Our comprehensive 2017 Madagascar Tour once again showcased Madagascar’s best birds and wildlife in just 15 days, with an optional week spent at Masoala at the start. During this time we enjoyed good views of almost all available endemic birds. Among the 189 species logged were all five species of ground roller, all three mesites, all species of vanga and all ten couas.

The most enjoyed birds and birding experiences of the trip were close-up views of the impressive Henst’s Goshawk in tenth, prolonged and unobstructed views of a lovely male Madagascar Flufftail in ninth, a flock of fourteen Crab Plovers on Nosy Ve in eighth, unbeatable views of a pair of Madagascar Yellowbrow in seventh and closer-and-closer views of the delightful White-browed Owl in sixth. The top five were a less-than-impressed Giant Coua in fifth, incredible views of Crossley’s Vanga and the intricately-marked Scaly Ground Roller in a tie for third, exceptional views of two gorgeous male Schlegel’s Asity in second, and the incomparable Collared Nightjar in top spot. Other favourites nominated included Red-tailed Tropicbird, Madagascar Cuckoo, Baillon’s Crane, Madagascar Pygmy Kingfisher, White-throated Rail, Velvet Asity, Long-tailed Ground Roller, Pitta-like Ground Roller, Short-legged Ground Roller, Rufous-headed Ground Roller, White-breasted Mesite, Grey Etrueil, Madagascar Blue Pigeon, Madagascar Hoopoe, Torotoroka Scops Owl, Brown Etrueil, Cuckoo Roller, Nuthatch Vanga, Madagascar Nightjar, Verreaux’s Coua, Madagascar Cuckoo-Hawk and the endemic subspecies of Little Bittern. Unbelievably Helmet Vanga, seen on day two, didn’t get a single nomination despite the excellent views – how quickly it was forgotten! We also recorded 27 lemur species, two tenrecs, four leaf-tailed geckos, more than ten chameleons, several different day geckos, a beautiful painted frog, giraffe-necked weevil and lots of other great critters.

Deservedly called the eighth continent, Madagascar is among the most unusual and spectacular wildlife hotspots on the globe. With more than 120 endemics bird species, several endemic bird families and a great diversity of unique mammals and habitats, it is quite simply a must-visit destination for birders and wildlife enthusiasts alike.

The early arrivals for the trip met up at our comfortable hotel-base in Antananarivo, exhilarated at what the coming weeks held in store for us. The remote rainforests of Masoala in the north-east of the country provided the first stop on our route. A short stint of birding in our hotel gardens produced Madagascar Nightjar on its day roost and tickled our taste buds before we enjoyed our first of many scrumptious meals together. As is now becoming routine, Air Madagascar let us down right from the start and cancelled our flight to Maroansetra, so we instead chartered a small plane and arrived well in time for a stint of afternoon birding at Maroansetra, which included several waders and herons, the only Reed Cormorant | Long-tailed Cormorant of the trip and a hunting Peregrine Falcon. The next morning the stormy weather had only subsided very slightly so it was a rather bumpy boat ride across to Masoala. We were more than relieved to set foot on the beach below the Lahatrousa trailhead for our first forest walk. The overcast conditions meant that things happened slowly during our entire visit, but our first walk produced some excellent views of Red-ruffed Lemur and Helmet Vanga. Fortunately Bernier’s Vanga was not too tricky this year, and we spent some time watching a pair foraging in some Pandanus palms at the end of our first full day. This meant there was plenty of time to look for other specials and we also found Short-legged Ground Roller, Brown Mesite, Madagascar Crested Ibis (perched in a tree for good views), Madagascar Starling, Madagascar Pygmy Kingfisher (well done Lynne!), Madagascar Spinetail, Madagascar Pratincole, Blue Vanga, White-headed Vanga, Crossley’s Vanga and Rufous Vanga. Mammals were represented by Lowland Streaked Tenrec and White-fronted Brown Lemur. The return boat trip to Maroansetra was much smoother, but Air Madagascar deserted us again, this time in Sambava for 24 hours, requiring yet another charter flight to get us back on schedule!

