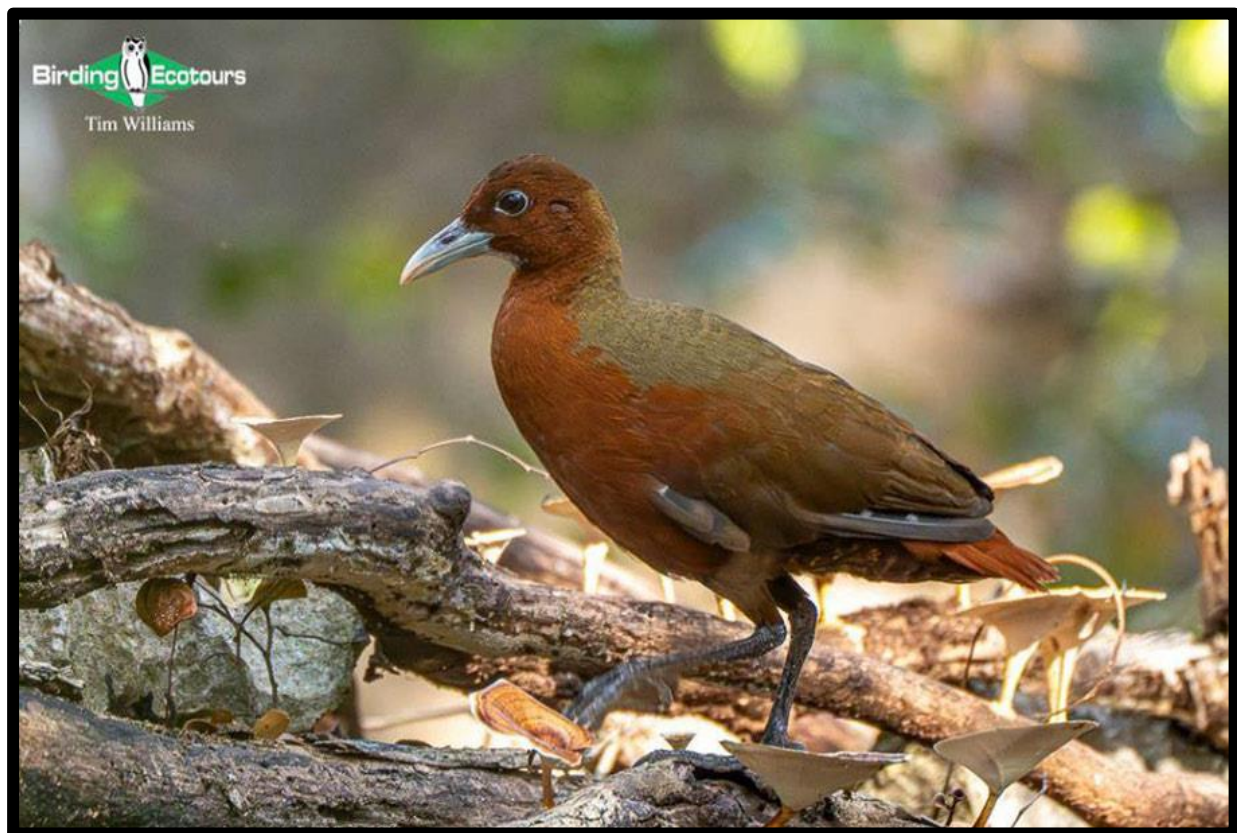




MADAGASCAR: RARE BIRDS AND MAMMALS OF THE WEST

10–17 OCTOBER 2027



Tsingy Forest Rail is one of Madagascar's least observed birds and a major target on this tour.

Overview

This exciting 8-day Madagascar birding tour will likely appeal to serious global listers and those wishing to see some of Madagascar's most iconic and seldom-seen mammals. Although this tour does not yield as many species as some of our other Madagascar birding tours, it offers better chances at birds not typically seen on other itineraries, such as **Banded Kestrel** and the global mega **Tsingy Forest Rail**. In addition to these stand-out species, we will likely encounter representatives of Madagascar's well-known families while birding the region's deciduous forests, with birds like **Giant** and **Coquerel's Couas**, **Schlegel's Asity**, **Cuckoo-roller**, **White-breasted Mesite**, **Sickle-billed Vanga** and many more.

The mammals on offer are equally alluring, and we'll look for several lemur species, including the impressive **Verreaux's** and **Van der Decken's Sifakas** and a few nocturnal species, for which a night walk is required. Perhaps the best of all our mammal targets is the island's largest carnivore, **Fosa**, which we will search for during our time at Kirindy Forest Reserve. This tour also has some of the best scenery in Madagascar, and we'll be sure to take in the sights of the famous "Avenue of the Baobabs" during our time in Morondava.



