

Project Update: April 2015

As planned, the biological study part of this project was done during the rainy season to compare the frequency of biodiversity richness of the wet and dry season.

The method used during this study was mainly casual observation using binoculars and point counts for birds with identification books. (*A Field guide to the Amphibians and Reptiles of Madagascar* by Frank Glaw and Miguel Venees; *Birds of Indian Ocean Island, Madagascar, Mauritius, Reunion, Rodrigues, Sheychelle and the Comoros* by Ian Sinclair and Olivier Langrand 2007; *Flore generique des arbres de Madagascar*, George E. Schatz 2001, and *guide to the birds of Madagascar*, Olivier Langrand 1990)

We have also worked with the villagers for their knowledge on the presence of fauna and most of the villagers have great knowledge on birds name in Malagasy which is a great potential for a guided visit.

In total, 35 bird species were recorded, of which 26 were endemic to Madagascar; most of these bird species are classified as Least Concern at IUCN Redlist. This great endemism can be an opportunity for the site to be a tourist attraction.

Following is the species of bird we have been recorded:

Kittlitz's plover (*Charadrius pecuarius*), Madagascar magpie robin (*Copsychus bospecularis*), Madagascar coucal (*Centropus toulou*), Madagascar buzzard (*Buteo brachypterus*), common hoopoe (*Upupa epops*), Madagascar nightjar (*Caprimulgus madagascariensis*), Madagascar turtle-dove (*Nesoenas picturatus*), white-throated rail (*Dryolimnas cuvieri*), Madagascar red fody (*Foudia madagascariensis*), Sakalava weaver (*Ploceus sakalava*), Madagascar black bulbul (*Hypsipetes madagascariensis*), gray-headed lovebird (*Agapornis canus*), Namaqua dove (*Oena capensis*), Madagascar buttonquail (*Turnix gricollis*), cattle egret (*Bubulcus ibis*), crested drongo (*Dicrurus forficatus*), common mynah (*Acridotheres tristis*), black heron (*Ardeamelocephala*), Madagascar wagtail (*Motacilla flaviventris*), Caspian tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*), white-tailed tropicbird (*Phaethon lepturus*), paradise fly catcher (*Terpsiphone mutata*), common jery (*Neomixis stenella*), Madagascar cisticola (*Cisticola cherina*), long-billed green sunbird (*Nectarinia notata*), Souimanga sunbird (*Nectarinia sovimanga*), long-billed green bul (*Berneria madagascariensis*), olive bee-eater (*Merops superciliosus*), Chabert's vanga (*Leptopterus chabert*), common newtonia (*Newtonia brunneicauda*), crested coua (*Coua cristata*), Madagascar kingfisher (*Corythornis vintsioides*), Madagascar green pigeon (*Treron australis*), sickle-billed vanga (*Falco palliata*), and broad billed roller (*Eurystomus glaucurus*).

In addition to the bird species recorded, we have also records some species of reptiles and Amphibians. We have records of two species of lizards, five species of snakes, which are all endemic, and two species of endemic chameleons, of which one is the tiniest chameleon in the world (*Brookesia stumpffi*). The site also is a place of green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) which classified as Endangered in IUCN Redlist.

The following are reptiles we have recorded. Tree gecko (*Hemidactylus platycephalus*), giant Madagascar day gecko (*Phelsuma grandis*), Mascarene grass frog (*Ptychadena mascareniensis*), blonde hognose snake (*Leioheterodon modestus*), Malagasy giant hognose snake (*Leioheterodon madagascariensis*), Madagascar tree boa (*Sanzinia madagascariensis*), four-striped snake (*Dromicodryas quadrilineatus*), common big-eyed snake (*Mimophis mahafalensis*), panther chameleon (*Furcifer pardalis*), and plated leaf chameleon (*Brookesia stumpffi*)

We also recorded *Eulemur coronatus*. This species of lemur is known to cohabitate with the Sanford lemurs but villagers affirmed that this was the only one species of the area and we did not see another species of lemur. The crowned lemurs are found specifically in the afternoon in a large group and do not seem to be afraid of people. This species is classified as Endangered in IUCN Red list. In Anjiabe and Ampombofofo, the threat to this species is mostly habitat loss because eating lemurs is Fady in the village (taboo).

The project site also, is a home of one of the Madagascar endangered and endemic fruits bat species called Madagascar flying fox (*Pteropus rufus*) which is Vulnerable in IUCN Redlist.

Compare to the fauna of dry season, the fauna of the wet season is more abundant in different species but less in individual frequency. Some species of bird such as Madagascar buzzard (*Buteo brachypterus*), broad billed roller (*Eurystomus glaucurus*) and gray-headed lovebird (*Agapornis canus*) were only seen during the wet season.



Left: *Brookesia stumpffi*. Right: Madagascar flying fox (*Pteropus rufus*) Photo taken by Erika Rakotomalala Belotto.