

How to enjoy birding in the Soya Region



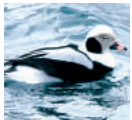
White-tailed Eagle and Steller's Sea Eagles

From November to December and March, White-tailed Eagles and Steller's Sea Eagles migrating between Hokkaido and Sakhalin can be seen around Cape. The Masuhiro River area is a stopover site for both species; birders can observe numerous eagles between November and December, and during March, when the river is not frozen. The coast along Teshio to Wakkanai is another gathering area for both the white-tailed and Steller's sea eagles, especially if there are carcasses that washed ashore. Beware of obstructing traffic if you stop along the road to watch the birds.



Geese and Swans

Bean Goose and Greater White-fronted Goose and Tundra Swan and Whooper Swan stay in Soya area between April and early May, and between mid September and mid October, migration season. Geese can be seen pastureland around the major stopover sites, Lake Kabutonuma in Toyotomi, Penke Marsh in Horonobe (inaccessible), and Furaol Marsh in Teshio. The swans can be seen in the major stopover sites, Lake Onuma in Wakkanai, Lake Poro in Sarufutsu, and near Lake Kutcharo in Hamatonbetsu. In areas between those stopover sites, the birds can occasionally be seen flying overhead. When the snow starts to melt in spring, geese and swans gather at plain comprised of flooded pastureland by meltwater. When you watch birds near the pastureland, it is important not to enter the pasture land, and to make sure you do not obstruct tractors and other farm vehicles. It is also important to make sure you do not frighten the birds.



Long-tailed Ducks and other diving ducks

Between December and March, dozens of long-tailed ducks can be seen in the Fukuko Port of Wakkanai. Besides them, you may be able to see a number of other diving ducks including the Harlequin Duck, and occasionally the White-winged Scoter, Common Guillemot, and Spectacled Guillemot. When birding in the port, please be mindful of the fishermen and others who are working, so as not to disturb or get in the way of their work.



Black Woodpeckers

Black woodpeckers inhabit forest near Himenuma Marsh, and Kanro Sensui Spring in Rishiri Island, and near Kafukai Midorioka Park in Rebun Island. During breeding season from spring through summer, it is important not to approach their nesting trees, as you don't disturb them.



Yellow-breasted Buntings and Yellow Wagtails

Yellow-breasted buntings can be seen mainly in June, along the boardwalk at Sarobetsu Wetland Center, Toyotomi. They are an endangered species, only found here in Japan. Utmost consideration is required when observing them, so as not to disturb the birds.

Yellow wagtails can be found along the boardwalk at Meguma Marsh in Wakkanai, Beniya Genseikaen in Hamatonbetsu, and along the boardwalk at the Horonobe Visitor Center in Horonobe. When they fly around you with warning, this could indicate there is a nest nearby, and then you should not stay long, or move on and give them space.

Facility Overview

Onuma Bird House Waterfowl Observatory

Oaza Koetomura Aza Kotetoi-genya, Wakkanai, Hokkaido 097-0000
TEL: 0162-26-2965
Hours: 9:00 - 17:00
Open: January 29 - November 25 *Closed between March 1 - 24
Holidays: No holidays during open season.

Sarobetsu Wetland Center

Kami Sarobetsu 8662, Toyotomi Teshio-gun, Hokkaido 098-4100
TEL: 0162-82-3232
Open: November - April : 10:00 - 16:00/ Holidays: Monday
May - October : 9:00 - 17:00 No holidays
*Hours for June and July are 8:30 - 17:30.

Horonobe Visitor Center

Aza Shimonuma, Horonobe Teshio-gun, Hokkaido 098-3228
TEL: 01632-5-2077 Hours: 9:00 - 17:00
Open: May - October (no holidays during open season)

Hamatonbetsu Lake Kutcharo Waterfowl Observatory

Kutcharo-kohan, Hamatonbetsu Esashi-gun, Hokkaido 098-5739
TEL: 01634-2-2534 Hours: 9:00 - 17:00
Holidays: Mondays, the day after national holidays, New Year holidays

Rishiri Town Museum

Senhoshi Aza Honcho 136, Rishiri Rishiri-gun, Hokkaido 097-0311
TEL: 0163-85-1411 Hours: 9:00 - 17:00
Open: May 1 - November 30
Holidays: Monday, the day after national holidays.
Open everyday during July and August.

