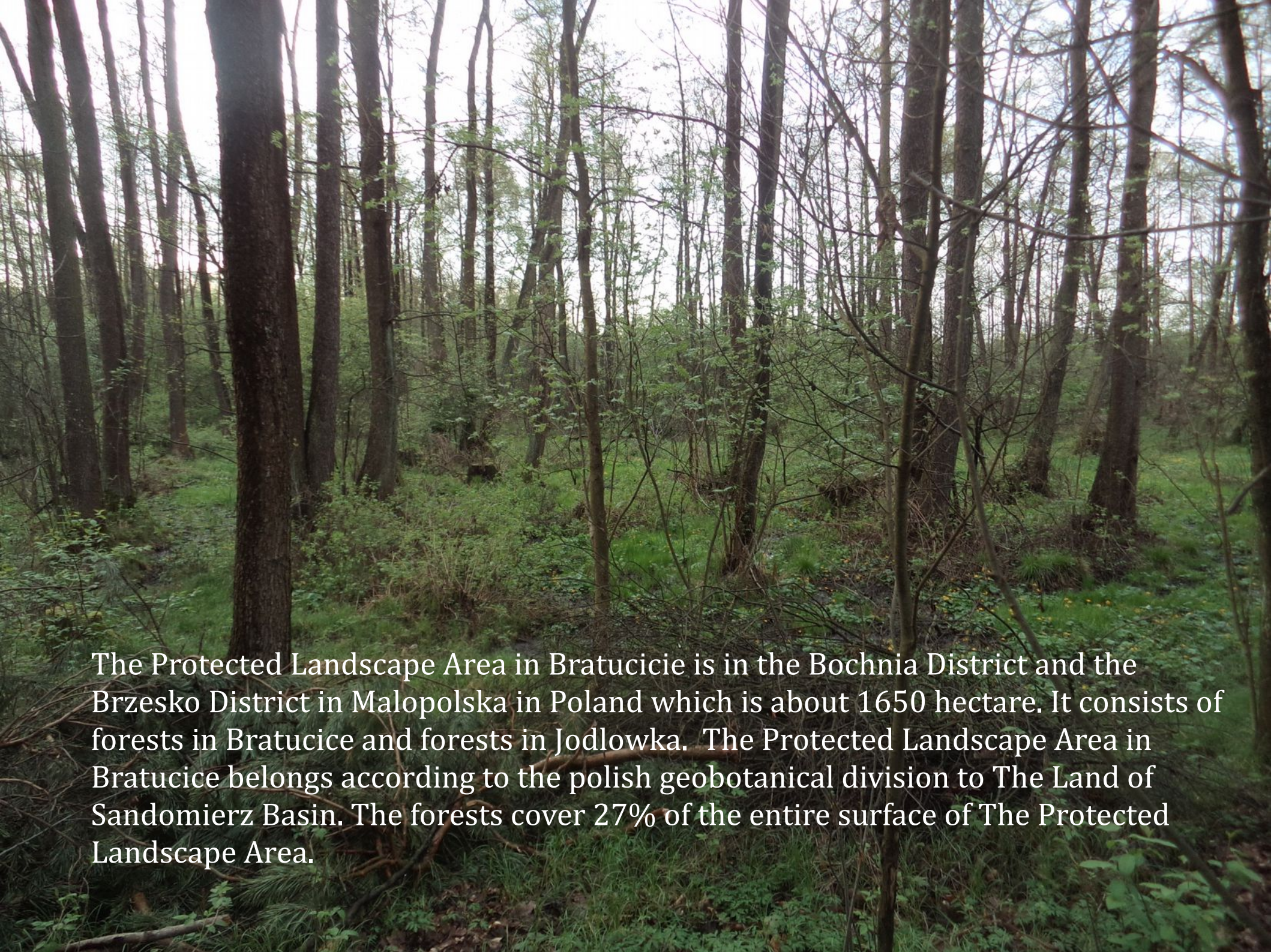




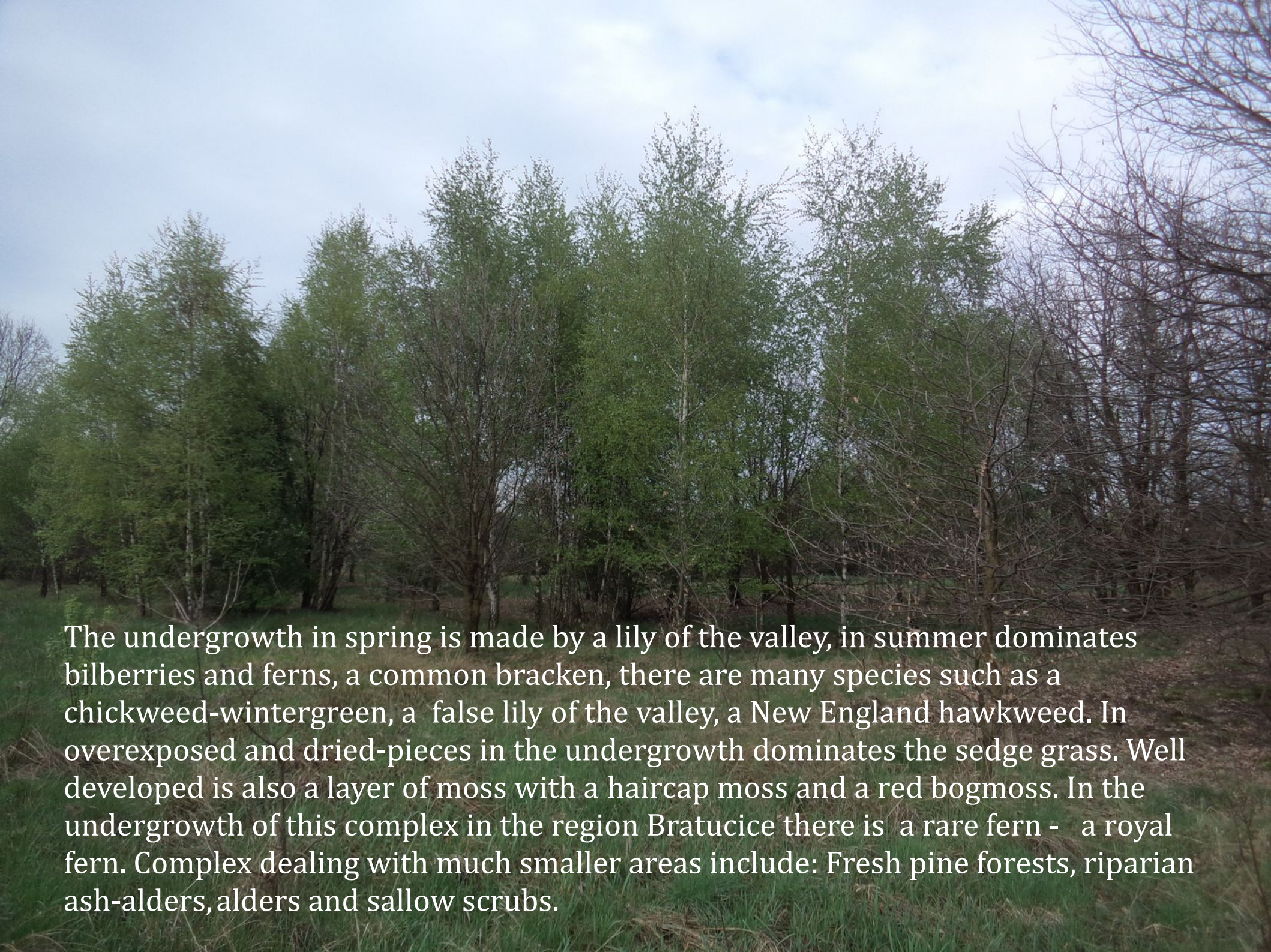
BRATUCICE

A photograph of a dense forest. The trees are tall and thin, with dark trunks. The ground is covered in a thick layer of green vegetation, including grasses and small plants. The lighting is soft, suggesting an overcast day or a shaded forest interior. The overall scene is a lush, green woodland.

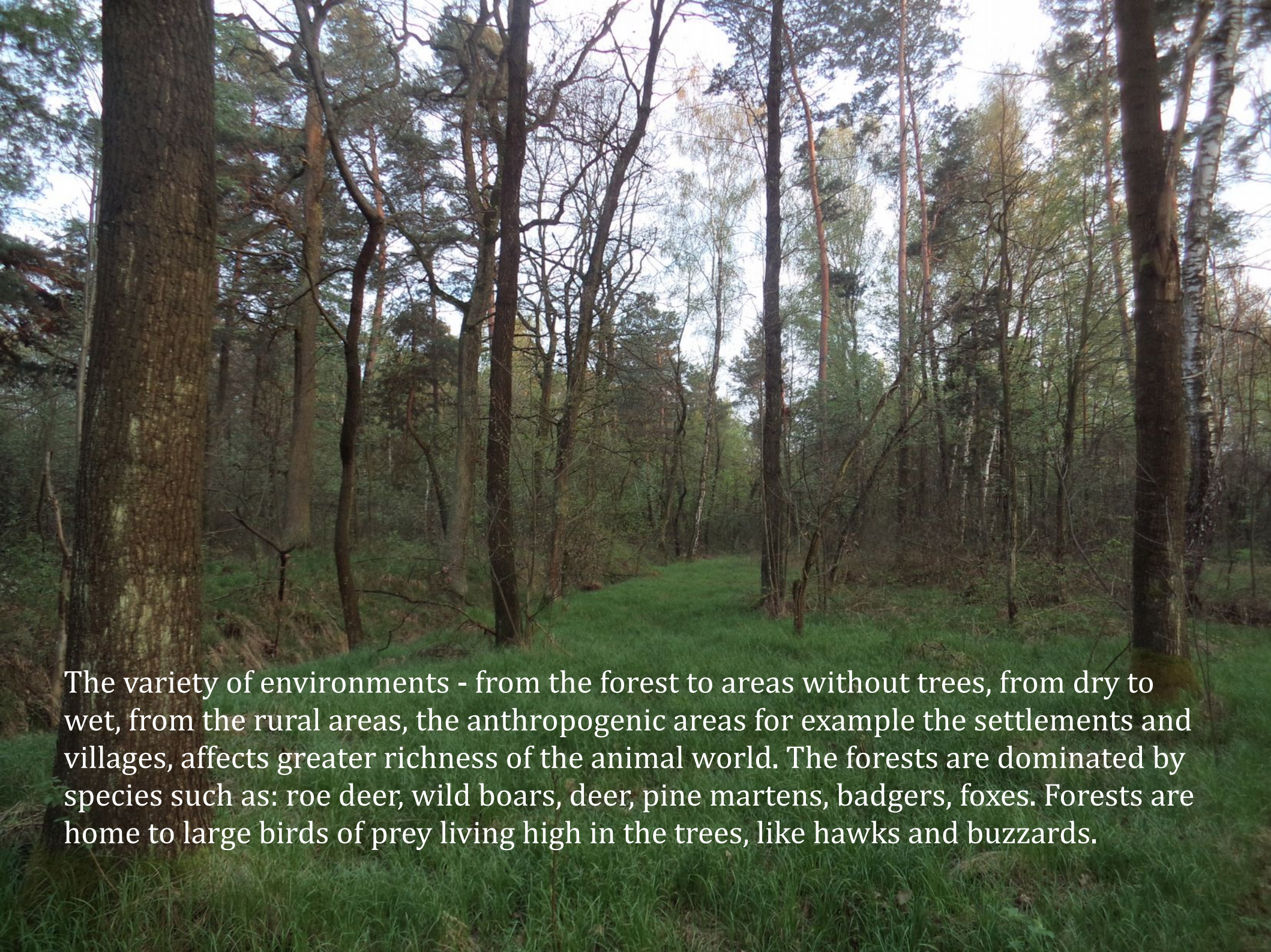
The Protected Landscape Area in Bratucicie is in the Bochnia District and the Brzesko District in Malopolska in Poland which is about 1650 hectare. It consists of forests in Bratucice and forests in Jodlowka. The Protected Landscape Area in Bratucice belongs according to the polish geobotanical division to The Land of Sandomierz Basin. The forests cover 27% of the entire surface of The Protected Landscape Area.



