crossleyi* – A great find with the persistence of our local guide, Emile, at Ranomafana at the upper elevation trail. He tried several locations and territories and finally found one to respond. We settled in amongst the leaf litter and shrubs to sit and wait – in it came to a call – we had front and side views and 2 passes as it inspected us, great to see this elusive species! (1)
- **(E) Long-tailed Ground-Roller** *Uratelornis chimaera* – Good views of a furtive individual corralled by our local guides. It then crossed the road having afforded us good views, and did some dust bathing to relax after the commotion. (1)

#### Falconidae: Falcons – 2 species

- **(RE) Madagascar Kestrel** *Falco newtoni* – One seen at the Tana airport, perched on a communication structure. We had great looks at one in the Arboretum at Toliara, and then in the rocky realm of Isalo they were present. We heard them and tracked a pair down in the granite domes we stopped to photo near the Pope's Cap on the route from Isalo to Ranomafana. They seemed comfortable around towns and each travel day we found several individuals. (9+E) Extension: Seen on our travel days.
- **Sooty Falcon** *Falco concolor* – Brief glimpses of one over the hotel one afternoon, another in flight at the airport our first morning ahead of flying south. Peg spied one harassing a buzzard and then making a quick flight away as the group walked down the road from the lake at Mantadia. (3+ E) Extension: A Sooty Falcon held court at Lac Ravelobe where it was often perched up on a dead snag. At one point, it was bombing the resident Madagascar Fish Eagle in flight. Good scope views here though distant.

#### Psittaculidae: Old World Parrots – 3 species

- **(RE) Greater Vasa-Parrot** *Mascarinus vasa* – Great views of a vocal and courting pair flying and perched, on our walk at Isalo. An individual posed for us on a snag, seen from the Mirador at Ranomafana. We had them several times on

the same day, or even mixed in with Lesser Vasa Parrots, getting views again at Andasibe. (6+E) Extension: Seen and heard at Ankarafantsika NP, they seemed to frequent the mature Mango trees there.

- **(RE) Lesser Vasa-Parrot** *Mascarinus niger* – Heard at Zombitse. Heard our first and second days at Ranomafana. We got them in the scope several times and heard them a lot while at Andasibe and Mantadia. (5+E) Extension: Seen and heard at Ankarafantsika NP, near park headquarters and the lake.
- **Grey-headed Lovebird** *Agapornis canus* – Seen well on our walk in the spiny forest, we had super looks perched up on a euphorbia. A small flock then flew by at this location. We had them again on our walk up the road at La Table, perched for inspection in a ravine below us. They flew around the grounds of the hotel at Isalo. (3+E) Extension: Good views at Ankarafantsika NP, seen around the park headquarters and on the trails.

### Eurylaimidae: Broadbills – 3 species

- **(E) Velvet Asity** *Philepitta castanea* – Wonderful looks at a breeding plumage male in deep forest as we watched a group of lively Golden Bamboo Lemurs, a bonus to an already sublime moment! (1)
- **(E) (Common) Sunbird Asity** *Neodrepanis coruscans* – Seeing this species was a gift of our local guides, who had spied a nest. We waited silently by it and got very good looks of both male and female as they were still nest building. This was in the lower elevation section of Ranomafana. (1)
- **(E) Yellow-bellied (Sunbird) Asity** *Neodrepanis hypoxantha* – After climbing to the high ridge, we were able to watch at a nest of this species after checking several of its favorite mistletoe plants in bloom just in case it was feeding. We had the female come and go three times, and despite declaring a forest nap to be a good idea with someone on lookout, we figured she was incubating as the male did not come in. Still great to see the habitat, nest and habits of this species. (1)

