

BIRD TRIP TO POLAND MAY 2010

THE BIALOWIECZA NATIONAL PARK AND BIEBRZA MARSHES



Tour Guide: Artur Wiatr – Biebrza Nature Reserve Park Ranger & Biebrza Explorer

Members:

Ray Evans – Mid Cheshire Ornithology Group

Colin Butler – “ ”

Joe Carroll - “ ”

Bob Holland - “ ”

Don Weadon - “ ”

Richard Sturman - “ ”

Jeff Arnold - Suffolk Ornithological Society

Paddy Heyland – Northumberland & N Tyneside Bird Club

Itinerary

Friday 7 May

Flew BA Newcastle to Warsaw, via London. Overnight at the Hotel Mercure Frederic Chopin in downtown Warsaw



DAY ONE – Sat 8 May - Weather Sunny with some cloud, 19 C

7.30 to 10.30 am: Morning Walk around Saski Park and Old Town, Warsaw produced Tree Sparrow, Jackdaw (Northern Race), Rook, Hooded and Carrion Crow, Fieldfare, Starling, Swallow, House Martin, Swift, Greenfinch, Magpie, Blue Tit, Mallard, Feral Pigeon, Wood Pigeon, Stock Dove and Collared Dove.

12.30 to 1600: Joined tour group and Mini bus to Bialowiecza 222 km North east of Warsaw. Birds seen enroute; Lapwing, Kestrel, Marsh Harrier, White Stork (n), Montagu's Harrier, Common Crane, Buzzard, Mute Swan and Starling

Mammal; Hare, Bat

Checked in to "Gawra" hunting lodge, Bialowiecza.

Pre-dinner Evening walk around Bialowiecza village (7.30 to 8.30 pm) ;

Serin (2), Black Redstart, Thrush Nightingale, Corncrake (h)), Grasshopper Warbler (h), Blackbird, Greenfinch and Woodcock

DAY TWO – Sun 9 May

Pre-breakfast walk in village and palace grounds(5 to 7 am):

Great Reed Warbler (2), Thrush Nightingale (2), Chaffinch, Fieldfare, Great Tit, Whiskered Tern (2), Cuckoo (h), Chiffchaff (h), Goldfinch, Song Thrush, Serin, Wryneck (2), Common Rosefinch, Spotted Flycatcher and Raven.

Bialowiecza Forest Strict reserve and palace grounds (8 am to 12.30 am):



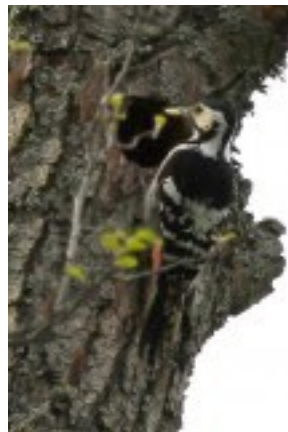
Wryneck (2), Common Rosefinch, Lesser Spotted Eagle, Pied Flycatcher, Collared Flycatcher (numerous (n)), Red Breasted Flycatcher, Spotted Flycatcher, White Backed Woodpecker, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Middle Spotted Woodpecker, Greater Spotted Woodpecker, Raven, Marsh Harrier, Tree Pipit, Nuthatch, Song Thrush, Robin, Corncrake (3 + h), Whinchat (4), Swift, House Martin, Serin, Blackcap, Marsh Tit, Hawfinch (n), Great Grey Shrike, Woodcock

Bialowieza Managed Forest area (1 to 4 pm):

Green Sandpiper, Hobby, Three Toed Woodpecker

Narew Valley and Narewka Great Snipe Lek (4 to 7/8 pm):

Grey Heron, Woodlark, Snipe, Grasshopper Warbler, Corncrake (2/3 h), Great Snipe (10 lekking), Montagu's Harrier, White Winged Black Tern, Black Tern, Common Crane (h).