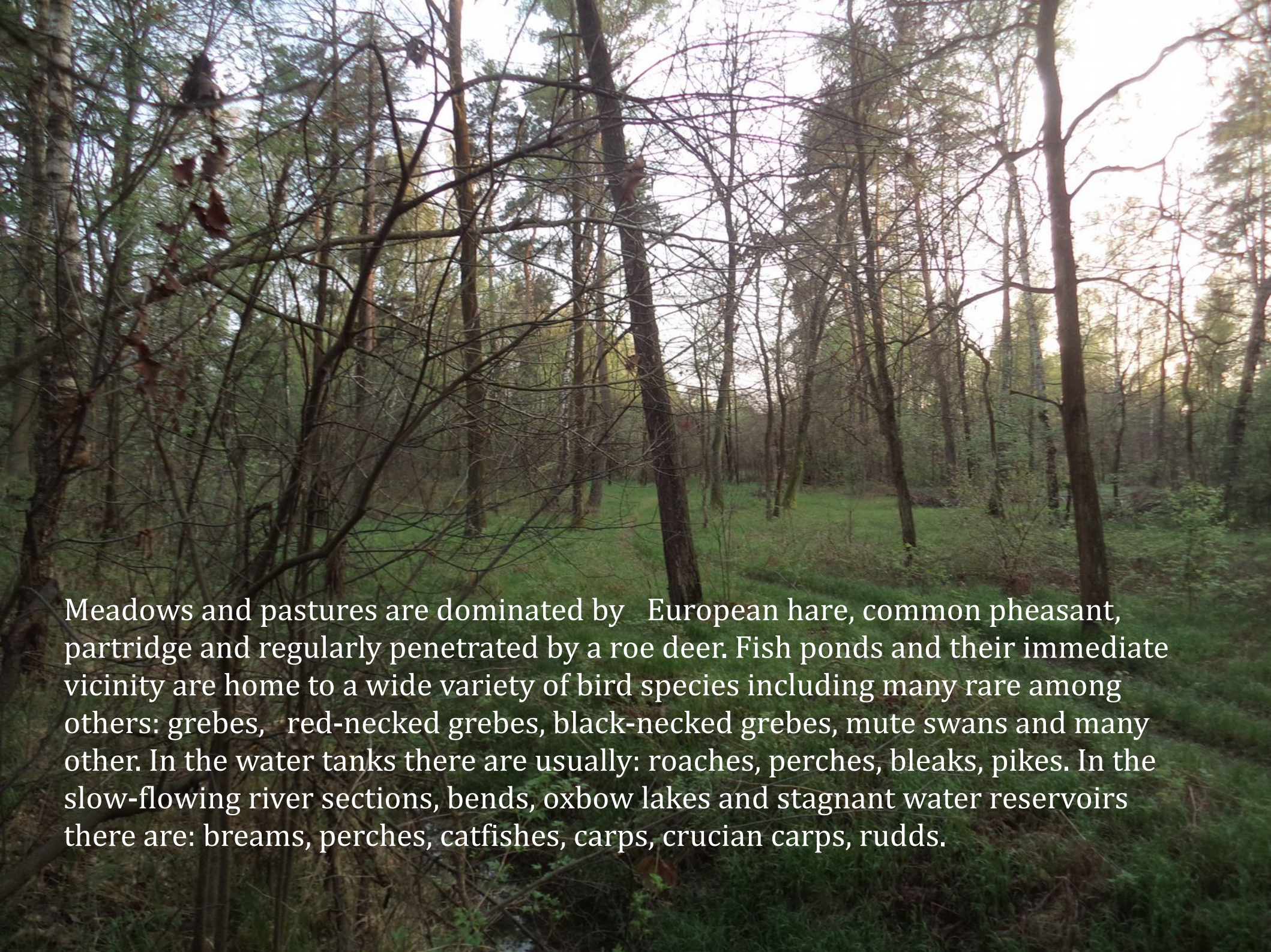
The main species which make the forest is the Scots pine. There is also a pedunculate oak. Dominant is a silver birch, a common alder, an European ash, an European larch, a common hornbeam, a sessile oak and an artificially introduced northern red oak. In the shrub layer is luxuriantly growing hawthorn, rowan and oak sapling.



