

Rishiri-Rebun-Sarobetsu National Park

National
Parks
of Japan



A national park is designated by the Japanese government as a natural landscape that represents Japan based on the Natural Parks Act. Thirty-five national parks are designated from Hokkaido in the north down to Okinawa and the Ogasawara Islands in the south, and more than 300 million people visit them every year. These national parks are full of precious treasures such as wild animals and plants, history and culture in addition to the scenic beauty. Japan's national parks are characterized by various environments such as forests, farmlands, villages, etc. While some are untouched, the local history and culture derived from nature and people's lives can be appreciated. Come visit our national parks to fully enjoy the beautiful nature of Japan that shows off various sceneries in each season.

Characteristics

**Vibrant Scenery and the Northernmost Park
Full of Flowers Created by Mt. Rishiri
— A northern island and wilderness with
splendid flower fields and the abundant seas —**

The Rishiri-Rebun-Sarobetsu National Park is Japan's northernmost national park boasting its varied landscape such as mountains, flower fields, sea cliffs, wetlands, and coastal sand dunes. Mt. Rishiri is a beautiful konide-type mountain, also known as Rishiri Fuji, which is a symbolic presence of the park. On the Rebun Island, alpine-flower fields, including valuable plants such as Rebun lady's slipper orchid can be appreciated in low-lying areas. Along the coast of Bakkai and Wakasakanai, lakes and wetlands are scattered between rows of belt-like sand dunes, and they present rare scenery, together with dune forests of *Quercus crispula* var. *crispula* and *Abies sachalinensis*. Sarobetsu-genya Plain has Japan's largest high moor spreading on a mire, and it is also an important stopover site of migratory birds such as geese and ducks.

[Date of Designation] September 20, 1974 [Relevant Prefectures] Hokkaido Pref.
[Area] 24,512 ha



Mt. Rishiri viewed from the Rebun Island

Terrain Geological Features Landscape

The Rishiri Island is a conical volcanic island with an outer circumference of approximately 60km consisting of Mt. Rishiri with an altitude of 1,721m, located approximately 20km away from the coast of northwest Hokkaido. It stands tall from the coast, and its towering appearance in the center of the landscape is a symbol of the park. While erosion has progressed and showing a rough appearance with deep valleys and sharp ridges in the mountainside and upper part of the mountain, lakes and wetlands as well as many spring water sources are scattered at the foot of the mountain. The Rebun Island is an elongated island located approximately 10km northwest of the Rishiri Island, with the size of approximately 8km in crosswise and approximately 29km in lengthwise. While the west side of the island is the topography of sea cliffs and odd-looking rocks, the grassland spreading from



Mt. Rishiri



West coast of the Rebun Island and the Cape Sukai

the west to the east side of the island drawing gentle curves is a treasure trove of alpine plants. In the area of coastal dunes, several rows of sand dune forests are developed in a belt-like fashion, over approximately 40km in length parallel to the coastline. In addition, there are several lakes and swamps in the dune forests presenting a unique landscape. Sarobetsu-genya Plain is a vast mire formed in the Sarobetsu River basin. Wetland vegetation spreads on the peat where the remains of plants have accumulated over the said 6,000 years. Together with the Kushiro-shitsugen Marsh and Ozegahara Marsh, it is representative wetland still remaining in Japan, with the largest area as a high moor. In addition, it shows the exceptionally large wetland landscape in the country including massive grooves and the Hitomi Swamp with one of the country's largest floating islands.



Lakes and swamps of coastal dune forests



Sarobetsu-genya Plain (Photograph provided by NPO Sarobetsu Eco Network)

Conservation Efforts

- Preservation of the Trails of Mt. Rishiri -
The upper part of Mt. Rishiri is formed of very fragile volcanic soil, and the erosion of the trails is worsened by various reasons including being stepped on by climbers. As a countermeasure, government organizations and local stakeholders have organized a council and have been working on repairing the trails by setting up a soil retaining system and vegetation nets. In addition, "Mt. Rishiri KOMADORI Project" began in 2014, and the sales proceeds of the badges have been used for preservation of the trails. (KOMADORI stands for "problem solving" in this case).