DAY THREE – Monday 10 May

Bialowieza Forest and Czar Path/Glade:

Golden Oriole (3), Corncrake, River Warbler (h), Middle Spotted Woodpecker

Siemienowka Reservoir, Narewka & Narew Valley

Hobby, Great Bittern (h), Gadwall, Penduline Tit, White Wagtail, Linnet, Yellow hammer, White Winged Black Tern (n), Black Tern (n), Black headed Gull, Whiskered Tern, Great White Egret, White Stork (n), Mallard, Mute Swan, Greylag Goose, Bean Goose, Marsh Harrier, Crane (flock), Ruff, Skylark, Jay, Hawfinch, Coot

The Dead Forest (aka Little Louisiana)

White tailed Eagle (juv), Black Stork, Pied Flycatcher, Spotted Flycatcher, Collared Flycatcher, Green Sandpiper, Hazel Grouse (2), Cuckoo, Raven

Bialowiecza Forest

Grey Faced Woodpecker, Barred Warbler, Red Backed Shrike (2), Jay

Narewka Valley Observation Tower

Kingfisher

Night Watch: Bialowiecza Forest/Czar Path

Pygmy Owl, Woodcock



DAY FOUR – Tuesday 11 May

Early morning walk – Bialowiecza village and surrounding palace grounds area

Redstart, Redbreasted Flycatcher, Spotted Flycatcher, Wryneck (2), Red backed Shrike, Snipe

Am: Transfer to Biebrza Marshes via Bialystok Fishponds & Zigmund Augusta Lake

Doljidy Fishponds, Bialystok



Great Crested Grebe, Red necked Grebe (3), Black Headed Gull (large nesting flock), Penduline Tit (2), Garganey (2), Tufted Duck, Coot, Marsh Harrier, Great Reed Warbler (n), Reed Warbler, Sedge Warbler, Great Bittern (h), Water Rail (h), Reed Bunting, Whinchat, Long tailed Tit (2), White Winged Black Tern (n), Black Tern, Lesser Whitethroat, Great White Egret, Whooper Swan, Goldeneye, Lesser Spotted Eagle, Common Rosefinch



Zigmund Augusta Lake

White Tailed Eagle (6), Yellow Wagtail, Skylark, Montagu's Harrier, Marsh Harrier (3), Black Throated Diver, Cormorant, Teal, Pochard, Tufted Duck, Mallard, Hoopoe (h)

Dobarz Evening Walk (5 to 6 pm)

Spotted Flycatcher, Hoopoe, Montagu's Harrier, Red Backed Shrike

Mammals:

Hare



DAY FIVE – Wednesday 12 May

Dobarz Early morning walk (6 to 7 am)

Dunnock, Montagu's Harrier, Common Crane, Yellowhammer, Garden Warbler, Common Buzzard, Greater spotted Woodpecker, Raven

Biebrza Marshes (Southern Basin)

Mcichy/Goniadz/Osowiec triangle

Great White Egret, Grey Heron, White Stork (n), Mute Swan, Greylag Goose, Mallard, Shoveler, Garganey, Pochard, Teal, Wigeon, Lesser Spotted Eagle, Marsh Harrier, Common Buzzard, Honey Buzzard (3), Hobby, Grey Partridge, Common Crane, Lapwing, Wood Sandpiper, Black-Tailed Godwit, Snipe, Ruff, Blackheaded Gull, Common Tern, Black Tern, White winged Black Tern, Woodpigeon, Collared Dove, Cuckoo, Swift, Hoopoe, Black Woodpecker, Greater spotted Woodpecker, Skylark, Swallow, House Martin, Meadow Pipit, White Wagtail, Citrine Wagtail, Bluethroat (3 White spotted race), Wheatear, Whinchat, Song Thrush, Fieldfare, Blackbird, Whitethroat, Sedge Warbler, Savi's Warbler, Marsh Warbler, River Warbler (h), Great Tit, Penduline Tit, Red backed Shrike, Magpie, Jackdaw, Rook, Hooded Crow, Raven, Starling, Golden Oriole (h), House Sparrow, Chaffinch, Goldfinch, Common Rosefinch (3), Reed Bunting, White Tailed Eagle, Lesser Spotted Eagle, (Possible Greater Spotted Eagle),

