



WILDLIFE WATCHING FESTIVAL

9-days in the Białowieża Forest & Biebrza Marshes

Join our fanatic nature enthusiasts crew at the best time of the year. See the unscathed nature and plenty of wildlife at your own pace. This is by far the most affordable and fun way to join wildlife watching trips.

Hotel & food included

Pay just €650 for 9 days! This covers a comfortable hotel, food and transfer from/to Warsaw. You won't find a better price!

Guided trips are optional

Join our guided trips, offered several times a day, or watch wildlife on your own thus composing your personal itinerary.

Wildlife photography

Apart from over a dozen different trips we offer three professional hides for bird and mammal closeup photography.

Affordable prices and no cash

Pay as little as €20 for a guided trip. Only debit or credit cards are accepted so no cash is needed.

We will spend this week in the Białowieża Primeval Forest, in the far east of Poland, at the border with Belarus. This area holds the largest population of wild **European Bison** and we would love to show them to you during our dawn and dusk trips. It has also happened that we saw **Wolves** or **Lynx** on such trips before.

This is also the best time of the year for **birdwatching** and we will offer day trips for all the rare Woodpeckers, Collared and Red-breasted Flycatchers, Pygmy Owl, Thrush Nightingale as well as Barred, Icterine or River Warblers and even Great Snipe. In fact, **over 150 bird species** can be seen here in a week!

Additionally, we will offer trips to the **Siemianówka Reservoir** and the famous **Biebrza Marshes** where



Aquatic Warblers, Bluethroats, Citrine Wagtails, Marsh Terns, White-tailed and Greater Spotted Eagles can be seen along with **Elks and Beavers** (seen well on all our previous trips!)

You will also get a chance to visit the **Strict Protection Area of the Białowieża National Park** for a few hours walk. We will have the permission to enter the core area of the forest, the Man and Biosphere Reserve and a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. The **pristine, natural forest** of huge, centuries-old trees and home to the rarest Black, White-backed and Three-toed Woodpeckers.

Furthermore, **three different photography hides** set out by a professional photographer **for birds and mammals** will be available to hire on a daily basis. Finally, we will also point out numerous options for **self guided walks** so you can see the forest at your own pace and have some **private time**.

Our experienced and **enthusiastic nature guides** will point out all the wildlife and wildflowers around as well as keep you informed about the region's **history and ethnic diversity**. As usual, we will finish with a traditional Polish campfire dinner with live music played by a local musician to add a unique and unforgettable taste to your wildlife holiday.



Outline itinerary is very simple

Day 1: Join us at Warsaw by 13:00 and transfer to the Białowieża Forest

Days 2–8: Wildlife watching trips in the Białowieża Forest, Siemianówka Lake and Biebrza Marshes – do it yourself or join our guided trips and photo hides

Day 9: transfer to Warsaw, arrive by 13:00, visit Warsaw Old Town

The main price includes accommodation, food and transfer

The festival starts and ends in Warsaw. Participants arrive at Warsaw F. Chopin Airport Okęcie (WAW) at their own expense. If you fly into Warszawa Modlin (WMI), you should account for ca. 2 hrs to get to WAW airport. We pick you up at Warsaw airport (WAW) or your hotel, no later than 13:00 and transfer to our guesthouse in Białowieża. If you arrive by train or a car – contact us for detailed directions.

The guesthouse is located just across the road from the 19th century park, that the Russian Tsars laid out around their enormous castle-like shooting lodge. The park is well preserved with beautiful trees, a river and ponds where Beavers live. Behind the park lies the Strict Protection Area of the National Park.

On the 9th day, we transfer you back to Warsaw. We plan to arrive by 13:00 and show you around the Warsaw Old Town. **Basic participation costs include the transfer, accommodation and food only.** If you feel like watching wildlife on your own – it's all you pay for. You will even receive a detailed map of the area and suggestions for self guided walks to help your personal exploration.



Wildlife watching trips are optional; charged on the spot

On the grounds of our guesthouse we will run the Festival's Office where you will be able to find out and subscribe to our guided wildlife watching trips on a daily basis. We will offer at least 3–4 different trips each day according to current wildlife situation and weather. **These trips include transportation, guiding and all entry fees.**

Each day we will also offer several seats at professional photography hides for birds and mammals.

This way you **compose your own itinerary on the spot** and are charged for the trips or hides you choose, separately. Only debit or credit cards are accepted (Visa and MasterCard), so no cash is needed. **All trips start and finish at the guesthouse.**



A variety of reasonably priced trips will be offered

The trips will be priced according to their length and driving distance. A **typical trip is 3-4 hrs long** and **costs PLN 160–240** (€40–60). There is no limit to the number of people taking part in a festival but our guided trips always run in small groups, 3–12 persons.

The costs of a single trip always include:

- transport in a comfortable minibus
- guiding by an English speaking passionate naturalist
- all entrance fees and National Park tickets

Photography **hides are prepared for 2 to 4 persons**. Set out and maintained by a professional photographer so you will be thoroughly advised about best gear, time of day etc. Depending on a hide, **one day entry costs PLN 400–500 per person** (€90–120).