In Mahajanga we met up with the rest of the group that had arrived for the main tour, starting off with a boat trip to Maroansetra at the start. During this time we enjoyed good views of almost all available endemic birds. Among the 189 species logged were all five species of ground roller, all three mesites, all species of vanga and all ten couas.
Madagascar Sacred Ibis were seen feeding at close range. We found our only Sooty Falcon of the trip, which perched for excellent views, plus Greater Sand Plover and Terek Sandpiper among the more common waders and a young Madagascar Harrier-Hawk on a nest, nearly ready to fledge, while its parents circled nearby.

Back on shore we wasted no time in heading for the dry forests of Ampijoroa in Ankarafantsika National Park. As the afternoon cooled we spent some time along the shores of Lac Ravelobe watching Madagascar Jacana, and found a few noteworthy birds in the car park, including Sickled-billed Vanga. The following morning we struck out early into the forest, our first walk producing the goods in record time: perched Madagascar Green Pigeons, fantastic views of White-breasted Mesite and two incredible male Schlegel’s Asities at eye level. We enjoyed great views of Coquerel’s Coua and Madagascar Hoopoe before making our way to search the best area for Van Dam’s Vanga. En route we paused to admire Red-capped Coua and Rufous Vanga, before being led to a raptor nest which we were told belonged to Banded Kestrel.

All that could be seen of the incubating bird was a banded tail, although a Banded Kestrel did briefly pass overhead above the forest canopy and was seen briefly by some. We continued on to look for the aforementioned vanga. By now it was heating up and activity was dropping rapidly, and we’d not heard a peep from the vanga. So, it was with the aforementioned vanga. By now it was heating pass overhead above the forest canopy and was banded tail, although a did briefly which we were told belonged to Banded Kestrel.

En route we paused to admire Red-capped Coua and Madagascar Hoopoe before making our way to search the best area for Van Dam’s Vanga. Before making our way to Andasibe for our eastern rainforest introduction. During lunch we watched Chabert Vanga, Ward’s Vanga and Madagascar Starling, followed by a short but productive walk in the reserve to admire Collared Nightjar on its day roost, plus Nuthatch Vanga, Indri and Eastern Woolly Lemur. After gate closing we found Madagascar Long-eared Owl and Rainforest Scops Owl on their day roosts before the rain set in and we headed for our lodge.

Our first full day in the eastern rainforest was spent at Mantadia, for which me made a very early start. Not long after arriving we were rewarded with excellent views of a pair of Short-legged Ground Rollers, followed by Madagascar Pygmy Kingfisher and Scaly Ground Roller. With all the biggies in the bag we could now focus our attention on other birds. These included Red-fronted Coua, Blue Coua, Madagascar Starling, Madagascar Spinetail, another pair of Madagascar Grebe and lovely male Madagascar Flufftail. The rain came even earlier that afternoon, and we were driven back to our lodge without having the chance to look for Madagascar Rail. Our second full day was spent at Andasibe where, after some effort, we tracked down a lovely Red-breasted Coua, Madagascar Wood Rail, Crossley’s Vanga and male Velvet Asity. In the late afternoon we returned to the entrance of Mantadia, this time finding a lovely Madagascar Rail that scurried back and forth and found a bonus Little Bittern.

Continuing our exploration of the eastern rainforests, we made the long drive south to Ranomafana National Park, broken with an overnight stay at a very comfortable hotel in Antsirabe. Early the next morning a stint of birding near Antsirabe produced several Madagascar Partridge and excellent views of Madagascar Lesser Cuckoo, Peregrine Falcon, Madagascar Black Swift and Marsh Owl on the ground. Later that day, our lunch spot brought good flight views of a pair of Madagascar Snipe, whilst a Baillon’s Crane was lured from the dense reed beds for great views. Energised by the day’s sightings we rolled on to Ranomafana, arriving in the late afternoon.

