



Marojejy is one of the best places on Earth for one of the best birds on Earth: Helmet Vanga

# MAROJEJY

NATIONAL PARK  
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MADAGASCAR

October 19-23, 2020

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## INTRODUCTION

Marojejy National Park is in northeast Madagascar, in the SAVA region, and is accessed via the booming vanilla town and regional center of Sambava. It is one of the largest and best-protected blocks of humid forest left in Madagascar. One of its countless charms is that it protects nearly the full transect of Malagasy elevations and habitats, from near sea level all the way up to the summit, above treeline at 2132m (6995 feet). It has the feeling of a vast and profoundly wild area that is sadly lacking from most of Madagascar, even from commonly visited protected areas, where you often just dip into the edge of the forest.

For birders, Marojejy is best known as one of the best sites for Helmet Vanga, though it has been eclipsed by Masoala as the go-to Helmet Vanga site in recent years. The trip whose results I will present here suggests that Marojejy deserves more consideration from visiting birders, especially keen and fit ones, and/or folks on a tighter budget. It offers everything that Masoala has, is much cheaper, and has the additional benefit of holding high-elevation species that are lacking from Masoala. Among general natural history lovers and mammal enthusiasts, Marojejy is famous as the only readily accessible site for the Critically Endangered Silky Sifaka, and a good lemur-watching site overall.

I visited Marojejy for the first time in November 2008. Since then I have been very keen to return, spend more time, and climb to the summit. I finally managed in October 2020 thanks to the extra time afforded me by the COVID-19 pandemic.

## QUICK HIGHLIGHTS

*BIRDS:* Helmet and Bernier's Vangas, Short-legged and Rufous-headed Ground-Rollers, Red-breasted Coua, Brown Emutail, Cryptic Warbler, and Yellow-bellied Sunbird-Asity.

*MAMMALS:* White-fronted Brown and Red-bellied Lemurs, Northern Bamboo Lemur, Ring-tailed Vontsira.

## SUMMARY

In 4.5 days of birding, I recorded the majority of Madagascar's endemic birds, including nearly all of the eastern rainforest endemics. I don't think there is any other easily accessible site in Madagascar where this is possible. There are no marshes along the normal tourist trails through the park, so I did not see any of the wetland endemics. I did note one small but promising-looking marsh to the southwest of the summit, but didn't quite have the inspiration or energy to make my way down to it. There is no trail, and walking off-trail through the grassland and heath at the top of the mountain is surprisingly difficult. I also missed a couple of other species, such as Wedge-tailed Jery and Madagascar Yellowbrow. They're definitely present, but finding them is mainly a matter of luck.

Birding is tough in Marojejy, though for some this will be part of the appeal. The forest is generally thick, and the terrain is steep. Venturing off-trail in pursuit of birds is often difficult and sometimes virtually impossible. Nonetheless, a keen birder who pays careful attention to the vocalizations will eventually connect with most or all of their target birds.

Marojejy is a famous mammal-watching spot due to the presence of Silky Sifaka. While I saw this amazing animal on my 2008 visit, between Camp 1 and Camp 2, I failed to connect with it on this visit. This was despite my own long days in the field, and the efforts of keen local guides who were shooting off to scour likely areas for sifakas. My group was one of the first to return to the park after many months of closure during the pandemic. During this time, the park camps were robbed of mattresses, cooking materials, and other things. My fear is that the same people who robbed the camps might also have hunted the troop of sifakas that is normally seen by visitors.

Hopefully I'm wrong, and our not seeing them was simply a matter of bad luck. But failing to see them is concerning when the animal involved is a Critically Endangered beast whose population is only around 200 individuals.

White-fronted Brown Lemur is fairly common though shy from the park entrance to Camp 2. Red-bellied Lemur is found above Camp 2, up to Camp 3. Northern Bamboo Lemur is fairly easily seen in the bamboo around Camp 1. According to the local guides, the only other lemur that is regularly seen is Mittermeier's Mouse Lemur, on night walks around Camp 2, though I failed to connect with it. Ring-tailed Vontsiras (formerly known as "mongoose") hang around Camp 2, especially behind the dining area.

## ITINERARY

<b>October 19</b>	Sambava to Marojejy NP headquarters (1.5 hours drive on a good road). Short drive to Mandena village (end of the drivable road). Hike to Park Entrance, then on to Camp 1.
<b>October 20</b>	Hike from Camp 1 to Camp 3. Night at Camp 3.
<b>October 21</b>	Camp 3 to Marojejy Summit. Lunch at Camp 3. Night at Camp 2.
<b>October 22</b>	Full day Camp 2 area. Walked all the way down to Camp 1 and back.
<b>October 23</b>	Camp 2 to Camp 1 for lunch, then hiking out of the park and back to the pickup point at Mandena. Drive back to Sambava for the night.

## LOGISTICS

Everything was arranged through my wife's Malagasy tour company, 8<sup>th</sup> Continent Expeditions. Porters, cooks, and local guides met us at the park headquarters. The food was astoundingly abundant and excellent throughout our stay. The national park bungalows are simple. They each have two bunk beds, and there are shared bathrooms. There are western-style toilets, cold running water for showering, and the cooks can prepare hot water for washing on request. Although the camps are in need of some maintenance, they were still perfectly comfortable, especially after a long day of hiking. The mattresses are in decent condition. Blankets are provided, but bringing your own sleeping bag to stay warm enough is highly recommended,

especially at Camps 2 and 3. Plans are afoot to restore and rebuild the camps, so conditions may soon change for the better.

One major advantage of Marojejy over Masoala is that it is accessed via the prosperous town of Sambava, where Air Madagascar normally runs daily flights, which are far more dependable than those to the remote town of Maroantsetra. From Sambava, reaching the park headquarters takes at most 1.5 hours on a very good tarmac road, whereas reaching Masoala from Maroantsetra takes a 2-hour boat trip that adds a lot of expense to any visit.

Those determined to do Marojejy as cheaply as humanly possible could actually take public transport (a taxi brousse) from Sambava to the park headquarters, which is along the main road to the town of Andapa. Once there, it might take some time, but you should be able to arrange porters, cooks, and very basic food (like rice and beans). Some degree of fluency in Malagasy or French would be a huge help in making this happen. From the headquarters it's possible to walk all the way to the national park entrance, and from there proceed to the camps, and the summit. Those with a vehicle can drive the 2.7 km to the village of Mandena, to save a bit of time and hot walking through deforested countryside.

