

## 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. Check avalanche risks before mountaineering or skiing in winter.
- 7 Do not enter forests under bad weather conditions.
- 8 In order to prevent the spread of CSF through food residues, please make sure to take your garbage home with you. We are also taking measures such as removing trash bins.
- 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.

### Pirika & Futamata Recreation Forest Access Map



### Access

By car	Origin	Route	Time	Course
Pirika - Mt. Maruyama Course	Sapporo Sta.	Hokkaido EXPWY / Route 230 / Pref. Route 999	About 3 hr	Pirika - Mt. Maruyama Course
	New Chitose Airport	Hokkaido EXPWY / Route 230 / Pref. Route 999	About 2 hr 30 min	
	Shin-Hakodate-Hokuto Sta.	Hokkaido EXPWY / Route 230 / Pref. Route 999	About 1 hr 30 min	
Futamata - Mt. Maruyama Course	Sapporo Sta.	Hokkaido EXPWY / Route 5 / Pref. Route 842	About 2 hr 50 min	Futamata - Mt. Maruyama Course
	New Chitose Airport	Hokkaido EXPWY / Route 5 / Pref. Route 842	About 2 hr 20 min	
	Shin-Hakodate-Hokuto Sta.	Hokkaido EXPWY / Route 5 / Pref. Route 842	About 1 hr 40 min	

\* The Recreation Forest is not accessible using public transportation, so please come by car.

## Pirika & Futamata Recreation Forest

Location : Imakane Town, Setana County /  
Oshamambe Town, Yamakoshi County, Hokkaido

Management office contact details :  
Oshima District Forest Office  
FAX : 0137-62-2961

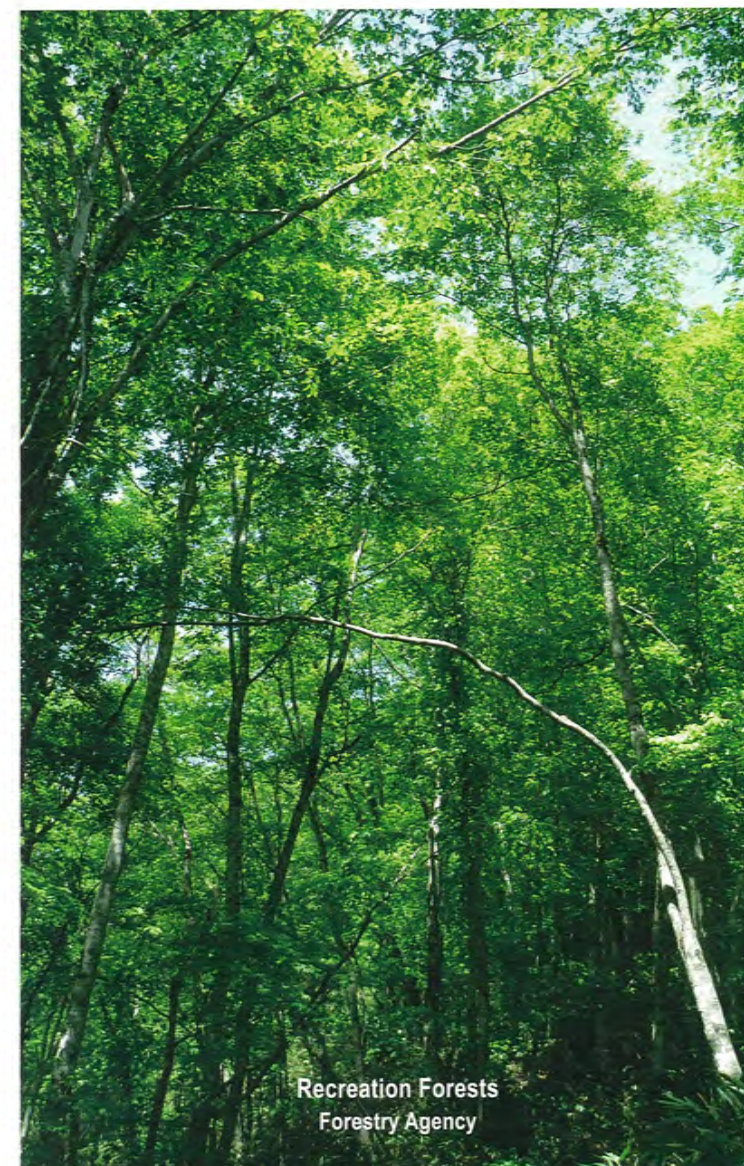
Pirika & Futamata Recreation Forest Management Committee /  
Imakane Municipal Office  
FAX : 0137-82-0111

