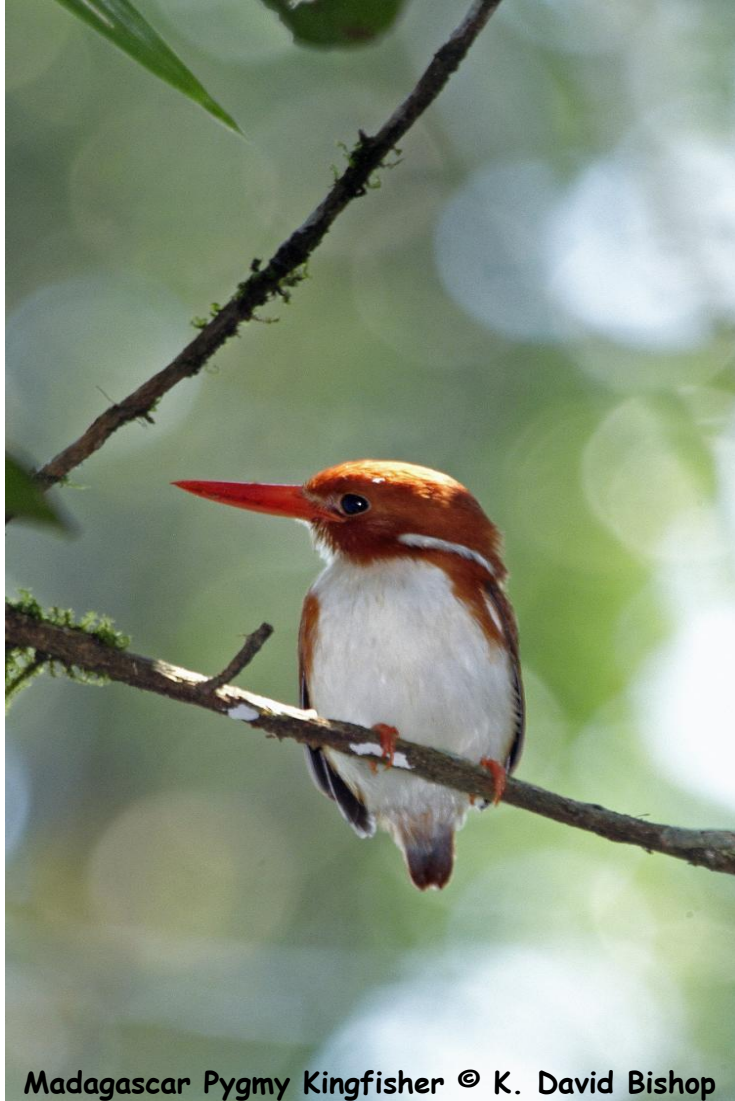


KDB December 2009

The Birds and Other Wildlife recorded on the 2009 VENT Madagascar Tour



Madagascar Pygmy Kingfisher © K. David Bishop

Compiled by **David Bishop**

Leaders: K. David Bishop and Fano

Madagascar 2009

This was VENT's second comprehensive tour of Madagascar - 'The Eighth Continent' and what a fabulous trip it was. We enjoyed some fabulous encounters with the Madagascan wildlife including (just as we did last year) all five of the world's species of ground-rollers; several very vocal cuckoo-rollers; a clean sweep of the couas; superb views of two species of mesites; 13 species of vangas; three species of sensational asities and an absolutely mind-boggling experience with the pygmy kingfisher. What could be better! Add to this all the gorgeous lemurs; adorable tenrecs and some wonderfully weird chameleons, geckos and insects and you have the makings of a very special natural-history experience.

This was my third tour there since the early 1980s and I can't believe the hugely, positive changes that have taken place during those years; and continue to take place. The improvement in the roads is generally impressive; some of the lodges at which we stay are as good as any at which I have stayed anywhere in the world and the font of knowledge especially among our local guides concerning where to find birds, mammals and reptiles coupled with several very attractive and immensely useful field-guides greatly enhances any tour to this country; and all this despite a French-inspired coupe and the world recession! Undoubtedly a VENT tour to Madagascar is one of the premier natural history experiences of our world. If you haven't visited Madagascar then you really must do so; I for one cannot wait to return!

It is always a privilege to explore somewhere as exciting and brimming with fascination as Madagascar especially in the company of such a wonderful group. To return to this the spectacular island with such enthusiastic participants was sheer joy. Thank you one and all. Thanks too to all the people in Madagascar who helped make this trip so much fun and so successful. In particular I should like to pay special tribute to Fano my remarkable colleague and in-country co-leader extraordinaire. Thanks too to all our drivers, assistants, local guides, park rangers and boatmen who helped make the tour such a success. And to the delightfully friendly people of Madagascar who make our time in their country so enjoyable.

This is truly a remarkable country with an assemblage of plants and wildlife that is nothing short of astonishing. Whilst a report such as this tells something of what we saw and heard it only tells part of the story and can never really convey the wonderful overall sights and sounds of Madagascar and its delightful people. Remarkably we recorded 183 species of birds; 30 mammals; 38 reptiles and several species of frogs. Some of the highlights included:

- Exceptional views of all five Ground-Rollers including prolonged, point-blank views of a very confiding Rufous-headed Ground-Roller;
- An impressive 21 species of lemur including fine studies of Black-and-white and Red-bellied lemurs; the incomparable Indri and gorgeous Coquerel's Sifakas;
- A fine sightings of the elusive Madagascar Crested Ibis at dusk at Perinet;
- A spectacular mixed species flock on our first afternoon at Perinet including a dazzling Blue Vanga and male Velvet Asity - quite simply WOW!!!!!!!!!!
- Eleven species of Chameleons many of them multiple times;
- A surprise dawn visit to the Lavaka - a weird but magnificent, eroded bluff replete with fine views of Sooty and Peregrine falcons;
- Fabulous close encounters with the very rare and endangered Bernier's Teal (see the attached image);

And last but most certainly NOT least

- Three species of endearing tenrecs which our wonderful guides tracked down and showed everyone much to your leader's joy.

What a place!

The following is a summary of our daily activities as well as a list of what we heard and saw. Some of you may be surprised at just how many species we saw well AND were able to study through the 'scope!

Thank you

David Bishop



DIARY

1 November - A very interesting and attractive drive through farmland, marshes and forest to Mantadia National Park and our attractive accommodations at Vakona Lodge on the eastern escarpment. Great views of a handsome White-throated Rail got our tour off to a grand start. A superb luncheon and we were off to Perinet National park where typically it can be very slow in the afternoon. Our experience was nothing short of astonishing. No sooner had we entered the indigenous forest that we were literally besieged by birds, seemingly hundreds of birds. Originally intent on pushing on to see a couple of very tough, special birds we just couldn't help but stop and indulge ourselves in a flock that just seemed to go on forever. Who will ever forget the views of the Blue Vanga, the blue in the afternoon sun offset by its silky white underparts was nothing short of gorgeous. Many birds later we ran into a second flock and this one held one of Madagascar's most revered species, the incomparable male Velvet Asity (see David's attached image). Boy we slept with a smile on our faces that night.