With three full days at Ranomafana National Park we had plenty of time to track down all the tricky understorey skulkers for which this reserve is so well known. A pair of Brown Mesite was ushered into view with ease this year, Pitta-like Ground Roller performed beautifully, a pair of Pollen’s Vanga were tracked down quickly, Common Sunbird-Asity showed well on two occasions, Henst’s Goshawk perched near its nest for great views, and Rufous-headed Ground Roller was coaxed into the open for the best views I have ever had. A bright male Forest Fody perched up nicely above our heads and great views were obtained of Cryptic Warbler moving below eye-level. Grey-crowned Tetra was watched foraging over some mossy boughs and Brown Eurnutail was observed creeping mouse-like back and forth through the undergrowth. Two incredible male Velvet Asity showed remarkably well while Grey Eurnutail proved no challenge in its preferred swamp habitat. Forest Rock Thrush was lured into view and Madagascar Yellowbrow gave an astounding display for a bird that is usually so
It was now time to move on to the drier habitats of the south. We first paused at Anja Lemur Reserve where we spent an hour with a family of *Ring-tailed Lemurs* and found a flock of *Grey-headed Lovebird* for a great views, before continuing on to Isalo where we were welcomed by an almighty rain storm. Fortunately the rain stopped by the end of dinner and we quickly tracked down both *White-browed Owl* and *Torotoroka Scops Owl* for incredible views. Early the next morning Forest Rock Thrush (here called *Benson’s Rock Thrush*) was found near our accommodation before we moved on to Zombitse Forest for a few hours. At Zombitse the highlights were close views of *Appert’s Tetraeca*, a perched female *Frances’s Sparrowhawk*, a fantastic encounter with *Giant Coua* and good views of the local race of *Crested Coua* (split by BirdLife as Chestnut-vented Coua). Two *Verreaux’s Sifaka* were enjoyed close to the main road and a sleepy *Hubbard’s Sportive Lemur* perched from its roosting spot before it was time to move on. As we drove away a low-circling *Madagascar Cuckoo-Hawk* caused much excitement as we all piled out the bus to enjoy this distinctive yet elusive raptor.

After Zombitse National Park, we stopped beyond the village of Sakahara to look for *Madagascar Sandgrouse*. Soon after arriving we admired a group of 11 sandgrouse on the deck. Entering the coral rag scrub habitat near Toliara we found *Red-shouldered Vanga* without any trouble, and also spotted our first *Subdesert Brush Warblers, Green-capped Coua, Running Coua and Lafresnaye’s Vanga*. In the late afternoon, as we neared Ifaty, we spotted *Madagascar Plover* beside the road and all alighted from the bus for some good views before moving onto our beach-side hotel.

Up early the next morning, we were out in the incomparable Spiny Forest as the sun was rising. Our first stop was to admire the localised *Subdesert Mesite* that had been treed by our guides, before we were whisked off to see *Long-tailed Ground Roller* at close range. Marching on, *Madagascar Sparrowhawk* was seen beside its nest and yesterday’s views of *Running Coua* and *Green-capped Coua* were improved on. *Thamnornis* and *Archbold’s Newtonia* took a bit longer to track down than normal but showed well in the end, and the final bird for the morning was a lovely female *Madagascar Buttonquail* seen well on the ground, before we headed back to the beach for breakfast. Mammals included *Black-shouldered Sportive Lemur* and a rather sleepy *Lesser Hedgehog Tenrec*. After a bit of down time at the hotel we headed towards Toliara, pausing for some wader watching en route with another *Madagascar Plover, Kittlitz’s Plover* and *Three-banded Plover*. In the late afternoon a return visit to the coral rag scrub near Toliara finally produced excellent views of *Verreaux’s Coua* which perched up beautifully for us all to admire.

The final day had now come, and with our return flight to Antananarivo schedule for just before midday we needed to make an especially early start for Anakao and Nosy Ve. It took all of 60 seconds to find *Littoral Rock Thrush* at Anakao, and we admired both a male and female at close range before skipping across to the nearby island. A much-celebrated flock of 14 eccentric *Crab-Plover* were found on arrival, before we spent some quality time with *Red-tailed Tropicbird*. The boat trip back to Toliara was rather uneventful, and by midday we were back in Antananarivo! A final meal together that evening gave us a chance to reflect on some of the fantastic sightings of the past few weeks before saying our goodbyes and getting our respective flights from Tana back home. Thank you to all the clients and local guides for helping to make this such a fun and productive tour!
Ducks, Geese & Swans Family Anatidae

White-faced Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna viduata* – Seen a few times

African Pygmy Goose *Nettapus auritus* – At least 10 were seen at the wetland stop during the drive from Antakarafantsika to Antananarivo

