

An Island Set Apart

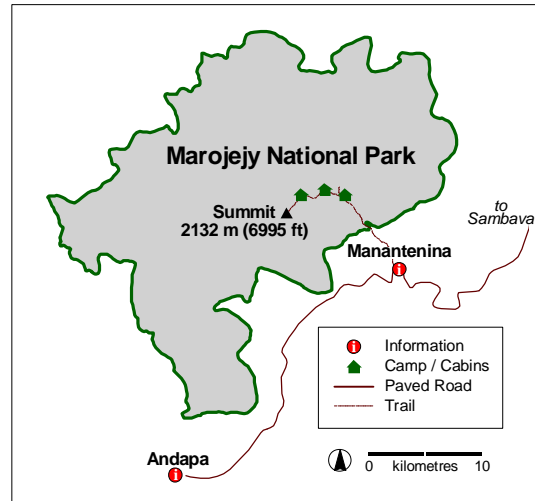
One hundred sixty million years ago, the ancient land-mass of Gondwanaland broke apart into what eventually became the present continents of Africa, South America, Antarctica, and Australia, along with the sub-continent of India and Madagascar. As the land was divided, so too were all the families of plants and animals living there; only a few of the species that later evolved managed to migrate across the Mozambique Channel from Africa. One way or the other, the species that did end up marooned on the island of Madagascar had plenty of time and opportunity to diversify.

The reptiles and amphibians did this particularly well: over 300 species of reptiles have thus far been described from Madagascar, and perhaps more than 250 species of amphibians. So great are the numbers, and so frequently do researchers discover new species, that the classification of Madagascar's herpetofauna is in a constant state of flux. Of Madagascar's reptiles, 93% are endemic, while for the amphibians the number is very close to 100%.

In Marojejy National Park, on the mountainous eastern escarpment of northern Madagascar, 77 species of reptiles and 70 species of amphibians have been inventoried to date. This represents over a quarter of the total herpetofaunal species known in Madagascar, and is the highest diversity of reptiles and amphibians currently known in any protected area in Madagascar. Seventeen of these species are endemic to Marojejy.

Clearly, Marojejy National Park plays a critical role in protecting Madagascar's remarkably high levels of biodiversity and endemism. But adequate protection requires more than just setting aside isolated fragments of rainforest. Current protected areas must be linked to allow species dispersal and genetic exchange, local residents must be educated about the unique and remarkable life forms that these forests hold, and they must be given acceptable alternatives to the current destructive practice of slash-and-burn agriculture (*tavy*). It is encouraging news that these are all measures currently being undertaken by the Malagasy government and a variety of conservation and development organizations in the country.

Access: Access into Marojejy National Park is via trail starting from the village of Manantenina, 60 km from Sambava along the road to Andapa. A permit and guide are required for entry; these are available at the Visitor Center in Manantenina or at the Park Headquarters office in Andapa.



Facilities: Three beautifully-sited and well-maintained camps are available at different elevations along the trail within the park. The camps all have cabins equipped with beds and bedding, as well as covered cooking and dining areas. Tent camping is also possible at several locations in the park.

Seasons: The park is open year-round, but the best times to visit are from April to May and September to December, when it is less rainy.

Surrounding Area: Northeastern Madagascar contains a number of other beautiful and biologically-interesting areas, including Masoala National Park, Nosy Mangabe and Anjanaharibe-Sud Special Reserves, and the Antalaha–Cap Est coastline.

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The Reptiles and Amphibians of Marojejy



Mantella laevigata

photo: Paul Atkinson

Marojejy National Park
Madagascar



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Reptiles and Amphibians: Marojejy National Park, Madagascar



* Species endemic to Marojejy National Park

Reptilia (77 species)

Gekkonidae

Blaesodactylus antongilensis
Ebenavia inunguis
Lygodactylus madagascariensis
Lygodactylus miops
Microscalabotes bivittis
Paroedura gracilis
Phelsuma bimaculata
Phelsuma guttata
Phelsuma lineata
Phelsuma madagascariensis
Phelsuma pusilla
Phelsuma quadriocellata
Uroplatus alluaudi
Uroplatus ebenaui
Uroplatus fimbriatus
Uroplatus henkeli
Uroplatus lineatus
Uroplatus sikorae
* *Uroplatus* sp.

