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Madagascar Birding Tour (South & East)

14 DAY/ 13 NIGHT TOUR

OVERVIEW

Madagascar is the world's fourth largest island and hosts six endemic bird families, the mesites, asities, cuckoo-rollers, tetrakas, vangas and the incomparable ground rollers. An amazing 120 bird species are endemic.

In addition to the wonderful birdlife, Madagascar also boasts an extraordinarily remarkable array of endemic flora, reptiles, frogs and mammals, the famous lemurs and two thirds of the world's chameleons. On this tour we will visit the South and East of Madagascar focusing on different types of habitat, especially the rainforests, wetlands and spine forests. Madagascar is definitely an outstanding birding experience!

DAILY SUMMARY

DAY 1	2 Oct	Arrival and transfer to the hotel
DAY 2	3 Oct	Morning birding at Tsarasaotra Wetland and flight to Tulear
DAY 3	4 Oct	Birding in Andatabo and the Ifaty Area
DAY 4	5 Oct	Mangily Spiny Forest
DAY 5	6 Oct	Zombitse Forest and Isalo National Park
DAY 6	7 Oct	Isalo National Park
DAY 7	8 Oct	Ranomafana National Park and Anja Park
DAY 8	9 Oct	Sahamalaotra Forest and Ranomafana National Park
DAY 9	10 Oct	Sahamalaotra Forest and Antsirabe
DAY 10	11 Oct	Andasibe National Park
DAY 11	12 Oct	Mantadia National Park and Analamazaotra Reserve
DAY 12	13 Oct	Mantadia National Park and the V.O.I Park

DAY 13	14 Oct	Antavolobe Forest
DAY 14	15 Oct	Torotorofotsy Marsh and return to Tana

DETAILED DAILY ITINERARY

DAY 1: Arrival and transfer to the hotel

After meeting you at the airport we will make our way to the hotel in the center of town. Birding on the way to the hotel might produce our first species like Squacco Heron, Black Egret and Madagascar Kestrel. Madagascar Red Fody is often seen in the in the back yard of the hotel.

🏠 **Accommodation: Sakamanga Hotel**

DAY 2: Tsarasaotra Wetland and flight to Tulear

This morning we start birding at the Tsarasaotra Wetland. This RAMSAR site hosts the Madagascar Pond Heron, Meller's Duck, Madagascar Grebe and other common endemic species of birds like warblers and herons. We will bird around the wetland for approximately 2 hours and then drive to the airport to catch our flight to Tulear.

We transfer from Tulear airport to our hotel. After settling into the hotel we will start birding in the Arboretum of Antsokay, looking for specials like Green-capped Coua, Chabert's Vanga, Madagascar Buttonquail, Madagascar Nightjar and Running Coua.

🏠 **Accommodation: Victory Hotel**

DAY 3: Andatabo and Ifaty

Our first target for today is the Madagascar Sandgrouse after which we will visit Andatabo Forest for Verreaux's Coua, Red-shouldered Vanga, Subdesert Tetraka and possibly Lafresnaye's Vanga. We will head back to the hotel for breakfast and after packing up we will drive to Ifaty with birding stops along the way. We will look out for Hottentot Teal, Little Grebe and Madagascar Plover.

After lunch in Ifaty we will spend the afternoon birding in the Mangily Spiny Forest looking for great birds like Running Coua, Red-tailed Vanga, Subdesert Tetraka, Subdesert Mesite and Archbold's Newtonia.

We will do a guided night walk and look out for Torotoroka Scops-owl and White-footed Sportive Lemur.

🏠 **Accommodation: Nautilus Hotel**

DAY 4: Mangily Spiny Forest

With first light we will make our way to the Mangily Spiny Forest, home to great birds like Long-tailed Ground Roller, Subdesert Mesite, Running and Green-capped Coua, Sickle-billed Vanga, White-headed Vanga and Subdesert Brush-warbler. We will spend the hot part of the day relaxing at the hotel and head back to the Spiny Forest where we will bird for the rest of the afternoon looking for Banded Kestrel and other species we might have missed this morning. The Mangily forest has 2 amazing species of Baobabs, Adansonia Robrustipa and Adansonia Za. It also hosts interesting species of reptiles and insects like Wart Chameleon, Horned Chameleon, and Spotted Lizard to mention a few.

🏠 Accommodation: Nautilus Hotel

DAY 5: Zombitse Forest and Isalo National Park

After breakfast we will make our way to the Zombitse Forest where our main targets are Appert's Tetraka, Giant Coua, Madagascar Cuckoo Roller and Coquerel's Coua. Zombitse is also home to Verreaux's Sifaka, Sportive Lemur and Oustalet's Chameleon. From here we drive to Isalo National Park and we might be lucky to see Madagascar Partridge on the way. If time allows we can watch the sunset at the naturally sculpted Window of Isalo.

🏠 Accommodation: Isalo Ranch

DAY 6: Isalo National Park

We will spend the morning birding in Isalo National Park. Here our main focus will be the Namaza Canyon for Benson's Rock-thrush and Hook-billed Vanga while we might be lucky with Madagascar Buttonquail. The Namaza Canyon is also home to Ring-tailed Lemur and Verreaux's Sifaka. After a picnic lunch, we look for the Madagascar Partridge and the Madagascar Harrier outside the National Park. We have the option to go on a night walk near the rocks for the White-browed Owl.