Meller’s Duck *Anas melleri* – Excellent views of 8 at Lake Alarobia, and three seen in flight at Ranomafana

Red-billed Teal *Anas erythrorhyncha* – Most numerous at Lake Alarobia

Hottentot Teal *Anas hottentota* – Seen well at Lake Alarobia

GuineaFowl Family Numididae

Helmeted GuineaFowl *Numida meleagris* – Seen at Isalo and Masoala (*mitratus*, introduced)

Pheasants, Fowl & Allies Family Phasianidae

Madagascar Partridge *Margaroperdix madagarensis* – Seen crossing the road north of Antananarivo, and at least 8 flushed near Antsirabe

Common Quail *Coturnix coturnix* – Heard north of Antananarivo (*africana*)

Grebes Family Podicipedidae

Madagascar Little Grebe *Tachybaptus pelzelnii* – First seen at Lake Alarobia, with further great views obtained of a pair at the nest at Mantadia

Storks Family Ciconiidae

Yellow-billed Stork *Mycteria ibis* – One subadult seen at the Betsiboka Delta

African Openbill *Anastomus lamelligerus* – One seen in Mahajanga (*madagarensis*, endemic)

TropicBirds Family Phaethontidae

Red-tailed Tropicbird *Phaethon rubricauda* – Fantastic views on Nosy Ve (*rubricauda*)

Ibises, Spoonbills Family Threskiornithidae

Madagascar Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis bernieri* – Good views of at least 5 at the Betsiboka Delta (*berniieri*, endemic)

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* – Seen at Antakarafantsika

Madagascar Crested Ibis *Lophotibis cristata* – Seen well at Masoala and briefly at Andasibe (*cristata*)

Herons, BITterns Family Ardeidae

Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus* – A lovely male was seen well near Mantadia (*podiceps*, endemic)

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* – Seen a few times (*nycticorax*)

Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides* – Most common at Lake Alarobia

Madagascar Pond Heron *Ardeola ibis* – Seen well at Lake Alarobia and Antakarafantsika; also at Isalo

Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* – Common and widespread

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* – Seen at Ifaty and Nosy Ve (*frasa*, region endemic)

Madagascar Heron *Ardea humboi* – Just a single bird seen at Antakarafantsika

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* – Most common at Antakarafantsika (*madagarensis*, endemic)

Great Egret *Ardea purpurea* – Widespread sightings, especially in highland rice paddies (*melanorhynchos*)

Black Heron *Egretta ardesiaca* – Our best views were at Lake Alarobia

Dimorphic Egret *Egretta dimorpha* – Widespread and common, with both white and black morph birds seen well

Hamerkop Family Scopidae

Hamerkop *Scopus umbretta* – Several sightings around wetlands and rice paddies (*umbretta*)

Cormorants, shags Family Phalacrocoracidae

Reed Cormorant *Microcarbo africanus* – Seen at Maroansetra (*picillii*, endemic)

Kites, Hawks & Eagles Family Accipitridae

Madagascar Harrier-Hawk *Polyboroides radiatus* – Seen at Masoala, Betsiboka Delta, Mantadia and Ranomafana

Madagascar Cuckoo-Hawk *Ariceola madagascariensis* – Fantastic flight views of one at Zombitse

Frances’s Sparrowhawk *Accipiter francesiae* – Great looks at a female at Zombitse; males seen at Antakarafantsika and Maroansetra (*francesiae*)

Madagascar Sparrowhawk *Accipiter madagascariensis* – Brilliant views at Ifaty; also seen in flight at Vohiparara and on the nest at Antakarafantsika

Hens’ Goshawk *Accipiter henstii* – An excellent encounter at Ranomafana

Madagascar Harrier *Circus macroscelis* – Good and very welcome views of a male north of Antananarivo

Yellow-billed Kite *Milvus aegyptius* – Fairly common and widespread (*parasitus*)

Madagascar Fish Eagle *Haliaeetus vociferoides* – Fantastic views of a pair at Antakarafantsika

Madagascar Buzzard *Buteo brachypterus* – Seen regularly throughout the tour

Mesites Family Mesitornithidae

White-breasted Mesite *Mesitornis variegatus* – Amazing views of a pair at Antakarafantsika