Websites



Inquiries

Greater Kita Soya Tourism Promotion Association

Office: Inside the Wakkanai Tourism Association
KITAcOLOR 1F, Chuo 3-chome 6-1, Wakkanai 097-0022
TEL: 0162-24-1216 FAX: 0162-24-0016
E-mail: info@welcome.wakkanai.hokkaido.jp

NPO Sarobetsu Eco Network

Aza Toyotomi Higashi 2 Jo 5-chome, Toyotomi Teshio-gun, Hokkaido 098-4122
TEL: 0162-82-3950 FAX: 0162-82-1009

Birdwatching in Kita Soya



Steller's Sea Eagle
(Provided by Sarobetsu Eco Network)



Black Woodpecker
(Photo by Kenji Murakami)



Eastern Marsh Harrier
(Provided by Sarobetsu Eco Network)



Bean Goose (Photo by Makoto Hasebe)



Yellow Wagtail



Long-tailed Duck (Photo by Makoto Hasebe)



Eurasian Hoopoe
(Photo by Kenji Murakami)



Yellow-breasted Bunting
(Provided by Sarobetsu Eco Network)

Greater Kita Soya Area Tourism Promotion Association

Species	Spring and Fall	Summer	Winter
Sooty Shearwater	H	H	
Short-tailed Shearwater	H	H	
Black-legged Kittiwake	H	H	H
Pomarine Skua	H	H	
Rhinoceros Auklet		ABCGH	
Common Guillemot/Spectacled Guillemot			BCH
Ancient Murrelet	H		H
White-winged Scoter			BC
Harlequin Duck	G	G	BCFG
Long-tailed Duck			B
Japanese Crane		A	
Whooper Swan	ABDE		
Tundra Swan	ABDE		
Greater White-fronted Goose	A		
Bean Goose	A		

Species	Spring and Fall	Summer	Winter
Red-necked Grebe		AG	
Japanese Snipe		ABDEFG	
Steller's Sea Eagle			ABCDEFG
White-tailed Eagle	ABCDEFG	ABCDEFG	ABCDEFG
Eastern Marsh Harrier		ABDE	
Hen Harrier	A		
Rough-legged Buzzard	A		
Short-eared Owl			A
Eurasian Hoopoe	FG		
Eurasian Wryneck		AF	
Black Woodpecker	FG	DFG	FG
Yellow Wagtail	G	ABD	
Eurasian Jay	ABCDEFG	ABCDEFG	ABCDEF
Spotted Nutcracker	FG	FG	
Long-tailed Tit	ABCDEF	ABCDEFG	ABCDEF

Species	Spring and Fall	Summer	Winter
Middendorf's Grasshopper Warbler		ABDEFG	
Grey's Grasshopper Warbler		ABCDEFG	
Lanceolated Warbler		ABDE	
Japanese Waxwing/Bohemian Waxwing	FG		
Siberian Rubythroat		ABCDEFG	
Japanese Robin		ABCDEFG	
Siberian Blue Robin		ABCDE	
Red-flanked Bluetail	FG	F	
Lapland Bunting	G		
Snow Bunting	G		ABDE
Yellow-throated Bunting	G		
Yellow-breasted Bunting		A	
Grey Bunting		FG	
Common Redpoll	G		ABDE

Kita Soya Wild Bird Birdwatching Sites

The Soya region is located in the international important flyway of birds that travel from Hokkaido to Russia via Sakhalin. There are Rishiri and Rebun Islands in the Sea of Japan, westside of Soya Strait, and there is Sarobetsu Wetland in the southwest. On the shores along the Sea of Okhotsk in the south east, there are Lake Kutcharo in Hamatonbetsu and Lake Poro in Sarufutsu. These areas are mainly comprised of beaches, pasturelands, wetlands, marshes and lakes, while forests cover the central range. On Rishiri Island there is Mt. Rishiri, 1700 meter high, and on Rebun Island there are steep cliffs in the west side of the island.