🏠 Accommodation: Isalo Ranch

DAY 7: Ranomafana National Park and Anja Park

We leave Isalo National Park and drive to Anja Park through the Ihorombe plateau. This gives us another chance to search for Madagascar Harrier and Madagascar Partridge. We visit Anja Park before our lunch break. Here we can spot the Ring Tailed Lemurs and enjoy the charm of this small park. Back in Ranomafana we will enjoy a guided night walk before dinner. During the night walk we can see the Brown mouse Lemur as well up to 5 species of chameleons.

🏠 Accommodation: Cristo Hotel

DAY 8: Sahamalaotra Forest and Ranomafana National Park

We start early morning and make our way to the Sahamalaotra Forest. Our main target is the Yellow-bellied Sunbird Asity, Brown Mesite, Rufous-headed Ground-roller, Scaly Ground-roller, Forest Rock Thrush, Yellow Browed Oxylabes, Tetrakas, Brown Emutail, Common Sunbird Asity and Velvet Asity. This afternoon we will visit the Ranomafana National Park, for the Pitta-like Ground Roller, Pollen's Vanga and Tetrakas. We might even add two species of Lemur to our list -Bamboo Lemur and Milne-Edwards' Sifaka.

🏠 **Accommodation: Cristo Hotel.**

DAY 9: Sahamalaotra Forest and Antsirabe

This morning, we will choose the forest depending on the target birds that we have missed. The Sahamalaotra Forest is home to some the most difficult to see species, we will look out for Yellow-bellied Sunbird Asity, Rufous-headed Ground-roller, Brown Mesite and Brown Emutail. After a wonderful day's birding, we make our way to the town of Antsirabe where we will have dinner and spend the night.

🏠 **Accommodation: Chambre Du Voyageur Hotel**

DAY 10: Andasibe National Park

After breakfast, we make our way towards the Andasibe National Park birding en route. We will stop at the Mangoro River where we will look for Madagascar Pratincole. After checking in we bird in the V.O.I Park where our main targets will be Red-breasted Coua, Collared Nightjar and Crested Coua. We will also be on the lookout for Indri, Madagascar's largest Lemurs which also occur in this forest. We will do a guided night-walk before dinner to look for Long-eared Owl, Madagascar Scops Owl, Goodman's Mouse Lemur, Dwarf Lemur, Eastern Woolly Lemur. Different species of Chameleons and tree frogs can also be seen.

🏠 **Accommodation: Feon'ny Ala Hotel**

DAY 11: Mantadia National Park and Analamazaotra Reserve

After an early breakfast we will drive to Mantadia National Park where our main targets include Ground-rollers (Scaly, Pitta-like, Short-legged and Rufous-headed), Tetrakas, Madagascar Flufftail, Pygmy Kingfisher, Velvet Asity, Wild Diademed Sifaka, Red-bellied Lemur and Black-and-white Ruffed Lemur. We will enjoy our picnic lunch near a patch of water where we might see Meller's Duck and the Madagascar Grebe. This afternoon we

plan to visit the Analamazaotra reserve for the Madagascar Wood Rail, Red-fronted Coua and several species in the Tetraka family. Hopefully we will add the Eastern Gray Bamboo Lemur to our growing Lemur's list while the Indri is often seen in the Analamazaotra reserve. We again have the option to go on a guided night walk.

🏠 **Accommodation: Feon'ny Ala Hotel**

DAY 12: Mantadia National Park and the V.O.I Park

Our early morning birding will start in Mantadia where our main targets will be Rufous-headed Ground-roller, Nuthatch Vanga, Crossley's Vanga, Velvet Asity, several Tetrakas and Wedge-tailed Jery.

We will then spend the afternoon in the V.O.I Park where we will hopefully add more Vanga species and we have the chance to catch up on any species we might have missed so far. This park is also great for Crested Ibis, Red-breasted Coua, Madagascar Starling, Madagascar Green Pigeon and Madagascar Blue Pigeon.

🏠 **Accommodation: Feon'ny Ala Hotel**

DAY 13: The Antavolobe Forest

Today we drive to the Antavolobe forest followed by a walk to the Helmet Vanga's territory. Three interesting Vangas occur in this primary rain forest: Helmet, Bernier's and Pollen's Vanga. We will also try to see the difficult Brown Emutail, Pitta-Like Ground-roller and Madagascar Rail. From here we will drive back to the Feon'ny Ala Hotel where we will spend the night.

🏠 **Accommodation: Feon'ny Ala Hotel**

DAY 14: Totorofotsy Marsh and return to Tana

After an early breakfast we drive to the Totorofotsy wetland where our main targets will be Madagascar Rail, Madagascar Snipe, Gray Emutail and the Madagascar Flufftail while the Forest Fody is often seen in this area. From here we make our way back to the hotel after packing up we start making our way back to Tana.

If time allows we can stop at the Tsarasaotra wetland for the Malagasy Pond Heron and Meller's Duck. From here we will make our way to Tana. Accommodation on day-use at the Sakamanga hotel, Night transfer to the airport after dinner, farewell, flight out, end of the tour.

Thank you for choosing Nature Travel Birding.