### **Ground Agent Contact Information**

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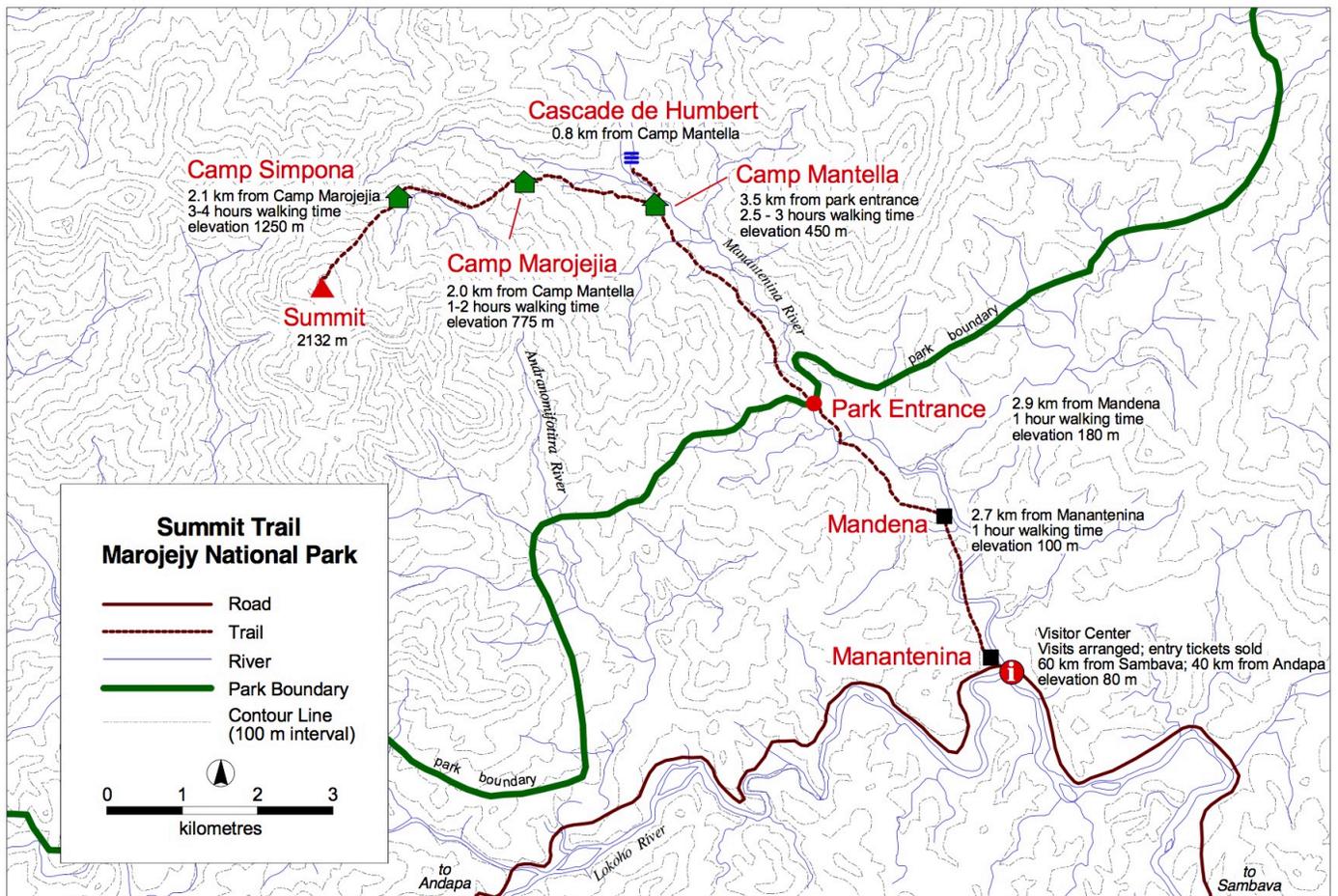
## **COSTS**

Part of the appeal of Marojejy is that you can spend a lot of time intensively birding in the forest for a very reasonable price. The most expensive costs are local guides (60,000 Ariary or \$15 / day) and park entrance (55,000 Ariary or \$14 / day). The costs for bungalows, cooks, and porters, are all remarkably cheap. The food catering can be customized to your budget. Desperate backpacking birders could survive for almost nothing on rice and beans, while those who want a bit more variety in food can choose a slightly more expensive, though still very reasonable, catering option. I was amazed by the variety and quality of food that we received for every meal during four nights spent in the park. It almost didn't feel right to be "camping" in the forest and eating so well!

## TIMING

As elsewhere in Madagascar, the best window here is September to December. November may be the optimal month, with the best chance for a conspicuous nesting Helmet Vanga. I also saw Scaly Ground-Roller and Dusky Tetraka on my November 2008 visit, but failed to find either during this October 2020 visit.

## SITE INFORMATION



Overall map, showing entrance track, main trail, summit, and the three camps.

Source of map: [marojejy.com](http://marojejy.com)

The most significant dividing line in the park, in terms of birds, is above and below Camp 2. Below Camp 2, the forest has the character of typical low-elevation rainforest, with tall, buttressed trees, vine tangles, and lots of big pandanus. Above Camp 2, there is a very steep climb up a tall ridgeline, and as you climb, you quickly start to transition to montane forest that has a shorter canopy, more tree ferns, and lots of moss. The transition from an area with Helmet Vanga (classic

lowland species) to an area with Yellow-bellied Sunbird-Asity (classic highland species) is remarkably quick. Camp 2 is the best camp for birding, offering good views of the forest, and frequent mixed flocks passing through. It's also well positioned so that you can go up the ridgeline above to look for high-elevation species, or down the trail towards Camp 1 to look for low-elevation species. Camp 1 is in the middle of a large area of bamboo, which is good for Northern Bamboo Lemur.

My itinerary was mainly aimed at climbing the summit, and spending a lot of time looking for Dusky Tetraka at lower elevations. I actually would have liked to have more time at higher elevations; another night or two at Camp 3, focused on seeing and photographing tough species like Rufous-headed Ground-Roller, Brown Emutail, and Madagascar Yellowbrow. Those who wanted the challenge of seeing as many Malagasy endemic birds as possible should consider spending around a week in the park. It's a delightful natural history experience unlike any other on offer in Madagascar. You sleep deep in the forest, and can bird and do night walks to your heart's content. This is very different from most other sites where you spend your time in less-than-pristine forest, and are prohibited from doing night walks inside the national parks.

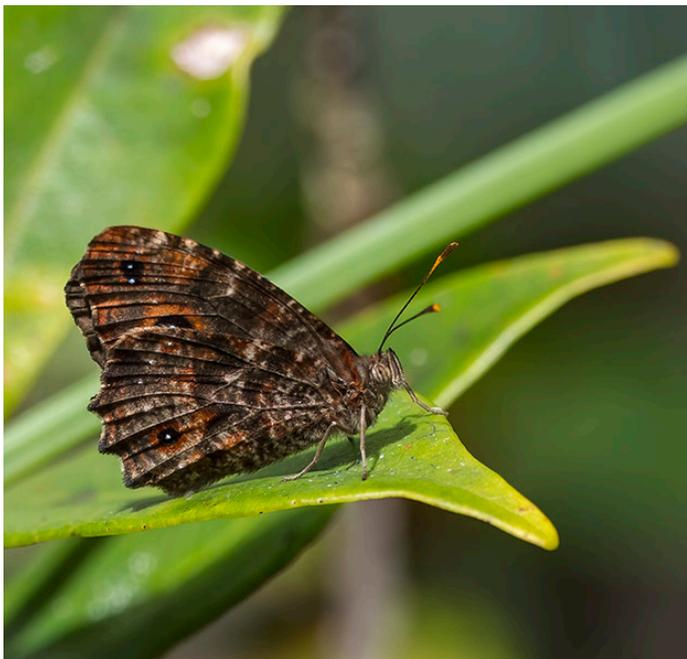
## **GPS**

Navigation in Marojejy is simple, as there is one main trail, and directions based on the three camps and the park entrance will usually suffice. I can send GPS waypoints of a few landmarks, plus spots for a few key birds such as Helmet Vanga, to anyone who requests them via e-mail.

