



After Royle Safaris November 2022 group tour Martin headed further north in Madagascar to scout out an itinerary for future trips. The idea was to visit Cape Masaola, Marojejy, Dariana, Ankarana and Nosy Be. The trip was only short (9 days to cover a huge amount of ground), so it was all go and left no room for problems. Which was a problem as Madagascan roads can be a nightmare.

As a result in the end we had to skip Marojejy, it was just not possible to get from Masoala to Marojejy without losing at least 2 full days and with these days better spent in Dariana and Ankarana the decision was made to adjust the itinerary.

It worked out that the only lemur we would be forsaking (with good chances of seeing) was the silky sifaka (you always need a reason to go back to a country 😊) and in the end we saw 38 species of mammals, including 24 species of lemur (meaning that across the two trips Martin participated in back to back a total of 74 species of mammals were seen of which 47 species were lemurs. Martin has now seen 52 species of lemur – nearly half way there to all the lemur species!

Highlights included a great **aye-aye** in Dariana, very close and engaging **Tattersall's sifakas** as well as **red-ruffed lemur** and all of the endemic lemurs to Cape Masoala. As well as lemurs we had 2 sightings of **fanaloka** and several bat species in the caves of the Ankara tsingy.

Below is our sighting log of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fishes. Doing this trip during the end of the dry season meant that some of the hibernating lemurs were not awake in big numbers, and tenrecs were not as abundant as they are during the wet season. The reason for this trip being at this time of year was the scheduling of the group tour that proceeded this one and for why we picked November for the group tour you can read that trip report.

The rain started to pick up a little on the trip, and particularly when in Cape Masoala where we had a couple of storms and this resulted in poorer views of the **red-ruffed lemurs** than we hoped for and was a large reason for the change in plan and leaving out Marojejy. To make it from Masoala to Marojejy requires a long boat journey around the cape and then 2 days on a bike (in good road conditions) but with the rain washing out the roads this could have extended the bike journey to several more days and so the plan was rightfully scrapped.

Other than the silky sifaka all other targeted species (and several others) were seen and we will be looking to include this route as part of a new itinerary in future and also can include this whole itinerary or parts of it as an extension to our existing Madagascar tours.

The plan we took was as follows; flying from Tana to Maroanotsetra and then heading straight to Nosy Mangabe for the night (a great little island with some nice wildlife which breaks up the journey from Tana to Masoala), then on to Masoala for 2 nights (Masoala being the largest intact forest in the country and whilst most is very dense and without trails, there are many trails accessible from the accommodation along the southern coast of the peninsula and also some great multi-day hiking to the interior of the forest). Then came the change of plan and we went back to Maroanotsetra for 2 nights as we waited for the flight back to Tana, whilst here we headed out around the town and found some nice mammals before flying to Antsiranana via Antananarivo and then we drove to Dariana for 2 nights, then back to Ankarana for 2 nights and then Nosy Be for 1 night before flying back to Tana before returning home.

The **aye-aye** was particularly good, as Jon Hall had done a few days earlier we went with local guides into the forest (the location of my **aye-aye** was not as aesthetically pleasing as Jon's was – it was in the middle of a make shift village / gold mine – which added something extra to walking around at night looking up at the trees and trying not to fall down the claustrophobia inducing holes and tunnels dotted all over the place) and waited until just after sunset. Then out of a huge tangle of vegetation emerged the amazing animal, it stopped and groomed itself for ages before heading out into the forest. It is great that the local people are now looking at the **aye-aye** as a positive and not an example of fady (a Malagasy superstition) and persecute it. Long may this continue and hopefully spread to other forests around the country.

We also had a near miss (kind of) with another aye-aye in Masoala. When looking for the endemic **Masoala sportive lemur** and **Masoala woolly lemur** (both of which we found) my guide was also looking on the ground and around fallen trees as he had seen aye-ayes on the ground looking for food in the rotting wood. We then found some eye-shine, the right size and shape on the ground. We made our way quietly forward and lost it....then right next to us popped up a **fanaloka!** Amazing, it trotted past us and into the forest without a care in the world. So not an aye-aye, but another one of Madagascar's rarely seen species; however we did find another **fanaloka** a couple of days later in Ankarana and with this being the 4th one I had seen on the trip, I was beginning to think they were not that rare at all 😊!

