

Trip Report

Belarus 2013

Sunday 5 May to Sunday 12 May

Leader:

Balázs Szigeti

Group:

Andrew Clements

Amanda Holden

Colin Jones

Gordon Stuttard

Alan Wood

Morag Wood

Day 1: 5 May Flight to Minsk; journey to Turov

Belavia, the Belarusian national airline, now operates a weekly direct flight from Gatwick to Minsk, the capital of Belarus, so the outward journey was straightforward and uneventful. So too were the airport formalities on arrival, and we were quickly united with our leader Balázs and his Minsk-based assistant and interpreter for the week, Yulia.

During supper in the airport—our introduction not only to Belarusian food but also to the rather unpredictable restaurant service that would characterise the whole week, Balázs gave us some bad news – that a couple of days earlier a dam had been breached on the Pripyat river at our first destination Turov, and that the water meadows which were the usual lekking grounds for Ruff and Great Snipe there were extensively flooded. He remained optimistic that we would still see plenty of good birds there, though, and we set out on the four-hour journey by minibus to our hotel in Turov. Birds en route were few, but the journey did produce what was too prove the only Woodcock of the week, flying across the road and spotted by Balázs but otherwise seen only by those sitting in the right place at the right time.

Day 2: 6 May Turov meadows; Kremnoe; Pripyat River and Pripyatsky National Park

The weather the following morning set the tone for the entire week – sunny and cloudless, with the temperature rising steadily day by day. The extent of the flooding in the Turov area was obvious even from our hotel; what should have been meadows in front of us was instead an expanse of water. But after breakfast and an introduction to Yulia's imaginative solution to the daily challenge of packed lunches – she had bought a selection of local charcuterie, fish, and cheese, together with some very good local bread, and suggested we all assemble our own sandwiches, a system that worked very well throughout the trip - we drove a short distance to overlook a field that a few days before had apparently been ploughed especially for a visit by the Belarus president. It was now almost totally flooded, with a healthy gathering of ducks, both diving and dabbling, *flava* wagtails and a wide range of waders. Ruff, many of them males in full breeding plumage, predominated, but there were also what turned out to be the only Spotted Redshanks and Wood Sandpipers of the trip. As well as a few Common and Little Terns three species of

European marsh terns were present too, providing the first of several opportunities during the week for the group to hone their identification skills in distinguishing between White-winged Black (generally the commonest of the trio), Whiskered and Black Terns (the scarcest).

There Balázs also located the first of our target birds for the week, Terek Sandpiper; two birds were feeding on the edge of the flood and provided excellent if slightly distant views, before we set off again for Kremnoe village, a regular site for another Belarusian speciality, Azure Tit. En route a European Beaver was swimming across what is usually a field, and there was plenty of water at Kremnoe too, though a raised embankment allowed us to walk along the edge of the river, where singing Thrush Nightingales, Serin and Black Redstart were much in evidence. The Azure Tits were harder to locate, though eventually Balázs found a pair apparently commuting between an orchard and a garden in the village; everyone got views of at least one bird, though some had to be content with just flight views. Another orchard provided the trip's only sighting of what was once a regular inhabitant of British orchards too, a Wryneck, before we set off for the forest in the Pripyatsky National Park.

Lunchtime provided a first opportunity to get to grips with local raptors, with superb views of an adult White-tailed Eagle (we would see an immature later that day too, the only records of the trip), and longer-distance ones of both Spotted and Lesser Spotted Eagles. A foray into a patch of beech wood then provided close encounters with a herd of goats and also with the typical birdlife of the forest: singing Wood Warblers seemed to be everywhere, but woodpeckers and flycatchers were harder to pin down; the only woodpecker that was easily identifiable turned out to be a Great Spot, while some had fleeting views of Red-breasted Flycatcher.