### Vangidae: Vangas – 16 species

- **(E) Archbold's Newtonia** *Newtonia archboldi* – Spiny forest trail at Ifaty, a pair were seen in flowering trees, with the male singing. Heard throughout the walk here. (1)
- **(E) Common Newtonia** *Newtonia brunneicauda* – Heard on our walk in the spiny forest, we did not stop to find them as we were on the trail of more specialty species there. We found them indeed at many of our other locations. (7+E)
- **(E) Dark Newtonia** *Newtonia amphichroa* – Seen well just below a trail junction on our walk with Emile in the higher elevation section of Ranomafana NP at Vohiparara. (1)
- **(E) Tylas Vanga** *Tylas eduardii* – Peg spied one at Ranomafana which turned out to usher in a super bird party, a mixed flock with several vangas, cuckoo-shrike, and Blue Coua, fun! Our best looks were on the final morning at Andasibe National Park where we suspect a pair was nest-building over the trail by their lingering. We had several pair there that day, including one in a large mixed flock. (2)
- **(E) Red-tailed Vanga** *Calicalius madagascariensis* – Good views of one in the canopy on our walk at Zombitse. Seen in the mixed flocks at Ranomafana, on day one, and at our first picnic, rest stop near the ridge in the Vohiparara section of the park the following day. This along with Chabert's and Ward's was by far the most common vanga for us to find, and being so vocal we noted them almost every day. (6)
- **(E) Nuthatch-Vanga** *Hypositta corallirostris* – A great pick up by David, as a bird party came into our defacto lunch spot (tired = sit and eat location). He said I have something moving like a creeper, and got several of us on it, Peg sounded the alarm to find this hard to spot gem – it fed more like a treecreeper of Latin America than a nuthatch but hey, a male seen well in a mixed flock was a good start to finding them. We had a second look at an individual in a mixed flock down along the creek in the higher section of Ranomafana the following day. On the trail at Andasibe our final morning one flew at eye-level from tree trunk to tree trunk along the trail, a nice colorful male. We then had a pair in a mixed flock on a small ridge as we made our way back to the lake. (3)
- **(E) Chabert's Vanga** *Leptopterus chabert* – A pair seen on our walk at Antsokay Arboretum at Toliara, the first vangas of the trip. A half dozen seen and heard on the walk in spiny forest at Ifaty. We had an active nest at the start of our walk to La Table outside of Toliara. Heard at Anja. Heard our first day at Ranomafana, and seen from our hotel there on an early morning walk. Seen each day at Andasibe and Mantadia. (10+E) Extension: One flew in as we waited in the late afternoon for the Schlegel's Asity to visit its nest in Ankarafantsika NP.
- **(E) Crossley's Vanga** *Mysticornis crossleyi* – We heard this species more than we saw it, but with work in a dark forest patch, several got to see this little skulker, reminiscent of a New World tapaculo in that its voice is easy to pinpoint but getting a look is challenging! (3)
- **(E) (Madagascar) Blue Vanga** *Cyanolanius madagascarinus* – Just John had this in the mixed flock (first one) at Ranomafana, but he described it perfectly. The rest of us got looks here and there as their scratchy call was picked

up on several days, alerting us to be vigilant. But all were quick looks, with individuals present in busy mixed flocks, not easy to get a good view. (4+E) Extension: We did finally get a good view, with some of the color, as Pat spotted one near the Belle Vue area of the Coquerel Loop trail at Ankarafantsika NP. This one sat and preened, even allowing for a few photo ops.

- **(E) Ward's (Vanga) Flycatcher** *Pseudobias wardi* – Mixed flock at Ranomafana, several in the canopy and then several more heard as we walked the trails there, on our first day there, the network of trails from the Visitor Center. We heard them and then had good looks on the ridgeline of the higher section of the park the following day. Singing and present at Andasibe and Mantadia. (6)
- **♠ (E) Rufous Vanga** *Schetba rufa* – Extension only, we were alerted to this species by its loud vocalizations, up on the ridge past the Belle Vue spot, a high area with many tall trees. The pair came low enough we got good views, though presence of a pair of Madagascar Paradise Flycatchers made it sporting to sort them out. (E-1)
- **(E) Sickie-billed Vanga** *Falcoelea palliata* – Spectacular views in the open at the spiny forest walk at Ifaty. In total, there were four, but the second two had a nest and really put on a good show for us. Again, we did not linger to give them a break, but wow – super views. Also, seen at a nest in Zombitse forest. (2 + E)
- **(E) White-headed Vanga** *Artamella viridis* – Seen by some of the group in a mixed flock at lunch, day one at lower elevation of Ranomafana. (1 + E)
- **(E) Pollen's Vanga** *Xenopirostris polleni* – This chunky species was seen only once, in the large mixed flock of vangas seen at the lunch stop in Ranomafana National Park. They were seen alongside cuckooshrikes, nice to compare. This was a difficult flock as it was spread above and below the path with a lot going on, so not all got to see this one. (1)
- **(E) Lafresnaye's Vanga** *Xenopirostris xenopirostris* – A male was seen well preening in the spiny forest near Ifaty. (1)
- **♠ (E) Van Dam's Vanga** *Xenopirostris damii* – With some patience, we got a good view of this species after a walk of some distance to a ridge with large trees in Ankarafantsika NP. (E-1)

#### Campephagidae: Cuckooshrikes – 1 species

- **(E) Ashy (Madagascar) Cuckoo-shrike** *Coracina cinerea* – Seen in both mixed flocks encountered on day one in Ranomafana on the network of trails from the Visitor Center. Again, seen in mixed flocks on our days in Andasibe National Park. (3)

#### Dicruridae: Drongos – 1 species

- **(RE) (Madagascar) Crested Drongo** *Dicrurus forficatus* – Pat had one at the hotel, the rest of us caught up with good sightings of a couple of them at lunch, and then on trails at Arboretum Antsoakay. A half dozen were seen on the walk in the spiny forest at Ifaty. Seen at Anja and at Ranomafana, lone individuals. They were common around Andasibe and Mantadia, one was making a nest just off the gazebo over the water at our hotel, found by Gail. Seen on all travel days. (14+E) Extension: This bird seems to tolerate the very small pockets of brush and woodland found on our travel days, also seen regularly in the park.