We specialise in tailoring mammalwatching tours all over the world and we can organise any itinerary to Madagascar you wish. Whether it be your first time visiting and you want to see a wide variety of species or you have been more than once and now have a specific list of species you wish to see, we can provide the itinerary for you. If this is of interest to you please contact me direct at info@royle-safaris.co.uk.

As you can see from the below species list that we had a very successful tour and we obtained pictures of many of these mammal species, I am not a photographer and taking pictures and videos is usually a secondary consideration for me, so I will post pictures and videos on my Facebook page (www.facebook.com/roylesafaris7/) in the coming days, some pictures are included below, but don't worry about the quality of the pictures, that is a result of my shoddy skills and poor camera, if you are a photographer with a decent camera you would get much better images than me.

A key to the locations mentioned in the below tables is:

NMG – Nosy Mangabe / **MAS** – Cape Masoala National Park / **MAO** – Maroanotsetra / **DAR** – Dariana / **ANK** – Ankarana National Park / **NBE** – Nosy Be

Species List Northern Madagascar Wildlife Tour

Nov 2022

Mammals (* = heard or signs only)

	Common Name	Binominal Name
1	Masoala woolly lemur	<i>Avahi mooreorum</i>
2	Greater dwarf lemur	<i>Cheirogaleus major</i>
3	Ankarana dwarf lemur	<i>Cheirolaelus shethi</i>
4	Aye-aye	<i>Daubentonia madagascariensis</i>
5	Madagascar straw-coloured fruit bat	<i>Eidolon dupreanum</i>
6	Tanala tufted-tailed rat	<i>Eliurus tanala</i>
7	White-fronted brown lemur	<i>Eulemur albifrons</i>
8	Crowned lemur	<i>Eulemur coronatus</i>
9	Black lemur	<i>Eulemur macaco</i>
10	Sandford's brown lemur	<i>Eulemur sanfordi</i>
11	Fanaloka	<i>Fossa fossana</i>
12	Ring-tailed vontsira	<i>Galidia elegans</i>
13	Northern bamboo lemur	<i>Haplemur occidentalis</i>
14	Lowland streaked tenrec	<i>Hemicentetes semispinosus</i>
15	Ankarana sportive lemur	<i>Lepilemur ankaranensis</i>
16	Daraina sportive lemur	<i>Lepilemur milanoii</i>
17	Masoala sportive lemur	<i>Lepilemur scottorum</i>
18	Sahafary sportive lemur	<i>Lepilemur septentrionalis</i>
19	Nosy Be sportive lemur	<i>Lepilemur tymerlachsoni</i>
20	Anjahely mouse lemur	<i>Microcebus macathurii</i>
21	Nosy Be mouse lemur	<i>Microcebus mampiratra</i>
22	Mittermeier's mouse lemur	<i>Microcebus mittermeieri</i>

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23	Masoala mouse lemur	<i>Microcebus</i> sp. Nov
24	Tavaratra mouse lemur	<i>Microcebus tavarata</i>
25	Aellen's long-fingered bat	<i>Miniopterus aelleni</i>
26	Glen's long-fingered bat	<i>Miniopterus gleni</i>
27	Golden trident bat	<i>Paratriaenops auritus</i>
28	Peter's sheath-tailed bat	<i>Paremballonura atrata</i>
29	Rock-dwelling sheath-tailed bat	<i>Paremballonura tiavato</i>
30	Montagne d'Ambre fork-marked lemur	<i>Phaner electromontis</i>
31	Masoala fork-marked lemur	<i>Phaner furcifer</i>
32	Bush pig	<i>Potamochoerus larvatus</i>
33	Tatersall's sifaka	<i>Propithecus tattersalli</i>
34	Madagascar flying fox	<i>Pteropus rufus</i>
35	Madagascar rousette	<i>Rousettus madagascariensis</i>
36	Greater hedgehog tenrec	<i>Setifer setosus</i>
37	Red ruffed lemur	<i>Varecia rubra</i>
38	Black-and-white ruffed lemur	<i>Varecia variegata</i>

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Note: Most of the bats identified 100% at roosts or with good views. Others identified with spectrograms in combination with sightings (no spectrograms without visual confirmation are recorded as a sighting), behaviour and habitat – so not 100% but best educated guesses. For more information please email me.