Mammals:

Elk (2), Roe Deer, Hare (2)

Reptiles:

Sand Lizard



DAY SIX – Thursday 13 May

Dobarz Early morning walk (5 am)

Common Crane (3)

Dluj Lyuki: Aquatic Warbler site (6 to 7 am)

Aquatic Warbler (1), Sedge Warbler, Robin, Blackbird, Savi's Warbler (h), Lapwing, Reed Bunting, Snipe, White winged Black Tern (n), Cuckoo (h)

Biebrza Middle Basin

Lesser Spotted Eagle, Common Crane, Hobby, Marsh Harrier, Montagu's Harrier, Common Buzzard, White winged Black Tern, Cuckoo, Hoopoe (3), Marsh Tit, Red backed Shrike, Great Grey Shrike, Golden Oriole, Common Rosefinch (3+), White tailed Eagle, Bluethroat (one pair), Black Stork, Goosander, Corncrake.

Mammals:

Elk, Hare, Bat, Red Deer, Roe Deer

Reptiles:

Grass Snake

DAY SEVEN – Friday 14 May



Dobarz area (6 to 7 am)

Black Redstart, Siskin, Golden Oriole (h), Black Woodpecker, Nutcracker, Garden Warbler

Biebrza Southern Basin

Tykochin

Icterine Warbler, Chiffchaff, Golden Oriole, Common Rosefinch, Hawfinch, White Stork, Black Stork, Greylag Goose, Marsh Harrier, Yellow Wagtail, Black Stork

Knyszyn Zamek Fishponds

White Tailed Eagle, Whooper Swan, Common Buzzard, Raven, Honey Buzzard, Mallard

Biebrza Sandpits

Sand Martin, Yellowhammer, Corncrake (dead)

Goniadz Observation Tower

White Stork, Lesser Spotted Eagle, Montagu's Harrier

Mammals

Elk (cow with two calves), Roe Deer

BIRD LIST

Legend

1. *Fairly Common: seen on three or four days*
2. *Common: seen on five to six days*
3. *Very Common: seen every day*
4. *(h) = heard but not seen*

Black Throated Diver	one male at Siemienowka Lake
Little Grebe	two at Dobarz Czar Path wetland
Great Crested Grebe	Doljidy Fishponds
Red-Necked Grebe	Doljidy Fishponds & Mcichy marsh
Great Cormorant	Zigmund Augusta Lake
Bittern	(h) common, esp. Bialystok fishponds
Great White Egret	Siemienowka, Biebrza S Basin
Little Egret	very common and widespread
Grey Heron	Common and widespread
White Stork	Very common and widespread
Black Stork	Siemienowka, Biebrza S Basin
Mute Swan	Common and widespread
Whooper Swan	Doljidy & SE Biebrza marshes
Greylag Goose	Common and widespread
Mallard	Common and widespread

Gadwall	Dojlidy fishponds, Biebrza S Basin
Shoveler	Dojlidy and Biebrza S Basin
Garganey	Dojlidy and Biebrza S Basin
Pochard	Dojlidy & Biebrza S Basin
Tufted Duck	Sigmund Augusta Lake, Dojlidy
Goldeneye	Biebrza S Basin
Teal	Biebrza S Basin
Wigeon	Biebrza S Basin
Goosander	Narew tributary
Lesser Spotted Eagle	Fairly common and widespread, esp Biebrza middle and S basin
Greater Spotted Eagle	(one) unconfirmed sighting at Biebrza Southern basin
White Tailed Eagle	Dead Forest (one) Augusta Lake/Czechowiana (six) & Knysyn Zamek fishpond (two)
Marsh Harrier	Common and widespread
Montagu's Harrier	Common and widespread
Common Buzzard	Common and widespread
Honey Buzzard	Biebrza S Basin (three) & Knysyn
Sparrowhawk	Bialowiecza & Biebrza middle basin
Goshawk	Biebrza middle basin
Kestrel	Warsaw and Biebrza
Hobby	Fairly common and widespread
Peregrine	Fairly common and widespread
Hazel Grouse/Hazel Hen	Dead Forest, Bialowiecza(two)
Grey Partridge	Biebrza S basin & Knyszyn fishponds
Corncrake	Bialowiecza Czar's path & Knyszyn Common & widespread (h)
Water Rail	(one x h) Bialystok fishponds
Coot	Fairly common and widespread