Chamaeleonidae

Brookesia betschi
Brookesia griveaudi
* *Brookesia karchei*
Brookesia minima
Brookesia stumpffi
Brookesia therezieni
Brookesia vadoni
Calumma boettgeri
* *Calumma* cf. *brevicornis*
Calumma cucullata
* *Calumma gastrotaenia*
* *Calumma* cf. *gastrotaenia*
Calumma guillaumeti
Calumma cf. *malthe*
Calumma nasuta
* *Calumma peyeriasi*
Furcifer pardalis

Scincidae

Amphiglossus frontoparietalis
Amphiglossus intermedius
Amphiglossus macrocerus
Amphiglossus mandokava

Amphiglossus melanopleura
Amphiglossus melanurus
Amphiglossus minutus
Amphiglossus mouroundavae
Amphiglossus ornaticeps
Amphiglossus punctatus
Androngo crenni
Mabuya gravenhorstii
Paracontias holomelas
Paracontias milloti
* *Pseudoacantias angelorum*

Gerrhosauridae

Zonosaurus madagascariensis
Zonosaurus rufipes
Zonosaurus subunicolor

Boidae

Sanzinia madagascariensis

Typhlopidae

Typhlops ocularis
* *Typhlops* sp.

Colubridae

Alluaudina bellyi
Geckolepis maculata
Geodipsas boulengeri
Geodipsas infralineata
Geodipsas laphystia
Geodipsas cf. *laphystia*
* *Geodipsas* sp. 1
* *Geodipsas* sp. 2
Liophidium doliocercus
Liophidium rhodogaster
Liopholidophis epistibes
Liopholidophis stumpffi
* *Liopholidophis* sp.
Lycodryas arctifasciatus
Lycodryas betsileanus
Lycodryas gaimardi
Pararhadinaea albignaci
Pseudoxyrhopus heterurus
Pseudoxyrhopus microps
Pseudoxyrhopus tritaeniatus

Amphibia (70 species)

Microhylidae

Platypelis barbouri
Platypelis grandis
Platypelis occultans
Platypelis tsaratananensis
Platypelis tuberifera
Platypelis sp.
Plethodontohyla bipunctata
Plethodontohyla coudreaui
Plethodontohyla laevipes
* *Plethodontohyla minuta*
Plethodontohyla notosticta
Plethodontohyla ocellata
Plethodontohyla serratopalpebrosa
Plethodontohyla sp. 1
Plethodontohyla sp. 2
Stumpffia grandis
Stumpffia roseifemoralis
Stumpffia tridactyla
* *Stumpffia* sp.
Stumpffia sp. 1
Stumpffia sp. 2

Mantellidae

Boophis albilabris
Boophis anjanaharibeensis
Boophis boehmei
Boophis brachychir
Boophis englaenderi
Boophis madagascariensis
Boophis cf. *mandraka*
Boophis marojezensis
Boophis rappiodes
Boophis cf. *rappiodes*
Boophis cf. *reticulatus*
Boophis septentrionalis
Boophis sibilans

Boophis tephraeomystax
* *Boophis* sp. 1
* *Boophis* sp. 2
Mantella laevigata
Mantella madagascariensis
Mantella manery
Mantella nigricans
Mantidactylus aglavei
Mantidactylus cf. *asper*
Mantidactylus betsileanus
Mantidactylus cf. *bicalcaratus*
Mantidactylus biporus
Mantidactylus charlotteae
Mantidactylus femoralis
Mantidactylus fimbriatus
Mantidactylus grandidieri
Mantidactylus grandisonae
Mantidactylus granulatus
Mantidactylus klemmeri
Mantidactylus leucomaculatus
Mantidactylus liber
Mantidactylus lugubris
Mantidactylus luteus
Mantidactylus massi
Mantidactylus opiparis
Mantidactylus peraccae
Mantidactylus pseudoasper
Mantidactylus pulcher
Mantidactylus redimitus
Mantidactylus rivicola
* *Mantidactylus schilfi*
Mantidactylus striatus
Mantidactylus tandroka
Mantidactylus ulcerosus
Mantidactylus webbi
* *Mantidactylus* sp.

Sources :

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Goodman, S.M. and Wilmé, L., eds., 2003. *Nouveaux résultats d'inventaires biologiques faisant référence à l'altitude dans la région des massifs montagneux de Marojejy et d'Anjanaharibe-Sud*. Recherches pour le Développement, Série Sciences Biologiques no. 19, CIDST, Antananarivo.