

# SFO travels to Madagascar

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## Yearly field trips

Madagascar is the home to about 1 000 species of orchids, 85% being endemic. Most of them are highly endangered due to habitat destruction, but new species are discovered every year. Since the year 2 000, SFO (through its Regional section Poitou-Charentes and Vendée) has organised one field trip every year in Madagascar. Numerous places have been visited, from Montagne d'Ambre in the North down to Andohahela Reserve in the South, with in between Marojejy and Andringitra Massifs, Angavokely Rock, Ranomafana National park and many more. The goal is to observe and identify in the field the species, to get a better view of distribution maps and protection status. After 12 years, about 300 species have been located in the wild, a number of them being potentially new. In particular, Ambondrombe, the Mountain of the Dead near Fianarantsoa in the South, has been surveyed 3 times, in 2009, 2010 and 2011. Thanks to a taboo and despite the fact that it is not a reserve, this mountain was found to be relatively well preserved and very rich in orchids. Over 100 blooming species could be spotted.

SFO now collaborates with scientific organisations such as MNHN (Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, France), CNRE (Centre National de Recherche en Environnement, Madagascar) to collect and describe the new species and help protecting endangered sites. Links have also been established with local Non Governmental Organisations, for example ADEFA (Association de Défense de la Forêt d'Ambodiriana) for protecting Ambodiriana forest in the East coast.

### SFO trips to Madagascar:

- 2000** Mount Ibity, Ranomafana, Angavokely, Sainte-Luce Bay, Andohahela
- 2001** Diego-Suarez, Montagne d'Ambre, Montagne des Français, Angavokely
- 2002** Merikanjaka, Ambatovy, Mantadia, Sainte-Marie Island
- 2003** Andringitra, Ivohibe
- 2004** Ankazobe, Didy forest, Zahamena forest
- 2005** Marojejy, Nosy Mangabe, Masoala
- 2006** Ankarana tsingy, Nosy Be, Sambirano, Mantadia



- 2007** Ambodiriana, Mananara Park, Anjozorobe.
- 2009** Manjakatampo, Mount Ibity, Ranomafana, Ambondrombe, Andringitra, Isalo
- 2010** Vondroso corridor, Andringitra, Ambondrombe
- 2011** Manjakatampo, Itremo, Ambondrombe, Ikongo, Anjozorobe
- 2012** Manongarivo and Montagne d'Ambre (March) Anjozorobe, east coast, Ambodiriana, Sainte-Marie island (October)

### Ambondrombe

The forest around Ambondrombe, the mountain of the dead, has been surveyed during 4 days in February 2011. No paths, but amazing findings, as *Oeonia curvata*, previously known only from one collection in Ranomafana National Park.



### Mananara

The trip to the North East coast and Mananara National park in 2007 enabled the discovery of *Didymoplexis madagascariensis*, which had been described in 1939 by Schlechter, after a type without flower!



### Ambodiriana

ADEFA (Association de Défense de la Forêt d'Ambodiriana) is an NGO located in La Réunion island. Its goal is to protect and manage the Ambodiriana forest in the East coast of Madagascar, near Manompana. Local people are involved in the organisation, they offer lodging, provide guides and boatmen. Below, on top: on the way to Ambodiriana, on bottom: a new species of *Bulbophyllum* sect. *plouarum* found at Ambodiriana in December 2007.



### Manjakatampo

All forests, including reserves, are endangered and cut for timber, charcoal, and slash and burn agriculture (tavy). The political turmoil since 2009 has increased the risks. Here a part of Manjakatampo Forest Station in February 2011.



### Angavokely

This sacred rock close to Antananarivo boasts 150 species of orchids.

