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Bialowieza NP and Biebrza NP

7-11/5 2013



Introduction

As part of a course in broadleaved forest management at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) there was a planned trip to Bialowieza forest. The trip was mainly to study the forest dynamics in Bialowieza forest but also forest management in Poland. The Bialowieza forest is sometimes referred as the last pristine temperate forest in Europe where some of the area is national park. The Bialowieza forest has been relatively untouched which also have led to the area being really species rich with many interesting birds and mammal species such as; Middle-spotted and White-backed Woodpecker, Lesser spotted Eagle, Black stork and the European Bison.

The scheduled days started around eight in the morning and finished around five in the evening. Birdwatching was therefore mainly done in the early mornings but also some in the evenings. One evening was spent in the Biebrza National park, to see and hear the Aquatic warbler. In total, we saw 109 species including nine species of woodpeckers.

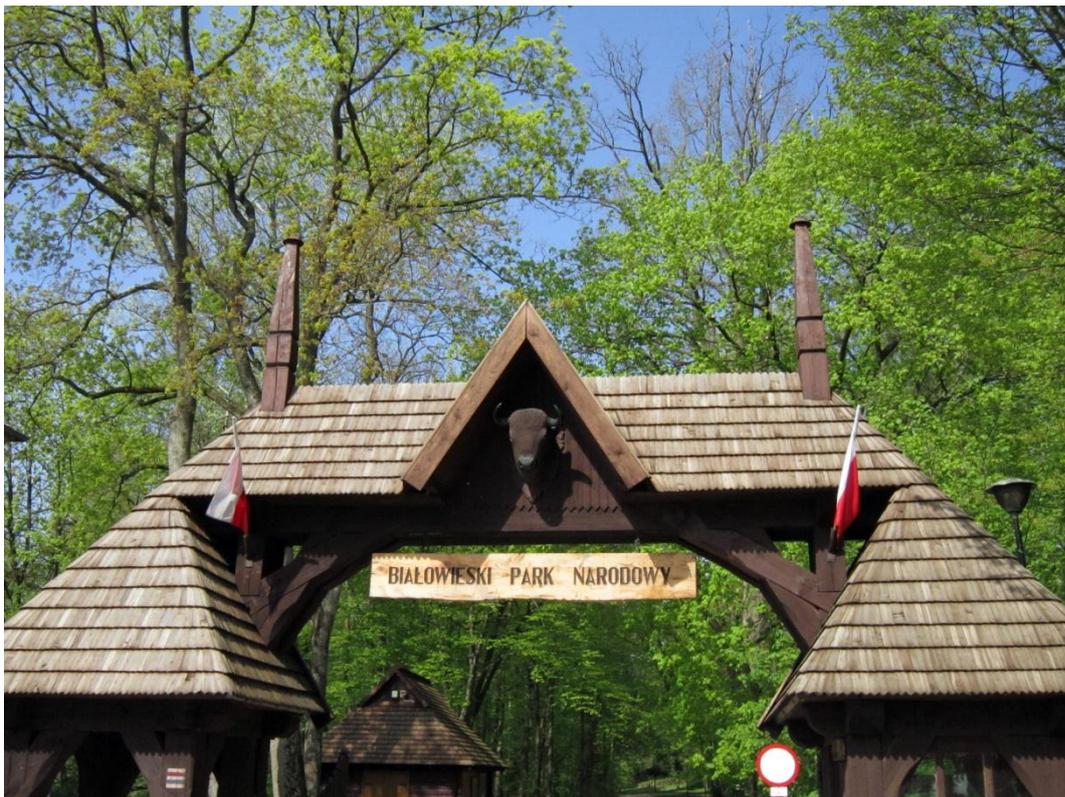
Places

Zebra zebra

A boardwalk situated in the western part in of Bialowieza village along the Zastawa road. The area was a really nice swampy area with a mixture of oak, alder, spruce and ash trees. The boardwalk made the walk really pleasant and with a good view of the surrounding forest. We saw for example; white-backed woodpecker, three-toed woodpecker and hazel grouse in this area.

Park Pallacowy

Just outside the main entrance to the strict reserve lies Park Pallacowy which to some extent is managed with trimmed lawns but also mixed with unmanaged parts of old growth forest . The area was good for singing birds and woodpeckers and we observed both Middle-spotted and White-backed woodpecker in this area. The southern parts of the park is crossed by the Narewka river which turned out to be a good place for many warblers like, Great read-, Savi´s- and River Warbler.



Entrance to the strict reserve in Bialowieza National Park

Strict Reserve, Bialowieza National Park

We visited the strict reserve twice which is the only part of the forest where you need to have a guide to enter. The forest inside the strict reserve is something really extra and is absolutely worth seeing. All red-breasted flycatchers that were seen during the trip were seen in the strict reserve.