**- Cooperative Management of
the Rebun Island Nature Trails -**
Government organizations and local stakeholders are cooperating to manage the trails on the Rebun Island. Efforts are underway to further conserve the natural environment and secure users' safety by uniform release of information on the rules of use and difficulty level of each trail as determined by all the concerned parties.

- Sarobetsu Nature Restoration Project -
In the mires of the Sarobetsu area, problems such as the drying of wetlands and damage to high moor vegetation due to human activities including agricultural land development and river modification have been pointed out. Therefore, nature restoration projects such as countermeasures to the drying of the wetlands and regeneration of peat harvesting sites with the cooperation of academic experts, administrative agencies, local dairy farmers, etc. have been enacted.



Preservation of the Trails of Mt. Rishiri

Contact List

Hokkaido Regional Environment Office
Wakkanai Ranger Office
Wakkanai Regional Joint Government Building, Suchiro 5-6-1,
Wakkanai City, Hokkaido Prefecture
097-8527
TEL: 0162-33-1100
E-mail: RO-WAKKANAI@env.go.jp

Hokkaido Regional Environment Office
3F, Sapporo Joint Government Building No.1
North 8 West 2 Kita Ward, Sapporo City, Hokkaido Prefecture
060-0808
TEL: 011-299-1950
URL: <https://hokkaido.env.go.jp/>

Rishiri-Rebun-Sarobetsu National Park Website



[VR 360-degree]
Welcome to Rishiri-Rebun-Sarobetsu
National Park



Cycling in
Rishiri Island



Trekking in
Rebun Island



Sarobetsu
Adventure travel

For Safe Travel
Please download below application in order to get information about warning for earthquake, volcanoes, tsunami and so on.

・Android: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=jp.co.nsc.safetyTips.android>
・iPhone: <https://itunes.apple.com/jp/app/safety-tips/id858357174?mt=8>



Supported by Japan Tourism Agency (<https://www.jnto.go.jp/safety-tips/eng/app.html>)

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* Please note that the highlights & guide map's purpose is to show an overview of the designated area; therefore, a margin of error shall be allowed.

Wild Animals and Plants Ecosystem

Both Rishiri Island and Rebun Island grow their own unique plants that have uniquely evolved due to the cold climatic conditions and the geographical conditions of an isolated island. In addition to *Papaver fauriei*, the endemic species, *Trollius altaicus* subsp. *pulcher* which can only be found in Mt. Rishiri in Japan are growing near the mountaintop. On the Rebun Island, many endemic species and alpine plants such as Rebun lady's slipper orchid and *Primula farinosa* subsp. *modesta* var. *matsumurae* grow, and they decorated the island also known as "the floating island of flowers." Wetland plants such as Amur Daylily, Small Cranberry, and Common Sundew bloom in the vast Sarobetsu-genya Plain in summer, attracting many visitors. One of the world's smallest mammals, the Eurasian Least Shrew along with Viviparous Lizard a reptile domestically

found only in the northern part of Hokkaido, are inhabit Sarobetsu-genya Plain as well as the coastal dune forest areas. There are also valuable breeding grounds for Yellow-breasted Bunting, etc., and the nesting of Japanese Crane has been confirmed in recent years. The habitat of rare wild birds such as White-tailed Eagle, Black Woodpecker, and Yellow Wagtail have been confirmed on both Rishiri Island and Rebun Island. These along with Sarobetsu-genya Plain are also important stopover sites for migration of Tundra Swan. Changes in vegetation due to altitude can be easily observed since Mt. Rishiri is an independent peak. When climbing a little from the coast, it changes to mixed coniferous-deciduous forests mainly consisting of *Abies sachalinensis*. Once it goes above the altitude of 500m, forests of Erman's Birch and Maximowicz's Alder can be found, and areas of Siberian dwarf pines and flower fields



