

## Kejo-numa

## Water Storage Area, Permanent Freshwater Lake

Geographical coordinates: 38°37'N, 141°57'E / Altitude: 25.9m / Area: 34ha / Major type of wetland: Water storage area, permanent freshwater lake / Designation: Special Protection Area of National Wildlife Protection Area / Municipalities involved: Osaki City, Miyagi Prefecture / Ramsar designation: October 2008 / Ramsar Criteria: 2, 6 / EAAFP Flyway Network Site



View of Kejo-numa from the south

Full view of Kejo-numa



Bean Geese in the surrounding rice paddies

View of Kejo-numa from the west



### General Overview:

The Kitakami Plain in the north of Miyagi Prefecture in northern Honshu is a wet lowland formed by the rivers such as the Kitakami River running south from Iwate Prefecture, the Hasama River that runs from the border of Akita and Yamagata Prefectures to the east, and the Eai River. Because of repeated floods, fertile soil was deposited in the area, which developed into a productive rice field.

The Tajiri River, a tributary of Eai River, is a narrow river that also flooded many times because it runs through poorly drained lowland.

Kejo-numa is a dammed lake constructed for the purpose of irrigation and flood control of the Tajiri River. The lake is situated approximately 5km northwest of the center of Osaki City and has a circumference of approximately 4km. Originally, Kejo-numa was a natural lake, but was modified into an agricultural reservoir more than 300 years ago, and again underwent construction to be a dammed lake in 1995. There are no natural streams flowing into the lake and it is fed only by rainfall, spring water, and flooded water through the conduit.

### Favorable Habitat for Birds:

Kejo-numa is dominated by aquatic plant communities such as Lotus, Manchurian

Wild Rice, and Water Chestnuts. The lake also nourishes many rare species such as Water Clover, and Brittle Water nymph. It is a good habitat for fish and dragonflies as well.

The lake is surrounded by gentle hills and has an extensive rice paddy field in the east, which is one of the major wintering habitats for waterfowl in Japan. There are two more Ramsar sites in this region along with Kejo-numa; "Kabukuri-numa and the surrounding rice paddies" 12km east of Kejo-numa, and "Izu-numa and Uchi-numa" 15km northeast of it.

### A Lake of Bean Goose:

Because Kejo-numa does not completely freeze over even in midwinter, it is a good roosting site for a number of waterfowl including White-fronted Geese and Bean Geese. In particular, a large number of Bean Geese winter here, more than 2,000 every year and 6000 at the maximum, accounting for most of those that fly to Japan. Bird watchers love to watch them as much as the White-fronted Geese in Kabukuri-numa and the swans in Izu-numa and Uchi-numa. However, the Bean Geese here leave the lake very early in the morning and come back to the lake very late at night.

A complete view of Kejo-numa can be seen from the Chojahara Service Area on the inbound line of the Tohoku Expressway.

**[Bean Goose *Anser fabalis*]** There are 4 to 5 subspecies of this bird and two that breed in the Kamchatka Peninsula visit Japan: *Anser fabalis serrirostris* and *Anser fabalis middendorffii* (Middendorf's Bean Goose). *Anser fabalis serrirostris* is approximately 85cm long and has a dark brown body with stripes, an orange band in the bill and orange legs. It feeds mainly on plants in meadows and rice paddies. Middendorf's Bean Goose has a larger bill and a longer neck. It likes to eat the seeds and roots of Water Chestnuts and Manchurian Wild Rice.

### Contact Information:

Osaki City Office  
<http://www.city.osaki.miyagi.jp/>