Brown Mesite *Mesitornis unicolor* – This year they came easily and were seen well at Masoala and Vohiparara

Subdesert Mesite *Monias benschi* – Seen well at Ifaty

Flufftails Family Sarothruridae

Madagascar Wood Rail *Canirallus kioloides* – Seen well at Andasibe and Masoala (*kioloides*)

Madagascar Flufftail *Sarothrura insularis* – Good views of a male at Mantadia and absolutely amazing views of another at Ranomafana

Rails, Crakes & Coots Family Rallidae

Madagascar Rail *Rallus madagascariensis* – Seen at close range near Mantadia, but the bird was always in a hurry; also seen briefly at Ranomafana

White-throated Rail *Dryolimnas cuvieri* – Seen well a few times (*cuvieri*)

Baillon’s Crake *Porzana pusilla* – Brilliant views at our lunch-time stop en route to Ranomafana

Allen’s Gallinule *Porphyrio alleni* – Good views on the drive from Antakarafantsika to Antananarivo

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* – A few good sightings (*pyrrhorrhoea*, regional endemic)

Buttonquail Family Turnicidae

Madagascar Buttonquail *Turnix nigricollis* – First seen when flushed north of Antananarivo, and followed up with excellent views of a female at Ifaty

Crab-plover Family Dromadidae

Crab-plover *Dromas ardeola* – A flock of 14 were seen well at Nosy Ve

Stilts, Avocets Family Recurvirostridae

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* – Seen in the Ifaty area

Plovers Family Charadriidae

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* – Seen along the coast

Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* – Seen at the Betsiboka Delta

Madagascar Plover *Charadrius thoracicus* – Seen at close range at Ifaty, on two occasions

Kittlitz’s Plover *Charadrius pecuarius* – Seen at Ifaty
Three-banded Plover Charadrius tricollaris – Seen at Ankarafantsika and Toliara (bifrontatus, endemic and split by BirdLife)

White-fronted Plover Charadrius marginatus – Good views at Nosy Ve, Maroansetra and Ifaty (tenellus, endemic)

Greater Sand Plover Charadrius leschenaultii – Several seen at the Betisiboka Delta

Pained-snipes Family Rostratulidae

Greater Painted-snipe Rostratula benghalensis – Two females and a male seen well at the wetland stop during our drive from Ankarafantsika to Antananarivo

Jacanas Family Jacanidae

Madagascar Jacana Actophilornis albinucha – A single bird was seen well at Ankarafantsika and another on the drive from Ankarafantsika to Antananarivo

Sandpipers, Snipes Family Scolopacidae

Madagascar Snipe Gallinago macrodactyla – Seen well en route from Antsirabe to Ramonafana, and again at Ramonafana

Bar-tailed Godwit Limosa lapponica – Seen at Maroansetra

Whimbrel Numenius phaeopus – Seen along the coast

Common Greenshank Tringa nebularia – Seen mostly along the coast

Terek Sandpiper Xenus cinereus – Quite numerous at the Betisiboka Delta

Common Sandpiper Actitis hypoleucos – Several sightings

Ruddy Turnstone Arenaria interpres – Seen along the coast

Sanderling Calidris alba – Seen at Nosy Ve

Curlew Sandpiper Calidris ferruginea – Seen along the coast

Coursers, Pratincoles Family Glareolidae

Madagascar Pratincole Glareola olor – Fantastic views between Mahajanga and Antananarivo, and at Masoala

Gulls, Terns & Skimmers Family Laridae

Greater Crested Tern Thalasseus bergii – Seen along the coast

Lesser Crested Tern Thalasseus bengalensis – The most numerous tern

Sandgrouse Family Pteroclidae

Madagascar Sandgrouse Pterocles personatus – Good views of 11 during the drive from Zombitse to Toliara

Pigeons, Doves Family Columbidae

Feral Pigeon Columba livia – Feral Pigeon was common in towns and villages

Madagascar Turtle Dove Nesoenas picturatus – Several good sightings (picturata)

Namaqua Dove Oena capensis – Most numerous in the Toliara area (aliaena, endemic)