Papaver fauriei



Trollius altaicus subsp. pulcher



Rebun lady's slipper orchid



Primula farinosa subsp. modesta var. matsumurae



Leontopodium discolor



Amur Daylily



Yellow-breasted Bunting



Japanese Crane



White-tailed Eagle



Black Woodpecker



Yellow Wagtail



Viviparous Lizard

of alpine plants can be found above the altitude of 1,100m. On the Rebun Island, cold climatic conditions and strong westerlies create windswept grasslands around the entire island, and alpine vegetation emerges from 0 meter above the sea level. The Rebun Island is also known as "the floating island of flowers" since many flowers including species only unique to the Rebun Island bloom all over the island in summer. Sarobetsu-genya Plain is one of Japan's largest wetlands with lakes and swamps in various sizes, and it has become an important habitat for many wild birds, including waterfowls such as the Bean Goose. Thus, it was registered as a Ramsar site in 2005 and was also selected as an important wild bird habitat by BirdLife International (an international environmental NGO working towards conservation of birds and their habitats).



Windswept grassland of the Rebun Island



Bean Goose flying over Sarobetsu-genya Plain

Culture

The waters surrounding the Rishiri Island and Rebun Island are the home of Rishiri Kombu, famous high-grade kelp. The scenery of drying kelp all over the islands is a summer tradition. In addition, the sea urchin fishing is actively conducted, and it has become the main fishery resource of the islands. On the other hand, the inland area on the mainland side is one of the largest dairy farm areas in Hokkaido, and its milk and butter products are shipped all over the country. Peat had been harvested until 2002 in the Sarobetsu wetland, and the harvested peat was processed as a soil conditioner and fuel and shipped to various places. Currently, restoration efforts are promoted at the site of harvesting for vegetation recovery.



Drying of Kelp on the Rishiri Island



Peat Harvesting Site



Dairy Farming of Sarobetsu-genya Plain

National Parks Etiquette

Please keep in mind the importance of nature and observe the following while staying in the national park so that everyone can enjoy.



Do not litter.



Do not pick flowers and plants.



Do not feed any wildlife.



No smoking is permitted while walking.



Bonfires shall be built within the designated area only.

Please observe the following "Rishiri Rules" when climbing Mt. Rishiri.

・Use your own portable toilet

Portable toilets can be purchased at various locations on the island.

Booths designated for using portable toilets are set up along the trail, and a collection booth for used portable toilets is set up at the starting point of the trail.

・Apply caps on the tips of trekking poles

The sharp tip of the trekking pole digs up fragile soils, which is likely to promote the collapse.

When using trekking poles, please make sure to apply caps on the tips.

・Do not sit nor step on the plants

In order not to damage plants and to prevent soil erosion as much as possible, please stay on the trail.



Located in the northernmost part of the island, it is the starting point for a trekking course around Cape Gorota and Cape Sukai. It is a relaxing place with the view of Todo-jima Island and the clear blue sea.



Rebus lady's slipper orchid is designated as a domestic endangered species by the Law of the Conservation of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, and places, where it grows, are limited even on the Rebus Island. Rebus lady's slipper orchid can be seen up close from the wooden path in the colony.



This is a scenic spot overlooking the beautiful sea and odd-looking rocks with characteristic shapes such as the gigantic peach-shaped rock (Momoiwa) and cat-shaped rock (Nekoiwa) rising from the sea.



Splendid flower fields of Leontopodium discolor and Rebus Globeflower as well as beautiful seas and cliffs can be appreciated along this trekking course in the south of the Rebus Island.



Situated at the starting point of the Kutsugata course on Mt. Rishiri, the observatory located about 10 minutes away offers a view of towering Mt. Rishiri up close and the scenery of the Sea of Japan spreading below.



Kanro-Sensui is a spring water flowing out near the third station of Mt. Rishiri's Oshidomari course, and this water of the northernmost is also selected as one of the 100 best waters of Japan by the Ministry of the Environment.



Mt. Rishiri has two trails: the Oshidomari course climbing from the north shore and the Kutsugata course climbing from the west shore. Both courses take about five hours each to the top. A dynamic mountain climbing with the views of the seas, which is unique to the independent peak rising on the sea, can be enjoyed in addition to the healing effects of flower fields of alpine plants at the top.