Birds (* = heard or signs only)

	Common Name	Binominal Name
1	Common mynah	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>
2	Grey-headed lovebird	<i>Agapornis canus</i>
3	Madagascar blue pigeon	<i>Alectroenas madagascariensis</i>
4	Great egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
5	Purple heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
6	Malagasy squacco heron	<i>Ardeola idea</i>
7	Long-billed bernieria	<i>Bernieria madagascariensis</i>
8	Cattle egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
9	Madagascar buzzard	<i>Buteo brachypterus</i>
10	Straited heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>
11	Madagascar nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus madagascariensis</i>
12	Madagascar coucal	<i>Centropus toulou</i>
13	Common ringed plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>

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14	Malagasy green sunbird	<i>Cinnyris notatus</i>
15	Feral pigeon	<i>Columbia livia</i>
16	Madagascar magpie robin	<i>Copsychus albospecularis</i>
17	Madagascar cuckooshrike	<i>Coracina cinerea</i>
18	Greater vasa parrot	<i>Coracopsis vasa</i>
19	Pied crow	<i>Corvus albus</i>
20	Madagascar pygmy kingfisher	<i>Corythornis madagascariensis</i>
21	Madagascar kingfisher	<i>Corythornis vintsioides</i>
22	Crested coua	<i>Coua cristata</i>
23	Madagascar cuckoo	<i>Cuculus rochii</i>
24	African palm swift	<i>Cypsiurus gracilis</i>
25	Fulvous whistling duck	<i>Dendrocygna bicolor</i>
26	Crested drongo	<i>Dicrurus forficatus</i>
27	Little egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
28	Helmeted vanga	<i>Euryceros prevostii</i>
29	Madagascar kestrel	<i>Falco newtoni</i>
30	Sickle-billed vanga	<i>Falcoea palliata</i>
31	Madagascar fody	<i>Foudia madagascariensis</i>
32	Madagascar pratincole	<i>Glareola ocularis</i>
33	Madagascar bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes madagascariensis</i>
34	Madagascar munia	<i>Lepidopygia nana</i>
35	Madagascar ibis	<i>Lophotibis cristata</i>
36	White-breasted mesite	<i>Mesitornis variegata</i>
37	Yellow-billed kite	<i>Milvus aegyptius</i>
38	Malagasy turtle dove	<i>Nesoenas picturatus</i>
39	Black-crowned night-heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
40	Namaqua dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>
41	Madagascar scops owl	<i>Otus rutilus</i>
42	Plain martin	<i>Riparia paludicola</i>
43	Common tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>
44	Black-naped tern	<i>Sterna sumatrana</i>
45	Madagascar paradise-flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone mutata</i>
46	Great crested tern	<i>Thalasseus bergii</i>
47	Madagascar green pigeon	<i>Treron australis</i>
48	Madagascar hoopoe	<i>Upupa marginata</i>
49	Madagascar white-eye	<i>Zosterops maderaspatanus</i>

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Reptiles (* = heard or signs only)

	Common Name	Binominal Name
1	Madagascar ground boa	<i>Acrantophis madagascariensis</i>
2	Microtubercilated velvet gecko	<i>Blaesodactylus microtuberculatus</i>
3	Nosy Be leaf chameleon	<i>Brookesia minima</i>
4	Peyrieras's pygmy chameleon	<i>Brookesia peyrierasi</i>
5	Hooded chameleon	<i>Calumma cucullatum</i>
6	Four-striped snake	<i>Dromicodryas quadrilineatus</i>
7	Tsaratanan skink	<i>Flexiseps tsaratananensis</i>
8	Malagasy giant chameleon	<i>Furcifer oustaleti</i>
9	Panther chameleon	<i>Furcifer pardalis</i>
10	Petter's chameleon	<i>Furcifer petteri</i>
11	Many-scaled gecko	<i>Geckolepis polylepis</i>
12	Common house gecko	<i>Hemidactylus frenatus</i>
13	Northern Madagascar ground gecko	<i>Paroedura homalorhina</i>
14	Madagascar giant day gecko	<i>Phelsuma grandis</i>
15	Speckled day gecko	<i>Phelsuma guttata</i>
16	Lined day gecko	<i>Phelsuma lineata</i>
17	Small lined day gecko	<i>Phelsuma pusilla</i>
18	Flat-tailed day gecko	<i>Phelsuma serratacauda</i>
19	Madagascar tree boa	<i>Sanzinia madagascariensis</i>
20	Northern flat-tailed gecko	<i>Uroplatus alluaudi</i>
21	Giant leaf-tailed gecko	<i>Uroplatus fimbriatus</i>
22	Mossy leaf-tailed gecko	<i>Uroplatus sikorae</i>
23	Brygoo's girdled lizard	<i>Zonosaurus brygooi</i>