## PHOTO GALLERY



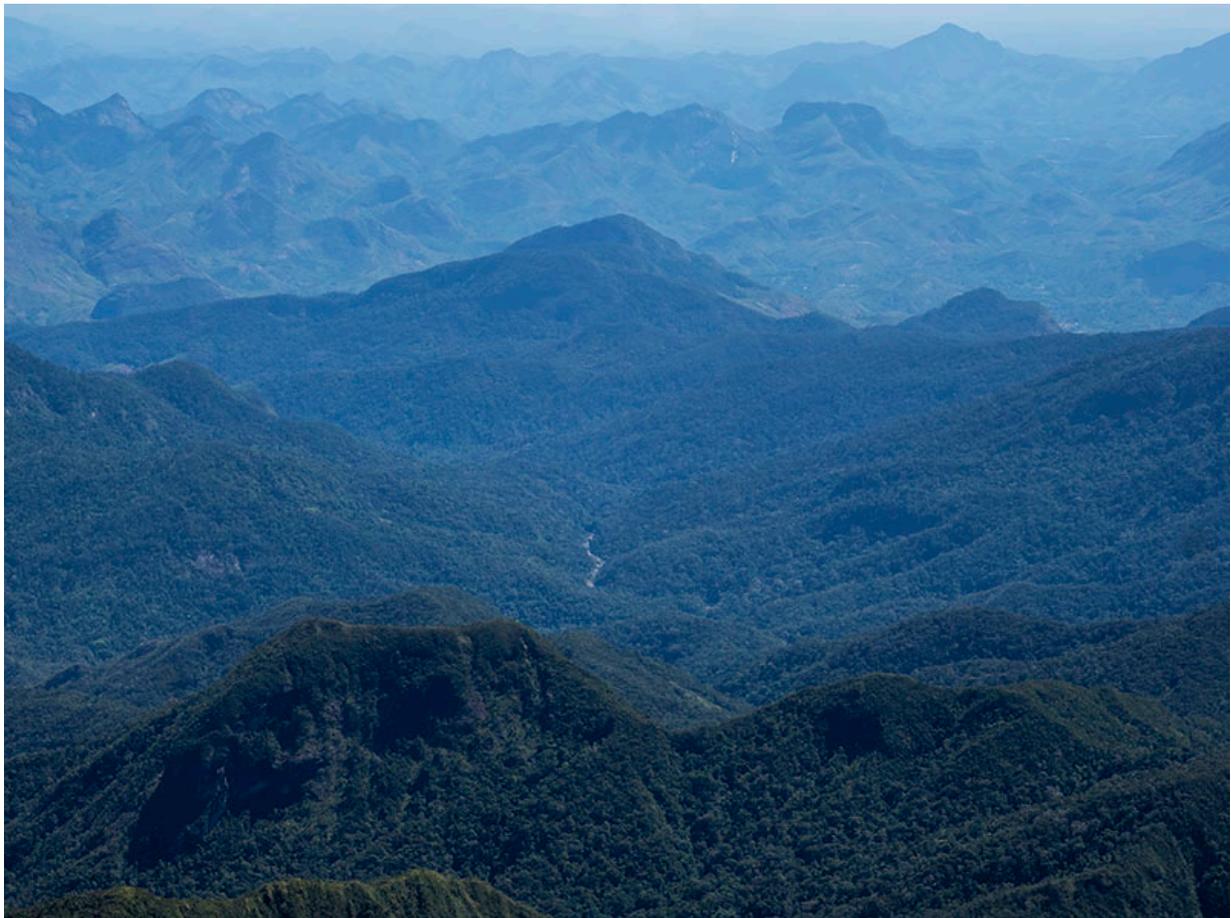
Blue Coua is pretty common, all the way up to Camp 3.



Lots of butterflies and dragonflies, like this *Strabena* (left) and a Silver Widow (*Palpopleura vestita*; right).



**Red-tailed Vanga is a core member of mixed feeding flocks. This is a female.**



**Marojejy has forest, lots and lots of wonderful forest, a refreshing sight in Madagascar.**



The dining area at Camp 1 (Camp Mantella).



The cooking area at Camp 3 (Camp Simpona)



**Camp 2 (Camp Marojejia) is my favorite of the three camps, and has a wonderful view.**



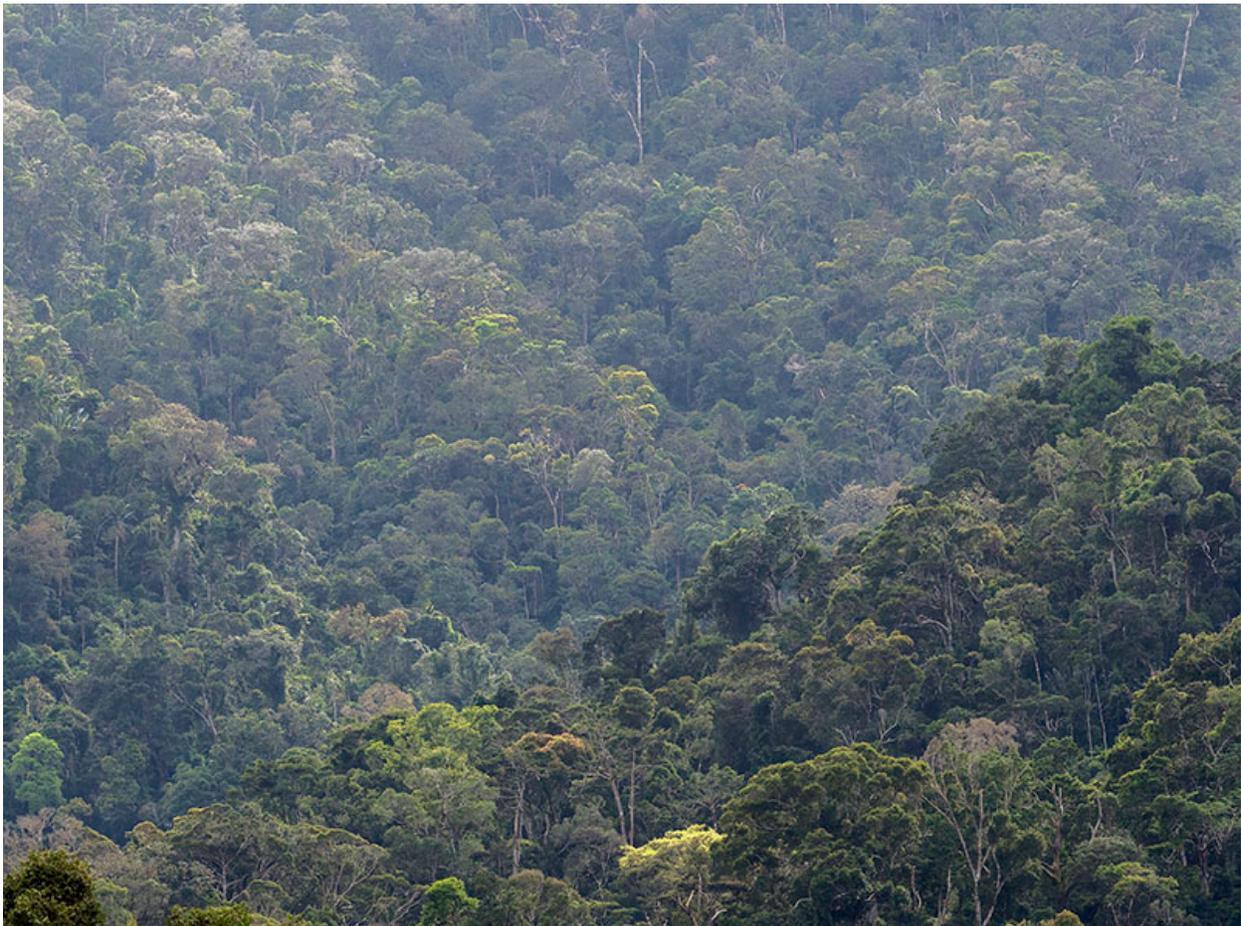
Panther Chameleon (*Furcifer pardalis*) is mostly seen along the entrance trail, before the park entrance.