Sickle-billed Vanga is just one of several vanga species on this tour.

Detailed Itinerary (8 days/7 nights)

Day 1. Arrival in Antananarivo

After arrival at Ivato International Airport in Madagascar's bustling capital, Antananarivo, participants will be transferred to a comfortable hotel close to the airport. Although we have no set

birding plans today, we will likely encounter some of the more common Malagasy birds around the hotel, such as **Red Fody**, **Malagasy Bulbul** and **Madagascar Wagtail**.

Overnight: Relais des Plateaux Hotel, (or similar) Antananarivo

Day 2. Flight to Morondava

Today, we will fly to Morondava, a town on Madagascar's central west coast and gateway to the iconic "Avenue of the Baobabs." From the airport, we will transfer to our beachside hotel to unpack and prepare for our afternoon excursion. Time-dependent, we may pop down to the beach to bird the Morondava estuary, which may yield a variety of shorebirds and terns, including **Terek Sandpiper**, **Greater Sand Plover**, **Lesser Crested Tern** and even the vulnerable **Madagascar Plover**. **Olive Bee-eaters** are common throughout much of the island and should quickly work their way onto our lists.

In the afternoon, we will make our way to the "Avenue of the Baobabs." On our short 30-minute drive to the baobabs, we may see **Malagasy Kestrel**, **Madagascar Buzzard**, and **Madagascar Cisticola**. We hope to enjoy a spectacular sunset at the baobabs – a bucket-list experience.

Overnight: Palissandre Cote Ouest, (or similar) Morondava



Sunsets at the "Avenue of the Baobabs" are out of this world!

Day 3. Transfer to Tsingy De Bemaraha National Park

Today will be an exclusively travel day as we embark on the 10-hour drive from Morondava to the town of Bekopaka – the base from which we will explore Tsingy De Bemaraha National Park. En route, we will pass by the "Avenue of the Baobabs" again, this time at sunrise. Although birding will

be somewhat limited, we'll keep an eye out for **Banded Kestrels** while passing through Kirindy Forest Reserve. We will return to Krindy later in the trip and will have a better chance of seeing this tricky bird upon our return.



Lesser Vasa Parrots should be a regular feature of this tour.

The drive to Bekopaka will not be without its adventures, as it involves two ferry crossings! After a long day on the road, we will arrive at our accommodation and get an early night in anticipation of an exciting few days in this area.

Overnight: Soleil des Tsingy, (or similar) Bekopaka

Day 4. Birding the Great Tsingy

We will start early this morning and head to the forests of the spectacular Great Tsingy. This area is known for its limestone karst pinnacles, and it is in this scenic habitat that we will search for our main target of the trip, the **Tsingy Forest Rail**. Finding the rail may require a lengthy search; however, perseverance may reward us with views of one of Madagascar's least observed birds. In addition to the forest rail, we hope to connect with birds like **Greater and Lesser Vasa Parrots**, **Cuckoo-roller**, **Madagascar Green Pigeon**, **Schlegel's Asity**, **Giant and Coquerel's Couas**, **Hook-billed** and **Madagascar Blue Vangas** and **Madagascar Harrier-Hawk**. Mammals will also be on the target list today, and we may see **Van der Decken's Sifaka**, **Red-fronted Brown Lemur**, and **Ring-tailed Vontsira**, among others.

