



MADAGASCAR: 8-DAY NORTHWEST EXTENSION

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2027 (BY REQUEST)



Madagascar Fish Eagle is one of the special birds we will be looking for by boat on this tour.

Overview

Madagascar's northwest offers a remarkable pre-tour extension that immerses birders in some of the island's most distinctive habitats and range-restricted species. Centered around the coastal city of Mahajanga and the dry deciduous forests of Ankarafantsika National Park, this itinerary is designed to complement the main eastern and southern Madagascar birding routes by targeting specials that cannot be found elsewhere. Over several days, participants will explore a mosaic of wetlands, lakes, and forested landscapes that host an exceptional diversity of wildlife.

Highlights include Critically Endangered species such as the **Madagascar Fish Eagle** and **Humblot's Heron**, alongside charismatic endemics like **White-breasted Mesite**, **Schlegel's Asity**, **Van Dam's Vanga**, the rare **Banded Kestrel** and the elusive **Madagascar Jacana**. The forests also shelter lemurs such as **Coquerel's Sifaka**, adding a mammalian dimension to the experience. We will enjoy two boat trips on this tour looking for highly desired species such as **Malagasy Fish Eagle** (on Lake Ravelobe) **Malagasy Sacred Ibis** and **Bernier's Teal** (both on Betsiboka Delta). While accommodations are simple, they are comfortable and well-situated for maximizing birding opportunities. This extension is ideal for travelers seeking a deeper immersion into Madagascar's biodiversity, offering a rewarding blend of rare birds, striking landscapes, and unforgettable encounters that set the stage for the main tour.



Humblot's Heron is regular at Lake Ravelobe.

Detailed Itinerary (8 days/7 nights)

Day 1. Arrival in Antananarivo

You can arrive in Madagascar's capital at any time today, after which you will be transferred to the hotel.

Overnight: Relais des Plateaux, (or similar) Antananarivo

Day 2. Antananarivo - Mahajanga (Majunga) - Ampijoroa (Ankarafantsika National Park)

We will leave the hotel after breakfast, take our flight to Mahajanga, and eventually drive directly to Ankarafantsika (about four hours' drive), heading for the Ampijoroa dry deciduous forest. A three-night stay should allow us to spot most of the key birds of the area. En route to Ankarafantsika, we plan to stop at Lake Amboromalandy and at rice fields to try to find birds like **Madagascar Jacana**, **Malagasy Pond Heron**, **Humblot's Heron**, and others.

Time-permitting, we can spend time at Lake Ravelobe, scanning for the Critically Endangered **Madagascar Fish Eagle**, the Endangered **Madagascar Jacana**, and many other birds. Please be cautious of crocodiles and avoid walking too close to the lake. We then return to our accommodation, checking the trees around the "lodge" for spectacular birds, including **Sickle-billed Vanga**, **Crested Coua**, **Madagascar Green Pigeon**, **Grey-headed Lovebird**, and many others. Depending on group energy levels, we may take a night walk (otherwise on another evening), which might generate **Madagascar Nightjar**, owls, chameleons, and nocturnal lemurs.

Overnight: Asity Lodge (or similar), near Ankarafantsika National Park



The unusual Sickle-billed Vanga should be seen on this tour.

Days 3–5. Three more nights at Ampijoroa

We have another early start to visit the various sections of Ankarafantsika. Here we need to find key target species such as **White-breasted Mesite**, **Van Dam's**, **Hook-billed** and **Rufous Vangas**, **Madagascar Ibis**, the incomparable and spectacular **Schlegel's Asity**, **Red-capped**, **Coquerel's** and **Crested Couas**, and lemurs like the charismatic **Coquerel's Sifaka**. One afternoon we plan to do a boat trip on the lake for species that might have been missed.

Overnight: Asity Lodge, (or similar) near Ankarafantsika National Park

Day 6. Ampijoroa to Mahajanga

After final “cleanup” birding in the dry forests of Ankarafantsika we will drive back to Mahajanga (Majunga) - a very lively town with plenty of rickshaws. Then we'll take a boat trip into the Betsiboka Delta, where we'll bird the mangroves for rare species such as **Malagasy Sacred Ibis** and **Bernier's Teal**, along with a host of tropical shorebirds, terns, and more. We will have some flexibility in our itinerary to coincide this boat trip with the correct tides.

Overnight: Roche Rouge, (or similar) Mahajanga

Day 7. Flight to Antananarivo, Tsarasoatra Lake

Today we will take a flight to Antananarivo and then transfer to our hotel.

Overnight: Relais des Plateaux, (or similar) Antananarivo



*The shrike-like **Hook-billed Vanga** is one of the many vanga species we can see on this tour.*

Day 8. Flight home or beginning of the Masoala extension (following day)

Either your international flight will leave for home today or you will fly to Maroantsetra the following day for the start of the Masoala extension.

Accommodation on this tour is simple but comfortable, with 24-hour electricity and cold-water showers.

Please note that the itinerary cannot be guaranteed as it is only a rough guide and can be changed (usually slightly) due to factors such as availability of accommodation, updated information on the state of accommodation, roads, or birding sites, the discretion of the guides, and other factors. In addition, we sometimes have to use a different guide from the one advertised due to tour scheduling or other factors.

Tour Details

Duration:	8 days
Group size:	4–8
Dates:	October/November 2027 - <i>by request</i>
Start:	Antananarivo (Tana)
End:	Antananarivo (Tana)
Prices:	€ 3,859 per person sharing, assuming 4-8 participants, plus about € 800 for the domestic flights, which we will book for you (2027)
Single supplements:	€ 564 (2027)

Price includes:

Meals
Accommodation
Guiding fees
Entrance fees
All transport while on tour
Bottled water throughout the tour

Price excludes:

International flights
Return flight Tana/Mahajanga (Majunga)/Tana
Items of a personal nature, e.g. gifts
Drinks
Laundry
Personal insurance
Gratuities (please see our [tipping guidelines blog](#))