

# Starobinsky Nature Reserve



Location:

Polesia, Belarus



Area:

5,300 ha



National protection  
status:

Local Nature Reserve



## General information

The Starobinsky Local Nature Reserve was designated with the participation of our project specialists. This area is located in the north part of the Pripjat Polesia. This natural complex is confined to the floodplain biotopes of the Sluch River below the Soligorsk water reservoir near the south-eastern outskirts of the town of Starobin.

Encompassing a number of valuable habitats, the nature reserve supports a great biodiversity with a high concentration of protected species of flora and fauna. For instance, the reserve hosts the most of the habitats of the protected Swamp Violet (*Viola uliginosa*) in Belarus. Nesting greater spotted eagles have been also registered there.

## Biodiversity and natural values

The flora of the area is quite specific. Rare and protected biotopes represented by spruce forests, oak forests and black alder forests have been identified in the reserve. There were also found 70 places of growth of six species of vascular plants, mosses and fungi included in the main list of the Red Book of Belarus, as well as seven plant species from the additional list of species in need of preventive protection.

The Swamp Violet (*Viola uliginosa*) prevails among the protected plants. Most of the places where this violet grows in Belarus are located in the territory of the reserve, which, of course, increases its natural significance. Also recorded here are the Mountain Arnica (*Arnica montana*), the Feathery Neckera (*Neckera pennata*), the Meadow Gladiolus (*Gladiolus imbricatus*) and other rare plant species.

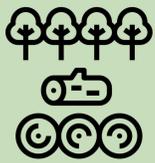
There are 36 animal species of various groups listed in the Red Book of Belarus recorded in the reserve. The vast marshy meadow ecosystems of the Sluch floodplain have also become the habitat of many protected bird species. There one can meet corncrakes, sandpipers, great snipes, grey cranes here. Birds of prey also find shelter and food here: the Bearded Owl (*Strix nebulosa*), the Greater Spotted Eagle (*Aquila clanga*) and others. The part of the floodplain in its natural state is a habitat for waterfowl. Floodplain forests are inhabited by the Black Stork (*Ciconia nigra*), which nests in centuries-old trees.

In addition to birds, several protected species from other wildlife groups have been found in the territory of the reserve: the Pond Turtle (*Emys orbicularis*), the Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*), the Hazel Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) and the Badger (*Meles meles*). The Lynx has also settled here, which is rare for this region.

# Starobinsky Nature Reserve

## The most important impacts and threats

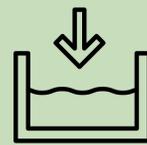
For forest habitats and species, the main threats are sanitary logging, as well as removal of debris (removal of dead wood). Artificial reforestation (establishment of forest crops) also has a negative impact on ecosystems. For floodplain and swamp ecosystems, the main threats are the reconstruction of land reclamation systems and ploughing for row crops.



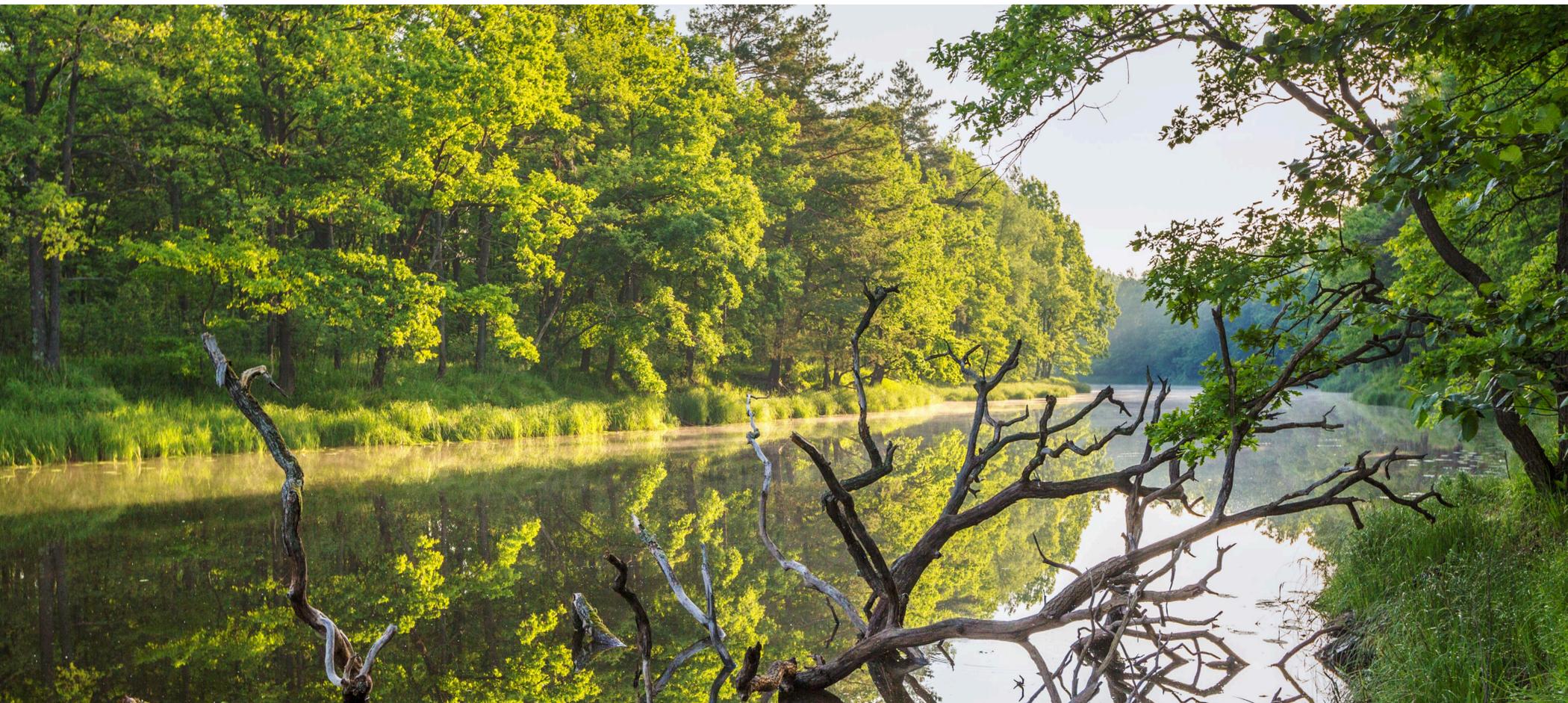
**Artificial  
afforestation**



**Logging, dead wood  
removal**



**Drainage systems  
construction**



## Conservation measures

Forest use is largely restricted within the reserve's territory. In particular, main use felling is prohibited, and all types of felling (except for sanitary felling) are prohibited on part of the territory. A significant part of the species' habitats have been transferred to land users for protection. It is necessary to develop a territory management plan and a system of monitoring of natural values.

Icons: www.freepik.com  
Photo credit: Viktor Malyschchyc