Male Velvet Asity © K. David Bishop

2 November - A superb morning's birding in Mantadia National Park kicked off with a fine encounter with a Madagascar Rail; but the morning only really got going with a not so gentle clamber up a steepish hillside for all to dwell at length upon a dapper Short-legged Ground-Roller. Fabulous! And my congratulations everyone. Working our way back towards the road Henst's Goshawk screamed overhead and although we witnessed its shadow this was all we were to see on this tour of this endemic species. A plaintive call eventually drew us to at least five spanking Pitta-like Ground-Rollers which again everyone got to see multiple times. Finally back on the road we headed further into the reserve and thanks to our guide, Patrice's intimate knowledge of his 'local patch' we were soon reveling in our third ground-roller. No less a gem than a magnificent Scaly-breasted Ground-Roller carrying food to its nest. Wow, the colour of those legs. Needless to say it was a very happy bunch of birders that returned for a very late lunch. Afternoon was much more typical of Perinet afternoons, rather quiet although there was always something to see - that's how it is in Madagascar! And for us it was a Madagascan Crested Ibis that flew in at dusk and perched long enough for us all to enjoy fine 'scope views of this very distinctive and much sought after endemic.

3 November - Our second morning in Mantadia could surely never compete with the previous day. Wrong! Again the morning commenced with a bang, this time in the diminutive form of that most lovely of crakes, the endearing Madagascar Flufftail.

Positioning ourselves immaculately we were all treated to the most marvelous, close views of my favourite Madagascan birds. Stopping and starting along the road for a variety of species including fine looks at Eastern Bamboo Lemur and gorgeous Diademed Sifakas we finally made it to our preliminary destination. From here we walked slowly along a gentle road through magnificent forest enjoying prolonged views of a Nelacourvi Weaver building its nest right over the road; a gigantic snail cruising across the road and then finally, gem of gems a pair of exquisite Madagascan Pygmy Kingfishers. After everyone had exhausted staring in the 'scope at the kingfishers Jim and yours truly scrambled up the slope to photograph these diminutive endemics. A few scratches, curses and laughs later we were both rewarded with some nice images (see attached). A visit to an attractive forested pool not only produced the hope for Madagascar Grebe - a species which is becoming increasingly difficult to find but a wonderful array of dragonflies and distant but charismatic views of our first Indri. Fortunately a bit of cloud cover kept things pretty cool and active and just as it started to drizzle we found a couple of troops of very handsome Black-and-white ruffed Lemurs before heading home for yet another late luncheon. Lunch was so late there wasn't much left of the afternoon so the opportunity was taken to relax and dwell on the birds and chameleons surrounding our attractive lodgings.

4 November - Yet another superb morning's birding this time in Perinet After lunch we made a quick and wet stop at Lemur Island before heading up to Tana for the night.

5 November - An early morning flight with appropriately named Mad. Air took us from Tana to Tulear to Fort Dauphin. There we were met by Ed and his colleagues and driven expertly to his attractive tented camp on the Mandrare River. Ed informed us that they had just received three days of unseasonal, torrential rain and that the Mandrare had gone from being bone-dry to being flooded. I'm only too glad we had such good drivers and four-wheel-drive vehicles as the driving through the mud and water was a little 'interesting' to say the least. We arrived in time to settle into our camp and enjoy a magnificent dinner.

6 - 7 November We had two full days to explore the environs of the Mandrare River Camp. During this time we went on extended hikes through some very birdy Spiny Forest in addition riverine woodland; scrub and a small swamp. Add to this a visit to a fascinating market and some wonderful mammals, reptiles and of course some very neat birds and you have the ingredients of our very successful time. The flights of Madagascan Sandgrouse along the river by our camp; the delightful experiences with several groups of Verreaux's Sifakas and various nesting birds around our camp all added to the allure.

8 November – Departing camp early we drove back along 'the' road to Fort Dauphin. Sea-watching off the cliffs failed to find the hoped for Kelp Gulls but we were treated to some fine views of cavorting Humpback Whales. Then it was time to fly to Tulear before heading north along the rather sandy coast road to our very lovely hotel at Ifaty.

9 November – Rising early so as to enjoy every moment of the cool we began our exploration of the Ifaty Spiny Forest which is quite different than that which we experienced along the Mandrare River. Barely had we started walking than our first Madagascan Harrier-Hawk came loping by; continuing on along a well marked trail that lead us through a maze of Baobabas, Euphorbias and spiny Didiera trees our remarkable guides quickly found us our first Mesite. A very confiding Sub-desert Mesite just sat and sat as we all enjoyed prolonged views of this highly sought after species. Other highlights of the morning included several magnificent butterflies; a good selection of lizards and geckos but best of all was a superb Long-tailed Ground-Roller that wandered all around us. Running and Olive-brown Capped couas all provided repeat close views among seemingly so much else. Returning for a notably late b'fast we then relaxed in the grounds of our truly gorgeous hotel. Venturing out again in the afternoon once the worst of the sun's heat had begun to diminish our first port of call was a very confiding Madagascan Plover in addition to numerous Bush-larks and Kittlitz's Plovers. Another Harrier-Hawk provided more prolonged views before we headed off into the Spiny Forest again. The sharp ears of our guide picked up something scratching in a hollow branch and with a bit of a struggle we all got to see the diminutive Lesser Hedgehog Tenrec. Amazing! But that wasn't all the guides also found its larger cousin the Greater Hedgehog Tenrec huddled in a log and looking for the entire world like Mrs. Tiggywinkle. Then we got down to the serious business of tracking down a buttonquail. And what views we had; not one but two pairs wandered around us permitting photographs and some fabulous views of a family that is normally so tough to see. Back at the bar and just beginning to relax whereupon David dragged us out into the car-park to witness a spectacular show put on by a couple of very responsive Madagascan Nightjars. Now it doesn't get much better than that!

10 November – Reluctantly departing our attractive hotel we slowly made our way southwards down the coast towards Tulear. Stops along the coast produced good numbers of shorebirds in addition to a handful of Greater Flamingoes and a selection of small lake and marsh birds. As the sun began to cool a bit we ventured forth into the Coral-Rag-Scrub where we surprisingly quickly found the very localized Red-shouldered Vanga. Unfortunately Verreaux's Coua was not quite so obliging and we only had a distant view of this increasingly difficult to find species.

11 November - After one of the world's more interesting means of boarding our speed boat (wading out into the sea in two wheeled oxen-carts) we sped off to the tiny, coralline island of Nosy Ve. Birding and snorkeling before a delicious seafood luncheon on the nearby mainland and then a gentle boat-ride back to Tuléar. Fabulous close views of several nesting Red-tailed Tropicbirds and an equally confiding pair of nesting Littoral Rock-Thrush were the highlights of the day.

12 November - Departing very early we made it to Zombitse Forest by 08.30 in time for a long hike through the dry deciduous forest before it became too hot. This very interesting and birdy woodland not only produced nice views of the dapper Appert's Tetraka (Greenbul) but some amazing views of both Giant and Coquerel's couas in addition to several very fine chameleons and geckos. From there it was a fairly short drive to our very attractive lodgings at Isalo National Park. Lunch and a dip in the divine pool were followed by a successful search for the localized Benson's Rock-Thrush which was nesting over the door of the Tack Room. A glorious sunset over rugged horizons completed yet another fine day on this remarkable island.

13 November - Early morning birding in Isalo Nat. Pk., followed by a delicious b'fast followed by longish but easy and very charming drive to Ranomafana up through the the centre of the island before turning east and then heading down the escarpment and increasingly attractive forested country.

14 November - A delightful hike through Upland Forest at Vohiparara produced lots of birds and mammals including Forest Rock-Thrush; our only Common Sunbird-Asity and superlative views of the Rufous-headed Ground-Roller. It was a tired but happy group the returned for a rather late lunch to our accommodations. A somewhat quieter afternoon unsuccessfully searching for the Pratincole concluded with fine views of the adorable Rufous Mouse-Lemur.

