

Japan's Forests with Breathtaking Views: Selections from the Tourist Destinations in National Forest

Forests have provided both mankind – and indeed all living things – with safety, sustenance and security for an eternity. The lush greenery and gentle breeze of the forest is surely enough to rekindle nature's vigor in any soul.

With more than 70% of Japan landmass covered in abundant greenery, the Forestry Agency is working to create "Recreation Forests" to inspire as many as possible to rediscover the wonder of nature.

The best forests to visit have been carefully selected and compiled as "Japan's Forests with Breathtaking Views."

Know before You Visit: General rules for visitors

- 1 Help protect wild animals and plants. When you bring your pets, please mind your manners and give consideration to the surrounding environment.
- 2 Damaging trees or stealing any forest product is penalized by law. Even collecting plants covering the ground of forest are prohibited within protection forests designated by law.
- 3 Do not enter the area beyond walking trails, or public squares. Please follow the rules for each Recreation Forest such as no camping outside the designated area.
- 4 Do not enter the area with 'No Entry' or 'Keep Out' sign.
- 5 When making a stop for rest or any other purposes, please look around and confirm that the area is safe without any risk of being hit by falling branches or rocks.
- 6 Enjoy mountaineering on your own responsibility. Please ensure that you submit your plan for mountaineering to a police station in the area as well as to your family members, your friends or colleagues after checking out climate and other necessary information for mountaineering and fully being equipped. Please also fill in 'the Name List of Climbers and Visitors', which is placed at the mountain entrance.
- 7 Do not enter forests under bad weather conditions.
- 8 Do not dispose of any leftover food in the forest. Please take your garbage home with you.
- 9 Smoking is permitted only in special areas. Make sure to extinguish any fires, e.g. after smoking cigarettes.
- 10 Mountain paths are potentially dangerous to walk. Do not use smartphone while walking. When taking photos, please remain fully aware of your surroundings and do not bother other visitors in any way.
- 11 If you wish to use an unmanned aerial vehicle (drone), you need to submit prior written notice to District Forest Office. Please contact the nearest Regional Forest Office or District Forest Office of national forest beforehand.

Hidaka Shizen-No-Mori Recreation Forest Access Map



Access

By public transport:

- About 15 minutes on foot from the Hidaka Municipal Branch Office bus stop of the Hidaka Town Bus
 - Sapporo Station (JR Sekisho Line [Sapporo-Kushiro route]: about 70 minutes by limited express) → Shimukappu Station*
 - New Chitose Airport (JR Chitose Line [Sapporo-New Chitose Airport route]: 3 minutes) → Minami-Chitose Station (change trains) (JR Sekisho Line [Sapporo-Kushiro route]: about 60 minutes by limited express) → Shimukappu Station*
 - Obihiro Station (JR Sekisho Line [Sapporo-Kushiro route]: about 75 minutes by limited express) → Shimukappu Station*
- *Shimukappu Station → Hidaka Town Bus (bound for the Hidaka Municipal Branch Office bus stop: about 25 minutes) → get off at the Hidaka Municipal Branch Office bus stop

By car:

- Sapporo Station (Doto Expressway, Shimukappu IC exit: about 90 minutes) → public road (about 15 minutes) → Hidaka Shizen-No-Mori Recreation Forest
- Tomakomai Ferry Terminal → public road (about 100 minutes) → Hidaka Shizen-No-Mori Recreation Forest
- Obihiro Station (Doto Expressway, Shimukappu IC exit: about 70 minutes) → public road (about 15 minutes) → Hidaka Shizen-No-Mori Recreation Forest

Hidaka Shizen-No-Mori Recreation Forest

Address : Tomioka, Hidaka Town, Saru Country, Hokkaido Prefecture

Management office contact details:
Hidaka Hokubu District Forest Office
FAX : 01457-6-3152

Hidaka Shizen-No-Mori Recreation Forest Management Committee
(Hidaka Branch, Hidaka Municipal Office)
FAX : 01457-6-3981

National Forest Planning Division,
Forestry Agency, MAFF

The Official Recreation Forests Website of the Forestry Agency
http://www.rinya.maff.go.jp/e/national_forest/recreation_forest/index.html



