

The World Heritage is an irreplaceable asset of mankind as a whole and is a treasure to be handed over to the future generations. The World Heritage includes cultural and natural heritage. To be inscribed on the World Heritage List as a natural site, it must meet one or more of the four criteria which are "topography / geography and geology", "ecosystem", "natural landscape," and "biodiversity." In Japan, Shiretoko, Shirakami-Sanchi and Yakushima have been inscribed as natural heritage.

**Criteria for World Heritages <Natural Heritages>**

Sites nominated should:

- N (i) be outstanding examples representing major stages of the earth's history, including the record of life, significant on going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features; or
- N (ii) be outstanding examples representing significant ongoing ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal, and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals; or
- N (iii) contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance; or
- N (iv) contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.

\* The criteria number will change after 2007.



**DATA** \_\_\_\_\_ P.16

**Yakushima**

Kagoshima Prefecture  
N30° 15' - N30° 23' E130° 23' - E130° 38'

Area: Approx. 10,700 ha  
Year of Inscription: 1993  
Criteria: N (ii)(iii)

Located in the interior of Yaku Island, at the meeting-point of the palaeartic and oriental biotic regions, Yakushima exhibits a rich flora, with some 1,900 species and subspecies, including ancient specimens of the sugi (Japanese cedar). It also contains a remnant of a warm-temperate ancient forest that is unique in this region.

L'île de Yakushima (Japon), située à l'interface des régions biologiques paléarctique et orientale, possède un site inscrit au patrimoine mondial. Elle possède une flore très riche de quelque 1900 espèces et sous-espèces, dont de très anciens spécimens de cèdre japonais. Le site contient également un vestige de l'ancienne forêt tempérée chaude, unique en Asie du Sud-Est.



