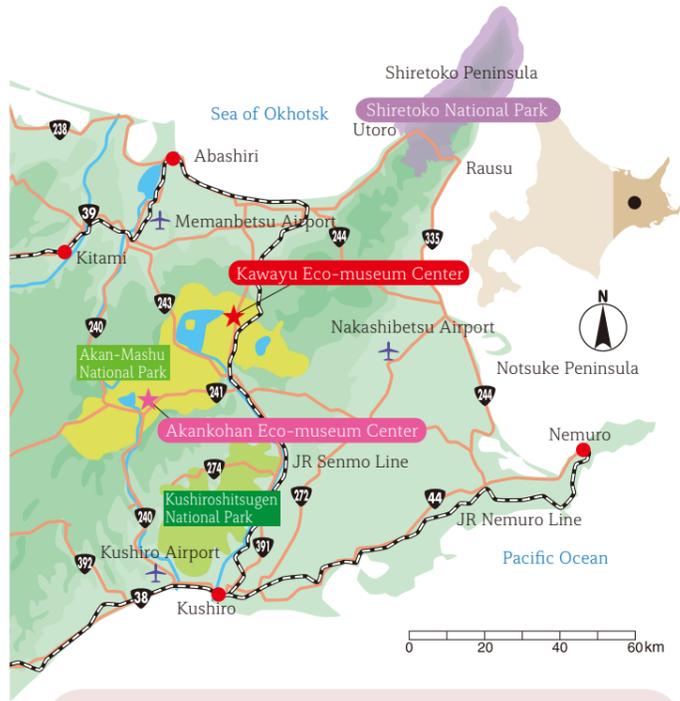


Kawayu Eco-museum Center: The Gateway to Akan-Mashu National Park

The best place to begin an adventure at Akan-Mashu National Park is the Kawayu Eco-museum Center. This facility introduces the region's nature and rich history through detailed dioramas and displays. Since the park covers 914 square kilometers and has numerous natural attractions, planning a tour may seem overwhelming, but the Kawayu Eco-museum's wealth of available information and knowledgeable staff make it easy for visitors to craft the ideal itinerary for exploring the park. There is also a bright and airy café space where guests can relax.



Access

Kushiro Station: approx. 1hr.50min. by train
 Kawayu onsen Station: approx. 5min. by car
 Kushiro Airport: approx. 1hr.40min. by car
 Abashiri Station: approx. 1hr.50min. by train
 Memambetsu Airport: approx. 1hr.10min. by car
 Nakashibetsu Airport: 1hr.20min. by car
 Mashu Station: approx. 30min. by car
 Akanko Onsen: 1hr.10min. by car

Opening days and hours: Summer (Apr.—Oct.): 8:00—17:00
 Winter (Nov.—Mar.): 9:00—16:00
 Closed: Wednesdays (the following day if Wednesday is a national holiday; open every day from the 3rd week of July to the end of Aug.)
 Admission fee: free

Kawayu Eco-museum Center
 2-2-6. Kawayu Onsen, Teshikaga-cho, Kawakami-gun, Hokkaido 088-3645, JAPAN
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Akan-Mashu National Park

Kawayu Eco-museum Center

Ministry of the Environment

Lake Mashu is renowned for the crystal clarity of its waters. Its waters, which consist almost entirely of rainwater, have a deep blue hue so special that it is termed "Mashu blue."

There are numerous campsites and outdoor hot-spring baths on the Kussusharo lakeshore, and in the winter (from around November to March), many people visit the lake to see the whooper swans that migrate here in large numbers from Siberia.

The Wakoto Peninsula was once a volcanic islet within Lake Kussusharo. Sediment gradually accumulated between the islet and the shore, connecting them to create the peninsula.

Kawayu Onsen

The Kawayu Onsen area lies directly north of Mt. Io. Natural spring water from the still-active volcano flows below ground and is pumped up to fill the hot-spring baths of local hotels. The sulfurous and acidic quality of the waters is beneficial for the skin.

Tsujsujigahara

The Labrador tea plants at the base of Mt. Io cover an area of around 1 square kilometer, and when they bloom in June, their white flowers, which resemble cotton balls, carpet the area.