On our way back to the hotel, we made two more stops. The first was in sparsely wooded area that produced a singing Barred Warbler as well as the most obliging Golden Orioles and Red-backed Shrikes anyone could possibly want to find, with males of the two species posing at the tops of a tree and a bush respectively. The second site was very close to the Pripyat River itself, where a male Bluethroat, also singing, eventually revealed itself low in a bush; it was the last new bird of a day in which we had seen more than 90 species.

Day 3: 7 May Pripyatsky NP (Azerani and Baklani); Beloe Fishponds

The following morning we drove to another access point into the forest, at Azerani. We passed through farmland over both Marsh and Montagu's Harriers were hunting, and en route to the forest we stopped to check some mammal traps that Balázs had set the previous evening. Both contained Striped Field Mouse, which appears to be the default small rodent in Belarus, and when it was released one of the animals immediately showed what an adaptable creature it was by unhesitatingly swimming across a small pond to make its escape. Woodpeckers were at the top of the agenda in the forest, which was carpeted with wood anemones and with the leaves of lily-of-the-valley, unfortunately still some way off flowering. We were treated to superb views of the strikingly beautiful white-headed northern subspecies (*caudatus*) of Long-tailed Tit, together with Eurasian Nuthatch and a surprisingly confiding party of Wild Boar. before Balázs heard one of the species we were looking for, White-Backed Woodpecker, and we quickly located the bird, watching it move from tree to tree. Three-toed Woodpecker was a little harder to locate, but it too was soon tracked down, together with our first Black Woodpecker and the best views anyone could want of Collared Flycatchers, feeding around a marshy clearing in the trees.

Lunch was eaten in the Lyaskovichi Forest near Baklani. The marshy fields lining the road into the forest were thronged with marsh terns, while a fleeting glimpse of a Hazel Grouse, only seen by Balázs and two group members, was the highlight of the drive down through the forest itself. The lunch spot, along a track still partially flooded by snowmelt, was a delight: while a Red Deer watched us from long distance, Grass Snakes and Common Lizards sunned themselves and a Middle-spotted Woodpecker put on a superb display; a Spotted Eagle touched down briefly on the track and Hawfinches came down to drink from the pools, a Goshawk zig-zagged its way through the trees, and two Hoopoes were seen as we drove out.

Beloe Fishponds was our next stop, one of the southerly breeding sites for Smew anywhere in the world. There were a number of birds there, and what appeared to be a breeding pair, gave particularly close views. Plenty of other ducks were present too, including Goldeneye and at least one Garganey, as well as displaying Great Crested Grebes and several pairs of Black-necked Grebe in breeding plumage. As we were returning to the hotel, Balázs suggested we should find out whether the Great Snipe that ought to have been lekking each evening in the Turov meadows had really been forced by the flooding to find another site or whether they had toughed it out; as far as we could see it was the former, and so we resigned ourselves to leaving Turov without having seen Great Snipe.

Day 4: 8 May Kremnoe; Alshani; Telehani; journey to Belovezhskaya Pusha NP (Kameniuki)

A long, memorable day began with a return visit to Kremnoe, in the hope of more extended views of Azure Tit. This time though no tits were to be found at all. Far fewer Thrush Nightingales were singing than two days earlier too, but there had clearly been an influx of Icterine Warblers, and one singing bird provided excellent views. Those who craved further views of the tit weren't to be disappointed, though, for Balázs had another possible site to investigate at Alshani. That proved a master stroke. Even before we could get out of the minibus to begin looking for the tit, a River Warbler was heard singing on the edge of a nearby reed bed, and no sooner had that bird been located than a Marsh Warbler started to sing too, and a few minutes later an Azure Tit flew into a wooden shed where presumably it had a nest, while for good measure a resplendently coloured Sand Lizard was basking nearby. A short walk between the reed bed and the river past a singing but unseen Savi's Warbler took us to another Azure Tit site, where two birds were busily working on a nest, while in a neighbouring tree a male Penduline Tit was hoping to attract a mate by building his, skilfully and intricately suspending it from an overhead branch.