**DATA** \_\_\_\_\_ P.10

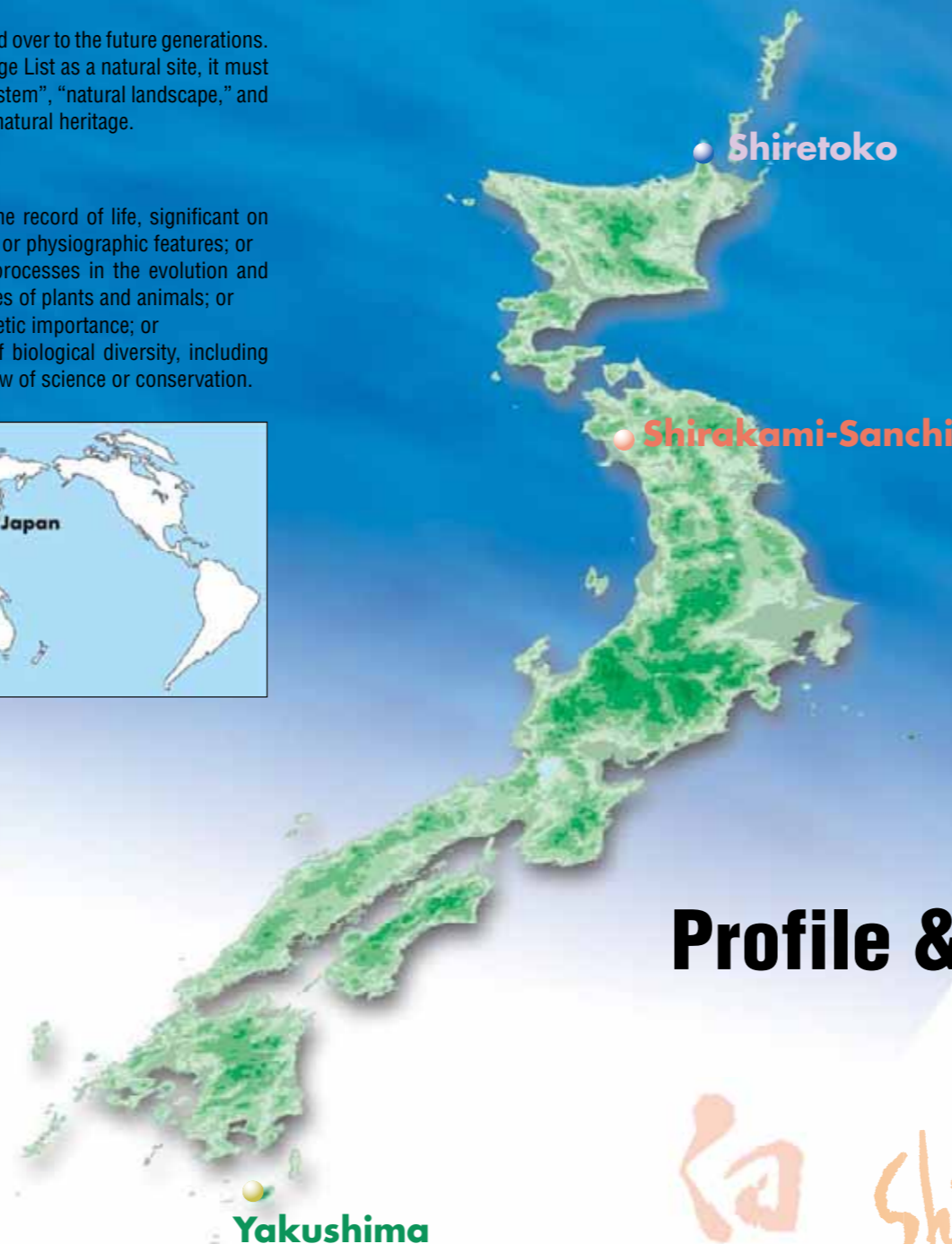
**Shirakami-Sanchi**

Aomori Prefecture, Akita Prefecture  
N40° 22' - N40° 32' E140° 02' - E140° 12'

Area: Approx. 17,000 ha  
Year of Inscription: 1993  
Criterion: N (ii)

Situated in the mountains of northern Honshu, this trackless site includes the last virgin remains of the cool-temperate forest of Siebold's beech trees that once covered the hills and mountain slopes of northern Japan. The black bear, the serow, and 84 species of birds can be found in this forest.

# Profile & Contents



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**Shiretoko**

Hokkaido Prefecture  
N43° 57' - N44° 21' E144° 58' - E145° 23'

Area: Approx. 71,000 ha  
Year of Inscription: 2005  
Criteria: N (ii)(iv)

Shiretoko Peninsula is located in northeast Hokkaido. The site includes the area extending from the central part of the peninsula to its tip (Shiretoko Cape) and the surrounding marine area. It provides an outstanding example of the interaction between marine and terrestrial ecosystems, as well as extraordinary ecosystem productivity largely influenced by the formation of seasonal sea ice at the lowest latitude in the northern hemisphere. It has particular importance for a number of marine and terrestrial species, some of them endangered and endemic, such as the Blakiston's fish-owl and the plant species *Viola kitamiana*. The site is globally important for threatened seabirds and migratory birds, many salmonid species, and a number of marine mammals, including the Steller sea lion, and some cetacean species.

La péninsule de Shiretoko est située au nord-est de Hokkaido au Japon. Le site comporte une zone terrestre qui s'étend de la partie centrale de la péninsule jusqu'à son extrémité (Cap Shiretoko) ainsi que la zone maritime environnante. Il donne un exemple remarquable de l'interaction des écosystèmes marins et terrestres ainsi que de la productivité extraordinaire d'un écosystème, largement influencée par la formation de glaces marines, à la plus basse des latitudes de l'hémisphère nord. Il revêt une importance particulière pour plusieurs espèces marines et terrestres, parmi lesquelles des espèces en danger et endémiques, comme le kétoupa de Blakiston et la plante *Viola kitamiana*. Le site est également d'importance mondiale pour des oiseaux migrateurs et des oiseaux de mer menacés, de nombreuses espèces de salmonidés et de mammifères marins, notamment le lion de mer de Steller, et des espèces de cétacés.