Mt. Io (Atosa-nupuri)

Mt. Io (Sulfur Mountain) is called Atosa-nupuri (Bare Mountain) in the Ainu language because of its barren, rocky face. Hot steam escapes from the earth through 1,500 "fumaroles" (small vents) of various sizes. The air is heavy with the distinct odor of sulfur, and the bright yellow vents create an otherworldly sight.

This park is an ideal destination for travelers looking for adventure in the outdoors. Akan-Mashu National Park is spread across 914 square kilometers of volcanic terrain formed by major eruptions some hundreds of thousands of years ago. The park offers plenty of opportunities for outdoor recreation, including hiking and walking, canoeing, horseback riding, camping, and fishing, as well as all manner of winter sports from around December to March.

The Akan-Mashu National Park is a hot-spring haven, with multiple sources found throughout the park. There are free footbaths and outdoor baths, as well as hot-spring hotels, in most areas. After a day of hiking or exploring, a dip in one of these mineral-rich baths can help soothe tired muscles.

— Sakhalin Spruce Nature Trail (Short Course)

— Sakhalin Spruce Nature Trail (Long Course)

— Tsujsujigahara Nature Trail

Map labels include: National Route 391, Lake Mashu approx. 15km, Taiho Sumo Memorial Museum, Labrador tea, Kawayu Eco-museum Center, Kawayu Onsen Foot Bath, Forest of Sakhalin Spruce, Japanese stone pine, Osmundastrum cinnamomeum var. fokenense, Mt. Io Rest House, Mt. Io Tunnel Trail, Lake Mashu Observation Deck No.3, Kawayu Onsen Station, Wako Field House, Teshikaga, Sunayu, Lake Kussusharo, Wako Peninsula, Mt. Mokoto, Mt. Boshu, Mt. Meboshi, Mt. Mebuto, Mt. Meio.

Kid's space

The kids' play area is stocked with picture books and toys for young children. This cozy space with a fireplace provides children and parents a nice relaxing time in rainy or cold days.



Gear Rental



For visitors in need of rain gear, rental of waterproof jackets and pants in all sizes are available so that everyone can enjoy the park regardless of the weather.

Information Counter



Ecomuseum staff are highly knowledgeable about the local area and are happy to answer any questions.

Nature craft



The Kawayu Eco-museum is fun for families. Older kids (and adults) can express their creativity by making pinecone art at the nature craft corner. We recommend you to start gathering craft materials in the woods just behind the ecomuseum.



Start from here!



The Kawayu Eco-museum is the perfect starting point to explore Akan-Mashu National Park. Learn about the many seasonal tours available in the park, including canoeing adventures, nature walks, and stargazing tours.

Discover



The ecomuseum has a diverse range of pamphlets and other literature about the park in both English and Japanese, and visitors can browse through the material to plan a tour of the park. Information on everything from the park's giant caldera lakes to its volcanoes and mountainous terrain is available. Information boards contain in-depth information about the park's flora and fauna.

Exhibition space

The ecomuseum's exhibition space introduces the nature and history of Akan-Mashu National Park. Violent volcanic eruptions have shaped the area and the sulfur-mining industry put Kawayu on the map. Exhibitions also highlight the interesting local wildlife, the distinctive flora that thrives here despite the harsh volcanic environment, and the culture of the indigenous Ainu people who have hunted and gathered here for centuries.



Sakhalin Spruce



Mt. Io



Sakhalin taimen



Plant specimen

Special exhibition area



In this corner, you can learn about the history and culture of this region. There are old tools, posters, and even displays handmade by members of staff.

Kawayu Onsen Information



Information on the history of Kawayu Onsen and hot springs dotting the area around Lake Kussharo is available here. Search for the hot spring you like most.

Videos



Before exploring the outdoors, please come to the 2nd floor to watch videos about the national park's natural features and ecosystems, as well as the different activities to enjoy while here.



Café & Community space



The cafe has seating for 20, and provide a view of the Sakhalin spruce woods as you enjoy a moment of relaxation with coffee roasted in Teshikaga town and treats like French toast made with local ingredients.

Guided walk

Ecomuseum staff can guide visitors along the Sakhalin Spruce Nature Trail, a short round-trip trek through the Sakhalin spruce forest behind the museum. (Reservations are not required for a guided tour during quiet times.)
Fees: Free of charge
Time required : approx.15-30min.
This program may be cancelled depending on the circumstances.

