

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.

Shikaribetsu Recreation Forest Access Map



Access

By public transport:

- Tokachi-Obihiro Airport (Bus: approx. 40 minutes) → Obihiro Station
 - Sapporo Station (Railway: approx. 2 hours 10 minutes) → Shintoku Station
 - Sapporo Station (Railway: approx. 2 hours 30 minutes) → Obihiro Station
 - Obihiro Station Bus Terminal (Bus: approx. 1 hour 40 minutes) → Shikaribetsu-kohan Onsen
 - Shintoku Eki-mae (Bus: approx. 1 hour 20 minutes) → Shikaribetsu-kohan Onsen
- ※ In winter, there is no charge for traveling from Obihiro/Shintoku to Shikaribetsu-kohan Onsen (Lake Shikaribetsu), the last stop. However, a regular charge applies if you get off the bus en route. Ask at bus terminals for details.

By car:

- New Chitose Airport → Tokachi Shimizu IC → Lake Shikaribetsu (approx. 190 km / approx. 3 hours)
- Asahikawa Airport → Route 237 → Lake Shikaribetsu (approx. 168 km / approx. 3 hours)
- Tokachi-Obihiro Airport (Obihiro-Hiroo Expressway, Doto Expressway) → Memuro IC → Lake Shikaribetsu (approx. 101 km / approx. 1 hour 30 minutes)
- Sapporo Station (Hokkaido Expressway, Doto Expressway) → Tokachi Shimizu IC → Lake Shikaribetsu (approx. 220 km / approx. 3 hours 20 minutes)

Shikaribetsu Recreation Forest

Address : Shikaribetsu-kohan, Shikaol-cho, Kato-gun, Hokkaido

Management office contact details:

Higashi Taisetsu Branch Office, Tokachi Seibu District Forest Office,
Hokkaido Regional Forest Office, Forestry Agency

FAX : 01564-2-2144

Shikaribetsu Recreation Forest Protection and Management Committee

(Commerce, Industry, and Tourism Division, Shikaol Municipal Office)