Madagascar Green Pigeon Teron aurantius – Seen at Masoala, Andasibe and Ramonafana (aurantius) and Ankarafantsika (xenius)

Madagascar Blue Pigeon Alectroenas madagascariensis – Good views at Mantadia and Ramonafana

Cuckoos Family Cuculidae

Madagascar Coucal Centropus toulou – Heard and seen almost daily

Crested Coua Coua cristata – Seen at Zombitse and Ifaty (pyropygga, split as Chestnut-vent Coua by BirdLife) and Ankarafantsika (dumontii)

Verreaux’s Coua Coua verreauxii – Very good views near Toliara

Blue Coua Coua caerulea – Observed regularly in the eastern forests

Red-capped Coua Coua ruficeps – Good views at Ankarafantsika

Green-capped Coua Coua [ruficeps] olivaceiceps – Brief views near Toliara and excellent views at Ifaty

Red-fronted Coua Coua r. nevadensis – Seen at all eastern forest sites, with the best views at Mantadia

Coquerel’s Coua Coua coquereli – Nice looks at Ankarafantsika

Running Coua Coua cursor – Seen well at Ifaty and near Toliara

Giant Coua Coua gigas – Exceptional views at Zombitse

Red-breasted Coua Coua serriana – Seen at Andasibe, but our best views were at Masoala

Madagascar Cuckoo Cactusus rochii – Several good sightings and heard almost daily

Barn Owls Family Tytonidae

Western Barn Owl Tyto alba – Heard in Antananarivo (hypermetra, regional endemic)

Las Family Strigidae

Torotoroka Scops Owl Otus madagascariensis – Brilliant views at night at Isalo

Rainforest Scops Owl Otus rutillus – Seen on the day roost at Andasibe, and briefly at night at Masoala

White-breowed Owl Ninox superciliiaris – Very memorable views at night at Isalo

Madagascar Long-eared Owl Asio madagascariensis – Good daytime views at Andasibe

Marsh Owl Asio capensis – Excellent day-time views near Antsirabe (hova, endemic)

Nightjars Family Caprimulgidae

Collared Nightjar Gacornia ennarius – Excellent views of the roost at Andasibe

Madagascar Nightjar Caprimulgus madagascariensis – Our best views were of a bird on a day roost in Antananarivo

Swifts Family Apodidae

Madagascar Spinetail Zoonavena grandidieri – Seen well at Mantadia and Masoala

African Palm Swift Cypsiurus parvus – Seen regularly in the lowlands (gracilis, endemic)

Alpine Swift Tachymarptis melba – Seen on the drive to Isalo

Madagascar Black Swift Apus palbo – Several excellent sightings (palbo, endemic)

Little Swift Apus affinis – Seen well in Antananarivo

Cuckoo Roller Family Leptosomidae

Cuckoo Roller Leptosomus discolor – We enjoyed some excellent views at Zombitse, in display flight and perched (discolor, endemic)

Rollers Family Coraciidae

Broad-billed Roller Eurytornus glaucus – Several good sightings (glaucus, endemic breeder)

Ground Rollers Family Brachypteracidae

Short-legged Ground Roller Brachypterus leptocephalus – Excellent views at Masoala and Mantadia

Scaly Ground Roller Geophiastes squamiger – A fantastic encounter at Mantadia

Pitta-like Ground Roller Atelornis pittooides – Excellent views at Ramonafana

Rufous-headed Ground Roller Atelornis crossleyi – Exceptional views at Vohiparara

Long-tailed Ground Roller Uralornis chimaera – Seen at close range at Ifaty

Kingfishers Family Alcedinidae

Madagascar Pygmy Kingfisher Corythornis madagascariensis – Two good encounters, at Masoala and Mantadia

Madagascar Malachite Kingfisher Corythornis vintsioides – Seen regularly around wetlands (vintsioides, endemic)

Bee-eaters Family Meropidae

Olive Bee-eater Merops supercillius – Seen regularly (supercilius)

Hoopoes Family Upupidae

Madagascar Hoopoe Upupa marginata – Several good sightings in the west
Falcons Family Falconidae