National Forest Planning Division,  
Forestry Agency, MAFF

The Official Recreation Forests Website of the Forestry Agency  
[https://www.rinya.maff.go.jp/e/national\\_forest/recreation\\_forest/index.html](https://www.rinya.maff.go.jp/e/national_forest/recreation_forest/index.html)

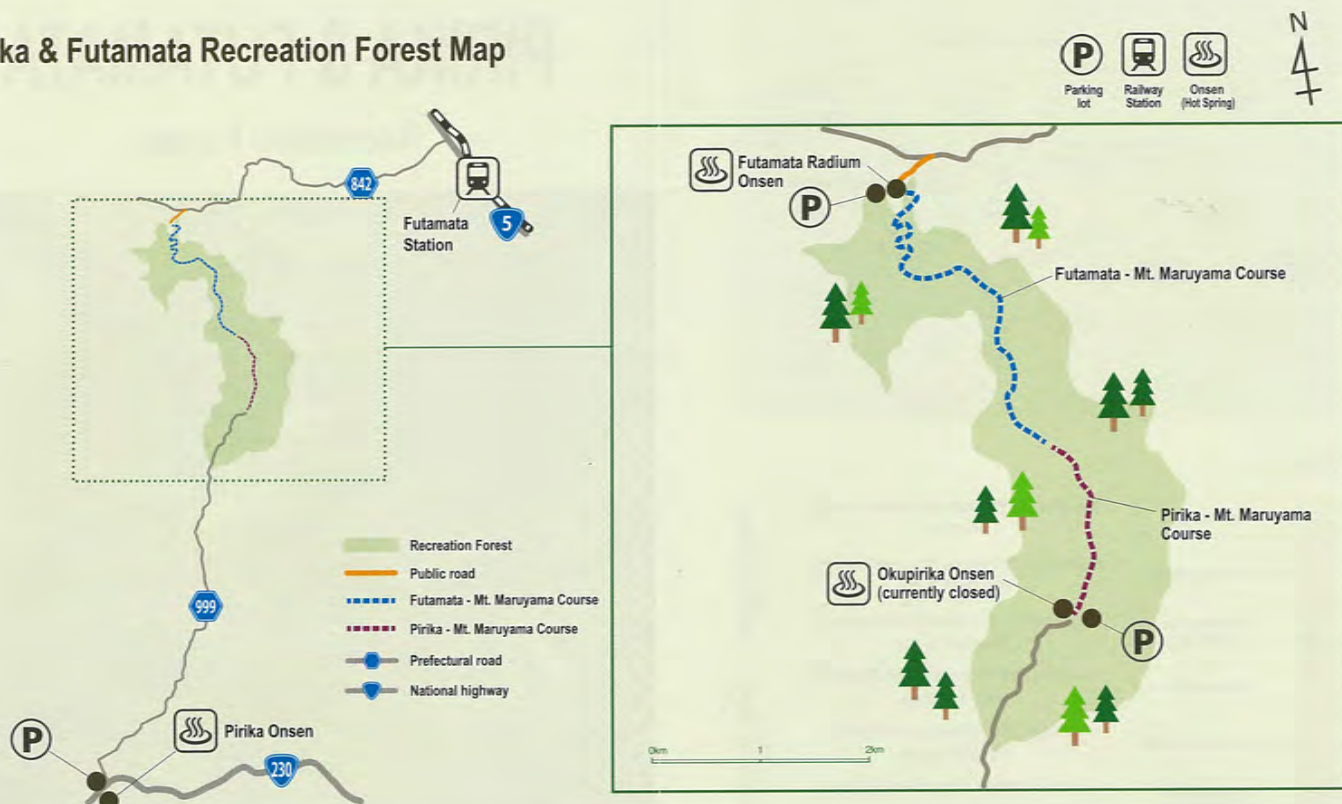


# PIRIKA & FUTAMATA Recreation Forest



# Savor magnificent views along a walking trail through a vast primeval Japanese beech forest!!

## Pirika & Futamata Recreation Forest Map



## Geographical/ topographical features

The Recreation Forest, located almost in the middle of the Oshima Peninsula, lines both sides of a ridge of relatively low mountains running north-south along the spine of the peninsula. The summit of Mt. Maruyama offers a rare view of both the Pacific Ocean to the east and the Sea of Japan to the west. The Oshamambe River flows east toward the Pacific Ocean into the Uchiura Bay, while the limpid Shiribeshi-Toshibetsu River flows west toward the Sea of Japan, forming a belted plain.



## Historical/ cultural features

The name of the Pirikabetsu River is derived from the Ainu language word "pirika," meaning "good," "beautiful" and "affluent." The nearby Pirika Paleolithic Culture Museum displays a large number of stone tools excavated in Imakane Town, mainly in the Pirika area. The museum's various hands-on activities, including classes where visitors can learn to make arrowheads or magatama (comma-shaped beads), are also recommended.



## Climate/ flora and fauna

The area has a moderate climate for Hokkaido. However, it has the Sea of Japan climate in the winter, receiving heavy snowfall and strong westerly winds.

The area forms a natural forest with a mix of broad-leaved trees, mainly Buna (Japanese beech (*Fagus crenata* Blume)), Mizunara (Japanese oak *Quercus crispata* Blume), Itaya Kaede (*Acer pictum* Thunb. subsp. *dissectum* (Wesm.) H.Ohashi) and birch.



## Attractions

The entire area consists of a forest of deciduous broad-leaved trees, mainly Japanese beech. The natural Japanese beech forest and other natural features, such as mountain streams, create a picturesque atmosphere and a great chance to observe and appreciate the area's plant life.

