

Kejo-numa

Water Storage Area, Permanent Freshwater Lake

Geographical coordinates: 38°37' N, 141°57' E / Altitude: 25.9m / Area: 34ha / Major type of wetland: Water storage area, permanent freshwater lake / Designation: Special Protection Area of National Wildlife Protection Area / Municipalities involved: Osaki City, Miyagi Prefecture / Ramsar designation: October 2008



View of Kejo-numa from the south

A full view of Kejo-numa



Bean geese at the surrounding rice paddies

View of Kejo-numa from the west



Principal Features:

The Kitakami Plain, extending in the north of Miyagi Prefecture, is a wet lowland formed by the streams such as Kitakami River running south from Iwate Prefecture, Hasama River that runs from the border of Akita and Yamagata Prefectures to the east, and Eai River. Because of repeated flooding, the fertile soil has been deposited on the area, and a productive rice farming area has been developed.

Tajiri River – a tributary of Eai River – is narrow, and also flooded the field many times, because it runs through poorly drained lowland.

Kejo-numa is a dam lake constructed for the purpose of irrigation and flood control of Tajiri River. The lake is situated approx. 5km northwest from Osaki City, with its circumference of approx. 4km. Originally, Kejo-numa was a natural lake, but was modified into an agricultural reservoir more than 300 years ago, and again underwent construction to be an existing dam lake in 1995. There is no natural streams flowing into the lake, thus the inflows are only rainfalls, spring water, and through the conduits during flooding.

Favorable environment around the lake:

Major aquatic plants of Kejo-numa include Lotus, Manchurian Wild Rice, and Water Chestnut. The lake also nourishes

many rare species such as Water Clover *Marsilea quadrifolia* and Brittle Water-nymph *Najas minor*, and provides habitat for fishes and dragonflies.

The lake is surrounded by a gentle hilly terrain. To the east of the lake, there extends a plain of rice paddies that serve as one of the major wintering sites in Japan for swans, ducks and geese. Besides Kejo-numa, there are two more Ramsar sites in this region: "Kabukuri-numa and the surrounding rice paddies" situated 12km east from Kejo-numa, and Izu-numa and Uchi-numa 15km northeast.

Bean Goose featuring the lake:

Because Kejo-numa is not completely iced over even in the midwinter, it provides a resting site for a number of waterbird species including White-fronted Goose and Bean Goose. In particular, more than 2000 (max. 6000) of Bean Geese – in fact, most of those that fly to Japan – winter here every year. Thus, the lake has a high popularity among bird watchers, as much as Kabukuri-numa where White-fronted Geese have a rest and Izu-numa and Uchi-numa famous for swans. Bean Geese fly up very early in the morning, and come back to the lake very late at night.

From the Chojahara Service Area on the inbound line of the Tohoku Expressway, you can see a good view of Kejo-numa.

[Bean Goose *Anser fabalis*]

There are 4–5 subspecies. Of those, two subspecies that breed in the Kamchatka Peninsula visit Japan: *Anser fabalis serriostri* and *Anser fabalis middendorffii* (Middendorf's Bean Goose). *Anser fabalis serriostri* is approx. 85cm long, and has a dark brown body with fringes and orange-color bill tip, legs, and feet. It eats chiefly plants in meadows and rice paddies. Middendorf's Bean Goose has a larger bill and a longer neck than *Anser fabalis serriostri*, and the seeds and roots of Water Chestnut and Manchurian Wild Rice are its favorite.

Contact Information:

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