

Shiretoko

The Shiretoko Peninsula is located in the northeastern part of Hokkaido, and contains sheer cliffs, wetlands and lakes, and steep mountains of about 1,500m formed by volcanic activity. The World Heritage property is an area of approximately 71,100 ha that includes Shiretoko Peninsula, from the central part to the Shiretoko Cape at the tip, and the surrounding ocean.

La péninsule de Shiretoko, située dans la partie nord-est de Hokkaido, se compose de montagnes escarpées d'environ 1.500 m dues à l'activité volcanique, de falaises abruptes, de marécages et de lacs. Le site inscrit au Patrimoine mondial est une zone d'environ 71.100 ha qui inclut la péninsule de Shiretoko, depuis sa partie centrale jusqu'au cap de Shiretoko, son extrémité, ainsi que la mer qui l'entoure.

Lake Rausu

This is the largest lake in the Shiretoko Peninsula. The deep primeval forests of Erman's birch and Sakhalin fir are dotted with wetlands and snow patches, with the various different alpine plants in each of the seasons. The Lake Rausu Route requires equipment and experience for mountain climbing.

Shiretoko Rausu Visitor Center

The Shiretoko Rausu Visitor Center serves as the gateway to the Rausu side, and displays and explains information related to nature, culture, and usage. It also serves as a central base for the Wildlife Protection Area and for wildlife research.

Shiretoko World Heritage Rusa Field House

The Shiretoko World Heritage Rusa Field House conveys the natural magnificence from the tip of the Shiretoko Peninsula, the connections between the marine and terrestrial ecosystems, and the value of the ocean at Shiretoko, which has been closely involved in the lives of the people there. It also provides lectures on rules and manners.

Whale watching

Mink whales, Baird's beaked whales, sperm whales, killer whales, Dall's porpoises, Pacific white-sided dolphins, and harbor porpoises are mainly observed here. The peak time to see mink and killer whales is around May/June, and sperm whales around August/September.

Salmonids

Large shoals of salmonids swim upstream along the rivers to spawn from the end of September until early November. They are characteristic species that link marine and terrestrial ecosystems.

Steller sea lion

Herd of around 100 Steller sea lions which primarily consist of females migrate to the coastal waters of the Shiretoko Peninsula. They mate in the seas adjacent to Russia, and pregnant individuals come here to build up their nutritional reserves in order to give birth. In Shiretoko, they feed mainly on Walleye pollock.

Sea ice (drift ice)

The Sea of Okhotsk is located in the lowest latitude in the world where sea ice can form. The abundant plankton is brought about by this sea ice and form the basis of a rich marine ecosystem.

World Heritage property

- Area A: Area for strict protection
- Area B: Area for conservation and utilization

Rausu Town

Shari Town

Shiretoko World Heritage Conservation Center

Shiretoko World Heritage Conservation Center shows the attractions of nature in Shiretoko, as well as instructs rules and manners for enjoying nature in Shiretoko through virtual experiences using tablets and hands-on displays of educational stuffed animals. It also provides real-time information and the latest information on management of the property. * Refer to the back cover

Mt. Rausu

This is the main and the highest peak for the volcanic range on the Shiretoko Peninsula, 1,661 m in elevation. It is one of the 100 Famous Japanese Mountains. Adequate equipment and experience are essential for mountain climbing.

Shiretoko Goko Lakes

Here visitors can see the beautiful scenery of five lakes surrounded by primeval forests dotting the landscape, with the Shiretoko mountain range and primeval forests reflected in the surfaces of the lakes. The periods in which Shiretoko Goko Lakes is open is divided into two stages: the Bear Avenue Season and Ecosystem Aware Season, with visitors being required to apply certain entry procedures or take a lecture depending on the time period to use walks on the ground. Visitors are allowed to freely stroll along the elevated boardwalk on which an electrified fence for repelling bears has been installed. See the Shiretoko Goko Lakes Field House website for details. (https://www.goko.go.jp/multilingual_eng/)

Mt. Iou

Along with Mt. Rausu, this is one of the active volcanoes on the Shiretoko Peninsula. It also is one of the rare volcanoes in the world that spews out large quantities of high purity dissolved sulfur. It has an elevation of 1,562 m.

Kamuiwakka Hot Falls

Since the water contains sulfur content, it carries the meaning "water of the gods (spirits)" in the Ainu language. The entire river is like a hot spring. Visitors can enjoy river trekking with the proper equipment.

Viola kitamiensis

This species is distributed only on Shiretoko, Etorofu Island and Kunashiri Island. Viola kitamiensis communities can be seen on the volcanic wilderness of Mt. Iou, Mt. Higashi, Mt. Chienbetsu, and Mt. Minami, as well as on the windswept wilderness in the saddle between Mt. Onnebetsu and Mt. Chienbetsu.

Furepe Falls

In this waterfall, underground water flows down from the fissures in a cliff that rises up vertically for approximately 100 m. It is locally known as "Maiden's Tears."

Sea cliffs

On the Shiretoko Peninsula, precipitous cliffs were formed through a combination of volcanic activity and marine erosion. On the western coastline on the Utoro side, a series of cliffs of up to 200 m, various different waterfalls, and uniquely shaped rocks can be seen.

Yezo sika

This is one of the subspecies of the sika deer that is widely distributed from Vietnam to Far East Asia. This subspecies is the largest of the sika deer. In recent years, the increased populations have been causing damage to the forests and grasslands.

Brown bear

The Shiretoko Peninsula is one of the world's highest density regions for brown bears. Since they can make use of the bounty of the forests and the sea—including herbaceous plants from the coasts and high mountains, fruit and nuts from forests, and the salmon that swim upstream—they have more than 90 varieties of food resources at their disposal.

Blakiston's fish-owl

This is the world's largest owl. It is rare at the species level with only about 1,000 individuals in the world. There are about 165 birds living in Hokkaido, with about one-fourth of these inhabit the World Heritage property. Red List of the Ministry of the Environment Threatened I (CR) *Species facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the near future

White-tailed eagle

The white-tailed eagle is distributed widely in northern Eurasia. Shiretoko is an important breeding site with ample food resources and has one of the highest nesting densities in the world. Red List of the Ministry of the Environment Threatened II (VU) *Species facing a growing risk of extinction

Steller's sea eagle

This is a large eagle that only breeds in the far eastern areas of Russia. It is a rare species, with estimated about 5,000 individuals in the world. There are records of more than 2,000 wintering birds in the Shiretoko Peninsula. Red List of the Ministry of the Environment Threatened II (VU) *Species facing a growing risk of extinction



* Caution: During the wintertime, the Trans-Shiretoko Highway is closed.