The Recreation Forest is also home to many wild birds, including Yamagera (grey-headed woodpecker (*Picus canus*)), Akagera (great spotted woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*)) and Uguisu (Japanese bush warbler (*Horornis diphone*)). Visitors can take a refreshing stroll in the forest amid the birdsong and engage in birdwatching.

The forest is popular among locals due to its accessibility and natural beauty and attracts large numbers of vacation campers over the Golden Week and summer holidays.

Two mountain trails lead to Mt. Maruyama. The 2.8 km long "Pirika - Mt. Maruyama Course" takes about 1 hour and 50 minutes and is also suitable for families. The 6 km "Futamata - Mt. Maruyama Course" takes about 2 hours and 30 minutes and includes a long, steep climb to the summit, so it is appropriate for more physically fit walkers. The Mt. Maruyama Observation Platform at the summit offers a superb panoramic view of various famous mountain peaks, such as Mt. Yotei and Mt. Usu, and the Sea of Japan. Isolated Mt. Yotei is known to locals as "Ezo Fuji" (Mt. Fuji of Hokkaido) for its graceful shape. Hot spring accommodation facilities are available along the national highway about 10 km before the Pirika - Mt. Maruyama Course Trailhead and also at the Futamata - Mt. Maruyama Course Trailhead.



## Information

▪ Elevation (m)	160 - 674
▪ Area (ha)	709.87
▪ Entrance fee	None for the Recreation Forest itself
▪ Opening seasons	Basically accessible 24 hours a day. However, the forest road on the Okupirika Onsen side (the hot spring is currently closed) becomes impassable from October through May. (The specific period during which the road is impassable depends on snowfall.)
▪ Accommodation options	[In the direction of Shimamaki Village] 20 km (about 50 minutes by car) to Japanese inns and guest houses in Shimamaki Village [In the direction of Setana Town] Hotels, Japanese inns and guest houses in Imakane Town Onsen hotels, Japanese inns, and guest houses in Oshamambe Town
▪ Car parking capacity / parking charges	- Okupirika Onsen (The onsen (hot spring) is currently closed, but parking is available.) - Pirika - Mt. Maruyama Course Trailhead: Free parking for 10 ordinary vehicles - Futamata Radium Onsen (Futamata - Mt. Maruyama Course Trailhead): Free parking for 10 ordinary vehicles