



SPRING WILDLIFE

8-days in the Białowieża Forest and Biebrza Marshes

The tour starts and ends in Warsaw. Participants arrive in Warsaw F. Chopin Airport Okecie (WAW) at their own expense. If you fly into Warszawa Modlin (WMI), you should account for ca. 2 hrs to get to WAW airport.

DAY 1 – SAT

13.00 (at the latest) pick up from Warsaw F. Chopin Airport Okecie (WAW) and transfer to Białowieża Forest. After ca. 4 hrs drive we will check in at an atmospheric and comfortable guesthouse in the Białowieża village.



After a hearty Polish dinner the guide will introduce you to the area and talk about the plans. For the next three full days (Days 2 to 4) we will be exploring the Białowieża Forest and surrounding areas.

Please note this tour varies in time and different dates offer slightly different wildlife:

APRIL

The best time for flooded meadows with Marsh Marigolds filled with thousands of Ruffs in breeding plumage and other waders. Good for mammals, early migrants such as **Collared Flycatcher, Wood Warbler, Wryneck, Bluethroat, Marsh Terns** as well as **Woodpeckers** and **Owls**. We may still miss a few species that usually arrive late April and in May like: **Thrush Nightingale, Aquatic Warbler, Corncrake, Red-backed Shrike, Red-breasted Flycatcher, Barred Warbler, River Warbler, Icterine Warbler, Rosefinch** (please check our tables with [bird arrival dates in NE Poland](#) : for reference)

MAY

The best time for birding, especially for the late arrivals mentioned above. Seeing all the woodpeckers, however, can be tricky or more difficult in May once they fledge.

DAY 2 – SUN

After a substantial breakfast, we will go for a few hrs walk to get you accustomed with the forest and local common birds like **Wryneck, Lesser Whitethroat, Collared Flycatcher** or **Hawfinch**. Woodpeckers like **Lesser Spotted, Grey-headed** and even **White-backed** are also possible on this walk.

We will have our lunch in the middle of the forest and continue visiting the best sites in the afternoon. You will see some of our favourite trails that wind through a variety of different forest habitats deep in the centre of the Białowieża Forest. Species seen on such walks include some of the rare **woodpeckers, birds of prey** or mammals such as **Bison, Deer, Wild Boar** and **Pine Marten**.

This day, we will also visit one or more **Pygmy Owl** territories trying to spot these miniature predators.

DAY 3 – MON

Early morning (ca. 4:30 am) we will explore some glades and meadows in search for wild **European Bison** and we will also have a short birding stroll in the forest to get you some of the local rarities.

After another substantial breakfast we will go for a few hrs walk in the **Strict Protection Area** of the **Białowieża National Park**. We will enter the core area of the forest, the **Man and Biosphere Reserve** and a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. The forest of huge, centuries-old trees of over 20 species that host thousands of creatures on the verge of extinction. Species seen here include **Black, White-backed, Middle Spotted** and **Three-toed Woodpeckers**.

In the evening, we will set off for a journey through the forest visiting some of our favourite patches of forest where **Collared Flycatchers** and **Wood Warblers** are plentiful and **Hazel Grouse** or **Eagles** are likely species along with **Bison, Deer** or **Boar**. At dusk, we may once again stop at some **Pygmy Owl** territories or decide to go for a dusk mammal watch with chances for **Bison, Boar** or **Beaver**.

DAY 4 – TUE

After the usual hearty breakfast we will set off for a full day birding trip up north of the forest towards the famous Siemianówka Reservoir. Species seen here in late April and May include **White-winged** and **Whiskered Terns, Great White Egrets, White-tailed** and **Lesser Spotted Eagles,**



Citrine Wagtails and numerous waders and waterfowl. Some other typical birds like **Marsh** and **Montagu's Harriers**, **Hoopoes** or **Great Grey Shrike** are also often seen there.

Furthermore, in April and May many **rare amphibians** like **Fire-bellied Toads** or **Tree Frogs** can be found and **reptiles** like **Sand Lizards** are plentiful.

After a substantial Polish dinner we will spend an unforgettable and atmospheric evening at a **Great Snipe lek** at a vast fen near the forest edge. **Elk**, **Roe Deer**, **Short-eared Owl** and plenty of **Snipe** as well as **Woodcocks** have been our usual sightings there.

DAY 5 – WED

After an optional early morning mammal patrol in the forest and a yet another hearty breakfast, we will set off for a journey to the Biebrza Marshes. We will visit numerous small ponds with abundant **White-tailed Eagles**, **Harriers**, **Whopper Swans**, **Black** and **Red-necked Grebes**, **Marsh Terns**, **waders**, **Great Reed Warblers** and a lot more.

We may also have one or more short walks in the heart of the Biebrza National Park to see if **Aquatic Warblers** have arrived. Chances of spotting **Elks** are high.

We shall arrive at our cosy guesthouse in the Biebrza on time for dinner after which we will again have a short talk about the plans for the next days over a pint or desserts. The next two days we will spend exploring the Primeval Biebrza Marshes and the National Park.

DAY 6 – THU

This early morning we will go for an **Elk (Moose)** safari driving through the willow shrub and vast fens. We may also have a short walk to one of the wooden hides overlooking the marshes. Seeing several **Elks** is possible while **Marsh** and **Montagu's Harriers**, **Common Snipe** and even **Aquatic Warblers** are highly likely.

After a hearty Polish breakfast we will continue visiting the best sites that Biebrza has to offer for **Lesser** and **Greater Spotted Eagles**, **Hoopoe**, **Black Stork** and other common birds. We may also pay a short visit at a picturesque raised bog with its variety of rare flora. We will get back for an earlier dinner and in the evening we will set off for a boat trip to watch **Beavers**.

When the time is right, just about sunset, we will board our



stable flat-bottomed boat for a gentle cruise down the river. You will spend a good hour or more on the water having chances to spot **several Beavers** as they swim across the river, get out to the shores to mark the territory, groom their fur and feed on twigs. We have run this very popular trip for several years now and **never missed a Beaver sight!**



DAY 7 – FRI

After another substantial breakfast we will go on a full day drive around Biebrza's top spots. We will start off with a gentle stroll in the marsh, the best possible site for a **multitude of warblers** and wetland birds of the area in April and May.

Bluethroat, Common and **Lesser Whitethroats, Penduline Tit, Savi's Warbler** and even **Little Crake** have been seen on this walk.



Later, we will visit a few more sites, have a walk in the marsh, see the flooded meadows full of **Ruffs** and other **waders, White-winged** and **Whiskered Terns, Cranes** and a lot more. We will finish the day at a vast, tranquil fen, surrounded by the multitude of water birds with good chances of spotting more **Elks** or **Short-eared Owls** and **Aquatic Warblers** at dusk.



DAY 8 – SAT

This morning, after our last hearty breakfast (don't worry, you will get used to it by the end of the holiday) we will set off for a ca. 3 hours journey back to **Warsaw**. We plan to arrive at **Warsaw** by 12:00, have a short walk in the **Old Town** and sit at a **small restaurant** for a **traditional Polish lunch**.



The tour ends when we arrive in Warsaw. Participants book a hotel there and flights home at their own expense. Around 16:00 we will drive you to the WAW airport or drop you off at a hotel, if you stay in Warsaw.

The above itinerary is also available at our website:
wildpoland.com/spring-wildlife-bialowieza-biebrza/