

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

Geographical Coordinates: 43°05'N, 145°05'E / Altitude: 0-3m / Area: 2,504ha / 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 / EAAF Flyway Network Site



Hemerocallis dumortieri in Kiritappu-shitsugen



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



Hare's Tail Cotton Grass

General Overview:

Kiritappu-shitsugen is a 3,168ha 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 2,504ha, which includes the main area of the marshland and two lakes, Lake Hichirippu and Lake Mochirippu, which are located in the west. Within this area, 803ha is also designated as a national natural monument under the name "Peat bog plant communities in Kiritappu". In March 2021, the area was also designated as part of the "Akkeshi-Kiritappu-Konbumori Quasi-National Park," and is gaining recognition as a core feature of the area.

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 Crane.

Marshland of Diverse Flowers:

From May to September, many colorful wetland flowers such as the Japanese Rose, Hare's Tail Cotton Grass, Arctic Iris, and *Hemerocallis dumortieri* adorn the

wetland, making it an attractive site for visitors from across the country.

Wetland Conservation by a NGO:

Most of the areas surrounding Kiritappu-shitsugen are privately-owned. In 1986, an NGO called the "Kiritappu-shitsugen Fan Club" was established by locals to attempt to conserve the marshland by renting the properties in question. This unique approach attracted much public attention, resulting in high membership numbers for 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 on the marshland and organizes nature observation programs. The Hamanaka Town Office also provides academic research grants for wetland surveys and studies.

[Wetland Trust] Kiritappu-shitsugen is



Arctic Iris
(*Iris setosa*)

home to the first wetland trust in Japan. The NGO "Kiritappu-shitsugen National Trust" leads the activity and either rents or purchases the properties surrounding the development. By September 2021, an area of 1,063ha is protected by the trust.

Contact Information:

Hamanaka Town Office

<http://www.townhamanaka.jp/>

