

Kiritappu-shitsugen Salt Marsh, Brackish Lake, River, High Moor

Geographical Coordinates: 43°05'N, 145°05'E / Altitude: 0-3m / Area: 2504ha / Major Type of Wetland: Salt marsh, brackish lake, river, high moor, low moor / Designation: Special Protection Zone of National Wildlife Protection Area / Municipalities Involved: Hamanaka Town, Hokkaido Prefecture / Ramsar Designation: June 1993 / Ramsar Criteria: 1, 3



Dwarf Day-lilies in Kiritappu-shitsugen



Aerial view of Kiritappu-shitsugen (Photo by Fujita Printing Company)



Hare's Tail Cotton Grass

General Overview:

Kiritappu-shitsugen is a 3168ha marshland in eastern Hokkaido. It is situated along the coastline of Biwase Bay and Hamanaka Bay facing the Pacific Ocean. The Ramsar site covers an area of 2504ha including the main area of the marshland and two lakes, Lake Hichirippu and Lake Mochirippu, in the west. Within this area, 803ha is also designated as a national natural monument with the name "Peat bog plant communities in Kiritappu".

As eastern Hokkaido is one of the coldest areas in Japan, Kiritappu-shitsugen is bound with snow and ice in winter.

In spring and autumn, a number of migratory birds stop over the site. The marshland is an important habitat for Japanese cranes and this area is included in the Flyway Site Network under the Partnership for the East Asian-Australasian Flyway.

Marshland of Diverse Flowers:

From May to September, a number of colorful wetland flowers such as the Japanese Rose, Hare's Tail Cotton Grass, Arctic Iris, and Broad Dwarf Day-lily adorn the wetland, making it the site of visitors

Arctic Iris, *Iris setosa*



from all over the country.

Wetland Conservation by a NGO:

Most areas around Kiritappu-shitsugen are privately-owned. In 1986, an NGO called the "Kiritappu-shitsugen Fan Club" was established by locals to conserve the marshland by renting the properties. This unique approach attracted much public attention, resulting in increased membership of the club. In 2000, the Fan Club developed into an NPO named the "Kiritappu-shitsugen National Trust" and commenced a progressive land trust to purchase private properties.

Ecotourism:

A variety of ecotourism activities are offered by a local fishery cooperative, tour agencies and NPOs, which attract many

visitors from all over the country. The Kiritappu-shitsugen Center is a base for environmental education that displays exhibits of the marshland, organizes nature observation programs and conducts wetland research.

[Wetland Trust] Kiritappu-shitsugen is home to the first wetland trust in Japan. The NGO "Kiritappu-shitsugen National Trust" spearheads the activity and either rents or purchases the properties facing the development. Currently, an area of 690ha is protected by the trust.

Contact Information:

Hamanaka Town Office
<http://www.townhamanaka.jp/>