Two widespread and common endemics: Madagascar Magpie-Robin (left), of the eastern subspecies, and Madagascar Munia (right), which I saw in bamboo near Camp 1.



**Madagascar Blue Vanga is a fairly common member of mixed flocks, especially between Camps 1 and 2.**



**Another slice of pristine forest in Marojejy.**

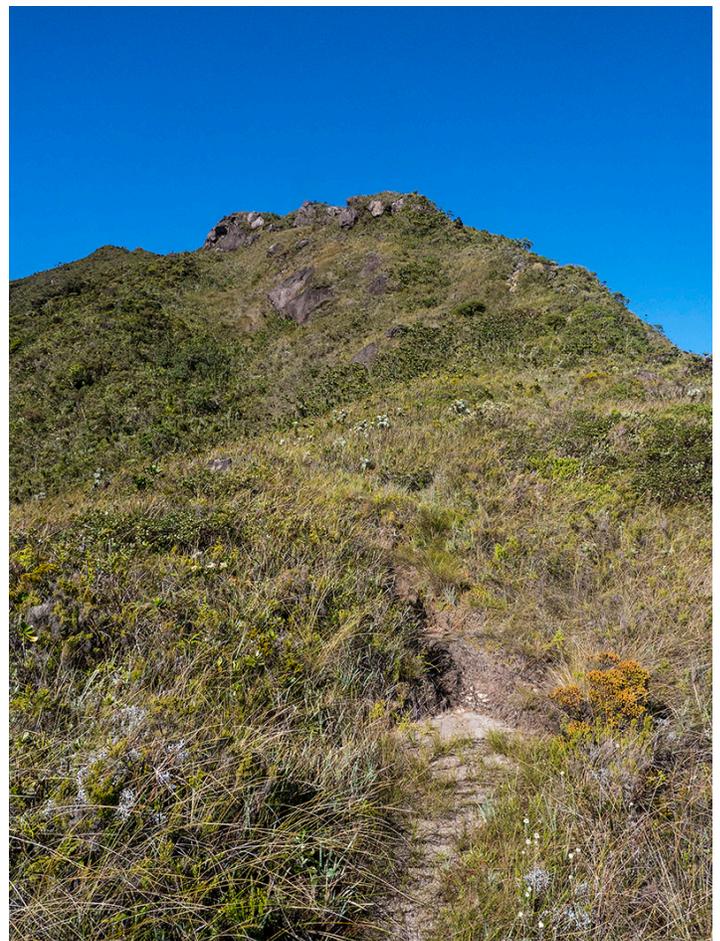


**The Marojejy summit (above), and its incredible sweeping views (below). Reaching this point requires a very tough hike on a poor trail, but is well worth it! There are very few birds around the summit, though African Stonechat and Madagascar Brush-Warblers are in the heath just down from the peak.**





**Cryptic Warbler is the most common bird in the stunted forest around timberline.**



**The Marojejy summit is a botanical wonderland, with lots of weird plants such as this miniature palm (left).  
The trail to the summit (right) ascends through grassland and stunted heath.**



**Common Sunbird-Asity** is common from Camp 2 to timberline. It seems like it may be displacing the rare **Yellow-bellied Sunbird-Asity**, even in the stunted ridgeline forest that is the classic habitat for that species.





Two sightings from between Camps 2 and 3: Hook-billed Vanga (left) and Red-fronted Coua (right).