It was hard to tear ourselves away from such a productive site, but it was going to be a long drive to Belovezhskaya Pusha. Balázs had decided on a detour; no Great Grey Owl nests had apparently been located in the Pusha that spring, but he did know of one nest near Telehani. On our way to this owl site, we stopped in the city of Pinsk, giving us the opportunity to sample kvass, the refreshing and very mildly alcoholic local drink made from fermented rye bread, which is sold on street corners in Belarus. At Telehani we met up with Viktor, an extremely helpful and knowledgeable local ecologist who began by taking us to see long-eared owls nesting in a pine wood. One of the adult birds was guarding the young, and flew warily around us when Viktor climbed up to check on the number of nestlings. We then drove on to another extensive tract of forest where a circuitous walk brought us to a point from which we could peer through the trees to see a Great Grey Owl staring back at us from its nest, with the head of at least one owlet occasionally appearing too. After that the long drive to our next hotel at Kameniuki on the edge of Belovezhskaya seemed a bit less arduous, though because of the lateness we did have to have dinner before we reached there, stopping off at the hotel in Beloazersk where we would also be

staying for the last two nights of the trip.

Day 5: 9 May Belovezhskaya Pusha NP

The day was going to be spent exploring different parts of the Belovezhskaya reserve, but there were birds to add to the trip list in the grounds of the Kameniuki hotel itself, including Common Redstart (a male exploring a possible nest site under the eaves of one of the hotel buildings) and Eurasian Jay. Then a short drive from the hotel brought us to an area of heathland, where both Woodlark and Tawny Pipit were holding territory from telegraph wires. While we were watching those birds, a group of around 30 Common Cranes could be seen soaring in the distance, and, three Whooper Swans flew majestically over the distant forest.

We were in for a bit of a shock when we arrived at the main entrance to Belovezhskaya Pusha. It so happened that 9 May is a public holiday in Belarus, and the park is clearly a very popular tourist attraction; the car park was very crowded. We needed permits to enter the strictly controlled parts of the reserve and had to be accompanied by an official park guide but perhaps because it was a holiday no guide was immediately available. So first we explored the public around the entrance to the reserve on foot; it was not exactly pristine forest, but still produced some very decent birds, the best of which was undoubtedly a superb Black Woodpecker.

After lunch in the park's restaurant – their mushroom soup was a culinary highlight of the trip - a guide finally materialised and we set off in the minibus into the reserve proper. The forest grew steadily wilder, and we eventually reached an extraordinary area which is entirely unmanaged, dead trees left lying where they fell, as it (and much of central Europe) must have existed for thousands of years. Then the forest thinned out to a meadow surrounded by forest, and in one corner of that we located what we were looking for - a European Bison, a solitary male grazing on the edge of the woodland. Later as we were returning to the reserve entrance we saw another bison in a much smaller clearing, this time a young male, which had apparently become isolated from its herd and, whether because it was sick or simply through familiarity, seemed to have become tolerant of people and of passing traffic.

Day 6: 10 May Belovezhskaya Pusha NP; travel to Beloazersk

The following morning we checked out of our hotel and headed back into the forest. The entrance area was much quieter than on the previous day, and we explore the area around it more thoroughly eventually finding a Grey-Headed Woodpecker that gave good view to everyone. Then we drove into another part of this vast area of wilderness and began a walk along the forest tracks; Hawfinches called and Red-breasted Flycatchers were singing but both proved elusive, and even harder to see well but it was soon clear that there was another species that Balázs was determined to find. Eventually he tracked it down: a Pygmy Owl, sitting tightly up against the trunk of a tree, and very hard to locate with the naked eye, but showing superbly through a telescope.

Then it was time to begin the journey back to Beloazersk. A brief stop in Kamianiec at one of Belarus's major tourist attractions, the so-called White Tower (the medieval building is actually built from red brick), produced the first Common Swifts of the week, but not the hoped for Syrian Woodpecker. Before we checked into our hotel in Beloazersk, too, we had a preliminary taste of the Sporovo marshes and their specialities; one Aquatic Warbler was even singing, but only showed itself fleetingly to Balázs, while a Citrine Wagtail flew quickly over, and Corn Crakes ratcheted away unseen.