Długa luka, Biebrza

Is the best and most famous place to see and hear Aquatic Warbler in Poland. We arrived at 19.00 and stayed until the sunset at 21.30. During that time we had the opportunity to observe and listen to at least ten individuals where some showed off really well during the whole period. To enjoy the Biebrza area in full I should recommend at least a whole day in Biebrza and also to arrive a bit earlier to Długa luka for better views of the other species such as the birds of prey and waders.



The view at Długa luka, Biebrza

List of birds

1. **Mallard** (*Anas platyrhynchos*)
Common, seen all days in Białowieża village.
2. **Garganey** (*Anas querquedula*)
10 ex. Długa luka, Biebrza 9/5.
3. **Common Goldeneye** (*Bucephala clangula*)
1 ex. Białowieża village 8/5.
4. **Hazel Grouse** (*Tetrastes bonasia*)
1 ex. heard at Zebra Zubra 8/5, 1 ex. heard in strict reserve, Białowieża forest 8/5.

5. **Common Pheasant**
1 ex. seen on the way from Bialowieza back to Warsaw.
6. **Great Bittern** (*Botaurus stellaris*)
1 ex. Długa luka, Biebrza 9/5.
7. **Little Bittern** (*Ixobrychus minutus*)
1 ex. seen by the river outside park Pallacowy, Bialowieza village 9/5.
8. **Great Egret** (*Casmerodius albus*)
1 ex. seen on the way from Bialowieza back to Warsaw 11/5.
9. **Black stork** (*Ciconia nigra*)
1 ex. seen flying by the river in Bialowieza village 10/5.
10. **White stork** (*Ciconia ciconia*)
Common, seen all days.
11. **Western Marsh Harrier** (*Circus aeruginosus*)
2 ex. (1 male + 1 female) Bialowieza village 8/5, 5 ex. Długa luka, Biebrza 9/5.
12. **Montague's Harrier** (*Circus pygargus*)
1 ex. (male) seen from the car close to Bialystok 9/5, 3 ex. (males) Długa luka, Biebrza 9/5.
13. **Lesser Spotted Eagle** (*Aquila pomarina*)
2 ex. Bialowieza village 8/5, 1 ex. Bialowieza forest 9/5, 1 ex. Bialowieza village 10/5.
14. **Common Buzzard** (*Buteo buteo*)
1 ex. seen from the car to Bialystok 9/5.
15. **Water rail** (*Rallus aquaticus*)
1 ex. Bialowieza village 8/5, 1 ex. Długa luka, Biebrza 9/5.
16. **Spotted crane** (*Porzana porzana*)
1 ex. Bialowieza village 8/5, 2 ex. Długa luka, Biebrza 9/5.
17. **Corncrake** (*Crex crex*)
4 ex. Bialowieza village 8/5, 1 ex. Bialowieza village 10/5.
18. **Common Crane** (*Grus grus*)
2 ex. Długa luka, Biebrza.
19. **Northern Lapwing** (*Vanellus vanellus*)
Seen in Bialowieza village every day.

20. **Common Snipe** (*Gallinago gallinago*)
Seen in Bialowieza village every day and at Długa luka, Biebrza 9/5.
21. **Eurasian Woodcock** (*Scolopax rusticola*)
1 ex. Bialowieza village 9/5.
22. **Black-tailed Godwit** (*Limosa limosa*)
2 ex. Długa luka, Biebrza.
23. **Common Redshank** (*Tringa totanus*)
1 ex. Długa luka, Biebrza 9/5.
24. **Common Sandpiper** (*Actitis hypoleucos*)
2 ex. seen flying by the river in Bialowieza village 9/5.
25. **Black headed Gull** (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*)
20 ex. Bialystok 9/5.
26. **Common Gull** (*Larus canus*)
20 ex. Bialystok 9/5.
27. **White-winged Tern** (*Chlidonias leucopterus*)
200 ex. Długa luka, Biebrza.
28. **Feral Pigeon** (*Columba livia*)
Seen in Bialowieza village every day.
29. **Stock Dove** (*Columba oneas*)
1 ex. Bialowieza village 8/5,
30. **Wood Dove** (*Columba palumbus*)
Common, seen all days.
31. **Eurasian Collared Dove** (*Streptopelia decaocto*)
2 ex. in Bialystok 9/5.
32. **Common Cuckoo** (*Cuculus canorus*)
Common, seen all days.
33. **Tawny Owl** (*Strix aluco*)
1 ex. seen nesting in a high stump in strict reserve, Bialowieza forest 10/5.
34. **Common Swift** (*Apus apus*)
Seen in Bialowieza village every day.
35. **Eurasian Wryneck** (*Jynx torquilla*)
Common around the Bialowieza village.