Recreation
Forests of JAPAN

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HIDAKA

Shizen-No-Mori Recreation Forest



Recreation Forests
Forestry Agency

Vast forest with clear streams at the foot of the Hidaka Mountain Range

Hidaka Shizen-No-Mori Recreation Forest Map



Climate, flora and fauna

This area has a continental climate, with large temperature changes and heavy snowfall. The Recreation Forest has planted trees such as Todomatsu (Todo fir (*Abies sachalinensis*)), Karamatsu (Japanese larch (*Larix kaempferi*)), and Ezomatsu (Yezo spruce (*Picea jezoensis*)), as well as natural forest trees including Mizunara (Japanese oak *mizu-nara* (*Quercus crispula* Blume)), Udaikanba (monarch birch (*Betula maximowicziana*)), Dakekanba (Erman's birch (*Betula ermanii*)) and Shinanoki (Japanese lime tree (*Tilia japonica*)), with some trees growing to diameters exceeding 100 cm. Visitors can also view herbaceous plants such as Osakurao (Primula *jesoana* var. *jesoana*), Enreiso (Japanese trillium (*Trillium smallii*)) and Ezo Engosaku (*Corydalis ambigua*). In addition, animals such as Ezoshika (Yezo shika deer (*Cervus nippon yezoensis*)), Kitakitsune (Ezo red fox (*Vulpes vulpes schrencki*)) and Ezoshimarusu (Siberian chipmunk (*Tamias sibiricus lineatus*)) and wild birds such as Akagera (great spotted woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*)), Shijukara (great tit (*Parus major*)) and Gojukara (Eurasian nuthatch (*Sitta europaea*)) can be seen.



Sango Falls (coral waterfall) in spring

Attractions

Along streams in the area, visitors can observe the various strata that speak of the changes the land has undergone since the distant past. Ores such as jade, chromium and manganese can be found on stream banks. The rich natural environment of the forest makes it an ideal site for hiking and trekking, insect collecting and the observation of wild birds, trees and fossils. The adjacent National HIDAKA Youth Outdoor Learning Center has outdoor experience facilities such as campsites that allow visitors to enjoy various activities in the great outdoors, including nature experiences, sports and recreation. The nearby Hidaka International Ski Resort attracts large numbers of visitors. In the winter, they can ski or snowboard the slopes on powder snow while enjoying the view of Hidaka Town far below. In summer, they can harvest edible wild plants and gaze at a sea of clouds.



Bird watching in the winter forest

Geographical / topographical features

The Hidaka Mountain Range—a backbone range stretching over 150 km from north to south in southcentral Hokkaido—are located where two giant tectonic plates (the North American Plate and the Eurasian Plate) collide. Since the Cretaceous period, the Atlantic Ocean has continuously expanded, while on the other side of the planet, where Hokkaido lies, the plates have continued to collide. As a result, mountains began to rise about 13 million years ago, forming the Hidaka Mountains.

The Kitahidaka District, where Hidaka Town is located, is one of the few areas in the world where the Cretaceous period crust of the island arc-trench system and the Atlantic region is compressed above ground where it can be directly observed. Visitors can see a wide variety of rock, ore and fossils.



Log-pulling race at the Hidaka Jukai Festival

Historical / cultural features

From 1937 to 1954, before the area's 1971 designation as "Hidaka Shizen-No-Mori," a variety of ores were mined in the area, including manganese, chromium and asbestos. A tunnel was bored to control the flow of the mountain streams as part of the effort to build ore transportation routes, creating an artificial waterfall named "Sango Falls" (coral waterfall). The name of the waterfall is derived from the fossils of hexacorals that have been found in its surroundings.

The presence of hexacorals fossils indicates that this place was at the bottom of the sea some 85 million years ago.



Remain of an ore transportation route

Information

Elevation(m)	260–980
Area (ha)	1,081.62
Entrance fee	Free
Opening seasons	There are two entrance gates along the forest road. Vehicles are not allowed to travel on the forest road during winter (from around late November to early May of the following year) due to snow.
Accommodation options	[Outside the forest] National HIDAKA Youth Outdoor Learning Center (adjacent), Hidaka Kogenso (adjacent), Japanese inns and hotels (5 km / 10 minutes by car), Hidaka Sarugawa Auto-camping Site (in the vicinity)
Car parking capacity / parking charges	National HIDAKA Youth Outdoor Learning Center parking lot: free parking for approximately 45 vehicles