

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 38ha) / Major Type of Wetland: Intermediate moor / Designation: Special Zone and Special Protection Zone of National Park / Municipalities Involved: Kokonoe Town and Taketa City, Oita Prefecture / Ramsar Designation: November 2005 / Ramsar Criteria: 1



Bogatsuru-shitsugen

General Overview:

With volcanoes scattered throughout the Japanese Archipelago, Japan is appropriately called a “country of volcanoes”. In the center of the nation's third largest island, 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.

The two wetlands, Bogatsuru and Tadewara, are situated in this Mountain Range. The former is found nestled in a basin surrounded by Mt. Mimata and other volcanic mountains. The latter is located in an alluvial fan below with many springs. These are considered to be one of the largest mountainous intermediate moors in Japan. The vegetation here reflects a variety of geographical and topographical features. In addition to Reeds, it has grassland species such as *Moliniopsis japonica* and Japanese silver grass, surrounded by the shrubs of *Hydrangea paniculata* with Japanese Black Pine on exposed sediments, a characteristic vegetation of this type of wetlands in Japan.

Scenery and Tourism:

The two wetlands represent the main features within Aso-Kuju National Park that attracts 5 million visitors annually

to its breathtaking landscape of smoking volcanoes, meadows, forest and inviting hot springs. Especially popular periods are the beginning of summer when the Kyushu Azaleas bloom, mid-summer for trekking, and autumn when the leaves change into brilliant colors. There is a visitor center at Chojabaru starting point of a boardwalk linking Bogatsuru and Tadewara-shitsugen. Bogatsuru also attracts tourists as a good camping site, and people who love the Kuju Mountains sing a local song praising the mountains.

Meadow Burning:

In Bogatsuru and Tadewara-shitsugen, 74 species of fern and 493 species of seed plants have been recorded, as well as many rare plants such as the endangered *Geranium soboliferum* var. *Kiusianum* and the *Pterygopleurum neurophyllum*. In order to maintain this vegetation, and in order to hinder the forest spread into the wetland, the local community conducts a controlled burning in the meadow every spring.

[Intermediate Moor (mixed sphagnum bog)] According to the degree of development of peat strata, wetlands are classified into low moor, intermediate moor and high moor. Intermediate moors are in the midway of the transition from nutrient-rich (characteristic of low moor) to nutrient-poor (characteristic of high moor) as



Tadewara-shitsugen

peat strata accumulate in the water and eventually lose influences from groundwater. *Moliniopsis japonica* is a dominant species commonly found in such wetlands.

Contact Information:

Kokonoe Town Office
<http://www.town.kokonoe.oita.jp/>
Taketa City Office
<http://www.city.taketa.oita.jp/>