15 November - A hike to remember but the birds we saw were well worth it as we toiled up and down steep slopes in the lower elevation wet-forests of Ranomafana. We all enjoyed fine views of a female Asity at her nest; a troop of handsome Red-bellied Lemurs and then after a very long, hard slog amazing views of the incomparable Collared Nightjar - how in heavens name di those guys find that bird? What is more it was the first of its kind to be found this year so we were doubly fortunate. An afternoon back at Vohiparara produced fine views of a male Madagascan Sunbird and then at dusk the very peculiar display flight of the Madagascan Snipe in flight.

16 November - Departing early we made a leisurely but long drive back to Tana in time for a wonderful farewell dinner.



Post Tour Extension

17 November - Early morning milk-run flight from Tana to Maroansetra before settling into our divine hotel for rest and relaxation and some wonderful moments with Lowland Streaked Tenrecs.

18 November - A modestly early departure for our boat crossing to the Masoala Peninsula and our lovely tented camp. Afternoon birding was typically slow but produced good views of a very confiding Red-breasted Coua and Madagascar Pratincoles in addition to an amazing *Uroplatus* Leaf-tailed Gecko.

19 November - Arguably one of the most disappointing birding days I have encountered in recent years. A Cyclone hanging offshore produced soaking rain and gusty winds all day such that despite the lovely forest walk we failed to encounter any birds and in particular the much sought after Helmet Vanga.

20 November - With strong winds threatening we departed our camp very early and returned to Maroansetra and our eventual flight back to Tana. Grrrrr.

21 November - A disgracefully early flight to Majunga and a seemingly quick drive quickly brought us to Ampijoroa and the joy of this wonderful site. As always the area around our dinning area and the headquarters was alive with birds and other critters. In particular the recently arrived Broad-billed Rollers were notably noisy. Our afternoon exploration of some swamps to the south of the park wasn't as productive as we had hoped but we did rescue a magnificent Oustalet's Chameleon that was wandering across the road and we did encounter several very dapper Madagascan Jacanas along with a handful of other waterbirds but sadly no African Pygmy-Goose this year.

22 November - This was a wonderful day of birding and natural history. We quickly kicked off with several pairs of White-breasted Mesites that becoming increasingly confiding such that everyone enjoyed superb views of these handsome birds. Rufous Vangas were fairly common including a courting pair and a male on the nest. A female Schlegel's Asity poked her head out of the nest but unfortunately there was no sign of the male. Returning to the headquarters area for a well deserved b'fast we spent the rest of the morning relaxing or watching a rare Madagascan Fish-Eagle put the fear of god up the ducks as it proceeded to munch on a humongous. A very enjoyable boat-ride around Lake Ravelobe produced our first Allen's Gallinules - lots of them surprisingly in addition to some fine close views of Purple Heron and Little Heron and a pair of fish-eagles. There was then just time for another try for the male Schlegel's Asity. Still no sign of him but a shout from my colleague Fano had all our hopes up, however, he had found a group of Mongoose Lemurs which were quite a find in themselves; and oh so very handsome. Literally just as we were about to give up and we heard the distinctive call of the male astiy. A little bit of judicious playback and we had this extraordinary bird in view; in fact we had him the 'scope for all to enjoy superb views of this wonderful bird. What a day! But there was more to come. A night walk on the trails near our cabins produced marvelous views of several Grey Mouse-Lemurs; the recently discovered Golden-Mouse Lemur; very active troops of Milne-Edward's Sportive-Lemur and a very weird-looking Rhinoceros Chameleon. Returning to the headquarters area we were once again spoilt by a magnificent meal put on by our specially imported caterers. A truly, fabulous conclusion to a great day.

23 November - A final morning's birding at Ampijoroa and after lunch a drive back to Majunga. A very enjoyable hike concluding with fine views of Van Dam's Vanga but including great kooks at two new couas, Great Hog-nosed Snake and several troops of the lovely Coquerel's Sifaka.

24 November – A boat trip into the Betsiboka Delta produced superb views of a pair of White-throated Rails several Madagascar White Ibis and large numbers of roosting Terek Sandpiper. But best by far of all were two pairs of the endangered Bernier's Teal which permitted astonishingly close views. We returned to Majunga in time for a very pleasant and relaxed lunch and a well deserved afternoon of R&R.

25 November – With the little else to look for and the hoped for ponds dried out we enjoyed a rare sleep-in followed by some nifty craft shopping before flying back to Tana in the afternoon. David and Judy then caught the evening flight to Paris whilst the rest of us spent one more night in Tana and the end of a wonderful tour.

ANNOTATED LIST OF BIRDS

Non Passerines

1. Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* – Approximately 130 on brackish lakes between Tulear and Ifaty.
2. **Madagascar Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus pelzelinii* – One adult in smart, full breeding plumage, studied nicely and at length; Mantadia National Park. **Vulnerable.**
3. Red-tailed Tropicbird *Phaethon rubricauda* – Glorious views of this charismatic and spectacular bird as it flew low over our heads in addition to several nesting birds with well advanced chicks on Nosy Ve. Hard to really estimate numbers but we found at least six nesting pairs and saw at least 12 birds in the air at one time.
4. Long-tailed Cormorant *Phalacrocorax africanus* – Six along the river at Maroansetra. Also known as Reed Cormorant.
5. Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* – One along the Mandrare River; two on Lake Belanada; a total of six on the cliffs south of Tulear and several on Nosy Ve. Two at Ampijoroa and two in the Betsiboka Delta.
6. **Humblot's Heron** *Ardea humbloti* – Two adults on the cliffs south of Tulear and at least two other adults in flight and possibly two different birds together with Grey Herons on Nosy Ve. One at Lac Ravelobe at Ampijoroa. **Endangered.**

7. Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* - One gorgeous adult seen well at Vakona Lodge; scattered ones and twos at several other wetlands. A notably handsome species.
8. Great Egret *Ardea alba* - Common in rice-fields and at various wetland sites. NOTE: Placed by some authorities in *Egretta* or *Casmerodius*.
9. Black Egret *Egretta ardesiaca* - Six on a small lake in Tana. Forty or more on and around Lake Abromalandy. Also known as Black Heron.
10. Dimorphic Egret *Egretta dimorpha* - Widespread and fairly common, both along the coast and inland.
NOTE: Treated by some authorities including the latest incarnation of Clements as a distinctive subspecies of Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*.
11. Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides* - Fairly common in the paddies around Tana and many birds were in their delightful soft golden-brown breeding dress and five on a small swamp near our Mandrare River Camp. Common at Lac Ravelobe and nearby swamps; also in the Betsiboka Delta.
12. **Madagascar Pond-Heron *Ardeola idea*** - One on two days at the small marsh near our Marandare River Camp. One on the river near Maroansetra and two at Lake Abromalandy. **Endangered.**
13. Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* - Common in open country throughout the areas visited on this tour.
NOTE: Until recently usually lumped with Eastern Cattle Egret *B. coromandus* and this is the line that Clements takes. However, there are several 'well informed' authorities that differ including yours truly!!!!
14. Little Heron *Butorides striatus* - Scattered sightings throughout the trip. This highly variable species is represented here by the subspecies *rutenbergi*.
NOTE: The A.O.U. now treats North America populations of the *Buteroides* superspecies as a separate species: Green-backed Heron *B. virescens*. *B. striatus* continues, for the time being, to apply to the rest of this widespread superspecies.
15. Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* - Ten at a swampy lake in Tana and small numbers at dusk at Vohiparara and near Ranomafana village.