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Amphibians (* = heard or signs only)

	Common Name	Binominal Name
1		<i>Aglyptodactylus securifer</i>
2	Dueril's bright-eyed frog	<i>Boophis tephraeomystax</i>

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3	Mr Ebenau's colourful frog	<i>Mantella ebenau</i>
4	Green-backed mantella	<i>Mantella viridis</i>
5	Climbing mantella	<i>Mantella laevigata</i>
6	Grandidier's Madagascar frog	<i>Mantidactylus grandidieri</i>
7	Mascarene grass frog	<i>Ptychadena mascareniensis</i>

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Fishes (* = heard or signs only)

	Common Name	Binominal Name
1	Kanadi kingfish	<i>Scomberomorus plurilineatus</i>
2	Sharpfin barracuda	<i>Sphyræna acutipinnis</i>

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Pictures to follow are from Martin Royle. Apologies for the crappy nature of many of them, photography is not an interest or a skill he possesses and many of the pictures are stills from videos taken.



Aye-aye



Crowned Lemur



White-fronted Brown Lemur



Black Lemur



Red Ruffed Lemur



Sanford's Brown Lemur



Northern Bamboo Lemur



Anjahely Mouse Lemur



Mittermeier's Mouse Lemur



Greater Dwarf Lemur



Ankarana Dwarf Lemur



Masoala Sportive Lemur



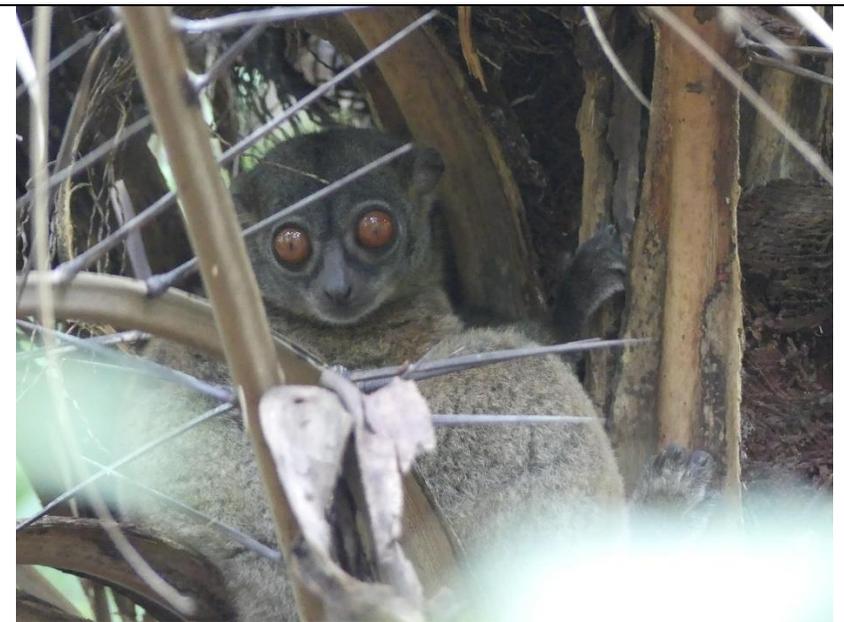
Sahafary Sportive Lemur



Ankarana Sportive Lemur



Dariana Sportive Lemur



Nosy Be Sportive Lemur



Masoala Woolly Lemur



Montagne d'Ambre Fork-marked Lemur



Tattersall's Sifaka



Rock-dwelling Sheath-tailed Bat



Allen's Long-fingered Bat



Madagascar Straw-coloured Fruit Bat



Fanaloka



Ring-tailed Vontsira



Tanala Tufted-tailed Rat



Lowland Streaked Tenrec



Greater Hedgehog Tenrec



Madagascar Rousette



Helmeted Vanga



Madagascar Pratincole



Madagascar Bulbul



Hook-billed Vanga



Madagascar Kingfisher



Madagascar Paradise Flycatcher



Madagascar Scops Owl



Mossy Leaf-tailed Gecko



Northern Madagascar Ground Gecko



Northern Flat-tailed Gecko



Satanic Leaf-tailed Gecko



Madagascar Giant Day Gecko



Brookesia peyrierasi



Petter's Chameleon



Madagascar Ground Boa



Madagascar Tree Boa



Boophis septentrionalis



Mr Ebenau's colourful frog



Sharp-fin Barracuda