Join us for an adventure in a unique land filled with beauty, an exotic culture and colorful traditions. Hokkaido is the Japan of wide-open spaces, with 20% of the country’s land area but only 5% of its population. There are large swaths of wilderness here, with primeval forests, tropical-blue caldera lakes, fields of alpine flowers and bubbling, in-the-rough hot springs. We’ll explore the dynamic urban city of Sapporo with its thriving food scene, stylish cafes, shopping
galore and easy access to the mountains. Two of the islands most beautiful National Parks will be our “home away from home” as well as a stay on the island of Teuri where we’ll have the opportunity to go night walking to spot the elusive rhinoceros auklet, a seabird that is a close relative to a puffin.

We’ll fly into Sapporo, the capital of Hokkaido, and travel around the island in our own privately chartered bus. An English speaking local guide will be with us throughout the trip to enhance our knowledge and appreciation of the Japanese culture as well as to assist on our hikes. At the end of the trip we’ll fly home from Kushiro airport.

For detailed background information about each days’ destination, please refer to the end of this document.

**Detailed itinerary:**

**DAY 1- Jun 14, 2020**

Depart USA for Sapporo, Japan

**DAY 2- Jun 15, 2020**

Arrive in Sapporo, Japan and settle into our hotel. In the afternoon, if time permits, we’ll travel by coach to the south of Sapporo and explore the Tarumae Garo area. In the evening we’ll have our “Welcome” group dinner and the first of our nightly meetings.

Hotel: Karaksa Hotel Sapporo or similar [https://Karaksahotels.com/sapporo/](https://Karaksahotels.com/sapporo/)

Meals: Dinner

**DAY 3- June 16, 2020**

Our first full day in Sapporo! We’ll leave the hotel by coach to drive to the trail head for our traverse of Mt. Sankaku and Okura. After our morning walk we’ll have time for lunch in Sapporo before heading out to either Mt Moiwa or Moerenuma Park for an afternoon walk. Then it’s back to the hotel to get ready for dinner and our daily evening meeting.

Distance : 3.5km
Total Elevation Gain : 310m (1017’)
Time : 2hours
This is a casual mountain hiking which takes less than 1hour to the top of Mt. Sankaku, and crossing 30minutes to Mt. Okura, and then going down along with the Nordic ski jump facility. Summit of Mt. Sankaku gives you a bird’s eye view of the Sapporo’s landscape and is recommended for warming up with its well-maintained track. We don’t go back the same way, but carry on the ridge with the Sapporo view to Mt. Okura. Mt. Okura has a ski jump slope which has been used for ski world cups etc. since 1972 Sapporo Winter Olympics. The view from the top explains how the landscape of Sapporo city is designed.

Hotel: Karaksa Hotel Sapporo or similar

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

**DAY 4- Jun 17, 2020 Depart Sapporo for Teuri Island**

After checking out of our hotel, we have an early departure to visit a Japanese Sake brewery and the local fish market before traveling by coach to Haboro. There we’ll board a high speed ferry to Teuri Island and possibly go on a Rhinoceros Auklet night watching tour (conditions permitting!) after dinner and our meeting.

Hotel: Torinoyado Daiichi or similar [https://www.teuri.jp/stay/daiichi.html](https://www.teuri.jp/stay/daiichi.html)

Meals: Breakfast, dinner

**DAY 5- Jun 18, 2020**

Today we continue our exploration of Teuri Island and have another opportunity to go Rhinoceros Auklet night watching.

Designated as a National Natural Treasure in 1938. The west coast of Teuri Island is lined with magnificent sea cliffs such as Akaishi Rock, Byobu Rock and Cape Kannon, and it is the breeding ground for around a million birds of 8 different kinds. As well as the common murre, which faces extinction in Japan, and the spectacled guillemot, one of the world’s rarest birds, birds such as the rhinoceros auklet and black-tailed gull come to nest from spring to summer. The entire sea bird colony (nesting ground) is a designated Natural Treasure, and the sight of flocks of sea birds flying around is truly spectacular.

Hotel: Torinoyado Daiichi or similar

Meals: Breakfast, dinner

**Day 6- Jun 19, 2020**
Today we bid farewell to Teuri Island and depart by high speed ferry back to Haboro. From there we travel by coach to the town of Higashikawa where we’ll be able to have lunch. In the afternoon we’ll go for a 2 hour walk on Mt Kitoushi before settling into our hotel for a 3 night stay.

Hotel: Hotel Bear Monte or similar [https://www.bearmonte.jp](https://www.bearmonte.jp)

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

**DAY 7- Jun 20, 2020**

Today we explore in Daisetsuzan National Park where we will visit a cultural museum (Kawamura Kaneto Ainu) and a spring in the morning, then going trekking in the high moor area of the park for about 2 hours in the afternoon.

Easy hiking through pine tree forest which represents Hokkaido. There are some small patches of wetland in the forest and we will visit one of them.

We will be visiting the area at the beginning of the climbing season and will therefore have the opportunity to take part in a very special and traditional festival, the Nupuri Koromakuinomei.

Dist : 5km

Elevation gain : 100m (328’)

Time : 2hours

Hotel: Hotel Bear Monte or similar

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 8- June 21, 2020**

Today we have an all day hike/excursion to the top of Mt Asahi departing the hotel around 9 am and returning about 5 PM for our evening meeting and dinner.

