



About Nature - Wildlife & Birding Tours

Private & Tailored Safaris Throughout South Africa's National Parks & Private Reserves

Madagascar Birding & Wildlife Private Photographic

Brief Tour Outline

Covering the major Birding & Wildlife destinations in Madagascar, this tour will give you an amazing opportunity to explore these highlight destinations with no sacrifice to the exclusivity of a privately guided tour for the duration of your stay.

Outside of arrival and departure dates, you'll spend 13 nights exploring Madagascar's incredibly diverse habitat from North to South, home to an amazing 241 species of Mammal, 287 species of Bird, 406 species of Reptile and 311 species of Frog!

This is a flexible medium to fast paced tour, with most of the activities taking place during the mornings and afternoons but includes a number of night walks.



Detailed Itinerary

Day 1: (Thatchfoord Lodge – *South Africa*) Once you have cleared through passport control and met your guide, we'll take a short drive in to Sandton and have an early check-in to the Thatchfoord Lodge where we'll stay tonight. Subject to your flight arrival time, we may visit a nearby Game Reserve for a midday game drive to make sure the camera is ready for action, or just take a relaxing walk along the Sand River that runs behind Thatchfoord Lodge.



Day 2: (Au Bois Vert – *Antananarivo, Madagascar*) We'll have a relaxed start to this morning and after breakfast head back to the airport for a short 3 hour direct flight through to Madagascar's capital, Antananarivo, locally known as 'Tana'. On arrival, we'll head straight through to our accommodation which, although only 10kms away from the bustling city centre, is situated amongst a 3 hectare wooded park of tall trees that attracts a good variety of Birds and the occasional Chameleon. Taking the opportunity to photograph some of the local Birdlife, we'll spend this afternoon getting our gear ready for the adventures that lay ahead.

Day 3: (Asity Lodge – *Ankarafantsika National Park*) After a 1 hour flight to Mahajanga and then a short drive through to the Ankarafantsika National Park, the true wildlife adventures begin! Ankarafantsika National Park is one of the largest and last remaining patches of dry deciduous forest remaining in Madagascar and is home to an abundance of species, including 8 Lemur species, such as the diurnal Coquerel Sifaka with it's unique Kangaroo style jump and dance when on the ground.

Days 4 & 5: (Gite D'Ampijoroa – *Ankarafantsika National Park*) Starting the day off scanning through some nearby forest, we'll hopefully find a few more Lemur species, but will also be searching for some rather impressive and very photogenic birds, such as the Sickle-billed Vanga, Long-billed Bernieria and Cuckoo Roller to name but a very small few. In the evening we will try to venture out on a night walk in search of some of the more nocturnal species, such as the Golden Mouse Lemur, Western Woolly Lemur, Fat-tailed Dwarf Lemur, Milne-Edward's Sportive Lemur and then maybe a Torotoroka Scops-Owl, Madagascar Nightjar or Rhinoceros Chameleon!

Days 6, 7 & 8: (Feon' Ny Ala – *Perinet Rainforest & Mantadia National Park*) Leaving the Ankarafantsika National Park, we'll head back to Mahajanga and fly back down to Antananarivo and make our way down to the Perinet Rainforest where we'll spend the next 3 nights. This is an exceptionally rich area for Mammals, Birds, Reptiles and Amphibians and we'll waste no time in our pursuit for quality sightings and get started basically as soon as we arrive. Much of the wildlife in this area is nocturnal, so while we'll be searching for some species after dinner by torch light, with species like the Malagasy Tree Frog, the Madagascar Boa, numerous species of Lemurs, and the fact that this is also a great place for the Giraffe-necked Weevil, no doubt one of the more dramatic insects on this planet, needless to say, there will not be many moments in the day where there is nothing to photograph.



Day 9: (Au Bois Vert – *Antananarivo*) After some early morning exploring to finish up our stay in this region, we'll drive back up to Antananarivo and have a relaxed evening, giving you a chance to go through your memory cards and recharge both your camera and personal batteries.

Day 10: (Le Relais de la Reine – *Toliara*) After an early morning flight to Toliara on the south eastern coast of Madagascar, we'll travel inland towards the Isalo National Park, a region that has an amazing variety of landscapes and terrain in its relatively small area. Here we'll find amazing landscapes of sandstone formations, deep canyons and palm lined oases that make suitable homes for Brown Lemurs and Sifakas to name just the commonly seen diurnal species of mammals.



Day 11: (Le Relais de la Reine – *Toliara*) After breakfast, we'll head back down to Toliara with a stop at the Zombitse-Vohibasia National Park, a recently established National Park that is trying to save the small patch of forest that remains in the former agriculture area. As the rainforest in this area has been reduced down so much in size, the abundance of wildlife here is fantastic! Verraux's Sifaka, Hubbard Sportive Lemur, Red-fronted Brown Lemur and the enormous Oustalet's Chameleon that can grow to almost 70cm's, are just a few of the things we'll have chances to see here!

Days 12 & 13: (La Mira de Madio Rano – *Ifaty*) After a morning spent back in the Isalo National Park searching for species we may have missed, such as the Ring-tailed Lemur, we'll then make our way back out to the coast and to the Spiny Forest of Ifaty. While this extraordinary area offers us some amazing walks amongst truly spectacular vegetation, 6 of the world's 9 species of Baobab Trees are endemic to Madagascar, it also produces a great variety of birds as well as some rather odd critters, such as the Small Madagascar Iguana (more commonly known as a three-eyed Lizard) and one of the world's largest species of Cockroach, the Hissing Cockroach.



Day 14: (Au Bois Vert – *Antananarivo*) We'll head down to the d'Antsokay Botanical Garden today to see not only some other amazing plant species that we may have missed, but also several mammal, bird and reptile species, such as the Mouse

Lemur, perhaps a sleeping Nightjar, a Spiny-tailed Iguana, or if we're observant enough, a Tenrec, a member of a truly amazing family of mammals that can resemble anything from a Hedgehog, a Shrew, an Opossum, Mouse or even an Otter... This afternoon we'll fly back to Antananarivo.

Days 15 & 16: Subject to your preference, we can either fly directly back to South Africa via South African Airways from Antananarivo, or take a slight detour and fly via Air Mauritius and have a complimentary lay-over on the small island of Mauritius, giving you a chance to spend an afternoon and a morning exploring this popular holiday destination. Regardless of which day we arrive back in Johannesburg, you also then have the option of flying back to your home country on the same day, or spending one last night at Thatchford Lodge and flying out the following evening...

Notes: Baggage allowances are restrictive on internal flights and may be as little as 7 to 10kgs per passenger, please keep this in mind and prepare to pack light as we travel in and out of Antananarivo. Regarding photographic equipment, generally speaking, for wildlife photography, anywhere from a 200mm to a 400mm lens would be ideal for most situations, and a wider angle will also be useful for scenery.