16. Hamerkop *Scopus umbretta* - Fairly common wet rice-fields *en route* from Tana to Perinet and from Ranomafana to Tana with a total of eight counted on one day.
17. Madagascar White Ibis *Threskiornis bernieri* - A total of >8 counted including some great views, on the trip into the Betsiboka Estuary. Characterized by its pale iris and white on black wing tips, this taxon is treated as separate species by Birdlife International (BUT not Clements).
18. Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* - Approximately 70 at Ampijoroa including several active nesting pairs and several hundred in the wet rice-fields associated with Lake Abromalandy.
19. **Madagascar Crested Ibis *Lophotibis cristata*** - One adult bird seen superbly at Perinet at dusk. Apparently this species has been very difficult to find on tour this year so we were especially fortunate to enjoy such fine 'scope views. **Near Threatened.**
20. African Open-billed Stork *Anastomus lamelligerus* - A single bird and then a group of four in wet rice-fields adjacent to Ankarafantsika Nat. Pk.
21. Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus roseus* - Six very pale looking birds including two immatures on the coastal sand-spit between Ifaty and Tulear.
22. White-faced Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna viduata* - A flock of 40 of this attractive duck on the sand-spit between Ifaty and Tulear; a flock of 60+ along the Masoala Peninsula and large numbers in and around Ankarafantsika Nat. Pk.
23. Comb Duck *Thalassornis leuconotus* - One female in flight along the Mandrare River; six near Lake Abromalandy and four at Lac Ravelobe.
24. **Bernier's Teal *Anas bernieri*** - Fabulous close and prolonged views of two pairs of this very rare duck in the Betsiboka Delta. **Endangered.**
25. Red-billed Teal *Anas erythrorhynchos* - 30+ at marshes to the south of Ankarafantsika Nat. Pk.
26. Hottentot Teal *Anas hottentota* - Six or more on the small Lake Belalanda marsh between Tulear and Ifaty.

27. **Madagascar Cuckoo-Hawk** *Aviceda madagascariensis* - One pair seen superbly both in flight and perched at the edge of riverine woodland at our Mandrare River Camp. This is a generally difficult to find species and visually mimics Madagascar Buzzard.
28. **Yellow-billed Kite** *Milvus aegyptius* - Widespread and seen throughout the island.
NOTE: This form is often treated as a sub-species of Black Kite *M. migrans*.
29. **Black Kite** *Milvus migrans* - A group of six seemingly on migration at Isalo.
30. **Madagascar Fish-Eagle** *Haliaeetus vociferoides* - Thanks to Patricia great and prolonged views of a single adult as it fed on a fish at Lac Ravelobe, Ampijoroa and then a pair the following day. **Critically Endangered**.
31. **Madagascar Harrier-Hawk** *Polyboroides radiatus* - One pair in flight at dawn over Spiny Forest near Ifaty and then again but at closer range and giving more prolonged views near our lovely Dunes Hotel at Ifaty. One found by David Brenner hunting among mango trees between Majunga and Ampijoroa.
32. **Frances's Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter francesii* - A pair was very active in the woodland surrounding our Mandrare River Camp and permitted most of us some fine views. Then we were treated to superb, close views of an adult male in the woodland at Ankarafantsika Nat. Pk.
33. **Madagascar Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter madagascariensis* - One seen on two days carrying food at Vohiparara. A single male flew in and perched in the canopy in perfect view for us at Ampijoroa. **Near Threatened**.
34. ***Henst's Goshawk** *Accipiter henstii* - One heard calling loudly over the forests at Mantadia where we could see its shadow but that was it. **Near Threatened**.
35. **Madagascar Buzzard** *Buteo brachypterus* - A good scatter of sightings of this vocal and conspicuous species.
36. **Madagascar Kestrel** *Falco newtoni* - A common and widespread endemic species that was seen well almost every day including a pair nesting alongside our hotel in Tana and at our hotel in Maroansetra.

37. **Banded Kestrel** *Falco zoniventris* - One displaying low over Spiny Forest near our Mandrare River Camp and one seen in flight over Spiny Forest near Ifaty. This is always a tricky and somewhat elusive species.
38. **Eleonora's Falcon** *Falco eleonora* - One seen nicely in flight during the late afternoon as we neared Tana.
39. **Sooty Falcon** *Falco concolor* - Several (≥6+) moving southwards over Maronsetra airport and one seen superbly perched and then hunting at dawn at the edge of Ankarafantsika Nat. Pk.
40. **Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus* - Excellent 'scope views of a resident individual perched on a ridge within the Lavaka of Ankarafantsika Nat. Pk.
41. ***Helmeted Guinea fowl** *Numida meleagris* - Heard at Ankarafantsika Nat. Pk. This species is introduced in Madagascar.
42. **Sub-desert Mesite** *Monias benschi* - We enjoyed fine views of a 'treed' female at Ifaty thanks to some amazing tracking by our local guides.
Vulnerable.
43. **White-breasted Mesite** *Mesitornis variegata* - Three groups of 2-3 seen superbly well at Ampijoroa as they responded brilliantly to our sound-recording. **Vulnerable.**
44. **Madagascar Buttonquail** *Turnix nigricollis* - Seen well by the front vehicle *en route* to our Mandrare River Camp and superbly for all then in the Spiny Forest near Ifaty and at the arboretum near Tulear. Probably the easiest buttonquail in the world to see!
45. **Madagascar Flufftail** *Sarothrura insularis* - Fabulous looks at two pairs at Mantadia. Heard at several other sites.
NOTE: Flufftails are now placed in their own separate family viz. *Sarothruridae*.
46. **Madagascar Wood Rail** *Canirallus kiolooides* - One seen briefly in forest at Vohiparara and heard at Masoala.
47. **Madagascar Rail** *Rallus madagascariensis* - Fabulous views of two individuals in marshland on the edge of Mantadia Nat. Pk.

48. **White-throated Rail** *Dryolimnas cuvieri* - One seen in rice-fields between Tana and Perinet and then fabulous views of a pair in mangroves in the Betsiboka Delta.
49. **Baillon's Crake** *Porzana pusilla* - Seen by Nancy and heard by the group at a small marsh between Ifaty and Tulear.
50. **Allen's Gallinule** *Porphyrio alleni* - A total of twenty or more including some fine views at Lac Ravelobe, Ampijoroa.
51. **African Swamphen** *Porphyrio madagascariensis* - One seen at Lake Belalanda between Ifaty and Tulear.
52. **Common Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus* - Widespread in low numbers.
NOTE: Recent studies suggest that this widespread species comprises more than one species (the New World and Old World forms should almost certainly be split) so it is wise to note where you have seen moorhens!
53. **Red-knobbed Coot** *Fulica cristata* - Three counted on Lake Belalanda just north of Tulear.
54. **Madagascar Jacana** *Actophilornis albinucha* - Good views of three in the wetlands to the south of Ankarafantsika Nat. Pk.
55. **Greater Painted Snipe** *Rostratula benghalensis* - A total of five seen superbly in a small swamp near our Mandrare River Camp.
56. **Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus* - Daily totals of 50 and 30 on the small swamps around Tulear and ca. 10 on Lake Abromalandy.
57. **Madagascar Pratincole** *Glareola ocularis* - Fabulous 'scope views of two on rocks next to our camp and several further along the beach at Masoala and three on the beach at the entrance to the river near Maroansetra.
Vulnerable.
58. **Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola* - Several along the coast near Tulear. Also known as Black-bellied Plover.
59. **Common Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula* - Small numbers seen nicely in the Tulear area and six along the river near Maroansetra.

