

One of the Japan's largest-scale mixed sphagnum bogs nestled in a basin between volcanic mountains

Kuju Bogatsuru and Tadewara-shitsugen Intermediate Moor

Geographical Coordinates: 33°06'N, 131°15'E (Bogatsuru); 33°07'N, 131°14'E (Tadewara) / Altitude: 1230-1270m (Bogatsuru); 1000-1040m (Tadewara) / Area: 91ha (Bogatsuru 53ha; Tadewara 38 ha) / Major Type of Wetland: Intermediate moors / Designation: Special Zone and Special Protection Zone of National Park / Municipalities Involved: Kokonoe Town and Taketa City, Oita Prefecture / Ramsar Designation: November 2005



Bogatsuru-shitsugen

Tadewara-shitsugen



cal and topographical features including reeds, and grasses species such as *Moliniopsis japonica* and Japanese silver grass *Miscanthus sinensis*, which are characteristic of this type of Japanese wetlands.

Scenery and Tourism:

The Bogatsuru and Tadewara-shitsugen are central attractions within Aso-Kuju National Park that draws 5 million visitors annually to its breathtaking landscape of smoking volcanoes, meadows, and forests, and inviting hot springs. Especially popular are the beginning of summer when the azaleas bloom, mid-summer for hiking, and autumn when the leaves change into brilliant colors. There is a visitor center at the focal point Chojabaru, and a walking path linking Bogatsuru and Tadewara-shitsugen. Bogatsuru also attracts tourists as a good camping site, and a local song in its praise is a favorite among those who love the wetlands of Kuju Mountains.

Meadow Burning:

In Bogatsuru and Tadewara-shitsugen, 74 species of fern and 493 seed plants have been recorded, as well as many rare plants such as the endangered *Geranium soboliferum* var. *Kiusianum* and the wild carrot *Ptychotis Sanicula*. In order to maintain this vegetation, terrestri-

alization of the wetlands into forests is hindered through annual meadow burning in spring by the local community.

[Intermediate Moor] Depending on the degree of development of peat strata, wetlands are classified as low moor, intermediate moor or high moor. Intermediate moors are midway in the process of going from being nutrient-rich (characteristic of low moor) to nutrient-poor (characteristic of high moor), when peat strata underwater begin to accumulate, and contact with groundwater decreases. *Moliniopsis japonica* is a dominant species commonly found in such wetlands.

Contact Information:

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Principal Features:

With volcanoes scattered throughout the Japanese Archipelago, Japan is appropriately called a "nation of volcanoes". In the center of the nation's third largest island of Kyushu, lies the Kirishima Volcanic Belt running north-south. On the north end of the belt is the Kuju mountain range, which is situated in southwestern Oita Prefecture bordering Kumamoto Prefecture.

Close to the summit of the mountain range, and down below at its base where springs flow are the areas where the mixed sphagnum bogs of Bogatsuru and Tadewara are formed. The former is found nestled in a basin between Mt. Mimata and other volcanic mountains. The latter is located in an alluvial fan below. These are considered to be the largest in scale of mountainous mixed sphagnum bog in Japan. The vegetation here represents a variety of geographi-