[Note]
* Please do observe "Rishiri Rules" (see "National Parks Etiquette" on the front) when climbing.
* Be cautious of falling rocks and falls as the vicinity of the summit, whose collapse is severe, has continuous scree and narrow ridges.
* Extra caution is necessary as there are dangerous places such as steep rocky areas higher than Mt. Sancho.



Located approximately 10 minutes by car from the Oshidomari Port, a walk around the quiet lakeside surrounded by forests can be enjoyed. There are also many wild birds such as Black Woodpecker, and it is ideal for bird watching.



Located in the southeast of the island, you can enjoy a walk around the lakeside while watching Mt. Rishiri reflecting on the surface of the lake. There is also a small shop in the parking lot, and it is one of the main tourist destinations of the island.



Located along the Ororon Line (prefectural road No.106), a walk around the swamp as well as scenery from the rooftop of the rest area, overlooking Mt. Rishiri floating across the Sea of Japan, can be appreciated.



You can walk around the wooden path of approximately 1km to enjoy Amur Daylily in summer. In addition, small high moor plants such as Small Cranberry and Common Sundew, can be found.



The vicinity of Pankenuma Swamp, which is the largest swamp in Sarobetsu-genta plain, many waterfowls can be observed during their migration period, and Mt. Rishiri across the swamp can be appreciated.

| Information | Facilities |
|-------------|------------|
|-------------|------------|



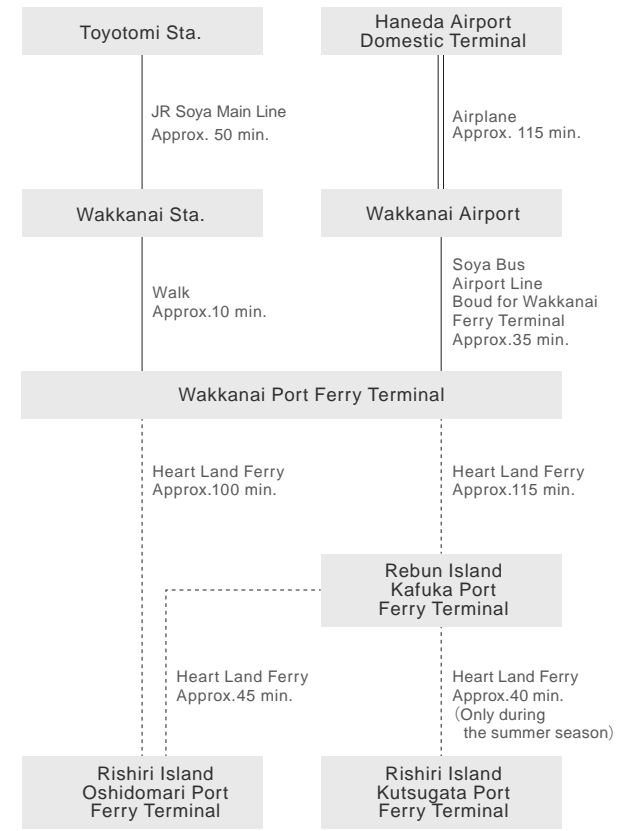
Horonobe Visitor Center | E5
Shimonuma, Horonobe Town, Teshio County, Hokkaido Prefecture
098-3228
[TEL] 01632-5-2077
[Open] May to October
Closed during winter (November to April)
HOURS: 9:00 - 17:00
[Closed] Open daily during the operating period