60. **Madagascar Plover** *Charadrius thoracicus* - A pair seen superbly well near Ifaty. **Vulnerable.**
61. Kittlitz's Plover *Charadrius pecuarius* - Common around Tulear and on Nosy Ve.
62. Three-banded Plover *Charadrius tricollaris* - Two of these handsome birds on a small marsh near Tulear.
63. White-fronted Plover *Charadrius marginatus* - One pair on Nosy Ve and ten on the river near Maroansetra.
64. Greater Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii* - Small numbers on the coast near Tulear and 30 counted on the Betsiboka Delta.
65. Eurasian Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* - The most common and widespread large wader in coastal areas with a maxima of 50 between Tulear and Ifaty and 10 on the Betsiboka Delta.
66. Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquatus* - One seen briefly as we passed the mud-flats of Tulear harbour and then another as we exited the river at Maroansetra.
67. **Madagascar Snipe** *Gallinago macrodactyla* - This increasingly difficult to find endemic provided us with a totally exhilarating experience; firstly at dusk at Vohiparara as one or two birds emitted their surreal display flight/sound over our heads and then the next morning as two individuals flushed from a small marsh a flew right by us in perfect light. Wow, way to go!
68. Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus* - Four on the coast north of Tulear and as many as 100 at the Betsiboka Delta.
69. Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* - Widespread with low numbers seen at scattered sites throughout Madagascar.
70. Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* - Widespread and locally common with a maxima of 50 on the coastal mudflats between Tulear and Ifaty.
71. Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* - Low numbers on the coast between Tulear and Ifaty; Nosy Ve and along the river at Maroansetra.

72. Sanderling *Calidris alba* - As many as ten on the coastal mudflats between Tulear and Ifaty and Nosy Ve. Two along the river at Maroansetra.
73. Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* - A maxima of 60 on the coastal mudflats between Tulear and Ifaty and several along the river at Maroansetra.
74. Little Stint *Calidris minuta* - Four on the sand-spit between Ifaty and Tulear.
75. Kelp Gull *Larus dominicanus* - Three seen very nicely off Fort Dauphin and one immature on Nosy Ve (Not an immature Sooty Gull as previously thought).
76. Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* - Three hundred or more roosting on shallow sand-bars in the estuary of the river near Maroansetra; many hundreds together with Lesser Crested Terns feeding in small and medium-sized flocks throughout the gulf of Masoala; presumably sheltering from the worst ravages of the Cyclone that was present at the time of our visit.
77. Lesser Crested Tern *Sterna bengalensis* - Fifty or more on sandbars off Nosy Ve and 20 - 120 along the coast between Tulear and Ifaty; 50+ daily off the Masoala Peninsula.
78. Greater Crested Tern *Sterna bergii* - Four off Fort Dauphin. Also known as Swift Tern.
79. **Madagascar Sandgrouse** *Pterocles personatus* - As many as twenty seen flying along and occasional dropping down to the river edge for a drinks at our camp along the Mandrare River; two also seen superbly at a small puddle near our camp.
80. Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon) *Columba livia* - Ubiquitous around towns and villages.
81. **Madagascar Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia picturata* - Widespread, but particularly tame and viewable at Ampijoroa.
82. Namaqua Dove *Oena capensis* - Widespread and generally common; this rather smart looking pigeon was common in the drier south and west of the country.

83. **Madagascar Green Pigeon** *Treron australis* - One seen briefly at Perinet; two seen well in flight above Tulear and then finally some superb views of several birds attending fruiting tree at Ankarafantsika Nat. Pk.
84. **Madagascar Blue Pigeon** *Alectroenas madagascariensis* - This distinctive and handsome pigeon was seen rather well on a number of occasions at Ranomafana. Also seen briefly at Mantadia.
85. **Grey-headed Lovebird** *Agapornis cana* - 10-20 seen daily at our Mandrare River Camp and the surrounding area; several in the Spiny Forest near Ifaty.
86. **Greater Vasa Parrot** *Coracopsis vasa* - Great views of several pairs at Mantadia and Perinet; common at Ankarafantsika Nat. Pk.
87. **Lesser Vasa Parrot** *Coracopsis nigra* - More widespread and common than the previous species and characterized by some very un-parrot-like whistled calls. First seen at Mantadia and thereafter a good scatter of sites.
88. **Madagascar Cuckoo** *Cuculus rochii* - Heard almost daily and seen nicely a couple of times. The calls of this summer visitor from mainland Africa is one of the most characteristic sounds of Madagascar.

The couas are often recognized as an endemic subfamily (Couinae) and are sometimes placed in their own family.

89. **Giant Coua** *Coua gigas* - Seen superbly at Zombitse where one bird took a large frog which it carried back to an unseen second bird; also seen by Jim in the Spiny Forest near our Mandrare River Camp.
90. **Coquerel's Coua** *Coua coquereli* - A pair seen superbly at Zombitse.
91. **Red-breasted Coua** *Coua serriana* - Seen superbly at Masoala, where we had prolonged views of several individuals.
92. **Red-fronted Coua** *Coua reynaudii* - Great views of one attending a nest at Perinet and then a second bird seen by some the following day; one individual along the entrance trail at Ranomafana.
93. **Red-capped Coua** *Coua ruficeps* - Common and fairly easy to see at Ankarafantsika Nat. Pk. where we were treated to some fine views of our last Coua!

94. **Running Coua** *Coua cursor* - Several seen superbly at Ifaty in the Spiny Forest where they were especially confiding this year.
95. **Crested Coua** *Coua cristata* - Several of this attractive species were seen on all our visits to the Spiny Forest near Ifaty (subspecies *pyropyga*) also common at the Mandrare River Camp (*maxima*) and a pair on the Masoala Peninsula and again seen at Ampijoroa (*dumonti*).
96. **Verreaux's Coua** *Coua verreauxi* - One seen distantly and all too briefly in the Coral Rag Scrub above Tulear. **Near Threatened.**
97. **Blue Coua** *Coua caerulea* - Wow what a stunner. We enjoyed excellent views of this rather Turaco-like Coua at Ranomafana, Mantadia, Perinet and Masoala Peninsula.
98. **Madagascar Coucal** *Centropus toulou* - Widespread and common, present in almost any habitat.
99. **Barn Owl** *Tyto alba* - Heard one evening at Ampijoroa.
100. **Rainforest Scops Owl** *Otus rutilus* - Frustratingly only heard this year at Mantadia, Ranomafana and our Masoala Camp.
101. **Torotoroka Scops Owl** *Otus madagascariensis* - One seen at its roost hole during the day at our Mandrare River Camp; heard very close by at Ampijoroa.
NOTE: These two scops owls were, until recently, lumped as 'Malagasy Scops Owl' *O. rutilus*, but differ markedly in coloration, patterning and vocalizations.
102. **White-browed Owl** *Ninox supercilialis* - Three seen exceptionally well at and beyond our Mandrare River Camp and Zombitse; all during the daytime.
103. **Madagascar Nightjar** *Caprimulgus madagascariensis* - Great views of two studied at length and at very close quarters in the grounds of lovely hotel at Ifaty. Several others heard.
104. **Collared Nightjar** *Caprimulgus enarratus* - A stunningly lovely creature that permitted us amazingly close and prolonged views permitting everyone time to drink in all the delicate beauty of this incredible and very poorly known species. How in heavens name our guides found such a bird in the dense forest interior of Ranomafana National Park I cannot imagine. We

were the first and possibly and only group to find this almost mythical species this year! Thank you Flavian *et al.*



Sub-desert Mesite © K. David Bishop

- 105. **Madagascar Spinetail** *Zoonavena grandidieri* - Notably common at Mantadia where a maxima of six provided some excellent close views. One over the woodland at Zombitse.
- 106. **African Palm Swift** *Cypsiurus parvus* - Small numbers in the lightly wooded farmland of central southern Madagascar and almost from thereon to Ifaty; several in and around Ampijoroa.
- 107. **Madagascar Black Swift** *Apus balstoni* - Notably common this year with 15+ together with other swifts feeding low over the ground near a lake in Tana; four at Ifaty and several at Vohiparara.
NOTE: Sometimes lumped with African Black Swift.

