

### ***Morning at the Lutownia river***

In central Europe, in the borderland between Poland and Belarus, where two Slavic cultures meet, there lies an ancient, primeval forest, where for thousands of years nature has lived by its own rules - the Bialowieza Forest. This is a last memento of truly virgin forests that used to cover European lowlands centuries ago.

The following album contains a single-take recording of a morning soundscape captured in May 2015 near a small, picturesque river which flows through the central part of the Bialowieza forest - the Lutownia river. The recording has not been modified in any way, it provides a faithful picture of what nature itself intended to present. I hope that this uplifting symphony of morning bird songs will reveal at least a glimpse of beauty hidden in this remarkable place - ancient, but always young and always eager to greet a new day with hope and joy.

## Listening notes:

It is about 6 AM in the morning, and the Bialowieza primeval forest bursts with activity. At this time of day, many of its feathered inhabitants are already busy foraging for food, thus the forest soundscape is filled not only with songs, but also with fluttering of wings. The flurry of activity is amazing - in fact, there is something going on all the time, as the birds fly to and fro, engaged in their daily tasks, constantly on the move. As the soundscape is so dense, it is impossible to name exactly all the birds which can be heard in the recording, but the main songsters include song thrushes, chaffinches, common blackbirds, collared and spotted flycatchers, blue and great tits as well as a Eurasian wren. In the background, sonorous drumming of woodpeckers carries across the distance. At the beginning, a common raven can be heard croaking intermittently and a female tawny owl hoots silently from time to time (mostly 1:25, 1:50, 2:26). Low-pitched voices of wood pigeons and common cuckoos travel through the air, enhanced by cathedral-like echoes arising among tall, ancient trees - actually, at times it sounds as if there were two cuckoos calling back and forth! Among this hubbub of bird songs, listen out for rattling alarm calls of a wren (most prominent around 10:00, later 40:20) as well as for series of rhythmical,

"chuck-chuck" calls given by anxious blackbirds. Two river warblers, one far away and the other close by, frequently enrich the chorus with their bizarre song, which resembles a stridulating grasshopper rather than a bird. From 12:54, a European robbin briefly joins in with a few soft, melancholic phrases. Interestingly, one of the collared flycatchers, which becomes most audible from around 15:00 onwards, frequently intersperses its songs with motifs typical for the pied flycatcher. As these species are known to interbreed in areas where they overlap, this bird may possibly be a hybrid. From 15:39, harsh calls of a distant Eurasian jay may be heard once in a while. From now on, also listen closely for a repetitive short trill of male chaffinch known as "rain" call, most prominent at around 32:00. From 18:55, a Eurasian treecreeper starts to sing its soft, high-pitched song. At 21:03 and later at 34:28, a blackbird can be heard fluttering around and singing nearby - at 35:12 it passes just next to the microphone. In the background, every now and then, a Eurasian blackcap sings its lovely, melodious, flute-like phrases, whereas from around 43:20 another blackcap starts to sing nearby. Once in a while, a distant woodpecker taps loudly at a tree, later a blackbird starts to give soft, warning "pook" calls.