Recommend the festival and get free trips

If you recommend the festival to your friends and fellow birders **we will offer 10% off each trip** you take during the festival for each person that joins following your recommendation. In other words, if you book three other people together with you or if we get three bookings for the festival from people who mention your name, you will get 30% discount on all the trips you take with us. This means that **10 people get you all the trips for free!** There are just three rules:

1. You get 10% discount for each person who books into the full festival and mentions your name at the time of booking.
2. The mentioned discount applies only to trips offered during this year's festival.
3. Maximum discount offered is 100% (so 11 and more people only give you 100% off)

Example trips

Below is a small selection of typical trips offered at this Festival. According to the current wildlife situation and your suggestions we may offer additional short trips, even for single species or a historical tour of wooden villages.

Our goal is to make the trips affordable to everyone and we will do the uttermost to keep the prices as low as possible. Many trips will take place at dawn and dusk for best wildlife activity, leaving enough time in the day to rest.

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Bison Safari, 2-3hrs

Pre-breakfast walk in search of wild European Bison. Other likely species include Wild Boar, Red Deer and even Corncrake or some of the Woodpeckers.



UNESCO Site, 4-7 hrs

A visit in the core area of the forest, the Strict Protection Area of the Białowieża National Park and a World Heritage Site. Pristine habitat and high chances of the rare Woodpeckers.



Woodpeckers, 4hrs

A drive around different forest habitats to find White-backed, Black, Three-toed, Middle-spotted and Grey-headed Woodpeckers.



Flycatchers & Warblers, 4hrs

A drive around different forest habitats to find the Collared and Red-breasted Flycatchers as well as some of the rare Warblers like Savi's, Great Reed or Icterine.



Pygmy Owl, 4hrs

A thrilling dawn or dusk trip trying to spot Europe's smallest owl – the Pygmy Owl. This time of day is also best for general wildlife activity and we will visit some unscathed patches of the forest.



Forest at dusk, 4hrs

We will visit one of the pristine patches of the forest for a short walk and stay out late listening to the sounds of nature, watching birds, spotting Bison, Pygmy Owl or even Raccoon Dogs.



Biebrza Marshes, 2 days, incl. hotel & food

Two days trip with an overnight stay at the famous Biebrza Marshes for Aquatic Warblers, Bluethroat, Greater Spotted Eagle and our flagship Beaver Boat trip and Elk Safari.



Great Snipe lek, 5hrs

This is an unforgettable evening trip to the marshland. Watch one of Europe's rarest birds—Great Snipe at sunset and witness their remarkable lekking behaviour.



Siemianówka Lake, 8-10 hrs

A full day trip to the Siemianówka Reservoir where Black Storks, White-tailed Eagles, Citrine Wagtails and a good number of other birds, amphibians and reptiles can be seen.

Anything still unclear?

Some common questions answered

Q: Can I join your trips without booking accommodation? (I will be in the area in these dates and have my own accommodation)

Yes, the Festival is open to other visitors who just 'come by' but priority is given to our customers. You will only be allowed to join a given guided trip when there are enough spaces available.

We think this is fair towards the participants who plan their holiday in advance.

Q: Can I easily communicate in English?

Yes, the Festival language is English and all our guides speak it well. What we cannot guarantee, however, is that all the hotel staff are fluent. Therefore our staff will be there to assist you in a rare case that you may require help.

Q: Can I pay with a credit card?

Yes, we accept VISA and MasterCard on the spot. In fact – we do not accept cash at all

Not all the hotels and bars accept cards, though, so you may wish to have some PLN in cash to pay for your drinks, souvenirs etc. There is a cash machine in the Białowieża Village.

Q: Can I pay in EUR or GBP?

Yes, but we don't accept cash. When you make a bank transfer to pay for the basic participation costs, we can accept EUR.

When you pay for the guided trips on the spot, we only accept card payments and charge in PLN.

Q: I travel alone but wish to share a room. Is it possible?

Yes, you may opt for a shared room option but in case we do not find you a room mate of the same sex, you will be charged an additional single room supplement.

It is a common practice here that hotels charge more for a single room and unfortunately, we cannot avoid this.

How to join

There are many affordable options to get to Warsaw

By air: Ryanair offers flights from Brussels (BE), Stansted (GB), Dublin (IRL) Barcelona (E), Paris (F), Eindhoven (NL), Oslo (N) or Stockholm (S) on these dates. Prices start from €20!

By car: Białowieża is 8 hrs drive from Berlin, 13 hrs from Amsterdam or Copenhagen and 15 hrs from Zurich or Helsinki

By train: Journey from Berlin to Warsaw takes only 5 hrs and from Vienna – 8 hrs

The above itinerary plus previous year's reviews and comments, photographs and videos are all available at our website: <http://wildpoland.com/wildlife-watching-festival-bialowieza-biebrza/>