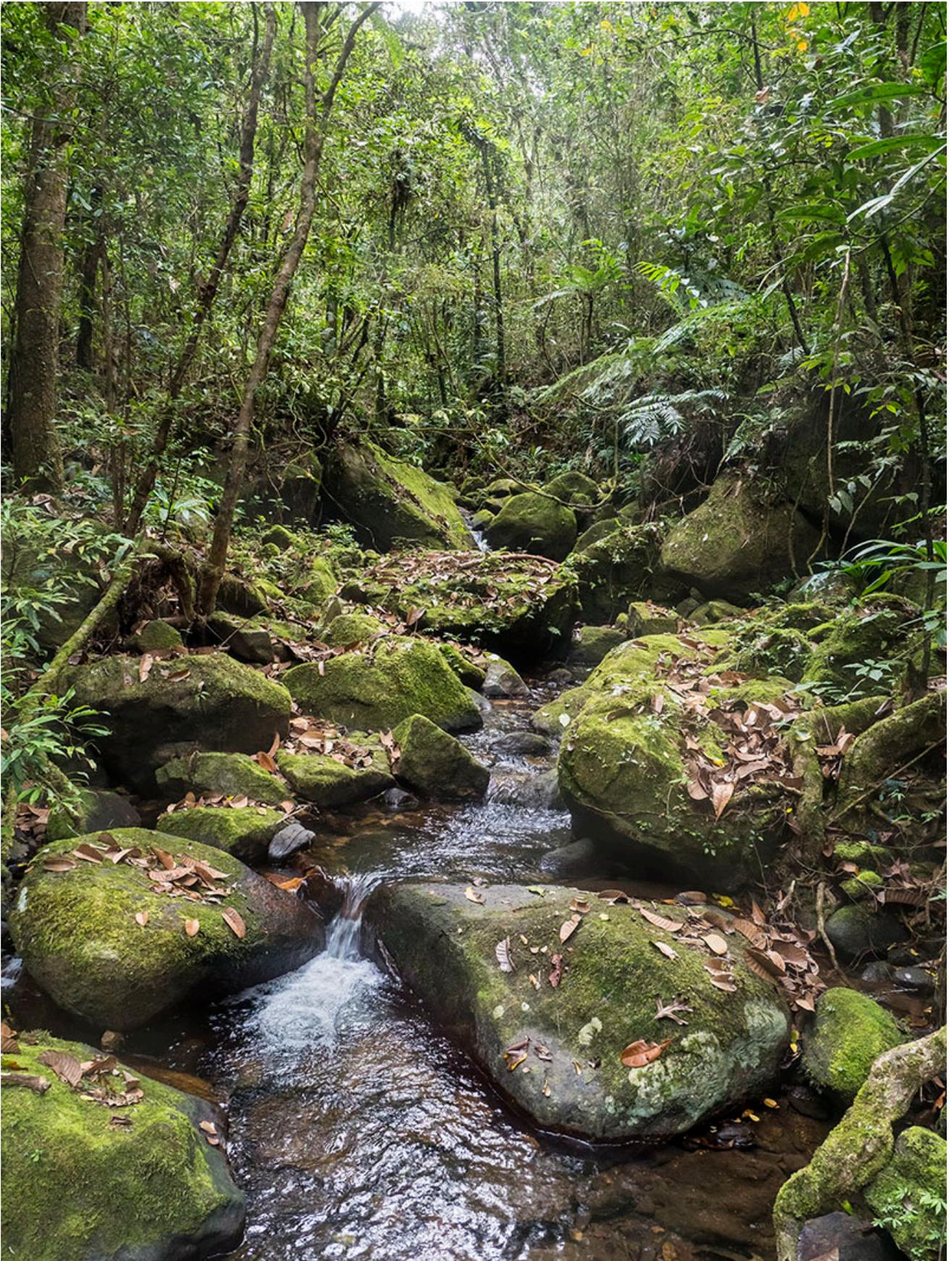
High-elevation forest near Camp 3. A rainy afternoon in the rainforest.



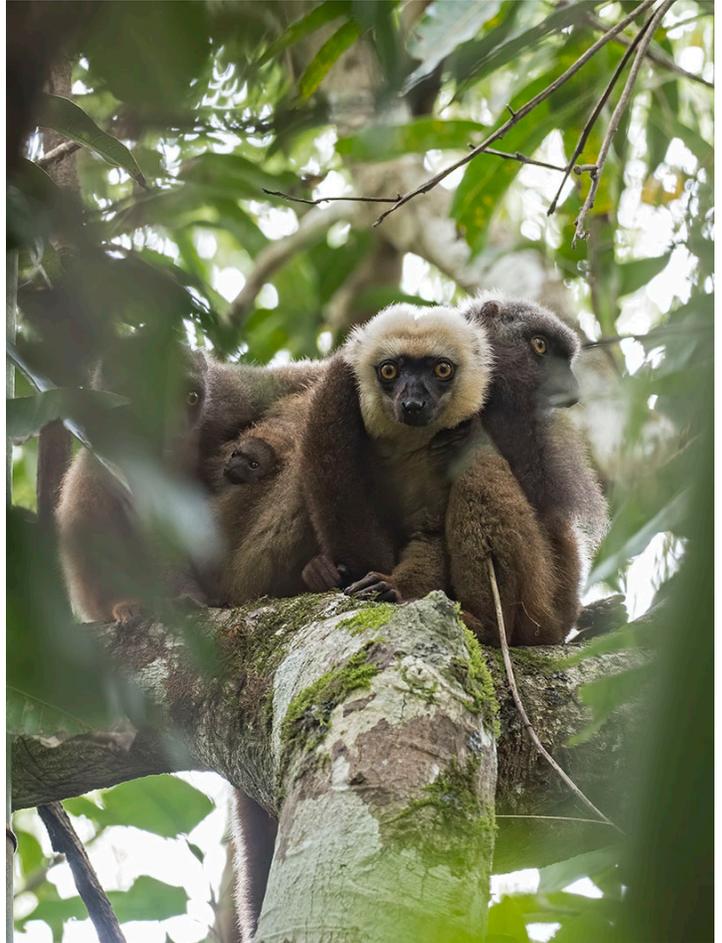
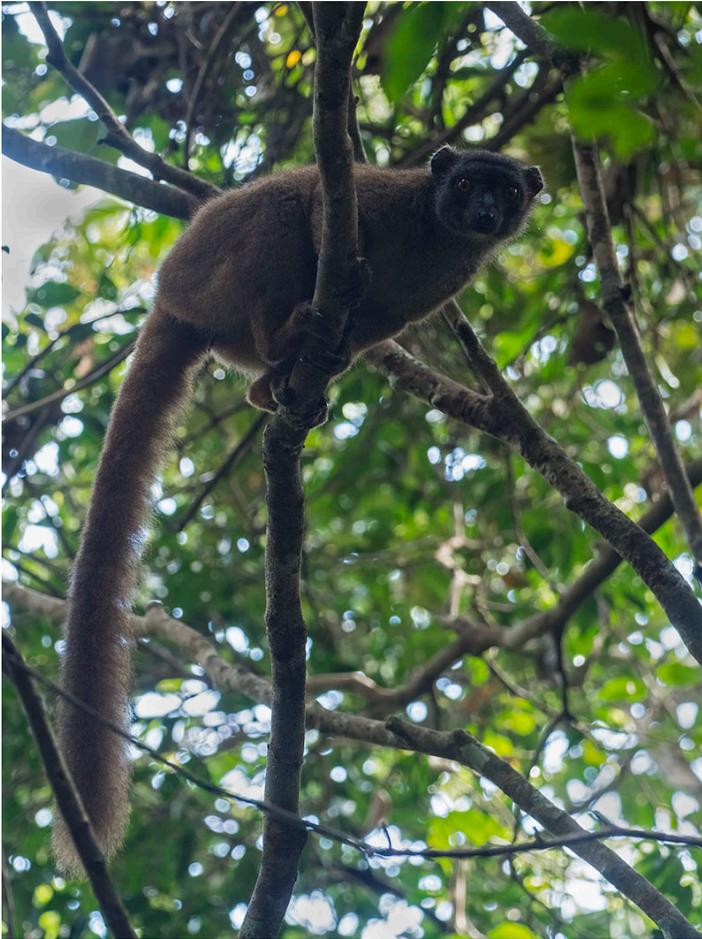
**Northern Bamboo Lemurs can usually be seen in the huge patch of bamboo around Camp 1.**



**Tylas Vanga (left) and Madagascar Cuckooshrike (right) look strikingly similar despite belonging to different families.**



**Gorgeous low-elevation rainforest below Camp 1.**



**White-fronted Brown Lemur is the common lemur in Marojejy, though it is quite shy.**



**This Forest Rock-Thrush was imitating a Helmet Vanga!**



**A flock with several Gray-crowned Tetrakas moved directly through Camp 3.**



Two of the biggest targets for visiting birders are likely to be Bernier's (above) and Helmet (below) Vangas. On this trip, I encountered Bernier's once, and Helmet several times.