108. Little Swift *Apus affinis* - One with several other swifts feeding over wasteland near a large lake in the middle of Tana.
109. **Madagascar Malachite Kingfisher** *Corythornis vintsioides* - Scattered ones and twos at edge of wetlands throughout the tour.
110. **Madagascar Pygmy Kingfisher** *Ispidina madagascariensis* - Undoubtedly one of THE highlights of the entire tour! This spectacular little gem gave us amazing views during our second morning at Mantadia.
111. **Madagascar Bee-eater** *Merops superciliosus* - Widespread and moderately common in small numbers throughout Madagascar except in the wet rainforests of the eastern slopes.
112. Broad-billed Roller *Eurystomus glaucurus* - These noisy and attractive birds are migrants from Africa and were conspicuous at Isalo, Zombitse, Mantadia, Masoala and especially Ampijoroa.

PASSERINES

113. **Short-legged Ground-Roller** *Brachypteracias leptosomus* - After an impressive hike up into the interior of Mantadia Nat. Pk. we finally found one 'stuck' to his branch where he permitted prolonged study from every angle. A second bird nearby appeared to be his mate. **Vulnerable**.
114. **Scaly Ground-Roller** *Brachypteracias squamiger* - After a short wait we were treated to superb views of one adult carrying food to a nest at Mantadia Nat. Pk. Amazing views of this stunning ground-roller and those legs!. **Vulnerable**.
115. **Pitta-like Ground-Roller** *Atelornis pittoides* - Sensational views of as many as five on our first morning at Mantadia; thereafter seen at Ranomafana.
116. **Rufous-headed Ground-Roller** *Atelornis crossleyi* - Arguably bird of the trip! Simply unbelievable views of an extraordinarily confiding individual that came in and wandered around less than three feet in front of us at Vohiparara. What a bird!

117. **Long-tailed Ground-Roller** *Uratelornis chimaera* - Great views of one on the first morning at Ifaty. **Vulnerable.**
118. **Cuckoo-Roller** *Leptosomus discolor* - Fine views of a pair over the Spiny Forest at Ifaty and then common at Zombitse where several pairs put on a great performance; two at Vohiparara and heard daily at Ranomafana. A truly impressive bird and the sole member of its family.
119. **Madagascar Hoopoe** *Upupa marginata* - A pair attending a nest at our Mandrare River Camp provided everyone with fine views of this striking species; two at Zombitse and seen daily at Ampijoroa.
120. **Velvet Asity** *Philepitta castanea* - Fabulous views of a male along with a huge mixed flock at Perinet on our first afternoon and then a female attending a nest at Ranomafana.
121. **Schlegel's Asity** *Philepitta schlegeli* - Great scope views of a female at her nest at Ankarafantsika Nat. Pk. and then a simply gorgeous male at dusk! **Near Threatened.**
122. **Common Sunbird-Asity** - Great looks at a sub-adult male at Vohiparara.
123. **Yellow-bellied Sunbird-Asity** *Neodrepanis hypoxantha* - Heard and a female seen briefly near flowering trees at Vohiparara. **Vulnerable.**
124. **Madagascar Bush Lark** *Mirafra hova* - Very common in open country around Ifaty, Tulear and Majunga.
125. **Mascarene Martin** *Phedina borbonica* - Fairly common and widespread except in the dry habitat of the south where notably more sparse.
126. **Brown-throated Sand Martin** *Riparia puludicola* - A flock of twenty between Tana and Perinet.
127. **Madagascar Wagtail** *Motacilla flaviventris* - Locally common on the high plateau and at the edge of the wet forests of the eastern escarpment and at Ampijoroa. A pair was seen feeding young around our accommodations at Vakona Lodge.
128. **Ashy Cuckoo-Shrike** *Coracina cinerea* - A widespread, though never common, member of mixed species flocks; several at Perinet and Mantadia and heard at Ranomafana.

129. **Long-billed Tetraka (Greenbul) *Phyllastrephus madagascariensis*** - Several good views at Zombitse where this species was common; several at Vohiparara and at Ampijoroa. It is indeed long-billed!
NOTE: Jønsson & Fjeldså (2006) reviewed 99 genetic studies to construct a tentative 'supertree' of relationships amongst all passerine birds. In the new arrangement the oscines passerines (order Passeriformes, suborder Passeri) are divided into the Parvorders 'Basal' and 'Crown' Corvida and the Passerida. The Passerida is then divided into three superfamilies, Muscicapioidea, Passeroidea and Sylvioidea. This arrangement is well supported and there appears to be consensus on all these major branches. In the new model none of the four species of Malagasy 'greenbul' are treated as bulbuls and they are not thought to be related to the African greenbul; hence my preference for calling them 'Tetrakas'. This new study strongly suggests they belong to an assemblage of Malagasy 'warblers' that includes Wedge-tailed Jery, Cryptic Warbler, White-throated Oxylabes, Thamnornis Warbler and Madagascar Yellowbrow that are placed together as 'clade 11' in the Parvorder Sylvioidea and are probably best treated as an endemic Malagasy family (perhaps to be called 'Bernieriidae?').
130. **Spectacled Tetraka (Greenbul) *Phyllastrephus zosterops*** - Common at Perinet, Mantadia and Ranomafana.
131. **Grey-crowned Tetraka *Phyllastrephus cinereiceps*** - Seen poorly with a mixed flock at Vohiparara.
132. **Appert's Tetraka (Greenbul) *Phyllastrephus apperti*** - Great views of a pair of these charming birds at Zombitse Forest. **Vulnerable**.
133. **Madagascar Bulbul *Hypsipetes madagascariensis*** - One of the commonest and most ubiquitous of Madagascar's endemics.
134. **Forest Rock Thrush *Pseudocossyphus sharpie*** - A male just sat glued to his song post as he quietly uttered his lovely refrain, permitting us all to enjoy his every nuance; Ranomafana. Also heard near *en route* back to Tana.
135. **Benson's Rock Thrush *Pseudocossyphus bensoni*** - Amazing views of both male and female as they attended an active nest over the doorway of the hotel 'tack-room'. Although this species is lumped by some authors with Forest Rock Thrush, its preference for a very different habitat; its paler plumage and distinctively different song suggest that it is best retained as a separate species. **Near Threatened**.