Day 7: 11 May Sporovo Reserve (Vysokoe); Bereza; Selets Fishponds

The warbler and the wagtail were clearly the priorities of the day, and so we drove to another part of the Sporovo Reserve where a boardwalk led to an observation platform overlooking the marshes. There both species more than fulfilled expectations: an Aquatic Warbler belied its skulking reputation and sang from the top of a bush in the marsh, while several Citrine Wagtails, at least two of them, superb adult males, were busily establishing their territorial rights. Savi's Warblers reeled and Corncrakes called, but both once again refused to show themselves, though two soaring Honey Buzzards, the only ones we saw all week, and a Camberwell Beauty, slightly faded but still a wonderful sight, were more than adequate compensation.

The day's second destination was to be the fishponds at Selets, but the journey there produced an unexpected bonus. As we were passing through the outskirts of the otherwise unremarkable town of Bereza, Balázs suddenly brought the minibus to a grinding halt. Over the noise of the minibus and the traffic, amazingly he had managed to hear a Syrian Woodpecker calling from a tree, and sure enough we soon found a pair of them, alongside a busy road lined with tower blocks, as they flew to and from what was presumably a nest hole. The fishponds themselves also added a number of species to the overall trip total. Among the waders around the edges of ponds were a single Little Ringed Plover and two tiny *Calidris* waders that turned out on closer inspection to be Temminck's Stint, one of them in nearly full summer plumage, while the assemblage of gulls included Little, Caspian, *fuscus*-type Lesser Black-Backed and, for those who believe in such things, one Heuglin's Gull, conveniently standing next to the *fuscus* LBB to allow the larophiles to compare and contrast them. Driving between the edge of the ponds and the river provided excellent views of beaver dams, though none of the rodents that constructed them, while a stop for coffee near a woodland lake produced a nice crop of dragonflies.

The final evening log also included nominations for the best birds and most memorable moments of the trip – Citrine Wagtail vied with Pygmy and Great Grey Owl for the best bird, while the choices for best moment ranged from the sight of four male Montagu's Harriers hunting across the same huge field, to the three Whooper Swans etched against the forest skyline.

Day 8: 12 May Travel to Minsk; return flight to Gatwick

The drive back to the airport in Minsk produced few birds, other than the last Montagu's and Marsh Harriers of the trip, while a stop at a filling station was the final chance to admire the local Jackdaws, of the rather handsome *soemmeringii* subspecies. Then, before the hassle-free return flight to Gatwick, it was time for the farewells and thanks - to Yulia, for her wonderfully resourceful and unfailingly cheerful organisation and lunches, and to Balázs, whose extraordinary field skills had been matched only by his wit and good humour.

SPECIES LIST

List of birds

No.	Common Name	Scientific Name	Notes
1	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	Seen in small numbers on four days
2	Whooper Swan	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	Three birds seen in flight while en route from hotel to Belovezhskaya Pushcha. Later, the same or another three birds were found on small road-side field ponds
3	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	A single bird seen at Turov meadows and about twelve birds seen flying over Sporovo reserve.
4	Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	Few pairs seen on Beloe fish-ponds
5	Smew	<i>Mergellus albellus</i>	About a dozen birds seen at Beloe fish-ponds
6	Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>	Seen on flooded meadows at Turov
7	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	Seen on one occasion on flooded meadows
8	Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>	Seen on two days, once on flooded meadows at Turov and once on Beloe fish-ponds
9	Northern Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>	Seen around Turov on the flooded meadows and on other small bodies of water
10	Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>	Seen in small numbers on two days around Turov/Pripyat area.
11	Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	Pair seen on flooded meadows at Turov
12	Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	Single flying bird seen by a few at Sporovo while we were watching for aquatic warbler
13	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Seen in small numbers every day
14	Hazel Grouse	<i>Tetrastes bonasia</i>	Single bird seen by Balázs and two group members when flushed by van in Lyaskovichi forest
15	Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>	Pair seen in fields near Turov
16	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	Several birds seen on Beloe fish-ponds including a pair displaying.
17	Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	About twelve birds seen on Beloe fish-ponds
18	European Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	Birds heard on two days, briefly seen on one occasion.
19	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Few birds seen on two days
20	Common Wood pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Common and widespread. Seen every day
21	Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	Seen in small numbers on several days
22	Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia domestica</i>	Common and widespread. Encountered every day
23	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	Birds finally encountered while en route from Belovezhskaya Pushcha to Sporovo. Then seen in good numbers. Just arrived!
24	Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	Seen or heard several times each day
25	Common Crane	<i>Grus grus</i>	Two road side and thirty+ soaring birds seen en route from hotel to Belovezhskaya Pushcha on 9th. Three birds seen at same road-side site the following day
26	Corncrake	<i>Crex crex</i>	Several birds heard well and close on two days around Sporovo reserve. Not seen.