Red-legged Plated Lizard (*Zonosaurus rufipes*) is common at lower elevations.



*Boophis roseipalmatus* is easily found at night along the stream that runs through Camp 2.



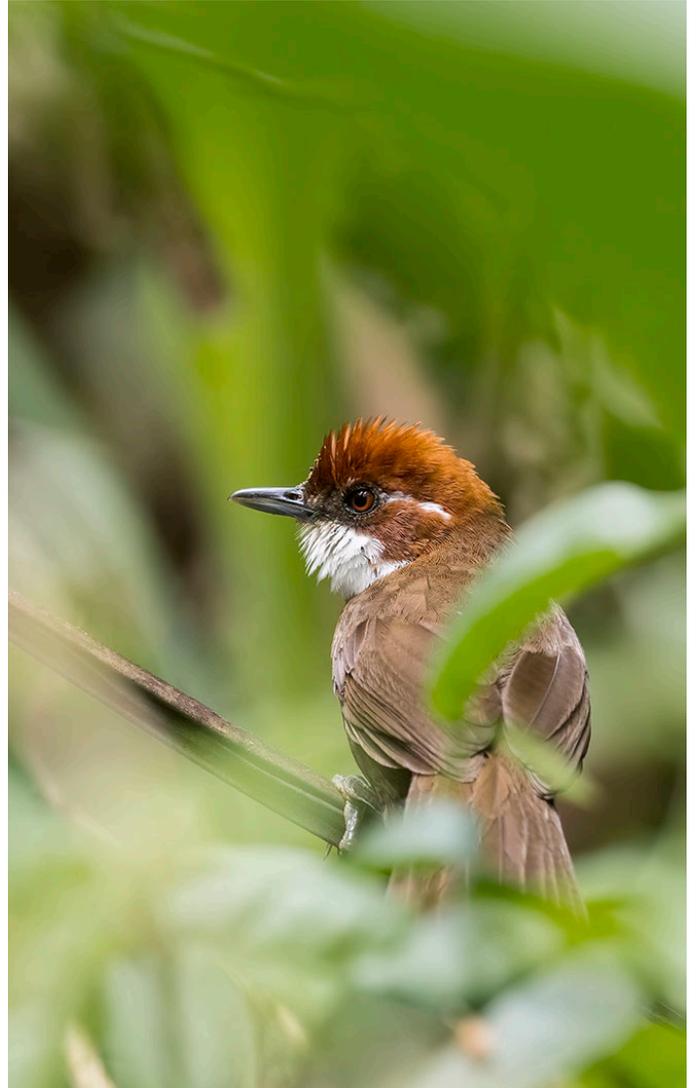
Madagascar Demoiselle (*Phaon rasoherinae*), a wonderful endemic damselfly.



Graceful Big-headed Gecko (*Paroedura gracilis*) at Camp 2, found after a lot of searching.



**Male Red-bellied Lemur. This handsome lemur was seen a few times above Camp 2.**



**Delightful endemics: Ward's Vanga (left) and White-throated Oxylabes (right).**



**A beautiful Madagascar Frog (*Mantidactylus* sp.) along a low-elevation stream.**



This dragonfly had caught and was eating an African Map Butterfly (*Cyrestis camillus*)!



Marojejy is great for butterflies. This beauty from high-elevation forest is *Heteropsis antalaha*.



**Ring-tailed Vontsiras hang around Camp 2.**



Gravenhorst's Skink (*Trachylepis gravenhorstii*) in Camp 1.



Nelicourvi Weaver, a common rainforest endemic.

## BIRD LIST

Taxonomy and nomenclature follow *The Clements Checklist of the Birds of the World v2019* (including updates through August 2019).

GALLIFORMES: Numididae		
Helmeted Guineafowl	<i>Numida meleagris</i>	Small flock near the park entrance. Very shy, suggesting lots of local hunting.
COLUMBIFORMES: Columbidae		
Madagascar Turtle-Dove	<i>Streptopelia picturata</i>	Occasionally encountered but very shy.
Madagascar Green-Pigeon	<i>Treron australis</i>	Seen and heard several times near Camp 1 and below. Around big fruiting trees. Seen once on a small fruiting tree immediately adjacent the dining area at Camp 1.
Madagascar Blue-Pigeon	<i>Alectroenas madagascariensis</i>	Seen just a couple times near Camp 1 and below, in the same fruiting trees that were attracting Green-Pigeons.
CUCULIFORMES: Cuculidae		
Crested Coua	<i>Coua cristata</i>	Heard several times, mostly at dusk. Very inconspicuous otherwise.
Blue Coua	<i>Coua caerulea</i>	Fairly common all the way up to Camp 3. One pair seen nest-building, and another carrying food.
Red-fronted Coua	<i>Coua reynaudii</i>	Uncommon below Camp 2, but surprisingly common above Camp 2, all the way up to timberline. Typically skulking and difficult to see well.
Red-breasted Coua	<i>Coua serriana</i>	Common by voice from the park entrance to Camp 2. Very shy, and seen only fleetingly a couple times.
Madagascar Coucal	<i>Centropus toulou</i>	Fairly common, especially in more open areas, especially bamboo-dominated zones.
Madagascar Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus rochii</i>	Uncommon by voice, mostly below Camp 2.
CAPRIMULGIFORMES: Caprimulgidae		
Madagascar Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus madagascariensis</i>	In town in Sambava!
CAPRIMULGIFORMES: Apodidae		
Malagasy Spinetail	<i>Zonavena grandidieri</i>	Seen once below Camp 1.
Alpine Swift	<i>Apus melba</i>	Seen along the main road a few kilometers before the park headquarters.

Madagascar Swift	<i>Apus balstoni</i>	Seen along the main road a few kilometers before the park headquarters.
<b>GRUIFORMES: Sarothruridae</b>		
Madagascar Wood-Rail	<i>Mentrocres kioloides</i>	Heard just once between park entrance and Camp 1.
Madagascar Flufftail	<i>Sarothrura insularis</i>	Heard once between Camps 2 and 3.
<b>PELECANIFORMES: Threskiornithidae</b>		
Madagascar (Crested) Ibis	<i>Lophotibis cristata</i>	Heard and glimpsed near Camps 1 and 2.
<b>ACCIPITRIFORMES: Accipitridae</b>		
Henst's Goshawk	<i>Accipiter henstii</i>	Heard from the viewpoint near Camp 3.
Madagascar Buzzard	<i>Buteo brachypterus</i>	Seen and heard a few times, as high as Camp 2.
<b>STRIGIFORMES: Strigidae</b>		
Malagasy (Rainforest) Scops-Owl	<i>Otus rutilus</i>	Common around Camp 1 in the bamboo. Heard a few and spotlighted one there.
White-browed Owl	<i>Athene superciliaris</i>	Heard pre-dawn at Camp 1.
Madagascar (Long-eared) Owl	<i>Asio madagascariensis</i>	Heard a couple times from Camp 2.
<b>LEPTOSOMIFORMES: Leptosomidae</b>		
Cuckoo-roller	<i>Leptosomus discolor</i>	Strangely scarce. Only heard twice near the park entrance.
<b>CORACIIFORMES: Meropidae</b>		
Madagascar Bee-eater	<i>Merops superciliosus</i>	Common along the entrance trail, between Mandena and the park entrance.
<b>CORACIIFORMES: Brachypteraciidae</b>		
Short-legged Ground-Roller	<i>Brachypteracias leptosomus</i>	Remarkably common by voice, but never seen. Heard at dawn at all 3 camps, and also heard near the park entrance, and on the ridge between Camps 2 and 3, where it seems especially common. Despite being so vocal, they were unresponsive to playback. And the steep nature of the terrain makes it difficult to head off-trail to find them.
Scaly Ground-Roller	<i>Brachypteracias squamiger</i>	I saw one individual between Camps 1 and 2 during a 2008 visit, but didn't see or hear it on this visit despite considerable searching.
Rufous-headed Ground-Roller	<i>Atelornis crossleyi</i>	Heard once just above Camp 3, and once on the ridge between Camps 2 and 3. Distant and unresponsive both times.