136. **Littoral Rock Thrush** *Pseudocossyphus imerinus* - Great views of this localized endemic, right alongside our luncheon site near Nosy Ve.
137. **Madagascar Cisticola** *Cisticola cherina* - Widespread and common in open country.
138. **Grey Emutail** *Dromaeocercus seebohmi* - Thanks to Jim one seen at a small marsh between Ranomafana and Tana.
139. **Madagascar Brush Warbler** *Nesillas typica* - Widespread and commonly heard scolding in the undergrowth of the wet forests. We managed to get many good views, especially at Perinet, Mantadia and Ranomafana.
140. **Sub-desert Brush Warbler** *Nesillas lantzii* - Seen very nicely in the Tulear arboretum.
141. **Thamnornis Warbler** *Thamnornis chloropetoides* - Several singing birds seen well in the Spiny Forest near Ifaty. See the comment under Long-billed Greenbul.
142. **Madagascar Swamp Warbler** *Acrocephalus newtoni* - Seen well in roadside marshes *en route* Tana to Perinet.
143. **Rand's Warbler** *Randia pseudozosterops* - Good scope views of this rather drab warbler at Mantadia.
144. **Dark Newtonia** *Newtonia amphichroa* - A pair seen nicely at Mantadia.
145. **Common Newtonia** *Newtonia brunneicauda* - A familiar sound in all forests.
146. **Archbold's Newtonia** *Newtonia archboldi* - Several in the Spiny Forest near our Mandrare River Camp.
147. **Cryptic Warbler** *Cryptosylvicola randrianasoloi* - Amazingly good views of a singing bird as he permitted prolonged 'scope views as he remained 'stuck' to his song-post at Vohiparara. See the comment under Long-billed Tetraka (Greenbul).
148. **Madagascar Magpie-Robin** *Copsychus albospecularis* - Widespread and common with birds being seen most days including pairs attending nests.

149. African Stonechat *Saxicola torquata* - A few in open country but not in the dry south-west.
NOTE: Clements has now re-lumped the stonechats as one species.
150. **Ward's Flycatcher** *Pseudobias wardi* - Several around the Vakona Lodge and then one seen by Jim at Vohiparara. This species has recently been shown to be a Vanga.
151. **Madagascar Paradise Flycatcher** *Terpsiphone mutata* - Common and amazingly confiding in all forests. Many wonderful views including several pairs attending nests.
152. **Common Jery** *Neomixis tenella* - Indeed common, its buzzy calls being heard on a near daily basis.
153. **Green Jery** *Neomixis viridis* - Seen at Mantadia and Perinet. This tree-top species is very common, but hard to see from forest trails.
154. **Stripe-throated Jery** *Neomixis striatigula* - This species strident song was a familiar sound in both the evergreen forests and the spiny forest, and we saw several at Mantadia and Perinet.
155. **Wedge-tailed Jery** *Hartertula flavoviridis* - No miracles this year! A pair of this skulking understorey species was heard and seen briefly at Mantadia and Ranomafana . See the comment under Long-billed Tetraka (Greenbul). **Near Threatened.**
156. **White-throated Oxylabes** *Oxylabes madagascariensis* - Two individuals seen at Ranomafana of this attractive understorey species. See the comment under Long-billed Tetraka (Greenbul).
157. **Yellow-browed Oxylabes** *Crossleyia xanthophrys* - Heard only at Vohiparara. See the comment under Long-billed Tetraka (Greenbul). **Near Threatened.**
158. **Souimanga Sunbird** *Nectarinia souimanga* - Widespread and common almost everywhere. The various vocalizations of this sunbird where one the familiar sounds of Madagascar 'bush'.

159. **Long-billed Green Sunbird** *Nectarinia notata* - Much the scarcer of the two endemic sunbirds we enjoyed fine views of both males and females in and around Vohiparara.
160. **Madagascar White-eye** *Zosterops maderaspatana* - Common and widespread.
161. **Red-tailed Vanga** *Calicalius madagascariensis* - Widespread and fairly common although heard more often than seen. Nice views of this smart looking species at Perinet, Mantadia and Ifaty.
NOTE: Vangas are placed in 'clade 7' of the 'Crown Corvida' (see notes under Long-billed Tetraka [Greenbu]), together with the butcherbirds, woodswallows, helmetshrikes, bushshrikes, batises and puffback. Also note that Common Newtonia (and presumably the other newtonias), Ward's Flycatcher and Crossley's Babbler have recently been shown to be vangas.
162. **Red-shouldered Vanga** *Calicalius rufocarpalis* - Fabulous close views of a very responsive male of this relatively recently discovered species near to Tulear where it is an endemic inhabitant of the Coral Rag Scrub. **Vulnerable.**
163. **Rufous Vanga** *Schetba rufa* - Seen commonly very well at Ampijoroa where it was seen on the nest.
164. **Hook-billed Vanga** *Vanga curvirostris* - Seen very well in Spiny Forest near the Mandrare River Camp and coral rag scrub near Tulear. One pair was attending at nest at Ampijoroa Forestry Station.
165. **Lafresnaye's Vanga** *Xenopirostris xenopirostris* - Fabulous views of several in Spiny Forest near our Mandrare River Camp.
166. **Van Dam's Vanga** *Xenopirostris damii* - One or two seen but frustratingly rather poorly despite that we heard several birds and found a new nest at Ampijoroa. **Endangered.**
167. ***Pollen's Vanga** *Xenopirostris polleni* - Heard at Vohiparara. **Endangered.**
168. **Sickle-billed Vanga** *Falculea palliata* - Several great sightings of this striking Vanga at Ifaty and Ampijoroa where it was nesting.
169. **White-headed Vanga** *Leptopterus viridis* - Seen poorly at Ranomafana but much better at Mantadia and Masoala.

170. **Chabert's Vanga** *Leptopterus chabert* - Common and widespread in open areas and forest edge. A notably handsome species.
171. **Blue Vanga** *Cyanolanius madagascarinus* - Superb views of this electric coloured Vanga in the eastern rainforests.
172. **Nuthatch-Vanga** *Hypositta corallirostris* - One pair with a huge mixed species flock on the first afternoon at Perinet and then one male seen all too briefly at Mantadia.
173. **Tylas Vanga** *Tylas eduardi* - Several pairs seen very nicely at Perinet.
174. **Madagascar Mannikin** *Lonchura nana* - Seen nicely at Mantadia; several seen *en route* to and from our Mandrare River Camp and two on two days at Ranomafana.
175. **Nelicourvi Weaver** *Ploceus nelicourvi* - Fine views of this forest dwelling weaver at Mantadia including one male persistently building a nest over the road; also at Perinet.
176. **Sakalava Weaver** *Ploceus sakalava* - Very common in the drier habitats of the south.
177. **Madagascar Red Fody** *Foudia madagascariensis* - Widespread and common; seen almost daily.
178. **Forest Fody** *Foudia omissa* - A handsome male seen superbly at the edge of Mantadia Nat. Pk.
179. **Common Myna** *Acridotheres tristis* - Widespread and common. Introduced.
180. **Madagascar Starling** *Hartlaubius auratus* - Seen nicely at Ranomafana.
181. **Crested Drongo** *Dicrurus forficatus* - Common and widespread with many seen nesting.
182. **Pied Crow** *Corvus albus* - Widespread and common, especially within farmland and open country.
183. **House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus* - A small group of six or more playing on the roof of the Tomasina airport buildings.



Grey Mouse-Lemur © K. David Bishop

MAMMALS

NB Please note that the sequence and the English names have been adjusted to reflect the usage in Nick Garbutt's excellent *Guide to the Mammals of Madagascar* (2007).