Madagascar Kestrel Falco newtoni – Seen regularly throughout the tour (newtoni)
Banded Kestrel Falco zoniventris – Brief flight views at Ankafantsika
Eleonora's Falcon Falco eleonora – One was seen at Ankafantsika
Sooty Falcon Falco concolor – Just one sighting, but it was a good one at the Betsiboka Delta
Peregrine Falcon Falco peregrinus – One seen at the Betsiboka Delta

Old World Parrots Family Psittaculidae

Greater Vasa Parrot Coracopsis vasa – Our best views were at Ankafantsika (droubardi) and Ranomafana (vasa)
Lesser Vasa Parrot Coracopsis nigra – Seen at Ankafantsika, Zombitse and Ifaty (lbs) and widespread, with regular views in the eastern forests (nigra)
Grey-headed Lovebird Agapornis canus – Seen at Anja and Ifaty (ablectaneus), and Ankafantsika (canus)

Broadbills Family Eurylaimidae

Velvet Asity Philepitta castanea – Incredible views of males at Ranomafana, although first seen at Andasibe
Schlegel's Asity Philepitta schlegeli – Fantastic views of two males at Ankafantsika
Common Sunbird-Asity Nesillas chabert – Seen several times, the best at Ranomafana (madagascarinus) and also at Ifaty (schistocercus)

Vangas Family Vangidae

Red-tailed Vanga Calicalicus madagascariensis – Several good sightings
Red-shouldered Vanga Calicalicus rufocarpalis – Great views of a pair near Toliara
Hook-billed Vanga Vanga curvirostris – Great views at Masoala, Ankafantsika and Ranomafana (curvirostris)

Bernier's Vanga Oriolia bernieri – Excellent views of a pair at Masoala

Lafresnaye’s Vanga Xenopirostris xenopirostris – A great sighting near Toliara
Van Dam’s Vanga Xenopirostris damii – Great views of a male at Ankafantsika
Pollen’s Vanga Xenopirostris polleni – Seen well at Ranomafana
Sickle-billed Vanga Falculea palliata – Super views at Ankafantsika, and also seen at Ifaty
?
White-headed Vanga Artamella viridis – Several good sightings, the best at Ankafantsika (annae) and Masoala (viridis)
Chabert Vanga Leptopterus chabert – Seen several times in the east (chabert), and also at Ifaty (schistocercus)

Blue Vanga Cyanolanius madagascariensis – Several good sightings (madagascariensis, endemic)
Rufous Vanga Schetta rafa – Seen at Ankafantsika (occidentalis), and Ranomafana and Ifaty (rafa)

Helmet Vanga Euryceros prevostii – Two good encounters at Masoala
Tylas Vanga Tylas eduardi – Several seen in the eastern forests (eduardi)

Nuthatch Vanga Hypositta corallostris – Great views at Andasibe

Dark Newtonia Newtonia amphichroa – Seen well at Vohiparara
Common Newtonia Newtonia brunneicauda – Seen regularly (brunneicauda)
Archbold’s Newtonia Newtonia archboldi – Good looks at Ifaty

Ward’s Flycatcher Pseudobius wardi – Our best views were at Vohiparara
Crossley’s Vanga Mystacornis crossleyi – Point-blank views of this great bird at Masoala and seen again at Andasibe

Cuckoo-shrikes Family Cuculgidae

Madagascar Cuckoo-shrike Coracina cinerea – Several good sightings in the east (cinerea) and west (pallida)

Drongos Family Dicruridae

Crested Drongo Dicrurus forficatus – Common and widespread (forficatus, endemic)

Monarchs Family Monarchidae

Madagascar Paradise Flycatcher Terpsiphone mutata – Common and widespread (mutata and singetra)

Crow Family Corvidae

Pied Crow Corvus albus – Common and widespread

Larks Family Alaudidae

Madagascar Lark Eremopterix hova – Seen very well in open habitats

Bulbuls Family Pycnonotidae

Madagascar Bulbul Hypsipetes madagascariensis – Common and widespread (madagascariensis)

Swallows, martins Family Hirundinidae

Mascarene Martin Phedina borbonica – Seen regularly (madagascariensis)
Brown-throated Martin Riparia paludicola – Regular around wetlands in the highlands (cowani, endemic)