FALCONIFORMES: Falconidae		
Madagascar Kestrel	<i>Falco newtoni</i>	Seen on the trail outside the park.
PSITTACIFORMES: Psittaculidae		
Lesser Vasa Parrot	<i>Coracopsis nigra</i>	Fairly common by voice, though mostly seen fleetingly in flight.
PASSERIFORMES: Philepittidae		
Velvet Asity	<i>Philepitta castanea</i>	Heard once partway up the ridge on the way from Camp 2 to Camp 3.
Common Sunbird-Asity	<i>Neodrepanis coruscans</i>	Common indeed, from Camp 2 all the way to above Camp 3. Even found on high-elevation ridgelines, which normally would be prime Yellow-bellied habitat. Displacing that species, perhaps with the help of climate change?
Yellow-bellied Sunbird-Asity	<i>Neodrepanis hypoxantha</i>	One brief encounter near the top of the ridge between Camps 2 and 3. Extensive searching on that ridgeline, and between Camp 3 and the summit, did not locate any other individuals. Very concerning. How quickly might this bird be disappearing?
PASSERIFORMES: Campephagidae		
Madagascar Cuckooshrike	<i>Coracina cinerea</i>	Fairly common, usually with flocks of larger vangas. Seen from Camp 1 to above Camp 3.
PASSERIFORMES: Vangidae		
Common Newtonia	<i>Newtonia brunneicauda</i>	Common from the park entrance to Camp 3.
Dark Newtonia	<i>Newtonia amphichroa</i>	Heard many times, from above Camp 2 to timberline on the summit trail. Although both newtonias are around Camp 3, at elevations slightly above Camp 3, there seems to only be Dark Newtonia, and it is most common there.
Tylas Vanga	<i>Tylas eduardi</i>	Uncommon, mostly in flocks of larger vangas. Found from the park entrance to above Camp 2.
Red-tailed Vanga	<i>Calicalicus madagascariensis</i>	Fairly common by voice, often in mixed flocks. From the park entrance to Camp 2.
Nuthatch-Vanga	<i>Hypositta corallirostris</i>	Several seen in a loose flock between Camps 1 and 2.
Chabert Vanga	<i>Leptopterus chabert</i>	Uncommon, heard once below Camp 1.

Crossley's Vanga	<i>Mystacornis crossleyi</i>	Heard only once, in high-elevation forest above Camp 3 on the way to the summit.
Blue Vanga	<i>Cyanolanius madagascarinus</i>	Fairly common from Camp 1 to Camp 3. Mostly in flocks of larger vangas.
Hook-billed Vanga	<i>Vanga curvirostris</i>	Uncommon. Encountered once on the ridgeline between Camps 2 and 3.
Ward's Flycatcher	<i>Pseudobias wardi</i>	Surprisingly uncommon. Only found on the ridgeline between Camps 2 and 3, where it was conspicuous by voice.
Helmet Vanga	<i>Euryceros prevostii</i>	Seemingly not rare, but typically quiet, inconspicuous, and elusive. In 2008, I saw it easily at a nest that was directly above the trail. On this visit, my first sighting was in a mixed flock on the ridgeline above Camp 2. Later, I found one completely silent individual a couple of times about halfway between Camps 1 and 2. My final encounter was by voice only, just above Camp 1. One of our porters also saw a Helmet Vanga a couple times at low elevations on the way from the park entrance to Camp 1. Marojejy is one of the very best places to look for this awesome bird, though finding it may still require some anxious effort.
Bernier's Vanga	<i>Oriolia bernieri</i>	Seen once, a couple noisy individuals in a flock just up the ridgeline above Camp 2. Other members of the flock were Madagascar Cuckooshrike, Tylas Vanga, and one Helmet Vanga. Strange to see this bird so high, and not in an area with a notable preponderance of pandanus.
White-headed Vanga	<i>Artamella viridis</i>	Uncommon, from the park entrance to Camp 2. Seen in a big mixed vanga flock from Camp 2.
Pollen's Vanga	<i>Xenopirostris polleni</i>	Reported by a couple members of our party in a big vanga flock at Camp 2.
<b>PASSERIFORMES: Dicruridae</b>		
Crested Drongo	<i>Dicrurus forficatus</i>	Fairly common, especially by voice. Mainly Camp 2 and below.
<b>PASSERIFORMES: Monarchidae</b>		
Madagascar Paradise-Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone mutata</i>	Found at least from the park entrance to Camp 3. One nest 1.5m above the ground along the side trail near Camp 2.

PASSERIFORMES: Corvidae		
Pied Crow	<i>Corvus albus</i>	Seen just outside of the park.
PASSERIFORMES: Cisticolidae		
Common Jery	<i>Neomixis tenella</i>	Common indeed, from the park entrance to Camp 2.
Green Jery	<i>Neomixis viridis</i>	Fairly common as a canopy voice from the park entrance to Camp 2.
Stripe-throated Jery	<i>Neomixis striatigula</i>	Fairly common as a canopy voice from the park entrance at least to Camp 2.
Madagascar Cisticola	<i>Cisticola cherina</i>	Seen in the more open country along the entrance trail, before entering the park.
PASSERIFORMES: Acrocephalidae		
Madagascar Brush-Warbler	<i>Nesillas typica</i>	Common by voice from Camp 2 all the way up to near the summit. Found in the heath and scattered bushes above timberline.
PASSERIFORMES: Locustellidae		
Brown Emutail	<i>Bradypterus brunneus</i>	Heard and glimpsed several times in the mossy high-elevation forest above Camp 3 on the way to the summit.
PASSERIFORMES: Bernieridae		
White-throated Oxylabes	<i>Oxylabes madagascariensis</i>	One flock between Camps 1 and 2, one near Camp 2, and another flock mixed with Gray-crowned Tetrakas in Camp 3. Capable of sounding almost exactly like the Hawkins recording of Dusky Tetraka.
Long-billed Bernieria	<i>Bernieria madagascariensis</i>	Uncommon, encountered a couple times between the park entrance and Camp 2.
Cryptic Warbler	<i>Cryptosylvicola randrianasoloi</i>	On the trail from Camp 3 to the summit, this is the most common and conspicuous bird, at least by voice. Ranges all the way up to the last stunted trees at timberline, and can be heard singing in the forest below from the heath and grassland at the summit.
Spectacled Tetraka	<i>Xanthomixis zosterops</i>	Shockingly few encounters. I found only one small flock, between camps 1 and 2. These birds were very elusive, but sadly didn't seem to be associating with any Dusky Tetrakas