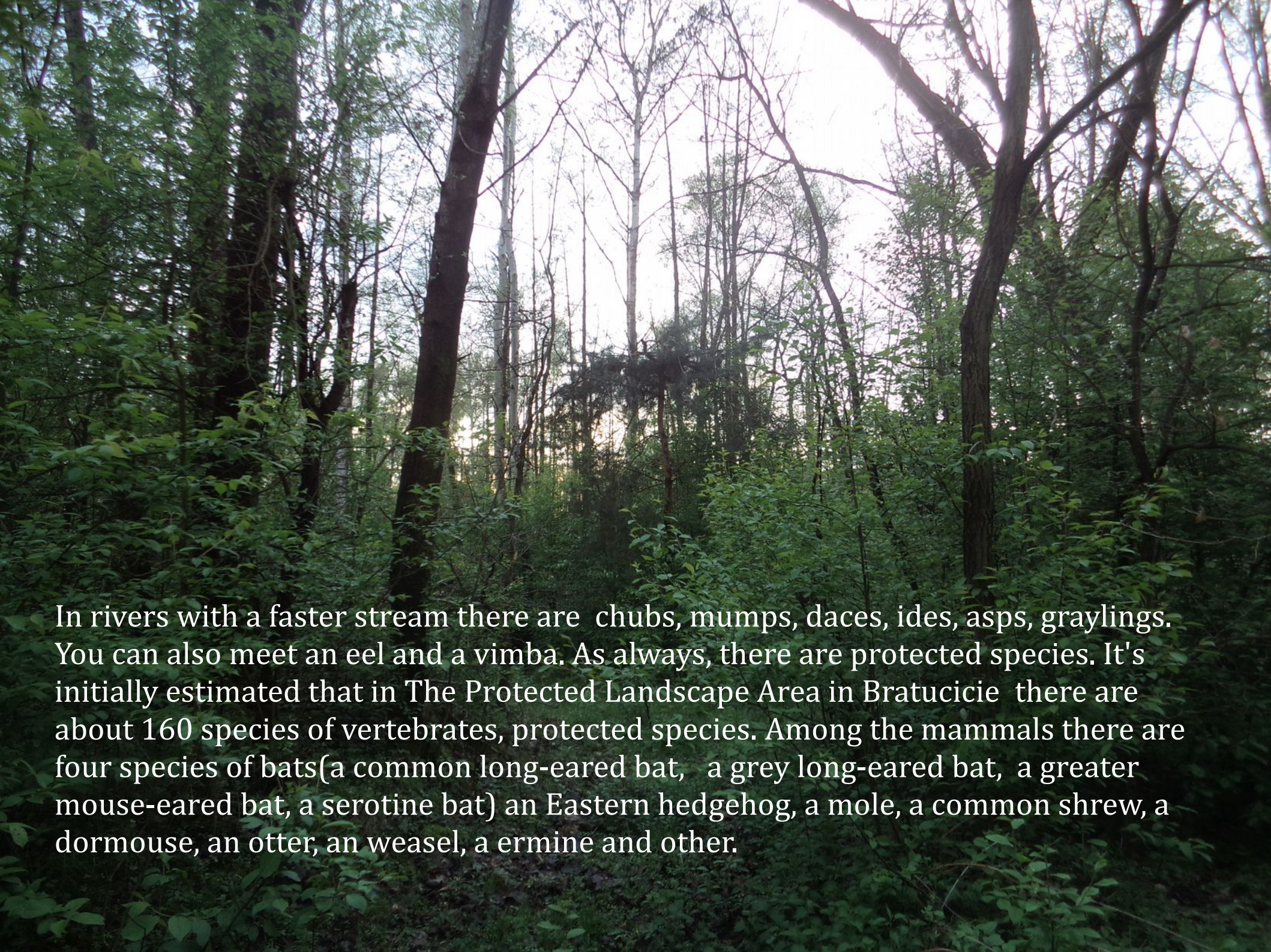
The undergrowth in spring is made by a lily of the valley, in summer dominates bilberries and ferns, a common bracken, there are many species such as a chickweed-wintergreen, a false lily of the valley, a New England hawkweed. In overexposed and dried-pieces in the undergrowth dominates the sedge grass. Well developed is also a layer of moss with a haircap moss and a red bogmoss. In the undergrowth of this complex in the region Bratucice there is a rare fern - a royal fern. Complex dealing with much smaller areas include: Fresh pine forests, riparian ash-alders, alders and sallow scrubs.



The variety of environments - from the forest to areas without trees, from dry to wet, from the rural areas, the anthropogenic areas for example the settlements and villages, affects greater richness of the animal world. The forests are dominated by species such as: roe deer, wild boars, deer, pine martens, badgers, foxes. Forests are home to large birds of prey living high in the trees, like hawks and buzzards.



