

## Oku-Nikko-shitsugen

## High and Intermediate Moor, Freshwater Lake

Geographical Coordinates: 36°47'N, 139°26'E / Altitude: 1,475m (Yuno-ko), 1,400m (Senjogahara), 1,410m (Odashirogahara) / Area: 260.41ha (Yuno-ko 35.71ha, Senjogahara 174.68ha, Yukawa 5.3ha, Odashirogahara 44.72ha) / Major Type of Wetland: High moor, intermediate moor, freshwater lake / Designation: Special Protection Zone and Special Zone of National Park / Municipalities Involved: Nikko City, Tochigi Prefecture / Ramsar Designation: November 2005 / Ramsar Criteria: 1



Senjogahara

### General Overview:

Oku-Nikko-shitsugen is located 120km north of Tokyo, at an altitude of 1,400m. The wetland is located in a valley surrounded by mountains with an altitude of over 2,000m, including Mt. Nantai (2,486m) and Mt. Shirane (2,578m). The designated area has a volcanic lake called Yuno-ko, which has the Yukawa River flowing out from it, and the two major wetlands, Senjogahara and Odashirogahara.

Although Lake Yuno-ko is small with an area of 35ha, the natural condition of this freshwater lake is relatively good because there are no man-made buildings in its catchment area. The hot spring on the north shore of the lake supplies abundant hot water to the hotels on the waterfront. The lake drains into the Yukawa River through Yutaki Waterfall which is renowned for its scenic beauty and the beautiful blossom of *Rhododendron degranianum*. The Yukawa River flows through Senjogahara and replenishes the wetland.

### Senjogahara and Odashirogahara:

Senjogahara used to be a dammed lake formed by the volcanic eruption of Mt. Nantai. Layers of dead aquatic plants gradually accumulated over the lake to form a high moor. More than 100 species of wetland plants, such as Hare's Tail Cotton Grass and Japanese Azalea have been identified in the area. The plant community is pro-

tected by fences because the overpopulation of deer in this area has damaged the vegetation. Odashirogahara, adjacent to Senjogahara, is a wetland with a unique landscape which transitions into grassland. Transient lakes appear after a rain and both wetland and grassland plants are found in the same area, which features the characteristics of both habitats.

### Breathtaking Landscapes:

In addition to the diverse wetland vegetation, Oku-Nikko-shitsugen offers a magnificent natural landscape of mountains, rivers, and wetlands every season. Many tourists from Tokyo metropolitan area visit the area to enjoy the brilliantly colored autumn leaves. As the wetland is located in the neighborhood of famous tourist spots such as Lake Chuzenji-ko, Kegon-no-taki Waterfall, and Toshogu (one of Japan's World Heritage Sites), approximately 6 million tourists visit the area every year.

**[Autumn Leaves]** Japanese people have enjoyed the distinctive features of the four seasons since ancient times. One example of them is the colorful autumn leaves. The leaves of deciduous trees such as beech, oak and maple turn into brilliant hues of red and yellow when the temperature drops below 8 degrees C at the end of autumn. Oku-Nikko-shitsugen is famous for its autumn beauty and many people visit the area with their families to see the breathtaking

Autumn leaves at Yuno-ko



contrast between wetland and forest.

### Contact Information:

Nikko City Office

<https://www.city.nikko.lg.jp/>