#### Monarchidae: Monarchs – 1 species

- **(RE) Madagascar Paradise-Flycatcher** *Terpsiphone mutata* – We had a male quite upset with the presence of a Madagascar Kestrel by the entrance to the Arboretum, it put on quite a show. We saw another male further down the trail, and then a female on a nest we could not help but flush as it was right over a main trail at Arboretum Antsoakay. They were with us all days in the forest at Ranomafana, but a highlight was Fidson finding a nest, and watching a nest exchange that included the male, a white form with his long flowing tail. John caught sight of him as he moved off to feed and others got on to it, one flashy bird! While they proved to be common, especially so at Andasibe and Mantadia, they always caused us to pause to admire, particularly the male. We found a nest by the Visitor Center at Andasibe that was only about knee-height, young babies begging seemed quite vulnerable! (9+E) Extension: We continued to see and hear them regularly in the national park and had several nests as we walked the trails. We saw males of both color morphs here as well as the other locations.

#### Corvidae: Crows – 1 species

- **Pied Crow** *Corvus albus* – First seen on the road from Toliara, as we searched for Madagascar Plover. We had several on the travel day, a half dozen between Ifaty and Toliara. We saw them on the next longer travel day, often causing someone to point out the “raptor” when high on a ridgeline. They continued to be present on all travel days. (9+E)

Extension: We had a nesting pair in the mangroves on the B. River Delta and they were present around the coastal part of town there. We had them on both travel days in small number.

#### Alaudidae: Larks – 1 species

- **(E) Madagascar Lark** *Mirafra hova* – One individual seen on the walk to Lake Antsokay in short grass. Numerous others in Isalo region, though not all stopped for inspection. (5+E)

#### Hirundinidae: Swallows & Martins – 3 species

- **Plain (Brown-throated) Martin** *Riparia paludicola* – Two seen flying close overhead as we walked around Lac Alarobia in Tana. As we came out of the trail head of the Vohiparara section of Ranomafana, Alastair pointed out a group of ten or so in flight over rocks of the stream. (4)
- **(RE) Mascarene Martin** *Phedina borbonica* – First birds seen by several of our group arriving in Madagascar, at the airport above the building. Six were seen on the walk into Lake Antsokay, and above the long stretch of salt grasses, 15 or so on the highway between Ifaty and Toliara. We saw them in towns on our travel day, and a good number in the scenic gorge we stopped at with an impressive waterfall as we left Ranomafana. Our best looks were at the twenty or so nesting under the gazebo over the water at our hotel in Andasibe. (12+E) Extension: Seen in the highlands around bridges on our travel days. Seen also at the bridge near Lac Ravelobe.
- **Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica* – Two were first seen near the village where we started the walk into the spiny forest near Ifaty, then we had a small flock above the salt grasses with Mascarene Martin. (1)

#### Pycnonotidae: Bulbuls – 1 species

- **(RE) Madagascar Bulbul** *Hypsipetes madagascariensis* – Vocal and easy to see with their red bills, we had several family groups at the hotel, and saw another two groups at Lac Alarobia. Several at Arboretum Antsokay. We learned its cheery call and cat-like meow notes, with ample reinforcement as this was one of the most frequently encountered species, either around hotels and gardens, or in mixed flocks of the forest, seen daily. (14+E) Extension: Seen daily.

#### Acrocephalidae: Reed Warblers & Allies – 3 species

- **(E) Madagascar Brush-Warbler** *Nesillas typica* – This was the first species for Peg and Elaine, who arrived early. They remained quite tame at Hotel Au Bois Vert, at least three pairs there, and one family group with begging chicks. We had them every day, alerted by their wren-like chatter, often several pair on trails we walked, and frequently at roadside stops and in our hotel gardens. They continued to be common along trails at Andasibe and Mantadia. (9)
- **(E) Subdesert Brush-Warbler** *Nesillas lantzii* – At least 3 pair on our walk in the spiny forest near Ifaty. (3)
- **(E) Madagascar Swamp-Warbler** *Acrocephalus newtoni* – First encountered at the small community reserve we visited a couple hours out of Ranomafana driving north, heard only there singing from the reeds. Our best looks were at our lakeside picnic at Mantadia. (2)

#### Locustellidae: Grassbirds & Allies – 1 species

- **(E) Brown Emu-tail** *Dromaecercus brunneus* – Seen briefly as we gathered around our local guide Emile, who had heard the call as we waited for Rufous-headed Vanga, sightings of two such secretive birds in short order was exciting. (1)