Sakhalin

Major flyways for migratory birds in Hokkaido

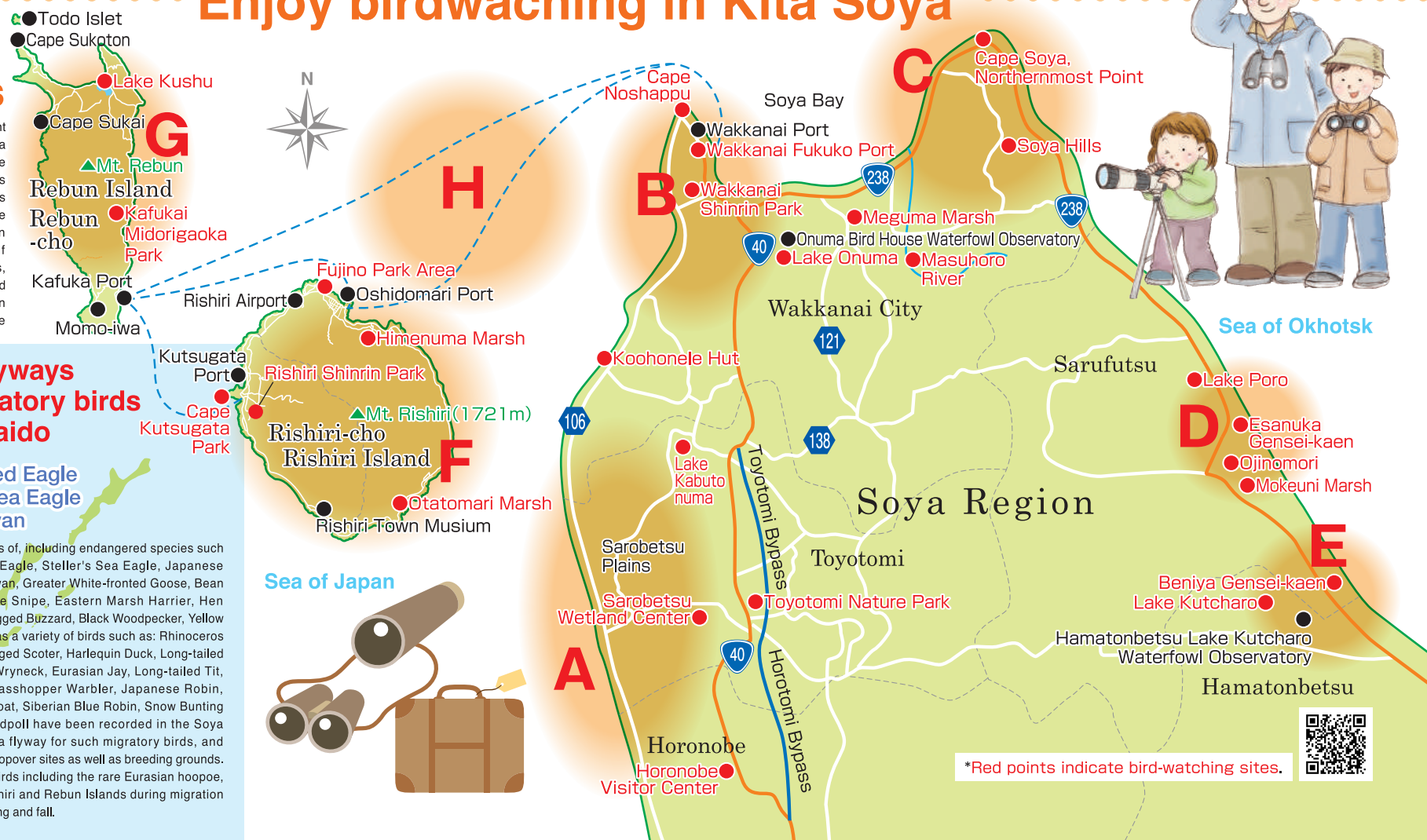
White-tailed Eagle
Steller's Sea Eagle
Tundra Swan

About 230 species of, including endangered species such as: White-tailed Eagle, Steller's Sea Eagle, Japanese Crane, Tundra Swan, Greater White-fronted Goose, Bean Goose, Japanese Snipe, Eastern Marsh Harrier, Hen Harrier, Rough-legged Buzzard, Black Woodpecker, Yellow Wagtail, as well as a variety of birds such as: Rhinoceros Auklet, White-winged Scoter, Harlequin Duck, Long-tailed Duck, Eurasian Wryneck, Eurasian Jay, Long-tailed Tit, Middendorf's Grasshopper Warbler, Japanese Robin, Siberian Rubythroat, Siberian Blue Robin, Snow Bunting and Common Redpoll have been recorded in the Soya region, which is a flyway for such migratory birds, and where there are stopover sites as well as breeding grounds. Many migratory birds including the rare Eurasian hoopoe, pass through Rishiri and Rebun Islands during migration season in the spring and fall.

Greater White-fronted Goose
Bean Goose

Hokkaido

Enjoy birdwaching in Kita Soya



*Red points indicate bird-watching sites.