Barn Swallow Hirundo rustica – Seen in the Toliara area

Red warblers and allies Family Acrocephalidae

Madagascar Brush Warbler Nesillas typica – Common in the highlands (typica)

Subdesert Brush Warbler Nesillas lantzii – Seen well in the Toliara area

Madagascar Swamp Warbler Acrocephalus newtoni – A few good sightings, the first at Lake Alarobia

Grassbirds and allies Family Locustellidae

Brown Emutail Bradypterus brunneicauda – Two quite good sightings at Vohiparara

Grey Emutail Amphilais seebohmi – Seen very well near Ranomafana

Malagasy warblers Family Bernieridae

White-throated Oxylabes Oxylabes madagascariensis – Good views at Ranomafana
Long-billed Bernieria Bernieria madagascariensis – Seen regularly throughout the tour (madagascariensis in the east, inceleber in the west)

Cryptic Warbler Cryptomyrtillus randrianasolo – Excellent views at Vohiparara

Wedge-tailed Jery Hartertella flavoviridis – Good views at Vohiparara

Thamnornis Thamnornis chloropetoides – Good views at Ifaty

Spectacled Tetraka Xanthomixis zosterops – Several good sightings; we probably saw andapae at Masoala and zosterops at Andasibe and Ranomafana

Appert’s Tetraka Xanthomixis apperti – Close views of a pair at Zombitse

Grey-crowned Tetraka Xanthomixis cinereiceps – Seen well at Vohiparara

Madagascar Yellowbow Crossleyia xanthophrys – Quite incredible views at Vohiparara

Rand’s Warbler Randia pseudozosterops – Seen very well at Andasibe; also seen at Ranomafana

Cisticolas and allies Family Cisticolidae

Common Jery Neomixis tenella – Common and widespread, with tenella at Masoala, decaryi at Ankafantsika, orientalis at Ranomafana and debilis at Ifaty

Green Jery Neomixis viridis – Seen at Masoala, Andasibe and Ranomafana (probably viridis)

Stripe-throated Jery Neomixis striatigula – Seen well at Andasibe (possibly splateri) and Ranomafana (possibly striatigula); good views at Ifaty, where birds have quite a different song (pallidor, split as Southern Jery)

Madagascar Cisticola Cisticola cherina – Several good sightings

White-eyes Family Zosteropidae

Madagascar White-eye Zosterops maderaspatanus – Seen regularly in the east (maderaspatanus)
Starlings Family Sturnidae
Common Myna Acridotheres tristis – Common indeed (introduced)

Madagascar Starling Hartlaubius auratus – Seen at Andasibe and Ranomafana, and in larger numbers at Masoala

Chats, Old World Flycatchers Family Muscicapidae
Madagascar Magpie-Robin Copsychus albospecularis – Common and widespread; albospecularis at Masoala, pica in the west and in Antananarivo and inexpectatus at Andasibe and Ranomafana

Littoral Rock Thrush Monticola imerina – Great looks at a pair at Anakao

Forest Rock Thrush Monticola sharpei – Seen well at both Ranomafana (salomonseni) and Isalo ("Benson's Rock Thrush", bensoni)

Madagascar Stonechat Saxicola sibilla – Fairly common in the highlands (sibilla)

Sunbirds Family Nectariniidae
Souimanga Sunbird Cinnyris sovimanga – Many great views (sovimanga), with white-bellied birds confined to the south (apolis)

Madagascar Green Sunbird Cinnyris notatus – Several good sightings (notatus, endemic)

Old World Sparrows Family Passeridae
House Sparrow Passer domesticus – A couple were seen in Mahajanga

Weavers, Widowbirds Family Ploceidae
Nelicourvi Weaver Ploceus nelicourvi – Seen at all eastern forest sites

Sakalava Weaver Ploceus sakalava – Seen well in the west (sakalava at Ankarafantsika, minor at Ifaty)

Red Fody Foudia madagascariensis – Common and widespread

Forest Fody Foudia omissa – Just one good sighting of a lovely male at Vohiperana

Waxbills, Munias & Allies Family Estrildidae
Madagascar Mannikin Lepidopygia nana – Several good sightings

Wagtails, Pipits Family Motacillidae
Madagascar Wagtail Motacilla flaviventris – Common and widespread