#### Bernieridae: Malagasy Warblers & Tetrakas – 7 species

- **(E) Long-billed Bernieria** *Bernieria madagascariensis* – First seen by a few stragglers in the forest at Zombitse, then encountered both days hiking the forest at Ranomafana. They were pretty common in Andasibe and Mantadia where we got views and heard them calling. (6+E) Extension: This species continued to be the easiest to see of the tetraka clan, with several spotted on the trails of Ankarafantsika.
- **(E) Wedge-tailed Jery (Tetraka)** *Hartertula flavoviridis* – Seen well, perched up in an open glade in the forest near a pandanus rich section of the upper section of Ranomafana. (1)

- **(E) Thamnornis** *Thamnornis chloropetoides* – This cactus wren imitation was perched up atop a euphorbia and calling loudly. Great views in the spiny forest near Ifaty. (1)
- **(E) Yellow-browed Oxylabes (Madagascar Yellowbrow)** *Crossleyia xanthophrys* – For most of this group this skulker was a heard only species, Fidson and a few in the front had glimpses. (1)
- **(E) Spectacled Tetraka** *Xanthomixis zosterops* – This vocal species was not difficult to find along forested trails. Best views were of a family group at Andasibe, which crossed the trail and posed for us. (4)
- **(E) Appert's Tetraka** *Xanthomixis apperti* – Seen only at Zombitse National Park on our forest walk. Excellent views of a pair. (1)
- **(E) Rand's Warbler** *Randia pseudzosterops* – First views were scope views at the parking lot at Ranomafana. This species likes to sing from high exposed perches so is hard to miss. Its song is distinctive as well, wood-warbler like in quality. (6)

#### **Cisticolidae: Cisticolas and Allies – 4 species**

- **(E) Common Jery** *Neomixis tenella* – Dave and Peter first found a small flock high in the pines above Au Bois Vert. They came down into the garden where a few others saw them. We had a group of three or four at the lake, not sure of the species, but assume were Commons, especially after the hotel sighting, the supraciliary line stronger than the field guide indicated. (13+E) Extension: Seen in shrubbery around the Schlegel's Asity nest we visited twice, hoping to view the adults, without success at Anakarafantsika NP.
- **(E) Green Jery** *Neomixis viridis* – Quick views for some in Mantadia, for most others it was heard only. They stayed high in lush canopy and were not easy to find. (2)
- **(E) Stripe-throated Jery** *Neomixis striatigula* – Very common in the spiny forest, singing from exposed perches, on the trail in the spiny forest at Ifaty. (7)
- **(RE) Madagascar Cisticola** *Cisticola cherina* – Ten seen at various spots on the day we traveled from Ifaty to Toliara. We had good views as we walked back to our Isalo hotel across some grassland, though the Mash Owl drew more attention, they posed up for photos and were singing. (6+E) Extension: We saw them as we got out of the van in the highlands to watch the Madagascar Harrier. We also heard them singing as we drove through palm grasslands leaving Anakarafantsika NP.

#### **Zosteropidae: White-eyes – 1 species**

- **(RE) Madagascar White-eye** *Zosterops maderaspatanus* – Seen at the Lac Alarobia on the back side of the lake, and in good number at the hotel where they were feasting on a white berry of a common shrub. They were not seen at all in the southwest, but once we got back to the east side of the country at Ranomafana they were seen daily. (9+E) Extension: We had a family group or small flock of 5 at the bridge at Lac Ravelobe.

#### **Musicapidae: Old World Flycatchers – 4 species**

- **(E) Madagascar Magpie-Robin** *Copsychus albospectularis* – One pair frequented Hotel Au Bois Vert, and then at the Arboretum Antsokay we got really great looks, and watched one pair that appeared to be on a nest. One in the spiny forest at Ifaty. We had this charming little bird every day as it was often present in our hotel garden, but we also encountered it in the forest. (12+E) Extension: This little mimic got us all excited at dusk as we waited for Schlegel's Asity to visit its nest, doing quite a perfect rendition of the male's song. It perched at eye level an arm's length away on the trail.
- **(E) Forest Rock-Thrush** *Monticola sharpei* – A few individuals seen along the creek bottom trail at our hotel at Isalo in lush streamside forest. (1)
- **(E) Littoral Rock-Thrush** *Monticola imerina* – A pair by the small resort at Anakaos across from Nosy Ve was most cooperative. (1)
- **(RE) African (Malagasy) Stonechat** *Saxicola torquatus sibilla* – This became a common species for the final days of our tour, at the hotel at Antsirabe, singing, and quite common at Andasibe, including in the gardens of our hotel. (6)

#### **Sturnidae: Starlings – 2 species**

- **Common Myna** *Acridotheres tristis* – Common and vocal everywhere! Seen every day of the tour. (14+E) Extension: Everyday continued, including in the lush mangroves by the visitor headquarters.