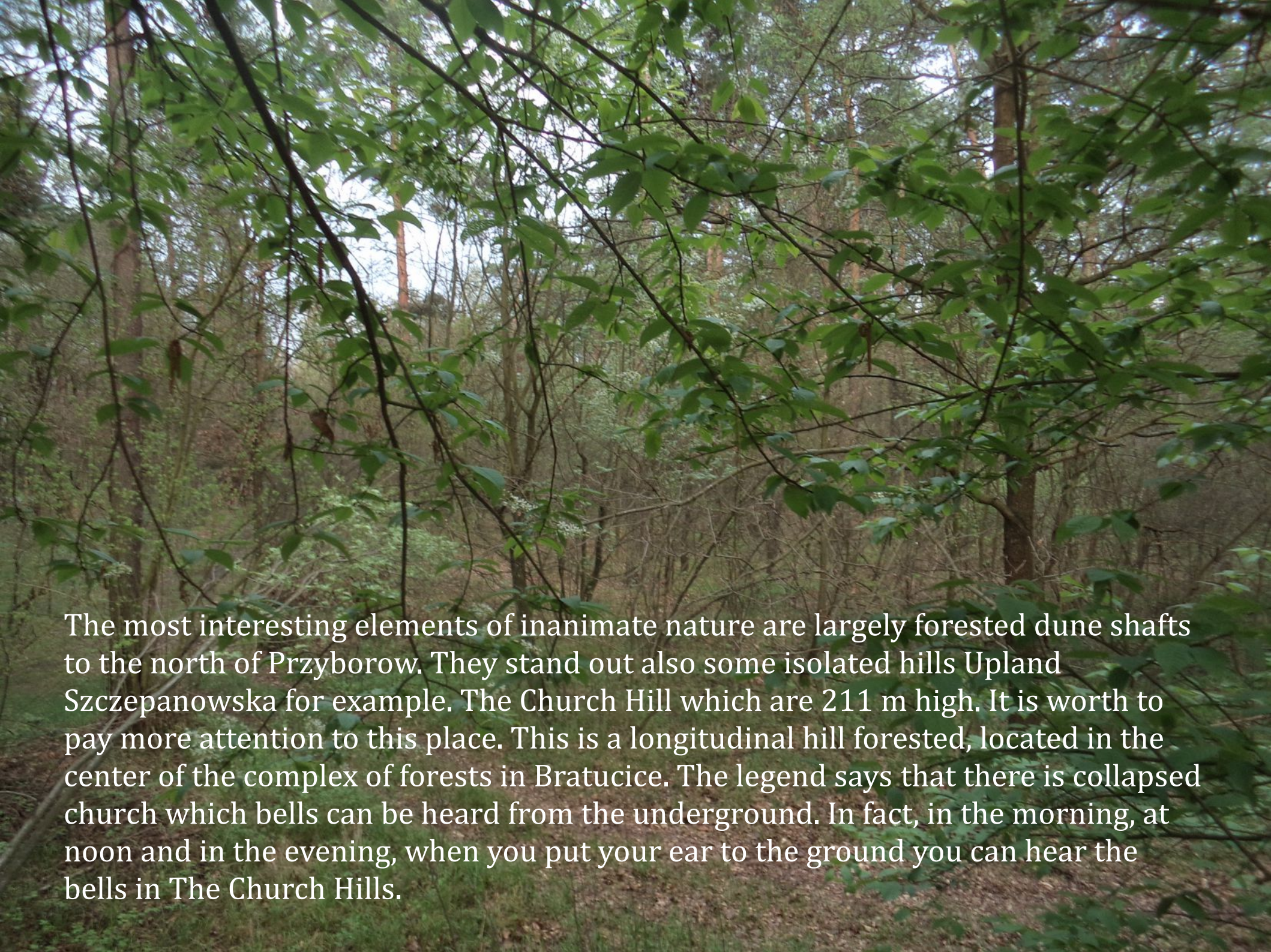
Meadows and pastures are dominated by European hare, common pheasant, partridge and regularly penetrated by a roe deer. Fish ponds and their immediate vicinity are home to a wide variety of bird species including many rare among others: grebes, red-necked grebes, black-necked grebes, mute swans and many other. In the water tanks there are usually: roaches, perches, bleaks, pikes. In the slow-flowing river sections, bends, oxbow lakes and stagnant water reservoirs there are: breams, perches, catfishes, carps, crucian carps, rudds.



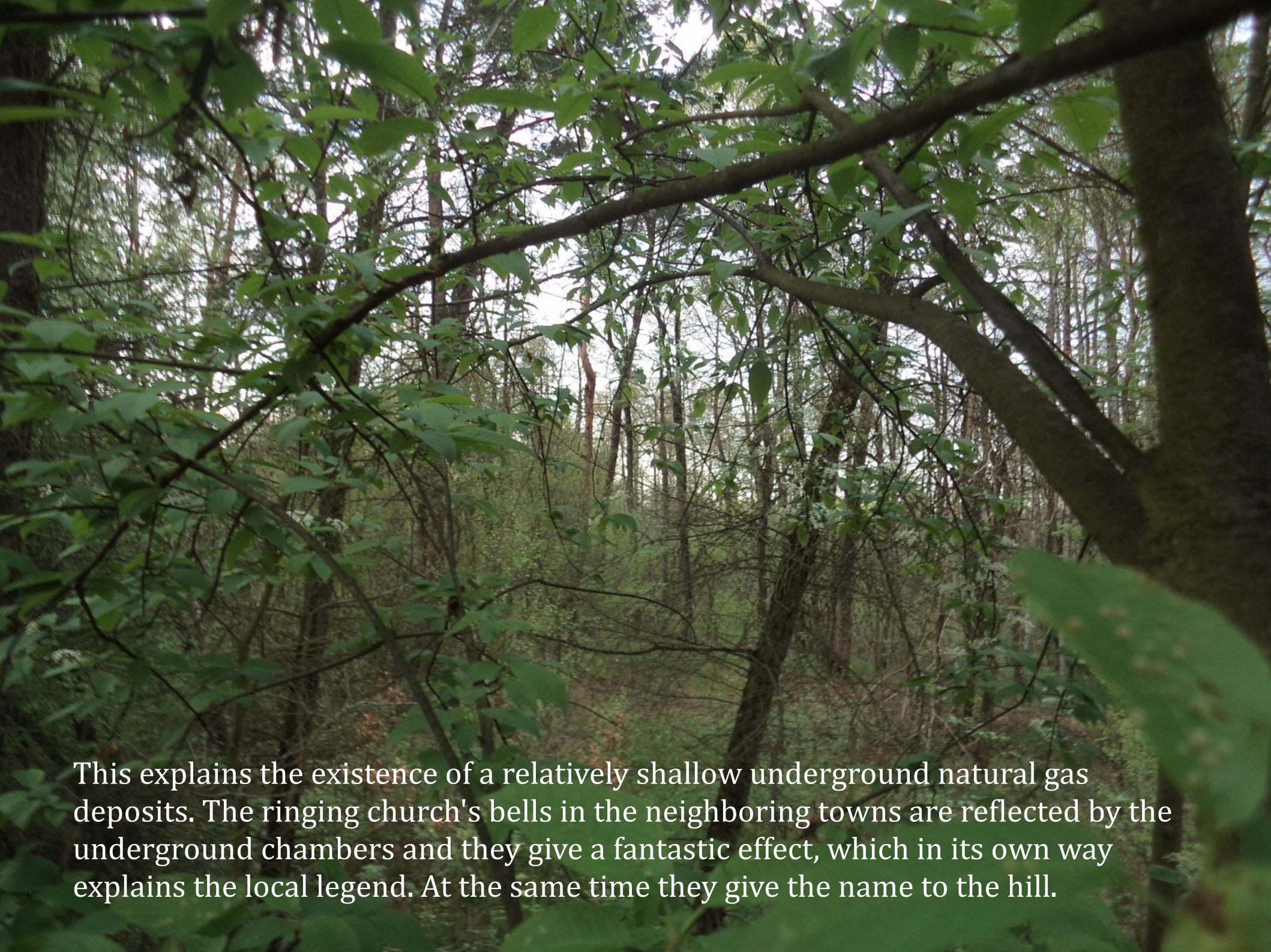
In rivers with a faster stream there are chubs, mumps, daces, ideo, aspens, graylings. You can also meet an eel and a vimba. As always, there are protected species. It's initially estimated that in The Protected Landscape Area in Bratucicie there are about 160 species of vertebrates, protected species. Among the mammals there are four species of bats (a common long-eared bat, a grey long-eared bat, a greater mouse-eared bat, a serotine bat) an Eastern hedgehog, a mole, a common shrew, a dormouse, an otter, an weasel, a ermine and other.