36. **Grey-headed Woodpecker** (*Picus canus*)
1 ex. seen in the south part of Bialowieza village 9/5.
37. **European Green Woodpecker** (*Picus viridis*)
1 ex. heard west of Bialowieza village 9/5.
38. **Black Woodpecker** (*Dryocopus martius*)
2 ex. strict reserve, Bialowieza forest 8/5, 1 ex. Bialowieza forest 9/5, 1 ex. strict reserve, Bialowieza forest 10/5.
39. **Greater Spotted Woodpecker** (*Dendrocopos major*)
1 ex. Zebra Zubra 8/5, 3 ex. strict reserve, Bialowieza forest 8/5, 1 ex. Zebra Zubra 10/5, 1 ex. Bialowieza village 10/5, 2 ex. Bialowieza forest 10/5.
40. **Middle Spotted Woodpecker** (*Dendrocopos medius*)
2 ex. seen well in the strict reserve, Bialowieza forest 8/5, 1 ex. park Pallacowy, Bialowieza village 11/5.
41. **White-backed Woodpecker** (*Dendrocopos leucotos*)
1 ex. heard Zebra Zubra 10/5, 2 ex. seen very well close to the river outside park Pallacowy, Bialowieza village 10/5, 1 ex. (female) probably the female from the couple seen the day before 11/5.
42. **Three-toed Woodpecker** (*Picoides tridactylus*)
1 ex heard drumming at Zebra Zubra 10/5.
43. **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** (*Dendrocopos minor*)
1 ex. heard in strict reserve, Bialowieza forest 8/5, 1 ex. Bialowieza village 10/5.
44. **Eurasian Skylark** (*Alauda arvensis*)
1 ex. Bialowieza village 9/5.
45. **Sand Martin** (*Riparia riparia*)
5 ex. Bialowieza village 8/5.
46. **Barn swallow** (*Hirundo rustica*)
Common , seen all days around Bialowieza.
47. **Common House Martin** (*Delichon urbicum*)
Common , seen all days around Bialowieza.
48. **Tree Pipit** (*Anthus trivialis*)
1 ex. Bialowieza village 8/5.
49. **Meadow Pipit** (*Anthus pratensis*)
2 ex. Bialowieza village 9/5.

50. **Western Yellow Wagtail** (*Motacilla flava*)
2 ex. Długa luka, Biebrza.
51. **White Wagtail** (*Motacilla alba*)
Common.
52. **Winter Wren** (*Troglodytes troglodytes*)
1 ex. Zebra Zubra 8/5, 1 ex. strict reserve, Bialowieza forest 8/5
53. **Dunnock** (*Prunella modularis*)
Common, seen all days.
54. **European Robin** (*Erithacus rubecula*)
Common, seen all days.
55. **Thrush Nightingale** (*Luscinia luscinia*)
Common around the village in Bialowieza.
56. **Black Redstart** (*Phoenicurus ochruros*)
Common around Bialowieza village.
57. **Common Redstart** (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*)
5 ex. Bialowieza village 8/5.
58. **Whinchat** (*Saxicola rubetra*)
Common around the Bialowieza village.
59. **Northern Wheatear** (*Oenanthe oenanthe*)
Common around the Bialowieza village.
60. **Common Blackbird** (*Turdus merula*)
Common.
61. **Fieldfare** (*Turdus pilaris*)
Common around Bialowieza.
62. **Song Thrush** (*Turdus philomelos*)
Common around Bialowieza.
63. **Common Grasshopper Warbler** (*Locustella naevia*)
1 ex. Bialowieza village 8/5, 1 ex. Bialowieza village 9/5, 1 ex. Długa luka, Biebrza 9/5.
64. **River Warbler** (*Locustella fluviatilis*)
3 ex. Bialowieza village 9-11/5, 1 ex. Długa luka, Biebrza 9/5, 1 ex. Zebra Zubra 10/5.
65. **Savi's Warbler** (*Locustella luscinioides*)
1 ex. at the river Bialowieza village 8/5, 2 ex. Długa luka, Biebrza 9/5.



Aquatic Warbler, Długa luka, Biebrza

66. **Sedge Warbler** (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*)

2 ex. strict reserve, Bialowieza forest 8/5, 1 ex. Długa luka, Biebrza 9/5.

67. **Aquatic Warbler** (*Acrocephalus paludicola*)

10 ex. Długa luka, Biebrza 9/5. Some birds were seen very well singing close to the boardwalk at Długa luka in the southern part of Biebrza national park.

68. **Marsh Warbler** (*Acrocephalus palustris*)

1 ex. strict reserve, Bialowieza forest 8/5, 1 ex. Długa luka, Biebrza 9/5, 1 ex. Bialowieza village 11/5.

69. **Great Reed Warbler** (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*)

3 ex. Bialowieza village 8-11/5.

70. **Icterine Warbler** (*Hippolais icterina*)

Common around Bialowieza village.