- **(E) Madagascar Starling** *Hartlaubius auratus* – We had two come in to the Mirador view point where the Ring-tailed Mongoose held court at Ranomafana, Fidson was able to quickly get the scope on them. He spied another at the small quarry lake at Mantadia, perched on one of the snags so prominent above the water. (2)

#### Nectariniidae: Sunbirds – 2 species

- **(RE) Souimanga Sunbird** *Cinnyris sovimanga* – Seen at the hotel working the Turk's Cap hibiscus, and at Lac Alarobia, where we watched them go through the motions of feeding on flowers that were dry and gone by. We had quite a few at the Arboretum where some clouds predicted possible rain, and males were singing up a storm. Seen on the trail in the spiny forest, several singing, and at the Lake Antsokay. It proved to be one of the most common species of the trip and was seen daily. Highly vocal, we learned this song early on. (14+E) Extension: Seen each day, one memorable one was at the Belle Vue spot on the trail at Ankarafantsika NP. They were in the garden of our hotels at both locations.
- **(RE) Madagascar (Green) Sunbird** *Cinnyris notatus* – This bird was a real show stopper on both Bottlebrush bushes and some brilliant purple flowers at our hotel at Antsirabe, we got very good looks on our early morning walk. We found a few others at Andasibe, but the hotel views were our best. Handsome species! (4+E) Extension: One seen near park headquarters at Ankarafantsika NP the first afternoon we stopped there.

#### Motacillidae: Wagtails – 1 species

- **(E) Madagascar Wagtail** *Motacilla flaviventris* – First seen at our lunch at the train station in downtown Tana, on the lawn. Then Dave and Peter found them high in the canopy on their arrival to Hotel Au Bois Vert, and we watched them still feeding at height the next day. They turned out to be quite common, and vocal, as we encountered them at all locations of our journey. Several landed on water lilies on the small quarry lake at Mantadia, nice! (9)

#### Ploceidae: Weavers – 4 species

- **(E) Nelicourvi Weaver** *Ploceus nelicourvi* – Seen on both days in mixed flocks in Ranomafana, handsome bird! One had an active nest and were feeding persistent vocal young during our stay at Andasibe Hotel. We had a pair mating our first morning walk at Andasibe by the lake. Another was making a nest above the path at Andasibe, fun to watch them weave. (5)
- **(E) Sakalava Weaver** *Ploceus sakalava* – One pair seen at the Arboretum, close to the restaurant, with good views of this pretty spectacular yellow-headed male. They were present in the spiny forest, and at the village at the trailhead, there was a big communal nest with a half dozen or more. They were seen a total of five days on the main tour. (4+E) Extension: Seen on our travel days, and a pair was active behind the hotel dining area at Blue Vanga Lodge.
- **(E) Red Fody** *Foudia madagascariensis* – What an amazing bird to have as a common bird! We got to know them in the hotel garden, but also had them at the train station outdoor lunch, at Lac Alarobia, the Zoo, and Arboretum Antsokay. Often in flocks of twenty or more, we had a good number of molting males coming into red plumage, and a number of really bright males. Present in the spiny forest near Ifaty, a flexible bird! They were absent for some days of the tour but appeared again in the garden of our hotel at Andasibe. (12+E)
- **(E) Forest Fody** *Foudia omissa* – Seen at our hotel in Tana, two individuals at Lac Alarobia and then two at Mantadia. (3)

#### Estrildidae: Mannikins – 1 species

- **(E) Madagascar Munia (Mannikin)** *Lonchura nana* – One seen at close range in a palm in the tortoise enclosure at Hotel Au Bois Vert. They were on the lawn at the hotel at Antsirabe, and we had wonderful morning sunlit views off the gazebo over the water at our hotel at Andasibe. (4)

#### Passeridae: Old World Sparrows – 1 species

- **↗ House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus* – Extension only. We had two individuals in the parking lot where at a small resort where we got on the boat to explore the Betsiboka River. (E-1)

**Lemurs (21 species)****F. Cheirogaleidae: Dwarf, Mouse & Fork-marked Lemurs**

- **Golden-brown Mouse Lemur** *Microcebus ravelobensis* – Extension only. Seen on our night walk, an adult with a young one at Ankarafantsika NP.
- **Gray Mouse Lemur** *Microcebus murimus* – Extension. Three individuals seen on our night walk at Ankarafantsika NP.
- **Gray-brown Mouse-Lemur** *Microcebus griseorufus* – Our first lemur, one seen cuddled up in dense vegetation at the Arboretum Antsoakay. One seen at the start of our walk in the Spiny forest.
- **Goodman's Mouse Lemur** *Microcebus ichilahytsara* – Andasibe, seen on the night walk.
- **Brown (Rufous) Mouse Lemur** *Microcebus rufus* – Ranomafana, seen on the night walk, coming in to honey rewards on roadside trees.
- **Crossley's Dwarf Lemur** *Cheirogaleus crossleyi* – Andasibe, seen on the night walk close to flowering wild bananas.