The most numerous protected birds include: finches, tit tits, buntings, robins, primroses, willow warbler. Amphibians are represented by 10 species, including by a northern crested newt and a scots newt, an European tree frog, an European fire-bellied toad. Among the reptiles you can meet sand lizards, viviparous lizards, worms, grass snakes and vipers. Invertebrates aren't known very much and it's difficult to estimate the number of species, especially those which are protected species.



The most interesting elements of inanimate nature are largely forested dune shafts to the north of Przyborow. They stand out also some isolated hills Upland Szczepanowska for example. The Church Hill which are 211 m high. It is worth to pay more attention to this place. This is a longitudinal hill forested, located in the center of the complex of forests in Bratucice. The legend says that there is collapsed church which bells can be heard from the underground. In fact, in the morning, at noon and in the evening, when you put your ear to the ground you can hear the bells in The Church Hills.

A photograph of a dense forest. The foreground is filled with green leaves and branches, some of which are out of focus. In the background, many tall, thin tree trunks rise up, creating a vertical pattern. The lighting is soft, suggesting an overcast day or a shaded area within the woods.

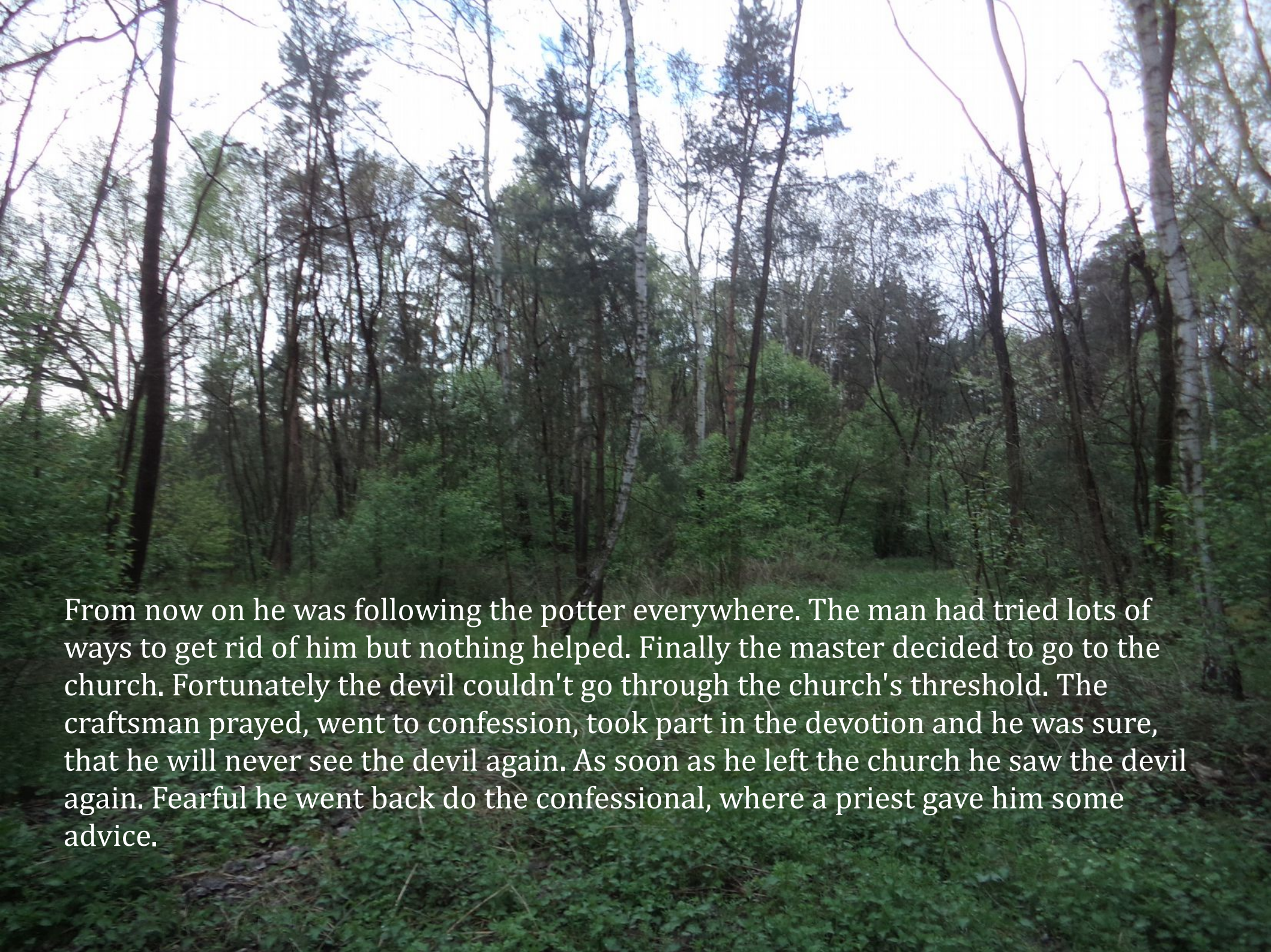
This explains the existence of a relatively shallow underground natural gas deposits. The ringing church's bells in the neighboring towns are reflected by the underground chambers and they give a fantastic effect, which in its own way explains the local legend. At the same time they give the name to the hill.