Common Crane	Very common and widespread
Lapwing	Very common and widespread
Wood Sandpiper	Goniadz
Green Sandpiper	Bialowiecza & Knyszyn fishpond
Common Sandpiper	Mcichy
Black-Tailed Godwit	Biebrza S basin
Woodcock	Fairly common and widespread
Great Snipe	Narewka Valley Lek site(ten)
Snipe	Common and widespread
Ruff	Fairly common and widespread
Blackheaded Gull	Very common and widespread
Common Tern	Biebrza S basin
Black Tern	Common and widespread, esp Bialystok fishponds and Siemienowka
White-winged Black Tern	Very common and widespread (esp Bialystok fishponds and Siemienowka)
Whiskered Tern	Bialowiecza village lake and czar path
Feral Pigeon	Very common and widespread
Woodpigeon	Very common and widespread
Stock Dove	Warsaw and Bialowiecza village
Collared Dove	Fairly common and widespread
Cuckoo	Fairly common and widespread
Pygmy Owl	Bialowiecza Forest (guided tour)
Swift	Very common and widespread
Hoopoe	Fairly common and widespread
Kingfisher	Siemienowka & Narewka valley
Black Woodpecker	Fairly common and widespread
Grey Headed Woodpecker	(one), Bialowiecza Forest
Greater Spotted Woodpecker	Common and widespread
Middle Spotted Woodpecker	Fairly common and widespread

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	(one) Strict Reserve
White Backed Woodpecker	(one), Bialowiecza Strict Reserve
Three Toed Woodpecker	(one) Bialowiecza Forest
Wryneck	Bialowiecza village (two)
Skylark	Common and widespread
Woodlark	(one) Narew valley
House Martin	Very common and widespread
Sand Martin	Knysna Fishponds
Swallow	Very common and widespread
Meadow Pipit	Dobarz
Tree Pipit	Strict Reserve
White Wagtail	Common and widespread
Yellow Wagtail	Fairly common and widespread
Citrine Wagtail	(one) Biebrza S Basin
Robin	Fairly common and widespread
Thrush Nightingale	Very common and widespread
Bluethroat (white spotted race)	(three) Biebrza S Basin, (two) Biebrza middle basin
Redstart	Bialowiecza village
Black Redstart	Common and widespread
Wheatear	Biebrza S Basin
Whinchat	Common and widespread
Song Thrush	Common and widespread
Mistle Thrush	Fairly common and widespread
Fieldfare	Very common and widespread
Blackbird	Very common and widespread
Barred Warbler	(one) edge of Bialowiecza village
Blackcap	(one) Strict reserve,
Lesser Whitethroat	(one) Bialystok fishponds