27	Spotted Crake	<i>Porzana porzana</i>	Bird heard briefly by some at Sporovo reserve while seeking corncrake and aquatic warbler
28	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	Single bird seen briefly by a few at Beloe fish-ponds
29	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	Seen on three days. Twice in Turov/Pripyat area once at Sielets fish-ponds
30	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>	Seen in reasonable numbers around Pripyat area
31	European White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	Common and widespread. Seen every day in good numbers.
32	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	Single birds seen at Turov on two occasions and single at Sporovo
33	Eurasian Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>	Heard on two occasions around Turov
34	Great White Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	Seen every day in suitable habitat
35	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Seen most days in small numbers
36	Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	At least one on flooded Turov meadows
37	Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	Common and widespread. Encountered every day.
38	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	Few birds seen on flooded Turov meadows
39	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	Single bird seen at Sielets fish-ponds
40	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	Seen on four days in small numbers. In Turov and Sporovo areas
41	Eurasian Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	Single bird seen from van by a lucky few en route from the airport
42	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	Seen on three days. Twice in Turov area and once at Sporovo
43	Terek Sandpiper	<i>Xenus cinereus</i>	At least two birds seen well on flooded Turov meadows
44	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	Seen on two days on Turov meadows
45	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	Seen on two days around Turov and in Lyaskovichi forest
46	Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>	About ten birds seen on flooded Turov meadows
47	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	Two birds seen on flooded Turov meadows
48	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	Seen on three days in good numbers around Turov/Pripyat
49	Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	Seen in large numbers on flooded meadows at Turov including many displaying males
50	Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>	Two birds seen together, one almost full summer plumage, at Sielets fish-ponds
51	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	Three birds seen at flooded Turov meadows and about twelve birds seen at Sielets fish-ponds
52	Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>	Several birds seen on flooded Turov meadows
53	Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>	Several birds seen over flooded meadows at Turov and on other bodies of water in Pripyat area. Single bird seen at Sporovo.
54	White-winged Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>	Seen most days in good numbers. The most common marsh tern encountered
55	Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>	Several birds seen on flooded Turov meadows and at Sporovo
56	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	Several birds seen in Turov/Pripyat area and around Sporovo reserve
57	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	Common and widespread. Seen in good numbers every days
58	Little Gull	<i>Hydrocoloeus minutus</i>	Three birds at Turov flooded meadows and four birds at Sielets fish-ponds
59	Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	Seen in small numbers on two days in Turov/Pripyat areas
60	Caspian Gull	<i>Larus cachinnans</i>	Seen on three days. Twice in Turov/Pripyat area and at least 10 birds at Sielets fish-ponds