Dusky Tetraka	<i>Xanthomixis tenebrosa</i>	Saw in 2008 between the park entrance and Camp 1. Although I remain confident in this sighting, I was so new to Madagascar birding at that point that I didn't realize the full significance of seeing this rare bird, and didn't try nearly hard enough to get photos. On this trip, despite days of effort, I never found one.
Gray-crowned Tetraka	<i>Xanthomixis cinereiceps</i>	Just one encounter, of a small flock mixed with White-throated Oxylabes, moving through Camp 3.
Rand's Warbler	<i>Randia pseudozosterops</i>	Uncommon by voice, mostly below Camp 2. As always, closely associated with Stripe-throated Jery.
<b>PASSERIFORMES: Hirundinidae</b>		
Mascarene Martin	<i>Phedina borbonica</i>	Seen outside the park on the entrance trail.
<b>PASSERIFORMES: Pycnonotidae</b>		
Madagascar Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes madagascariensis</i>	Fairly common throughout, except above timberline.
<b>PASSERIFORMES: Zosteropidae</b>		
Madagascar White-eye	<i>Zosterops maderaspatanus</i>	Less common than expected. Most sightings were between Camps 1 and 2.
<b>PASSERIFORMES: Sturnidae</b>		
Madagascar Starling	<i>Hartlaubius auratus</i>	Seen once from Camp 1, and once at the biggest river crossing along the entrance trail, outside the park.
<b>PASSERIFORMES: Muscicapidae</b>		
Madagascar Magpie-Robin	<i>Copsychus albospectularis</i>	Fairly common by voice, but inconspicuous. Mostly below Camp 2.
Forest Rock-Thrush	<i>Monticola sharpei</i>	Only found once, near the top of the ridgeline between Camps 2 and 3. Heard and recorded imitating Helmet Vanga!
African Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquatus</i>	One of only a handful of birds above timberline, in the mountaintop grassland / heath habitat.
<b>PASSERIFORMES: Nectariniidae</b>		
Souimanga Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris sovimanga</i>	Fairly common by voice, all the way from the park entrance to the shrubs at timberline.
Madagascar Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris notatus</i>	Uncommon, mostly below Camp 2. Easily missed if you don't know the call.

PASSERIFORMES: Ploceidae		
Nelicourvi Weaver	<i>Ploceus nelicourvi</i>	Fairly common though inconspicuous from the park entrance to Camp 2.
Red Fody	<i>Foudia madagascariensis</i>	A few along the entrance trail before the park entrance.
Forest Fody	<i>Foudia omissa</i>	Just a couple in thick forest between the park entrance and Camp 1. Surprisingly absent elsewhere, despite keeping an ear out for them.
PASSERIFORMES: Estrildidae		
Madagascar Munia	<i>Lonchura nana</i>	One mildly surprising encounter in bamboo near Camp 1. Not a bird that I normally expect to see in the forest.
PASSERIFORMES: Motacillidae		
Madagascar Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flaviventris</i>	Scarce inside the forest. Mostly around large streams.

## BIRDS MISSED

The table below includes some comments on surprising misses, plus information and / or speculation on where to find some additional desirable targets. My information about what has been recorded in the park comes from *The Terrestrial Protected Areas of Madagascar, Volume II*, by Goodman *et al.*

Meller's Duck	<i>Anas melleri</i>	Not recorded, but probably occurs.
Madagascar Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus pelzelinii</i>	Known from the park.
Brown Mesite	<i>Mesitornis unicolor</i>	Known from the park. The area from the park entrance to Camp 2 looks like prime habitat, though I never heard one.
Collared Nightjar	<i>Gactornis enarratus</i>	Known from the park. Tricky bird to find without the help of skilled local guides who are familiar with the bird's habits. Hence why most visiting birders end up seeing this species at Andasibe.
Madagascar Rail	<i>Rallus madagascariensis</i>	Known from the park. Wetland species.
White-throated Rail	<i>Dryolimnas cuvieri</i>	Known from the park. Surprising miss. Must be found along streams between the park entrance and Camp 2.
Madagascar Harrier-Hawk	<i>Polyboroides radiatus</i>	Known from the park. Low-density resident of forest throughout Madagascar.
Madagascar Serpent-Eagle	<i>Eutriorchis astur</i>	Known from the park. Enigmatic species. Marojejy certainly seems like one of the most likely places to find one. I certainly kept an ear out, but never heard one. The fact that this bird with a loud and distinctive voice is so rarely recorded suggests that it is indeed remarkably rare, and not simply overlooked.
Madagascar Cuckoo-Hawk	<i>Aviceda madagascariensis</i>	Known from the park. I suspect that a couple hours spent watching from the viewpoint near Camp 3 would produce a sighting. They love that sort of ridgeline habitat.
Frances's Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter francesiae</i>	Known from the park. Probably more common along the park periphery, and plantations outside the park. Pretty scarce inside of good rainforest.
Madagascar Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter madagascariensis</i>	Known from the park. Always a tough bird to see.

Madagascar Pygmy-Kingfisher	<i>Corythornis madagascariensis</i>	Known from the park. A surprising miss. Must be present between the park entrance and Camp 2.
Malagasy Kingfisher	<i>Corythornis vintsioides</i>	Not known from the park. But surely must occur along rivers and streams just outside the park.
Pitta-like Ground-Roller	<i>Atelornis pittoides</i>	Known from the park. I was surprised not to hear this bird. The area around Camp 2 seems ideal.
Rufous Vanga	<i>Schetba rufa</i>	Known from the park. But always scarce in eastern rainforest.
Madagascar Swamp Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus newtoni</i>	Known from the park. In some parts of Madagascar, this species inhabits high-elevation heath, but I didn't record it around the summit.
Gray Emutail	<i>Amphilais seebohmi</i>	Not known from the park. Wetland species. But if you find Madagascar Rail, there's a good chance this species will also be present.
Wedge-tailed Jery	<i>Hartertula flavoviridis</i>	Known from the park. Perhaps my most surprising miss, though I had only one good tetraka flock, in Camp 3.
Yellow-browed Oxylabes	<i>Crossleyia xanthophrys</i>	Known from the park. Another surprising miss, though it's always an elusive bird. The habitat from above Camp 2 up to above Camp 3 is perfect. More time invested there would almost certainly turn up this species.