71. **Lesser Whitethroat** (*Sylvia curruca*)

Common, seen all days.

72. **Common Whitethroat** (*Sylvia communis*)

Common, seen all days.

73. **Garden Warbler** (*Sylvia borin*)

Common, seen all days.

74. **Eurasian Blackcap** (*Sylvia actricapilla*)

Common, seen all days.

75. **Wood Warbler** (*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*)
Common, seen all days in Bialowieza forest.
76. **Common Chiffchaff** (*Phylloscopus collybita ssp. abietinus*)
Common, seen all days.
77. **Willow Warbler** (*Phylloscopus trochilus*)
Seen every day but not as common as in Sweden.
78. **Goldcrest** (*Regulus regulus*)
2 ex. heard at Zebra Zubra 8/5.
79. **Spotted Flycatcher** (*Muscicapa striata*)
Common, seen all days.
80. **Red-breasted Flycatcher** (*Ficedula parva*)
Had just arrived before our visit and was quite common in the right habitat with high old broadleaved trees often with a dense understory. 4 ex. strict reserve, Bialowieza forest 8/5, 11 ex. strict reserve, Bialowieza forest 10/5
81. **Collared Flycatcher** (*Ficedula albicollis*)
Common in the Bialowieza forest.
82. **European Pied Flycatcher** (*Ficedula hyoleuca*)
1 ex. Zebra Zubra 8/5 1ex. strict reserve, Bialowieza forest 10/5.
83. **Crested Tit** (*Lophophanes cristatus*)
1 ex. Bialowieza forest 9/5
84. **Willow Tit** (*Poecile montanus*)
1 ex. seen in park Pallacowy, Bialowieza village 8/5.
85. **Marsh Tit** (*Poecile palustris*)
1 ex. Zebra Zubra 8/5, 1 ex. Bialowieza village 10/5.
86. **Blue Tit** (*Cyanistes caeruleus*)
Common, seen all days.
87. **Coal Tit** (*Periparus ater*)
1 ex. Zebra Zubra 8/5, 3 ex. 3 ex. Bialowieza forest 9/5, 3 ex. strict reserve, Bialowieza forest 10/5.
88. **Great Tit** (*Parus major*)
Common, seen all days.
89. **Eurasian Nuthatch** (*Sitta europaea*)
Common, seen all days.

90. **Eurasian treecreeper** (*Certhia familiaris*)
1 ex. Bialowieza village 8/5.
91. **Eurasian Golden Oriole** (*Oriolus oriolus*)
Was seen every day with a few individuals. 3 ex. Zebra Zubra 8/5, 1 ex. strict reserve, Bialowieza forest 8/5,
92. **Red-backed Shrike** (*Lanius collurio*)
Common in the open areas around the village.
93. **Eurasian Jay** (*Garrulus glandarius*)
2 ex. Zebra Zubra 8/5.
94. **Eurasian Magpie** (*Pica pica*)
Common, seen all days in Bialowieza village.
95. **Western Jackdaw** (*Corvus monedula*)
5 ex. seen in Bialystok 9/5.
96. **Hooded Crow** (*Corvus cornix*)
5 ex. seen in Bialystok 9/5.
97. **Rook** (*Corvus frugilegus*)
5 ex. seen in Bialystok 9/5.
98. **Common Raven** (*Corvus corax*)
1 ex. heard at Zebra Zubra 8/5.
99. **European Starling** (*Sturnus vulgaris*)
Common, seen all days.
100. **House Sparrow** (*Passer domesticus*)
Common
101. **Eurasian Tree Sparrow** (*Passer montanus*)
Common
102. **Common Chaffinch** (*Fringilla coelebs*)
Seen all days.
103. **European Serin** (*Serinus serinus*)
Seen every day in the Bialowieza village.
104. **European Greenfinch** (*Carduelis chloris*)
Common

105. **European Goldfinch** (*Carduelis carduelis*)
Common
106. **Common Rosefinch** (*Carpodacus erythrinus*)
1 ex. Bialowieza village 8/5.
107. **Hawfinch** (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*)
Common
108. **Yellowhammer** (*Emberiza citronella*)
Common around Bialowieza village.
109. **Common Reed Bunting** (*Emberiza schoeniclus*)
10 ex. Długa luka, Biebrza.

List of mammals

1. **Eastern European Hedgehog** (*Erinaceus concolor*)
1 ex. seen in Bialowieza village 8/5
2. **Eurasian Elk** (*Alces alces*)
3 ex. seen in Długa luka, Biebrza 9/5.
3. **Red Fox** (*Vulpes vulpes*)
1 ex. seen in Bialowieza village 9/5
4. **Beech Martin** (*Martes foina*)
1 ex. seen on the road back from Długa luka, Biebrza 9/5.

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