A photograph of a dense forest with tall, thin trees and green foliage. The text is overlaid on the image.

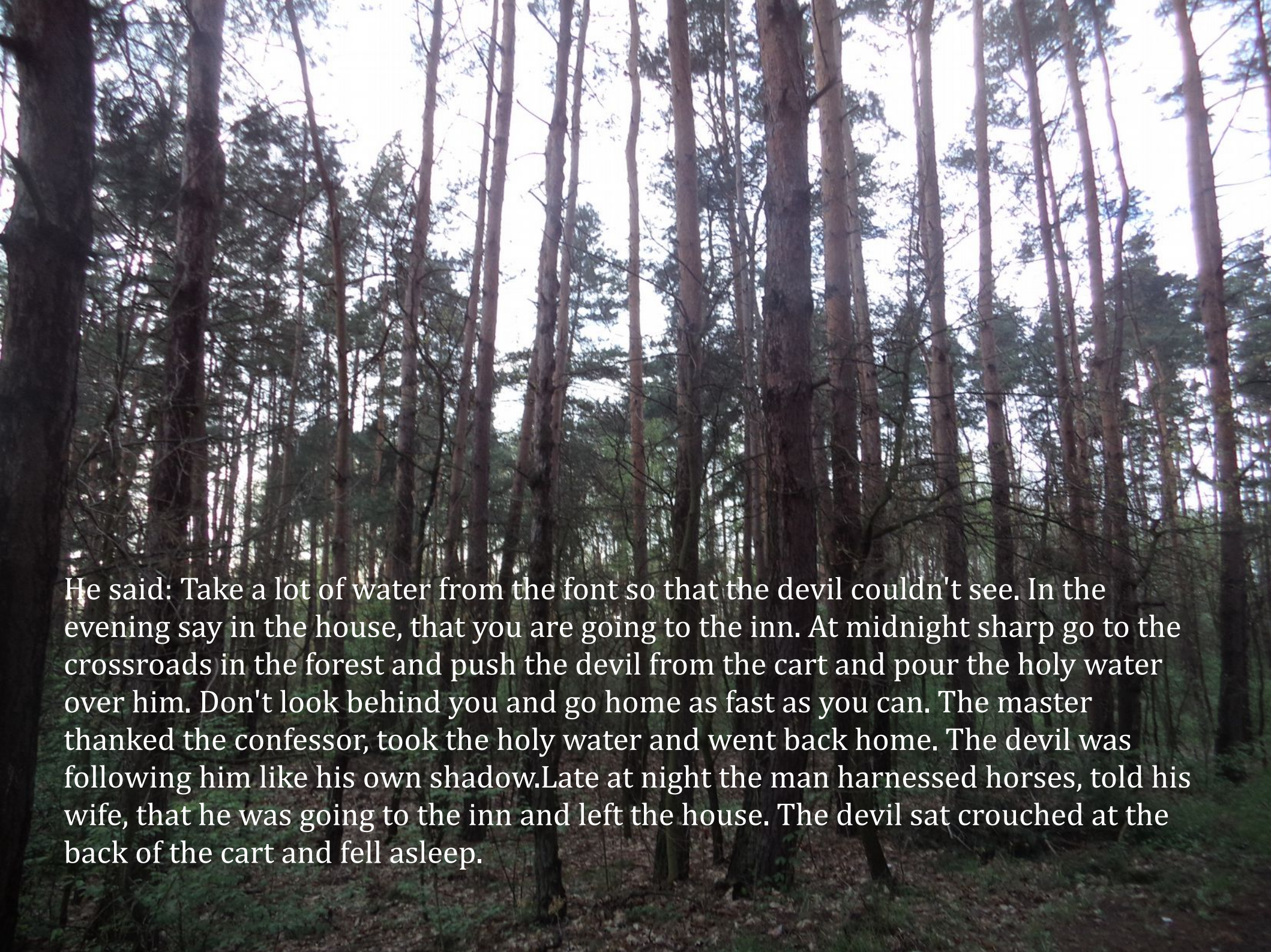
"The devil in the forest in Bratucice"

The legend says that once upon a time in a small town Bratucice had lived a potter - the real master in his job. His capable fingers could make the most beautiful vases, pots and even toys. Once, for fun or maybe for interest he made the devil. He didn't like him very much, so he covered him with glaze, just like he was doing with another things. Then he put him to the pottery fireplace. He was really surprised, when after pulling out from the fireplace nothing was covered with glaze but the devil. The shiny devil jumped on the floor and screamd:

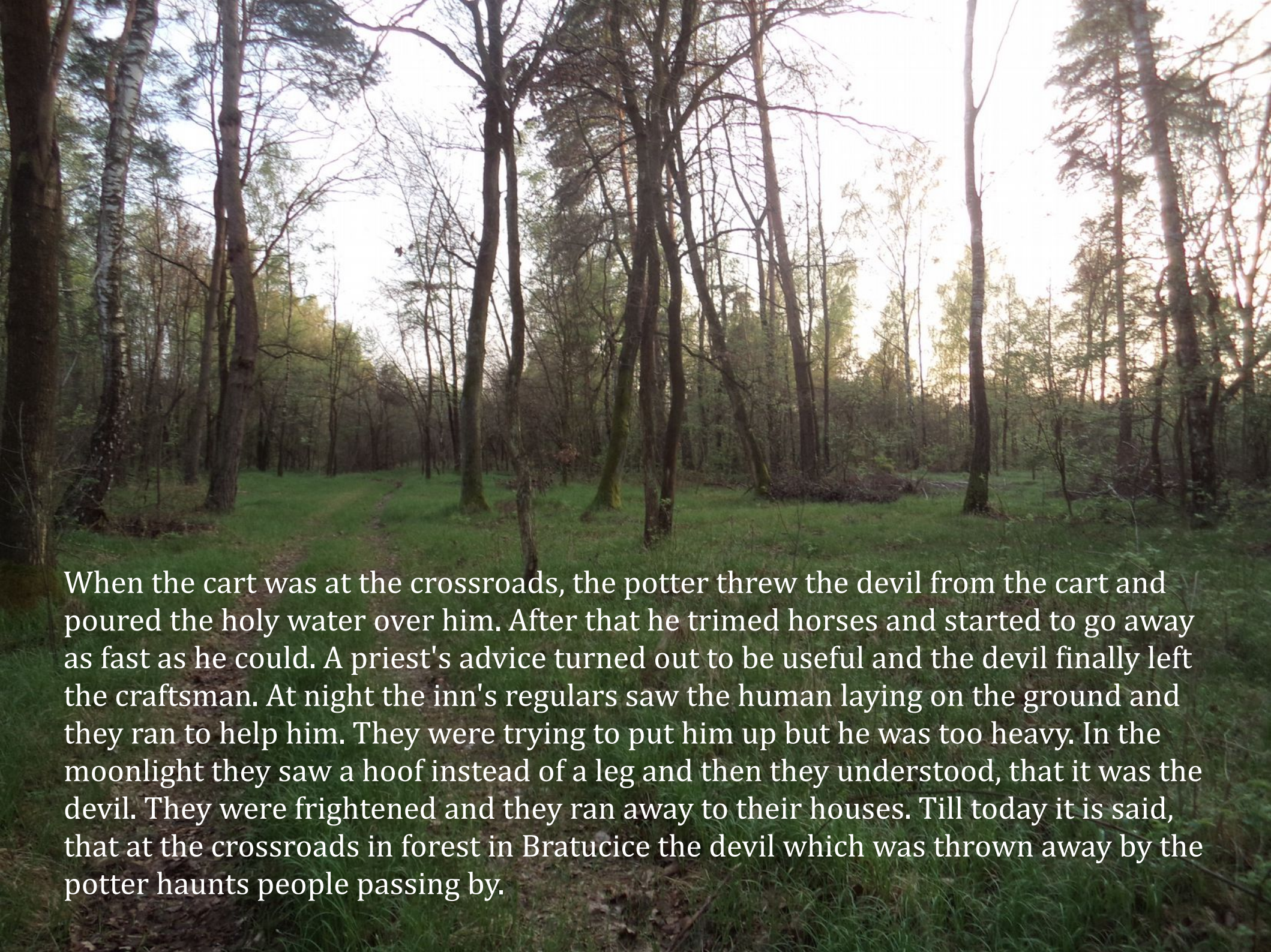
- If you have made me, you will have me!

A photograph of a dense forest. The trees are tall and thin, with some showing white bark. The ground is covered in a thick layer of green undergrowth. The sky is visible through the canopy, appearing overcast.

From now on he was following the potter everywhere. The man had tried lots of ways to get rid of him but nothing helped. Finally the master decided to go to the church. Fortunately the devil couldn't go through the church's threshold. The craftsman prayed, went to confession, took part in the devotion and he was sure, that he will never see the devil again. As soon as he left the church he saw the devil again. Fearful he went back do the confessional, where a priest gave him some advice.



He said: Take a lot of water from the font so that the devil couldn't see. In the evening say in the house, that you are going to the inn. At midnight sharp go to the crossroads in the forest and push the devil from the cart and pour the holy water over him. Don't look behind you and go home as fast as you can. The master thanked the confessor, took the holy water and went back home. The devil was following him like his own shadow. Late at night the man harnessed horses, told his wife, that he was going to the inn and left the house. The devil sat crouched at the back of the cart and fell asleep.

A photograph of a forest with tall, thin trees and a grassy clearing. The trees are mostly bare, suggesting late autumn or winter. The ground is covered in green grass and some fallen leaves. The sky is bright, possibly due to the sun being low in the sky, creating a hazy, golden light. The overall scene is a dense, wooded area with a central clearing.

When the cart was at the crossroads, the potter threw the devil from the cart and poured the holy water over him. After that he trimmed horses and started to go away as fast as he could. A priest's advice turned out to be useful and the devil finally left the craftsman. At night the inn's regulars saw the human laying on the ground and they ran to help him. They were trying to put him up but he was too heavy. In the moonlight they saw a hoof instead of a leg and then they understood, that it was the devil. They were frightened and they ran away to their houses. Till today it is said, that at the crossroads in forest in Bratucice the devil which was thrown away by the potter haunts people passing by.

Our opinion about the forest:

"The time spent in the forest, is very good for our health and mind. I think that each of us needs time for relax, reflections and de-stress yourself. The forest gives us these capabilities. Lots of people like going to the forest in the autumn when it is the most colourful and you can even find some mushrooms." *Klaudia*

"For me the forest is a great place to spend time with my family. Hiking, picking mushroom or enjoying the nature is a nice steppingstone of our daily life between our computer and mobile phone. I think that all people should go out more often and the best place to do so is the forest." *Natalia*

"Bratucice is my home village. I have many beautiful memories from my childhood, when I was playing in the forest. I still love riding a bike or walking in the woods as well as climbing trees. You can do many activities in there and of course see beautiful nature." *Filip*

Bibliography

Statistic data:

<http://rudyrysie.w.interiowo.pl/bochk.htm>

Information about the legends:

Zofia Wiśniewska, Zjawy i Dziwy w Okulicach i Gminie Rzezawa, 2000, ISBN 83-86744-96-0

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