Whitethroat	(one) Biebrza S Basin
Sedge Warbler	Common and widespread
Aquatic Warbler	(one) Dluj Lyuki boardwalk, Dobarz
Grasshopper Warbler	Bialowiecza Palace grounds
River Warbler	(h) Biebrza S basin
Savi's warbler	(one) Biebrza S basin
Reed Warbler	Bialystok fishponds
Great Reed Warbler	Palace grounds (two), Bialystok fishponds (at least six)
Icterine Warbler	(one) Tykcochin, Biebrza S basin
Wood Warbler	(one) Bialowiecza Forest
Chiffchaff	very common and widespread
Siskin	Dobarz area
Spotted Flycatcher	Fairly common esp Bialowiecza
Pied Flycatcher	(two) Strict Reserve & (one) Palace Grounds
Collared Flycatcher	Fairly common esp. Bialowiecza
Red Breasted Flycatcher	Fairly common, esp Palace Grounds
Great Tit	Common and widespread
Blue Tit	Common and widespread
Marsh Tit	Fairly common esp Biebrza S basin
Long Tailed Tit	Fairly common and widespread
Penduline Tit	(two) Biebrza S basin, (one) Bialystok fishponds, (one) Siemienowka
Nuthatch	(one) Strict Reserve
Treecreeper	Fairly common and widespread
Red Backed Shrike	Very common and widespread
Great Grey Shrike	Fairly common and widespread
Magpie	Very common and widespread
Jay	Fairly common and widespread
Nutcracker	(one) Dobarz Forest

Jackdaw	Very common and widespread (incl northern race, Saski park Warsaw)
Rook	Very common and widespread
Crow	Very common and widespread
Raven	Very common and widespread
Starling	Very common and widespread
Golden Oriole	Common and widespread
House sparrow	very common and widespread
Tree sparrow	Fairly common and widespread
Chaffinch	Very common and widespread
Linnet	Bialowiecza palace grounds
Goldfinch	Very common and widespread
Greenfinch	Fairly common and widespread
Serin	Fairly common, esp Bialowiecza village & palace grounds
Hawfinch	Common and widespread, esp Bialowiecza forest and Strict Reserve
Common Rosefinch	Very common and widespread, esp palace grounds & Biebrza marshes
Reed Bunting	Very common and widespread
Yellowhammer	Fairly common and widespread
Bean Goose	Siemienowka

Mammals and Reptiles:

Hare
 Bat
 Red Squirrel
 Bank Vole
 Red Deer
 Roe Deer
 Bison (four in Dead Forest, Bialowiecza)
 Elk (Dobarz & Biebrza marshes)
 Sand Lizard
 Grass Snake

USEFUL INFORMATION

I booked this trip on-line with Biebrza Explorer.

www.biebrza-explorer.pl

I cannot praise this company highly enough. Run by qualified park rangers from their base at Goniadz, the level of overall organization, bird sites visited and variety of birds seen exceeded my expectations. Their prices are cheaper than better known bird tour companies, but they cater for smaller groups, which certainly adds to the birding experience. I was fortunate that the birders on this trip were dedicated and provided tremendous company. It is possible to negotiate even cheaper rates with Biebrza Explorer for a single bird club group trip of at least eight people. If you intend to travel to this region I recommend this company unreservedly.

The Podlasie region of north-east Poland that includes Biaolowicza and Biebrza is vast. Local knowledge and expertise is essential to guarantee specialities such as Great Snipe, Pygmy Owl, Whitebacked, Three toed and Grey faced Woodpeckers as well as overcoming confusion between certain birds, for example Lesser Spotted and Greater Spotted Eagles (Greater Spotted is much rarer than Lesser Spotted and were informed that there is at best a 1 in 10 chance of seeing Greater Spotted in this part of Poland). Go-it-alone birders will be lucky to see a fraction of what we saw and this was confirmed in conversations with independent English birders we met at Biebrza.

If you haven't yet travelling to Poland it is a beautiful country in general except for the overall standard of driving which at times borders on the lethal. The forests, marshes, fens, watercourses and meadows are absolutely spectacular. The poles themselves are very generous, friendly and informative and the food has improved greatly since the fall of communism

Getting There

There is a direct Easyjet flight to Warsaw from Manchester, or either KLM via Amsterdam or BA via Heathrow.

Alternatively, economy flights are available from Newcastle to Krakow. But mind that if hiring a car, Krakow to Bialowicza is a considerable distance to travel in terms of road conditions.

Important note: TAKE MOSQUITO REPELLENT.