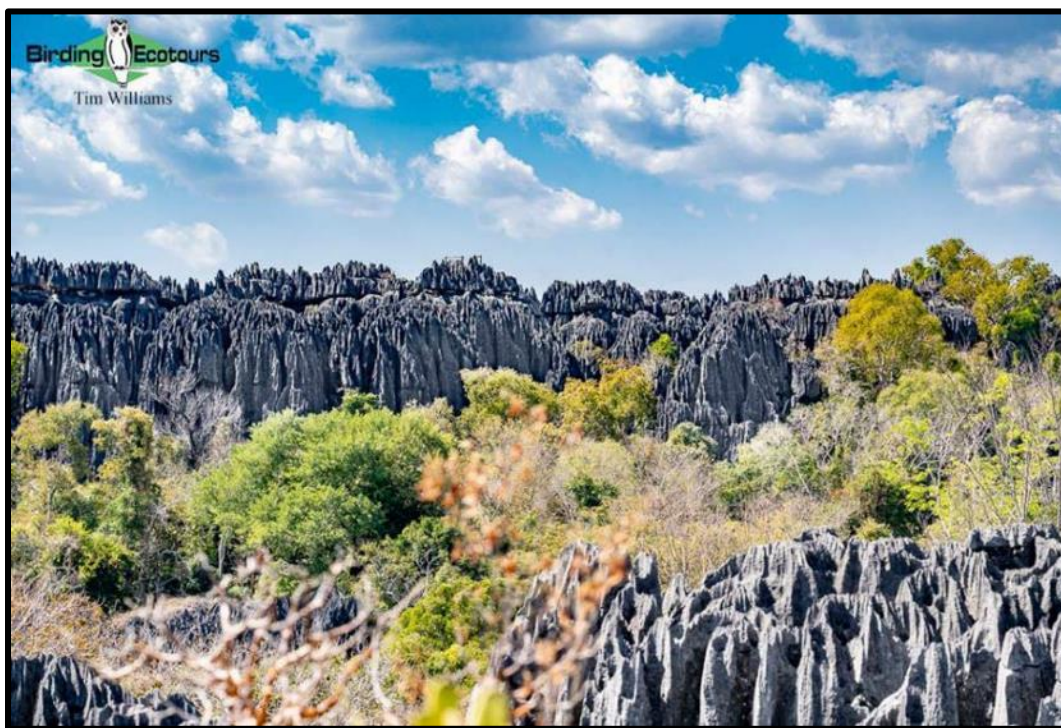
We'll return to our accommodation in Bekopaka to rest and relax after what will surely have been an exciting day out.

Overnight: Soleil des Tsingy, (or similar) Bekopaka

Day 5. Little Tsingy and Malambolo

Today, we will bird the Little Tsingy area, where we will have another chance at **Tsingy Forest Rail**, should we have missed it yesterday. The birds on offer are again similar to those we would have connected with yesterday, and we will have the opportunity to clean up any missed targets.

Overnight: Soleil des Tsingy, (or similar) Bekopaka



Limestone formations at Tsingy De Bemaraha National Park.

Day 6. Kirindy Forest Reserve

We will bid farewell to Bekopaka today and make our way south again towards Kirindy Forest Reserve. Once again, this will be a long day in the car; however, we hope to arrive in time for a good afternoon of mammal-watching and birding. Kirindy boasts one of the largest areas of protected dry forest in Madagascar; as a result, the birding is phenomenal. We may see **White-breasted Mesite**, **Crested**, **Giant**, and **Coquerel's Couas**, **Rufous**, **Red-tailed**, **Sickle-billed**, **Madagascar Blue**, **Chabert** and **Hook-billed Vangas**, **Grey-headed Lovebird**, and with luck, **Banded Kestrel**.

The main target here is, however, **Fosa**. This large and bizarre-looking carnivore is seen with some regularity around park lodgings and is one of the most wanted mammals on the island. In addition to Fosa, other mammals may include **Verreaux's Sifaka**, **Red-fronted Brown Lemur** and even the seldom-seen **Narrow-striped Boky**. We will head out at night with the aim of seeing some of the park's nocturnal inhabitants like **Grey Mouse Lemur**, **Pale Fork-marked Lemur** and **Red-tailed Sportive Lemur**. During our night walk, we will try for **White-browed Owl** and **Madagascar Nightjar**.

Overnight: Relais du Kirindy, (or similar) Kirindy Forest Reserve



Fosa is seen with some regularity in Kirindy Forest Reserve.

Day 7. Flight to Antananarivo

We will leave Kirindy Forest Reserve this morning and catch our flight from Morondava to Antananarivo to conclude what promises to be an unforgettable tour in a part of Madagascar that few get to see. Depending on our arrival time, we may squeeze in a final birding session at Lake Alarobia on the edge of the city for **Meller's Duck**, **Humblot's Heron**, **Malagasy Pond Heron**, **White-throated Rail**, and many other water birds.

Overnight: Relais des Plateaux Hotel, (or similar) Antananarivo

Day 8. Departure

Today, you will be transferred to the airport to catch your international flight home, or you will join our **Best of Madagascar: 14-day Birding and Wildlife Tour**, which starts in Antananarivo after this tour.

Overnight: Not included

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 participants
Dates:	10–17 October 2027
Start:	Antananarivo (Tana)
End:	Antananarivo (Tana)
Price:	€ 5,148 per person sharing, assuming 4–8 participants, plus about € 750 for the domestic flights, which we will book for you (2027)
Single supplement:	€ 930 (2027)

Price includes:

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

Price excludes:

International flights
Domestic return flight from Antananarivo to Morondava
Items of a personal nature, e.g. gifts
Drinks
Laundry
Personal insurance
Gratuities (please see [our tipping guidelines blog](#))