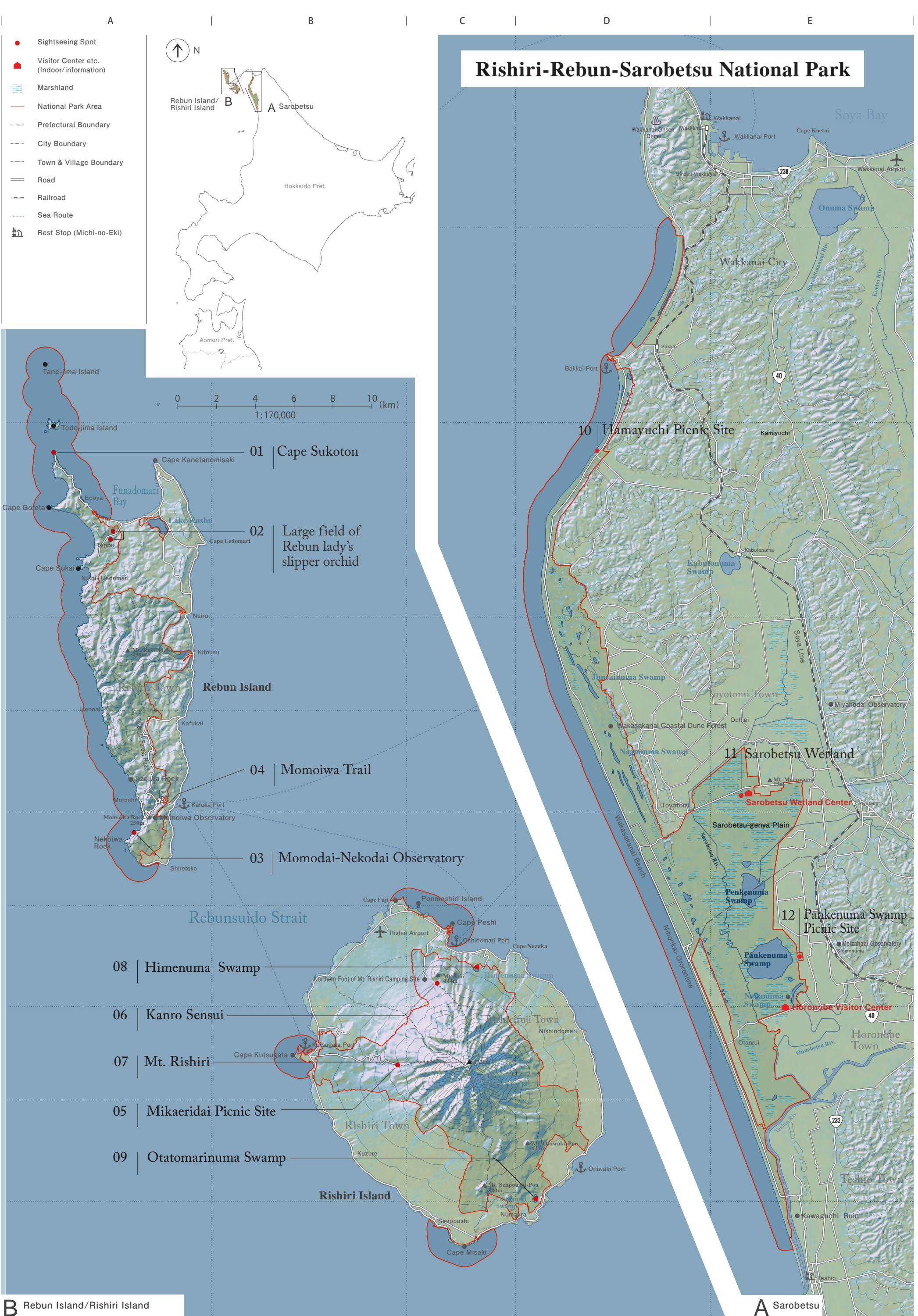
Sarobetsu Wetland Center | E4
Kami-Sarobetsu, Toyotomi Town, Teshio County, Hokkaido Prefecture
098-4100
[TEL] 0162-82-3232
[Open] May to October - 9:00 to 17:00
November to April - 10:00 to 16:00
[Closed] May to October - Open daily
November to April - Mondays

* Operating period or hours are subject to change without notice. Please directly contact each facility for the latest details.

| Access | Transportation |
|--------|----------------|
|--------|----------------|



* The access route above is an example. The time required for each section is an estimate only. Please contact each transportation company or check their websites for more information.



Please contact each responsible ranger office or regional environment office of the Ministry of the Environment for area details.