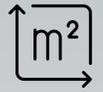


Prostyr Nature Reserve



Location:

Polesia, Belarus



Area:

9544,71.0 ha



National protection status:

National Nature Reserve



International protection status:

International protected status: Ramsar site (1611) – Prostyr (9,5440 ha); IBA (BY037) – Prostyr (10,335 ha); Emerald Network* (BY0000051) – Prostyr (10,103.40 ha).

* After denunciation of accession to the Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, de jure there are no Emerald Network sites in Belarus.



General information

The nature reserve occupies the area between the Pripyat and the Prostyr rivers, as well as the floodplain of the Gnilaja Pripyat River and part of the floodplain of the Styr River stretching from the Ukrainian border to the Gnilaja Pripyat Firth.

Part of the area is completely natural; another part is drained by old canals, most of which are overgrown and overcrowded. It is marshy, with many oxbow lakes and channels. The hydrological network is made up by the Pripyat and the Prostyr rivers and their tributaries, the largest of which are the Varaciec and the Plesa, as well as numerous creeks, oxbow lakes and channels.

In spring, almost the entire floodplain is flooded to an average height of 0.7-1.0 m.

The area boasts a diversity of meadow and wetland habitats being an important stopover and breeding ground for a number of protected waterbird species.

Biodiversity and natural values

About 20 endangered habitats requiring specific protection under the Bern Convention (Resolution No 4 of the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention) have been identified here, including Floating frogbit rafts (3150), Floating water-soldier rafts (3150), Floating bladderwort colonies (3150), Floating Salvinia natans mats (3150), Floating Aldrovanda vesiculosa communities (3150), Free-floating vegetation of eutrophic waterbodies (3150), Rooted submerged vegetation of eutrophic waterbodies (3150), Mesotrophic vegetation of slow-flowing rivers (3260), Eutrophic vegetation of slow-flowing rivers (3260), Transition mires and quaking bogs (7140), Rich fens, including eutrophic tall-herb fens and calcareous flushes and soaks (7230), Beds of large sedges normally without free-standing water, Moist or wet eutrophic and mesotrophic grassland (6440), Moist or wet tall-herb and fern fringes and meadows (6430), Riverine scrub, Riverine willow woodland (91E0), Riverine ash - alder woodland, wet at high but not at low water (91E0), etc.

27 protected bird species are registered in the area: 21 ones when nesting and 6 ones during their migration. The area is highly important for wetland birds. Four globally threatened species nest here: the Greater Spotted Eagle (*Aquila clanga*), the Great Snipe (*Gallinago media*), the Black-Tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*), and the Aquatic Warbler (*Acrocephalus paludicola*).

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Some protected bird species are found here in numbers exceeding 1% of their national populations: the Savi's Warbler (*Locustella luscinioides*) - more than 10%, the Little Crake (*Porzana parva*) - more than 15%, the Great White Egret (*Casmerodius albus*) - more than 10%, the Spotted Crake (*Porzana porzana*) - more than 6%, the Bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*) - more than 2%, the Little Bittern (*Ixobrychus minutus*), the Eagle Owl (*Bubo bubo*), and the Crane (*Grus grus*) - more than 1% of their national population.

12 plant species occurring here are listed in the Resolution No 6 of Committee of the Bern Convention and 21 are included in the Red Book of Belarus. The site is an important habitat for a number of insect species: the Scarce Large Blue (*Phengaris teleius*), the Dusky Large Blue (*Phengaris nausithous*), the Large Copper (*Lycaena dispar*), the False Ringlet (*Coenonympha oedippus*). Such rare plants as the Eastern Pasqueflower (*Pulsatilla patens*), the Floating Watermoss (*Salvinia natans*) are also registered here.

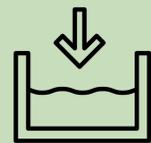
The most important impacts and threats



Meadows
overgrowing with
scrubs



Transformation of
river floodplains into
arable lands



Old drainage systems

Conservation measures

About 95% of this area is covered by the Prostyr National Landscape Reserve, where drainage, construction, clearcut logging as well as some other activities are restricted. Some particular rare species' habitats and biotopes are taken under legal protection. There is a management plan for the area.

Desirable conservation measures include the consistent implementation of the activities set out in the management plan and the reduction of the negative impact of agriculture.