FAX : 0156-66-1620

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



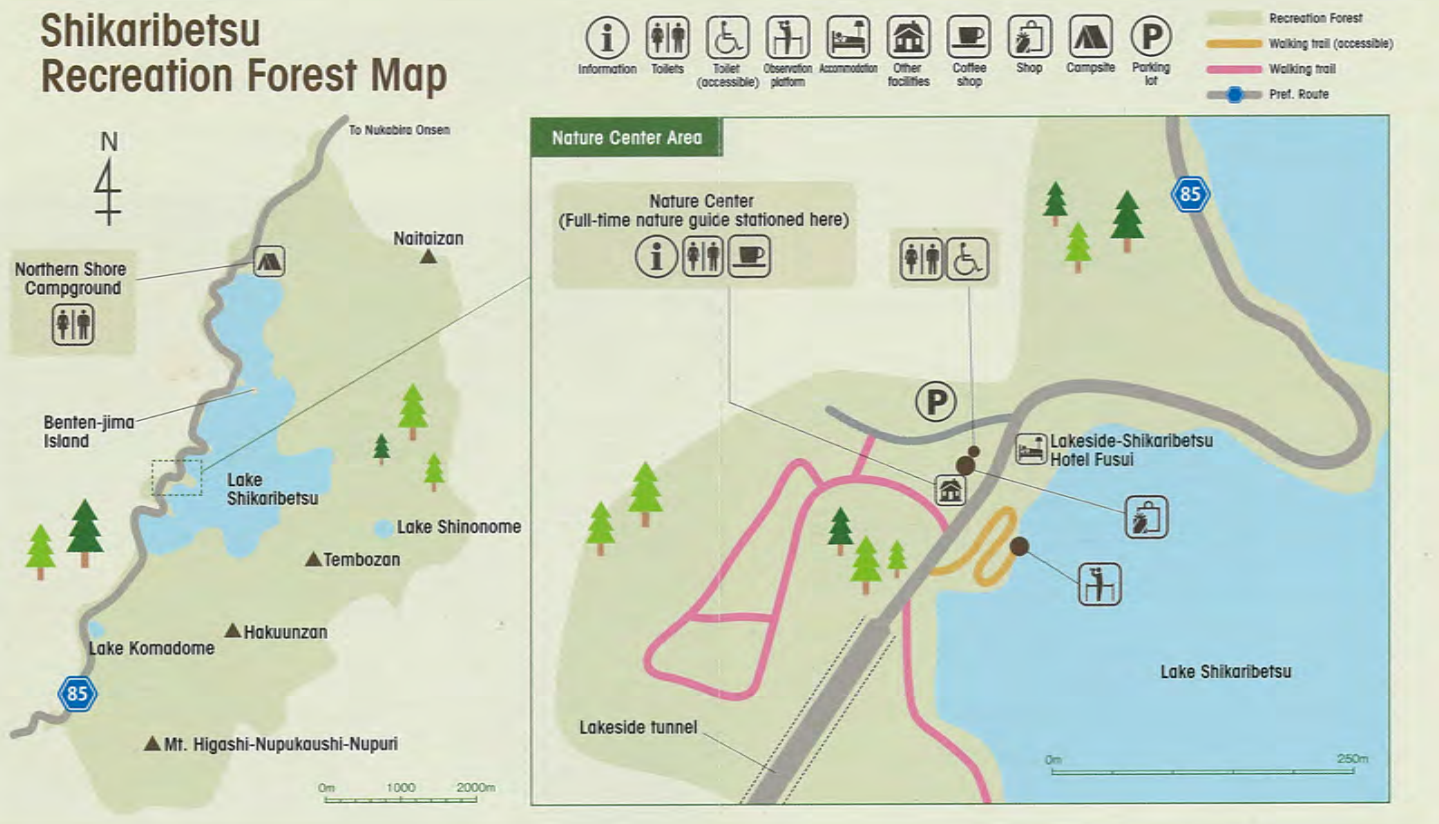
SHIKARIBETSU

Recreation Forest



Experience a unique mystical forest world, beside a lake that reflects the starry skies above

Shikaribetsu Recreation Forest Map



Climate, flora and fauna

In winter, the temperature plummets to -30°C or lower, while even in summer, it can drop to almost 5°C . This is the only natural lake in Daisetsuzan National Park. The Miyabeiwana (*Salvelinus malma s.m. miyabei*) is a subspecies of Oshorokoma (Dolly varden) that was uniquely evolved in this unlocked lake and lives here exclusively. The forest of Shikaribetsu provides a habitat for precious plants and animals such as pika (*Ochotona hyperborea yessoensis*), and is also designated as one of the 25 "important moss-forests of Japan" by Bryological Society of Japan.



Ezo red fox curled up in the cold snow covering the lake

Attractions

- **Mountain climbing:** The peaks of the surrounding mountains tower around 400 m above the trailhead. Trail conditions vary, but they are relatively easy and quick to climb, so they are suitable even for people who want to climb at a slower pace while taking in the nature around them and people who are new to mountain climbing.
 - **Canoeing and kayaking:** Guided tours are available (charge applies), so even novices can enjoy these pursuits safely.
 - **Pleasure boat trips:** The pleasure boat sails all the way around Lake Shikaribetsu on a cruise lasting about 40 minutes. Both the Morning Cruise and the Night Cruise are highly recommended. (Reservation required)
- There are many other things to enjoy here, including guided tours, camping, fishing (seasonal restrictions apply), and a footbath.



The canoe on the lake Shikaribetsu looks just like floating in the air

Geographical/ topographical features

Shikaribetsu Recreation Forest stretches out from the shores of Lake Shikaribetsu, in the south of Daisetsuzan National Park. The area is home to the Shikaribetsu volcanic group, whose peaks stand around 1,200 m high, as well as Lake Shikaribetsu, the highest lake in Hokkaido, which was formed tens of thousands of years ago when volcanic activity dammed the river. The volcanic group emerged during the last glacial period, when the climate was colder than it is now. Around their rocky slopes are air holes through which a cold wind blows, even in summer, and permafrost soil, sediment or rock that remains frozen all year round — has been found underground. Other features of this area's unique topography and landscape include hot springs, which are one of the benefits of volcanoes; a river delta that is still in the process of being formed even now; and Lake Shinonome, famed as one of Hokkaido's top three little-known lakes.



Glassy Lake Shinonome

Historical/ cultural features

- Most Hokkaido place names are derived from the Ainu language and many reflect the topographic features or local produce of that area. (There are a number of theories about their etymology.)
- **Shikaol-cho:** In Japanese, "shikaol" means "pursuing deer"; it is derived from the Ainu word "kutekuushi" (a place with fences for capturing deer)
- **Shihoro-cho/Kamishihoro-cho:** Derived from the Ainu word "shuuoro" (a place where cooking pots were steeped in cold water)
- The area has been used as a location for filming various television commercials, music videos, and television dramas.



View toward Tokachi Plains from Higashi-Nupukaushi-Nupuri

Information

- Elevation(m) 700–1,300
- Area (ha) 1,936.63
- Entrance fee Free
- Opening seasons Accessible 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
※ In winter (late October-late April), pref. route 85 between Lake Shikaribetsu and Nukabira is closed. At the moment this route from Yamada Gate to Nukabira Gate is blocked due to 2016's Typhoon damage, therefore the route 85 from Shikaribetsu to Nukabira is impassable year-round.
- Operation hours by staff Campsite: Only open during the summer (July 1st – September 30); The manager does not reside at the site but goes the round between 16:00 and 18:00 for toll collection.
- Accommodation options Lake Shikaribetsu Northern Shore Campground, Shikaribetsu-kohan Onsen Hotel Fusui, Nupuka-no-sato
- Car parking capacity / parking charges Space for about 150 vehicles (Free of charge)