61	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus fuscus</i>	Single adult ' <i>fuscus</i> ' bird (Baltic Gull) seen alongside Heuglin's Gull for comparison at Sielets fish-ponds
62	Heuglin's Gull	<i>Larus heuglini</i>	Single bird seen at Sielets fish-ponds
63	Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>	Two soaring birds seen from Sporovo board-walk
64	Lesser Spotted Eagle	<i>Ictinaetus pomarinus</i>	Seen on two days around Turov/Pripyat area. Three on first day and single in second
65	Greater Spotted Eagle	<i>Ictinaetus clanga</i>	Single birds seen on days one and two in Turov/Pripyat area
66	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	Single bird seen at Alsani being mobbed by a raven
67	White-tailed Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>	Two birds seen on 6th May, full adult in Turov area and sub-adult near Veci lunch stop
68	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	Encountered in small numbers most days
69	Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>	Seen on three days. The most stunning encounter being with four road-side males hunting over farmland. One flew very close alongside the van for some distance.
70	Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	Seen every day. The most common raptor encountered
71	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	Single birds seen on two days
72	Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	Soaring male found at Veci lunch stop and close low flying bird encountered in Belovezhskaya Pushcha
73	Eurasian Pygmy Owl	<i>Glaucidium passerinum</i>	Single bird seen very well in Belovezhskaya Pushcha
74	Long-eared Owl	<i>Asio otus</i>	Bird seen at nest in Delehanty woods and then in flight having been flushed by Victor whilst he was checking the nest
75	Great Grey Owl	<i>Strix nebulosa</i>	Bird seen very well sitting on nest in Delehanty woods
76	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	Seen on two days. Two birds seen on our exiting Lyaskovichi woods and a bird seen from the van near Alsani
77	European Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>	Fly-over bird heard by some at Turov flooded meadows.
78	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	Single bird seen only by Balázs at Turov
79	Eurasian Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>	Single bird seen very well in orchard in Kremnoe village
80	Grey-headed Woodpecker	<i>Picus canus</i>	Single bird seen well in Belovezhskaya Pushcha on the 10th
81	Black Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus martius</i>	Encountered on three days. Once in Azerani forest and twice in Belovezhskaya Pushcha. Seen well.
82	Three-toed Woodpecker	<i>Picoides tridactylus</i>	Excellent views had of a single bird in Azerani forest
83	Middle Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Leipicus medius</i>	Seen on three days. Twice in Lyaskovichi Forest (two separate locations) and once in Belovezhskaya Pushcha
84	White-backed Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos leucotos</i>	Single bird seen very well in Azerani forest.
85	Syrian Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos syriacus</i>	Pair of birds seen very well in town en route from Sielets fish-ponds to hotel on the 11th.
86	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	Seen on five days. Not seen in Sporovo area
87	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Single bird seen on first day
88	Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	Single birds seen on two days
89	Eurasian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>	Encountered every day, either being seen or heard. Fabulous views were had of three birds on the first day (don't know the name of the site but we also found a red-backed shrike and a dead striped field-mouse)
90	Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	Seen very well on most days.