**F. Lemuridae: True, Ring-tailed, Bamboo & Ruffed Lemurs**

- **Ring-tailed Lemur** *Lemur catta*) – Seen only at Anja, but there we were surrounded by them and were able to watch them at close range. A local taboo against harming them kept them safe over many decades up to establishment of a successful community reserve being established at this location. A lush forest persists there amid granite boulders, enchanting to see them there on the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of this reserve.
- **Common Brown Lemur** *Eulemur fulvus* – Good views on two days at Andasibe. Ankarafantsika National Park we had them in the headquarters area.
- **Gray (Eastern Lesser) Bamboo Lemur** *Haplemur griseus* – Seen first at night at Andasibe, in Mantadia and then on our final morning at Andasibe National Park.
- **Golden Bamboo Lemur** *Haplemur aureus* – fantastic extended viewing of a rather large group (much of it at eye level) in Ranomafana. A very special sighting.
- **Greater Bamboo Lemur** *Prolemur simus* – 2 individuals seen at close quarters in Ranomafana.
- **Southern Black-and-white Ruffed Lemur** *Varecia variegata editorum* – We were most impressed with these large lemurs. We heard several troops at two different locations before finding a group we could watch at Mantadia. We waited patiently watching them high in flowering trees, feeding on the flowers, and were treated to watching them move down, and then across the forest to where they fed on bright orange fruits. So, agile and quick, we got good views. Also heard at Ranomafana.
- **Red-bellied Lemur** *Eulemur rubiventer* – not seen as well as the others, but the distinctive white facial skin was evident in the scope – at Ranomafana.
- **Red-fronted Brown Lemur** *Eulemur rufifrons* – canopy level viewing in Ranomafana but with some patience the sight of these lemurs gorging themselves on the bright yellow *Strongylodon* creeper flowers will not be forgotten.

**F. Lepilemuridae: Sportive Lemurs**

- **Zombitse Sportive Lemur** *Lepilemur hubbardorum* – Seen with a baby in a day roost on our walk at Zombitse.
- **(Black-shouldered) Sportive Lemur** *Lepilemur sp.* – A female with a baby was seen well in the Spiny Forest at Ifaty, with dark black shoulders. There is still no clear indication as to which species should occur in the area and this black-shouldered variety is not known from anywhere else, This will be an armchair tick once the studies have been made!**Indri** *Indri indri* – Hearing this sound is now a lasting memory, as iconic to Madagascar as coyote howls are to the American West. We first heard them on our afternoon walk the arrival day at Andasibe, and the next morning woke up to hear quite a chorus as troops announced their locations at dawn. Hearing them at close range in the forest at Andasibe was amazing. Watching them leap and feed on two different days was a highlight for many on the trip.

**F. Indriidae: Woolley Lemur, Indri and Sifakas**

- **Indri** *Indri indri* – Andasibe National Park, we encountered groups at close range on two days, the second day they were leaping and jumping – spectacular! We heard them on all of our days there, the morning chorus at dawn unforgettable as multiple groups announced their locations. Our hotel was on a hill so you could hear a good number of groups. We also heard them at close range in the forest – haunting, beautiful sounds.

- **Diademed Sifaka** *Propithecus diadema* – Each lemur we saw then vied as our favorite of the trip but this one made the short list for all. It is a beautiful and colorful lemur, and we watched them at very close range, on the ground, harvesting seeds. One had a small baby and tolerated the group approaching within about ten feet, so intent on her feeding. We watched this group for some time, and at some point, they decided to go – one left dancing, leaping across the forest floor. We found them on our second walk in Andasibe as well, this time high in the trees.
- **Verreaux's Sifaka** *Propithecus verreauxi* – This is the first large lemur we saw so will be memorable for a long time. They were quite tolerant of our presence, and Michael got a video of one leaping to a tree on the trail to stare at the group. They did not linger long, but we got super views while at Zombitse.
- **Coquerel's Sifaka** *Propithecus coquereli* – Extension only, a troop was in the headquarters area of Ankarafantsika National Park, present each day but moving around the ripe mangos, on both sides of the road.
- **Milne-Edwards Sifaka** *Propithecus edwardsi* – seen on two days in Ranomafana lower and upper elevation forests.

#### Order Carnivora, F. Eupleridae (Malagasy Mongooses), SF Galidiinae

- Ring-tailed Mongoose *Galidia elegans* – excellent viewing of a habituated individual at Belle Vue in Ranomafana and also glimpsed in the upper forest too.

#### Order Rodentia, F. Muridae: Old World Rats & Mice

- Forest Rat *Nesomys rufus* – Seen at several forested locations.