1. Lesser Hedgehog Tenrec *Echinops telfari* - One of these endearing creatures was found by our remarkably local guides in the Spiny Forest near Ifaty.
2. Greater Hedgehog Tenrec *Setifer setosus* - The second of what we thought was a Lesser Hedgehog Tenrec in the spiny forests at Ifaty was in fact the larger, more bulky, longer-nosed Greater Hedgehog Tenrec. Also known as Mrs. Tiggeywinkle
3. Lowland Streaked Tenrec *Hemicentetes semispinosus* - Fabulous views of this gorgeous creature on our first morning *en route* to Mantadia and then two in the gardens of our lovely hotel at Maroansetra. What a wonderful little 'critter'.
4. Mauritian Tomb Bat *Taphozous mauritanus* - Several adults carrying dependant young roosting on tree-trunks at Ampijoroa.
5. Bat sp Vohiparara - An unidentified species at dusk at Vohiparara.
6. Grey Mouse Lemur *Microcebus murinus* - One seen on two nights in our Mandrare River Camp and then at least four at Ampijoroa.
7. Brown Mouse-Lemur *Microcebus rufus* - Superb views at dusk at the new 'Nocturne Point' at Ranomafana.
8. Grey-brown Mouse Lemur *Microcebus griseorufus* - Great views during the day-time and at night within the Spiny Forest along the Mandrare River and during the day in the Arboretum near Tulear.
9. Golden Mouse-Lemur *Microcebus ravelobensis* - This recently described species was seen and photographed on our very productive night-walk at Ampijoroa.
10. Furry-eared Dwarf Lemur *Cheirogaleus crossleyi* - Several seen at night at Perinet.

11. Milne-Edward's Sportive Lemur *Lepilemur edwardsi* - Several during our night-walk at Ampijoroa.
12. White-footed Sportive Lemur *Lepilemur leucopus* - Great views in Spiny Forest near our Mandrare River Camp at a daytime roost.
13. Eastern Grey Bamboo Lemur (Grey Bamboo Lemur) *Hapalemur griseus* - Great views at Mantadia.
14. Ring-tailed Lemur *Lemur catta* - Several in woodland along the Mandrare River.
15. Mongoose Lemur *Eulemur mongoz* - A group of this uncommon but very attractive species seen nicely at Ampijoroa.
16. Red-bellied Lemur *Eulemur rubriventer* - Super views of one group at Ranomafana.
17. Common Brown Lemur *Eulemur fulvus* - Seen well at Perinet.
18. White-fronted Brown Lemur *Eulemur albifrons* - Several rather shy groups at Masoala.
19. Red-fronted Brown Lemur *Eulemur rufus* - Seen at Ranomafana.
20. Black-and-white Ruffed Lemur *Varecia variagata* - Troops of this very rare and difficult to see species seen superbly at Mantadia.
21. Red Ruffed Lemur *Varecia rubra* - Two seen in deplorably rainy conditions in the fabulous Masoala forests.
22. Eastern Avahi (Woolly Lemur) *Avahi laniger* - One roosting midway up a tree at Perinet.
23. Verreaux's Sifaka *Propithecus verreauxi* - Common and tame in the Spiny Forests along the Mandrare River.
24. Diademed Sifaka *Propithecus diadema* - Several troops seen daily at Mantadia.
25. Coquerel's Sifaka *Propithecus coquereli* - Great views of this beautiful and easy to see lemur at Ampijoroa.

26. Indri *Indri indri* - Seen and heard, at Perinet and Mantadia. Truly a fantastic mammal.
27. Easter Red Forest Rat *Nesomys rufus* - Two at Ranomafana.
28. Western Tufted-tail Rat *Ellurus myoxinus* - One seen on our night-walk at Ampijoroa.
29. Small Indian Civet *Viverricula indica* - One found freshly dead between Tulear and Zombitse.
30. Humpback Whale *Megaptera novaeangliae* - Six off Fort Dauphin.



REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

CROCODILES

1. Nile Crocodile *Crocodylus niloticus* - Several individuals hauled out at Lac Ravelobe, Ampijoroa.



Parson's Chameleon © K. David Bishop

CHAMELEONS

2. *Brookesia nasus* - One at Ranomafana.
3. *Brookesia superciliaris* - One found by KDB at Masoala.
4. Short-horned Chameleon *Calumma brevicornis* - Several at Mantadia and Perinet.
5. Nose-horned Chameleon *Calumma nasuta* - One during the first evening at Perinet and one during the day at Ranomafana.
6. Band-bellied Chameleon *Calumma gastrotaenia* - One at Perinet.
7. Parson's Chameleon *Calumma parsonii* - Superb study of a fine adult at Perinet.
8. Panther Chameleon *Furcifer paradalis* - Two in the gardens of our lovely hotel at Maronsetra.
9. Rhinoceros Chameleon *Furcifer rhoniceratus* - One on our night-walk at Ampijoroa.
10. Oustalet's Chameleon *Furcifer oustaleti* - One in the Tulear arboretum and three at Zombitse and common at Ampijoroa.
11. Warty Chameleon *Furcifer verrucosus* - Common in the forest in and around our Mandrare River Camp.
12. *Culmma globifer* - One of these gorgeous creatures at Ranomafana.

IGUANID LIZARDS

13. Three-eyed Lizard *Chalarodon madagascariensis* - At least one in the Spiny Forest at Ifaty.
14. *Oplurus cuvieri* - Common in the camp grounds at Ampijoroa.
15. *O. cyclurus* - One in Spiny Forest near Ifaty.
16. *Oplurus quadrimaculatus* - Several *en route* to and within Isalo National Park.

GECKOS

17. Fimbriated Leaf-tailed Gecko - *Uroplatus fimbriatus* - Superb views of one near our Masoala Camp.
18. Gecko sp. *Paroedura androyensis* - One in Spiny Forest near Ifaty.
19. Gecko sp. *Blaeseodactylus sakalava* - One at Zombitse.
20. Common House Gecko *Hemidactylus fimbriatus* - Widespread especially in the north.
21. *Phelsuma standingi* - One at Zombitse.
22. *Phelsuma lineata* - Mantadia, Perinet and Ranomafana.
23. *Phelsuma quadriocellata* - Common at Ranomafana.
24. *Paroedura androyensis* - Spiny Forest near Ifaty.
25. *Hemidactylus fimbriatus* - Widespread.

LIZARDS

26. *Trachylepis (Mabuya) aureopunctata* - One in a baobab near Ifaty.
27. *Trachylepis petersi* - One in Spiny Forest near Ifaty.
28. *Zonosaurus laticaudatus* - Several at Ampijoroa.
29. *Zonosaurus madagascariensis* - Several at Perinet and Mantadia.

SNAKES

30. Giant Hog-nosed Snake *Leioheterodon madagascariensis* - Ampijoroa.
31. *Leioheterodon modesta* Modest Hog-nosed Snake - Several in our Mandare River camp.
32. Black-and-white striped Snake *Bibilava lateralis* - Ampijoroa.

33. Mahafaly *Mimophis mahfalensis* - One seen superbly in Spiny Forest near Ifaty.

34. *Dromicodryas lateralis* One at Ampijoroa.

FROGS

1. Madagascar Tree Frog *Boophis madagascariensis*

2. Painted Mantella *Mantidactylus madagascariensis*

3. Little Pandanus Leaf Frog *Mantidactylus pulchra*

And all this in addition to a wonderful variety of butterflies, some truly magnificent dragonflies, spiders and beetles including the astonishing Giraffe Weevil.