91	Great Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius excubitor</i>	Single birds seen on two days. Once on the 6th near Veci and again on the 11th near Sielets fish-ponds lunch stop
92	Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	Several birds seen around Kameniuki hotel complex, Belowezhskaya Pushcha.
93	Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	Seen in small numbers every day
94	Western Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	Seen every day. Common and widespread. Birds consistently showed characteristics of <i>ssp soemmerringii</i> . i.e. pale neck and nape.
95	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	Seen in good numbers every day in all suitable habitats
96	Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	Several birds seen each day
97	Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	Seen in small numbers every day.
98	Eurasian Penduline Tit	<i>Remiz pendulinus</i>	Bird seen very well nest building at Alsani next to a tree in which Azure tits were nest building!
99	Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	Seen on two days. Several birds in Azerani forest and a few in Belowezhskaya Pushcha.
100	Azure Tit	<i>Cyanistes cyanus</i>	Pair seen around Kremnoe village and up to three birds seen at Alsani. Alsani birds provided prolonged and excellent views.
101	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	Seen in small numbers each day
102	Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>	Encountered on two days. Heard in Azerani forest and seen in Belowezhskaya Pushcha
103	Wood Lark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>	Single bird seen on wires at road-side site en route from hotel to Belowezhskaya Pushcha.
104	Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Seen or heard in good numbers every day.
105	European Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	Birds seen near Kremnoe village on two days and also at Beloe fish-ponds
106	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Seen most days in good numbers
107	Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	Seen in good numbers most days.
108	Icterine Warbler	<i>Hippolais icterina</i>	Encountered on three days. Heard once and seen well once at Kremnoe village and also seen at Belowezhskaya Pushcha
109	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	Encountered in small numbers on four days. Greatest number at Sporovo board walk.
110	Aquatic Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus paludicola</i>	Bird heard (also seen by Balázs) on one day. Excellent and prolonged views of singing bird on following day. Both at Sporovo reserve.
111	Marsh Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus palustris</i>	Single bird seen at Alsani in the same area as river warbler
112	Eurasian Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	Bird heard singing on approach to Sporovo reserve board-walk
113	Great Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>	Seen on two days in Turov/Pripyat area
114	River Warbler	<i>Locustella fluviatilis</i>	Excellent and prolonged views of singing bird at Alsani. Also one heard at Sielets fish-ponds
115	Savi's Warbler	<i>Locustella luscinioides</i>	Singing birds Alsani on the 8th and Sporovo board-walk on the 11th.
116	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus caudatus</i>	Northern form birds <i>ssp caudatus</i> (all white head) seen well in Azerani forest
117	Wood Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>	Probably the most common warbler encountered in woodlands. Seen every day
118	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	Common in suitable habitat. Encountered every day
119	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	Common in suitable habitat. Encountered most days
120	Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	Encountered most days. Common and widespread in suitable habitats
121	Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>	Heard singing on first three days. Actually seen at Alsani on the third day. Also heard on fifth day at Belowezhskaya Pushcha.

122	Barred Warbler	<i>Sylvia nisoria</i>	At least two birds seen singing well at same unknown site towards end of first day where golden oriole, red-backed shrike and dead stripped field-mouse were found.
123	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>	Birds seen well around Kremnoe village and around Sporovo
124	Common Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	Encountered in small numbers on four days.
125	Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapillus</i>	Single bird seen well in trees adjacent to Belowezhskaya Pushcha car park.
126	Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	Birds encountered in woodland on four days around Pripyat and Belowezhskaya areas
127	Winter Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Bird seen at Kameniuki hotel complex and also in Belowezhskaya Pushcha
128	European Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Common and widespread. Seen in good numbers every day
129	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Encountered on three days around Turov and also at Belowezhskaya Pushcha
130	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	Encountered on five days in small numbers
131	Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	Birds seen on two days. Several in fields near Alsani and few en route to Sporovo area
132	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	Seen in small numbers on four days
133	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	Single bird seen on one day around Kameniuki hotel complex
134	Red-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>	Seen in Alsani forest and Belowezhskaya Pushcha
135	Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>	Seen on four days in small numbers
136	Collared Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula albicollis</i>	Seen on three days in small numbers. Some very good views.
137	Bluethroat	<i>Luscinia svecica</i>	Singing bird encountered in wet scrub near Turov
138	Thrush Nightingale	<i>Luscinia luscinia</i>	Encountered every day. Provided the background birdsong in almost all habitats. Seen exceptionally well at Kremnoe village
139	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	Seen on four days. Quite common around habitation.
140	Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	Bird seen very well at Kameniuki hotel complex
141	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	Encountered in good numbers on three days in all areas visited.
142	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	Single bird seen on wires in village en route from Sielets fish-ponds to hotel.
143	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	Single bird heard on final visit to Belowezhskaya Pushcha
144	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Seen every day in reasonable numbers. Common in towns
145	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	Seen every day in good numbers, especially around village habitation.
146	Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava flava</i>	Common and wide spread. Seen every day. ssp 'flava'
147	Western Citrine Wagtail	<i>Motacilla werae</i>	Seen on two days. Excellent views of multiple birds at Sporovo reserve board-walk
148	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba alba</i>	Seen in small numbers every day
149	Tawny Pipit	<i>Anthus campestris</i>	Single bird seen at road-side site en route from Kameniuki hotel to Belowezhskaya Pushcha.
150	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	Birds encountered on three days. At Azerani forest, Belowezhskaya Pushcha and Sielets fish-ponds
151	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	Seen on two days in Sporovo reserve area.
152	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Common and widespread. Seen every day.
153	Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>	Encountered on four days. Heard more often than seen but affording good views to some at times.
154	European Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>	Seen on four days, mainly in Turov/Pripyat area
155	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	Seen in Kremnoe village and in Sporovo area