#### Order Lypotyphla, F. Tenrecidae

- **Common Tenrec** *Tenrec ecaudatus* – The only tenrecs we saw were alive, but dangling in the hands of someone either going home to dinner or to the market, darn!

#### Order Chiroptera, F Hipposideridae

- **Commerson's Leaf-nosed Bat** *Hipposideros commersoni* – Extension only, this large sized bat zoomed past us a couple of times along the trail we walked with Ramon, our local guide at Ankarafantsika National Park.

### REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS:

#### Lizards & Chameleons

- **Jeweled Chameleon** *Furcifer lateralis* – well found by John at the Ankazomivady Community Reserve.
- **Oustalet's Chameleon** *Furcifer oustaleti* – Villagers showed us a good-sized female as we walked around Lac Alarobia. This massive chameleon was seen up close in Zombitse Forest, at Isalo and one also saved off the road north of Ranohira (Isalo).
- **Warty Chameleon** *Furcifer verrucosus* – Three individuals seen and photographed at the gardens at Arboretum Antsokay.
- **Short-horned Chameleon** *Calumma brevicornis* – seen on night walk at Ranomafana and a pair interacting at Andasibe Hotel.
- **Cryptic Chameleon** *Calumma crypticum* – male seen well on night walk at Ranomafana. Another possible one at Andasibe, at the hotel, on a different day than the male and female together.
- **Nose-horned Chameleon** *Calumma nasutum* – Ranomafana night walk with local guide Chantelle.
- **O'Shaughnessy's Chameleon** *Calumma oshaughnessyi* – Ranomafana night walk with local guide Chantelle. Large shocking blueish specimen at mid-stratum.
- **Parson's Chameleon** *Calumma parsonii* – Andasibe Bay night walk, a young bright green one.
- **Stump-tailed Chameleon** *Brookesia brunoi* – newly described species seen well at Anja.
- *Brookesia thiele* – The smallest of chameleons shown to us by our local guide Chantelle in Ranomafana.
- **Three-eyed Lizard** *Chalarodon madagascariensis* – Several seen on the trail at the spiny forest at Ifaty and other arid areas in the south.
- **Spiny-tailed Iguanid** *Oplurus cyclurus* – adult and young seen at the arboretum in Toliara.
- **Grandidier's Madagascar Swift** (Iguana) *Oplurus grandidieri* – super views of these large lizards on the rocks at Isalo.
- **Dwarf Gecko** *Lygodactylis tuberosus* – small geckos seen jumping at the base of the trees in Zombitse.
- **Madagascar Plated Lizard** *Zonosaurus madagascariensis* – seen regularly in the forest edge of Andasibe and Mantadia.

- *Trachyloptychus madagascariensis* – seen in carpark at Antsokay.
- **Gravenhorst's Mabuya** (skink) *Trachylepis gravenhorstii* – a few seen along roads in Andasibe.
- Skink sp. *Trachylepis elegans* – the small skink common in Tapia woodland of Isalo with the bright red dot on the neck.

#### Snakes (6 species)

- **Madagascar Tree Boa** *Sanzinia madagascariensis* – Seen wrapped around a short vine in hunting pose and blending in perfectly as we walked back from the quarry lake in Ranomafana.
- **Madagascar Ground Boa** *Acrantophis madagascariensis* – Great spot by Fidson driving into MantadiaMantadia.
- **Giant Hognose Snake** *Leioheterodon madagascariensis* – Extension only, three in one day!
- **Hognose Snake** *Leioheterodon geayi* – superb sighting in the sand at Isalo.
- **Striped Madagascar Garter Snake (Lateral Water Snake)** *Thamnosophis lateralis* - gray and black ribbon type snake seen a few times.
- **Bernier's Striped Snake** *Dromicodryas bernieri* – One individual, about 2.5 feet long, was stretched out in the sun next to the porch at our hotel at Ifaty.

#### Frogs (8 species noted)

- *Aglyptodactylus madagascariensis* – medium-sized elow frog seen on the trail just after the mantella in upper Ranomafana.
- **Green Tree Frog** *Boophis viridis* – Calling often on the trails, hard to see!
- **Painted Mantella** *Mantella baroni* – This striking green and black mantilla was seen twice, once at Ranomafana with Emile, and once with Jean Claude at Andasibe Bay. The second time it hopped up on Elaine's shoe!
- *Mantadiactylus majori* – Small all brown frog seen at Ranomafana.
- *Guibemantis* sp. *Aff. Liber south* – Small green frog photographed on leaf Ranomafana, upper elevation trail
- **White-whiskered Madagascar Frog** *Mantadiactylus melanopluera* – upper trail at Ranomafana.
- **Madagascar Bullfrog** *Laliostoma labrosum* – Extension only. Seen on the night walk at Ankarafantsika.
- **Rocket Frog** *Ptychadena mascariensis* – seen on the early morning walk at Ranomafana from the hotel and numerous at the 'rainbow rice paddies'.

### Invertebrates and other Creatures – a few of the many we admired!

#### Dragonflies

- *Thermostemis madagascariensis* – Anjaha and Andasibe
- **Black-Splash** *Tetrathemis pollenii* – Andasibe ponds
- **Red-veined Dropwing** - widespread
- **Blue Emperor** *Anax imperator* – widespread esp. Andasibe and Isalo
- **Ferruginous Glider** - Mantadia
- **Demoiselle** *Phaeon rasoherinae* – large forest damsel at Mantadia
- *Rhyothemis* sp. – Isalo
- *Pantala flavescens*
- **Pintail** *Acisoma panorpoides*

#### Butterflies

- **Citrus Swallowtail** *Pailio demodocus*
- **Spotted Blue Swallowtail** *Papilio epiphorbas*
- **Green Lady** *Graphium cyrnus*
- **Madagascar Orange Tip** *Colotus evanthe*
- **Grass Yellows** *Eurema* spp.
- **Migrants** *Catopsilia* spp.
- **Madagascar Metalmarks** *Saribia* spp.
- **Little Blues** (*various* spp.)
- **African Monarch** *Danaus chrysippus*
- **Madagascar Forest Nymph** *Aterica rabena*
- **Madagascar Leopard** *Phalanta madagascariensis*

- **Common Joker** *Byblia anvata*
- **Acraes** spp.
- **Madagascar Brown Pansy** *Junia goudotii*
- **Madagascar Commodore** *Precis andremiaja*
- **Brilliant Blue** *Junonia rhadama*
- **Blue Pansy** *Junonia oenone*
- **Common Diadem** *Hypolimnys misippus*
- **Indian Ocean Satyrs** *Heteropsis* spp.
- **Silk Moth**, spp.

#### Other invertebrates

- Giraffe-necked Weevil
- Kite Spiders
- Bark Spiders
- **Golden Orb Spiders** *Nephila madagascariensis* and *Nephilengys* sp.
- Flatid Leaf Insects
- Ant Lion adult – Isalo night walk
- Lacewing – well camouflaged on its tree
- Giant Pill Millipede – Seen as both brown, and emerald green along forest trails
- **Giant African Land Snail** *Achatina fulica*
- Cicadas
- Spittle Bugs
- Mantids & Stick insects
- Jumping worm!
- Tiger beetles

<b>LOCATION REFERENCE: MADAGASCAR 2016</b>
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- **Nov. 17 Day 1**  
Lac Alarobia, Tana (added field trip for those arriving early) and Hotel Au Bois Vert grounds
- **Nov. 18 Day 2**  
Flight to Toliara / Arboretum Antsokay and drive to Ifaty Beach, stops at ponds en route
- **Nov. 19 Day 3**  
Forest District of the baobabs (delivered by Zebu carts!) Spiny Forest / Return drive to Toliara stopping at ponds
- **Nov. 20 Day 4**  
Boat Trip to Anakao (peninsula with small resorts) and Nosy Ve (Island Reserve) Afternoon drive to La Table with sunset stop at the grottos
- **Nov. 21 Day 5**  
Travel Day Toliara to Isalo with picnic lunch and hike at Zombitse National Park, forest walk
- **Nov. 22 Day 6**  
Full Day at Isalo
- **Nov. 23 Day 7**  
Travel Day Isalo to Ranomafana with picnic lunch and hike at Anja Community Reserve (Ring-tailed Lemurs!)
- **Nov. 24 Day 8**  
Ranomafana National Park, Talately Section trails, lower elevations and Night Walk, with Chantelle and Veronique, local guides
- **Nov. 25 Day 9**  
Ranomafana National Park Vohiparara Section trails, upper elevations with Emile as local guide
- **Nov. 26 Day 10**  
Travel Day to Antsirabe / Ankazomivady Community Reserve / Stay at delightful Residence Madalief
- **Nov. 27 Day 11**  
Travel Day Antsirabe to Andasibe National Park / Andasibe National Park
- **Nov. 28 Day 12**  
Andasibe National Park Analamazaotra Circuit

- **Nov. 29 Day 13**  
Mantadia National Park by 4-wheel drive vehicles, hiking
- **Nov. 30 Day Fourteen**  
Andasibe National Park Return visit to Analamazaotra Circuit / return drive to Tana and Hotel Au Bois Vert / End of main tour

\*\*\* Extension:

- **Dec. 1** *Extension Day One – Long drive (due to Air Madagascar cancellation of route) to Mahajunga*
- **Dec. 2** *Betsiboka Delta Boat Tour – morning / afternoon Antarafantsika National Park*
- **Dec. 3** *Antarafantsika National Park, hiking two trails / Lac Ravelobe with boat tour and*
- **Dec. 4** *Return drive to Tana through highlands*
- **Dec. 5** *Departures*