156	European Serin	<i>Serinus serinus</i>	Birds encountered on three days. Twice around Kremnoe village and once around Belovezhskaya Pushcha
157	Corn Bunting	<i>Miliaria calandra</i>	Several birds seen at one site on one day. This was the same road-side site that produced tawny pipit and wood lark.
158	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	Seen every day in small numbers.
159	Common Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	Seen in small numbers on five days

Other classes

Common name	Scientific Name	Notes
Mammals	Mammalia	
European Bison	<i>Bison bonasus</i>	Male seen distantly and another beast seen very closely (perhaps unwell?) at Belovezhskaya Pushcha
European Beaver	<i>Castor fiber</i>	Single animal seen swimming in flooded meadows at Turov
Wild boar	<i>Sus scrofa</i>	Encountered twice. Once Azerani forest and once Delehanty forest
Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	Belovezhskaya Pushcha
Red Deer	<i>Cervus elephus</i>	Several animals seen on three days, at least once in each region visited
Roe Deer	<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>	Encountered on four days, at least once in each region visited
Stoat	<i>Mustela erminea</i>	Seen on two occasions
Brown hare	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>	Seen on twice on one day in Belovezhskaya Pushcha
Striped field mouse	<i>Apodemus agrarius</i>	One found dead and two trapped and released in Turov area
Common Mole	<i>Talpa europaea</i>	Freshly dead individual seen on road in Belovezhskaya Pushcha

Reptiles	Reptilia	
Slow worm	<i>Anguis fragilis</i>	
Grass snake	<i>Natrix natrix</i>	Several seen in Lyaskovichi forest
Sand lizard	<i>Lacerta agilis</i>	Fabulous views of one animal at Alsani
Common lizard	<i>Zootoca vivipara</i>	Several seen in Azerani forest

Amphibians	Amphibia	
Fire-bellied toad	<i>Bombina bombina</i>	Frequently heard but never seen
Green toad	<i>Bufo vridis</i>	Seen and heard
Common toad	<i>Bufo bufo</i>	Seen at Kremnoe village?
Tree frog	<i>Hyla arborea</i>	Azerani forest
Marsh frog	<i>Rana ridibundus</i>	Common
Common frog	<i>Rana temporaria</i>	Seen Delehanty

Butterflies	Lepidoptera	
Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>	Seen on garage forecourt
Scarce swallowtail	<i>Iphiclides podalirius</i>	Seen on garage forecourt
Camberwell beauty	<i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>	Worn individual seen at Sporovo board-walk
Map butterfly	<i>Araschinia levana</i>	Seen in Sporovo area
Orange tip	<i>Anthocaris cardamines</i>	Seen most days
Large white	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	Seen most days
Green-veined white	<i>Pieris napi</i>	Seen in Kameniuki hotel grounds
Wood white	<i>Leptidea sinapis</i>	Seen on several days in woodlands
Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhammi</i>	Common
Peacock	<i>Inachis io</i>	Seen most days
Red admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	Seen in Delehanty area
Small copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>	Seen in Delehanty area

Dragonflies	Odonata	
Downy emerald	<i>Codulia aenea</i>	Several seen at Sielets fish-ponds

Four-spot chaser	<i>Libellula quadrimaculata</i>	Seen at Sporovo and Sielets fish-ponds
Broad-bodied chaser	<i>Libellula depressa</i>	Seen freshly emerged at Azerani forest
Yellow-spotted whiteface	<i>Leucorrhinia pectoralis</i>	Encountered most days