The cable car takes us from 1100m to 1600m above sea level, and this allows for a 2.5hours hike to the summit. As it’s an active stratovolcano, you can see some steam which makes the views as we climb much more special and wild. The view from the peak is spectacular as you can see the whole mountain range of Daisetsuzan. The trail is rocky and sandy as well as the mountain is much colder than the base. It can be below 10℃ even in summer.

Dist : 7.5km
Elevation gain: 1191m (500m by cable car, 691m=2267’ on foot)

Time: 6hours

Hotel: Hotel Bear Monte or similar

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 9- Jun 22, 2020

Today we depart from Asahidake around 9 am and travel to the Ging and Ryusei waterfalls in the morning. We’ll have time for lunch before our afternoon hike on Mt Kurodake and exploration of Sounkyo gorge and Lake Saroma. A combination of gondolas and lifts takes us to the 7th stage of Mt. Kurodake at a height of 1,984m. From there, we will go trekking for an hour and a half. Then we’ll check into our hotel and get ready for the daily meeting and dinner.

Hotel: Dormy Inn Abashiri or similar https://www.s-tsuruga.com

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 10- Jun 23, 2020

This morning we’ll have a short walk on Mt Io after checking out of our hotel. After lunch we’ll have a walking tour of Wakoto Island, then visit Lake Mashu before settling in to our hotel in Akan for the last 3 nights of our trip.

Hotel: New Akan Hotel or similar http://www.newakanhotel.co.jp

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
**DAY 11- Jun 24, 2020**

Today we’ll depart the hotel for an all day hike to the top of Mt Meakan, we’ll eat lunch on the trail.

Dist : 6km

Elevation gain : 682m (2237’)

Time : 5 hours

Hotel: New Akan Hotel or similar

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

**DAY 12- Jun 25, 2020**

This morning we’ll visit the Kushiro wetlands and walk along a boardwalk trail, then have the opportunity to eat lunch at the Washo Seafood market before visiting a different area of the National Park in the afternoon. Tonight we’ll have a final evening meeting and our farewell dinner.

Hotel: New Akan Hotel or similar

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

**DAY 13- Jun 26, 2020**

After checking out of the hotel, we will visit the Japanese Crane center before making our way to the Kushiro airport for our flights home.

Meals: Breakfast
Leaders’ right to change itinerary

While the itinerary in this prospectus is what the leaders have planned at the time of writing, various factors may require changes for reasons of safety, transportation or lodging availability, and unforeseeable circumstances (such as weather considerations, natural disasters in areas to be visited, or recommendations of governmental agencies). The leaders reserve the right to make such changes as necessary, both before and during the trip.

Required Gear:

Gortex (or equivalent) rain jacket & pants
Wide brimmed hat for sun protection
Sunglasses
Sunscreen
Camelbak or bottles sufficient to hold at least 2 liters of water
Personal first aid kit
Fleece or down jacket
Polypro, polyester, nylon or coolmax tops and pants for hiking; NO COTTON!
Trail shoes or boots; NO SNEAKERS or CROSS TRAINERS
Hiking socks
Warm hat and gloves
Electrolyte powder, tablets, gel or “gummy blocks”
Pack with waist strap/belt sufficiently large to carry all of the above items plus your lunch, camera and personal items

Price of $6400 includes:

- 11 nights’ accommodations at 3* hotels based on double occupancy
- 11 Breakfasts and 11 dinners as stated in itinerary
- In/out group airport transfers via private transportation
- Group Charter bus with Japanese driver
- Group admission fees
- English speaking local nature guide for 12 days
- Gratuity for bus driver and nature guide
- AMC Overhead fee
- Luggage Tag
- Costs for 2 AMC tour leaders (accommodation, bus pass, transfers)

**Price does not include:**

- Lunches, snacks
- Travel/cancellation Insurance
- Flights to/from Japan
- Items of a personal nature
- Beverages other than tap water at included dinners
- Tips for housekeeping in hotels

AMC Adventure Travel trips are led by volunteers on a non-profit basis. Any monies left over after trip expenses are covered will be refunded to the participants. As leaders our goals for the group are to have fun, stretch your skills, and savor a foreign culture at reasonable cost and in the company of other adventurers with similar interests. We encourage your individual contributions, cooperation and good humor to enrich the group’s experience. We expect you to participate as part of a group and abide by the leaders’ decisions, and work towards the group having a good time. Be prepared to help your fellow hikers and spend time with other participants on the trip. In doing so, you will enjoy the trip to the maximum. Leaders have provided a list in this prospectus of the required gear. In the interests of group safety, trip leaders retain the right to deny participation in any hike if participants are not properly equipped.
SAFETY, RISKS AND HAZARDS:

As participant safety is a high priority for all AMC-sponsored events, procedures and policies have been developed to attempt to limit participant risk. Participants are expected to work with the leaders to reduce risks and make the experience successful for all. Participants should be aware that there are risks associated with outdoor adventure activities, including but not limited to adverse weather and environmental conditions, remote locations of our trips, and transportation in vehicles, on foot, by boat, or on a bike. Aside from any personal medical problems, participants should be aware of the possibilities of bug bites, dehydration, sun burn and other heat or cold related problems. You should regularly use sun screen, take care to be adequately hydrated and bring water on all day trips as well as wind/rain gear, warm hat and gloves. The terrain is similar to the White Mountains of NH in that it can snow at the higher elevations during any month of the year. Please carefully read and sign the AMC Participant Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risks and Release and Indemnity Agreement and contact us if you have any questions. Participants’ understanding of these risks and adherence to our policies and procedures can contribute to making this experience rewarding.

Leaders’ expectations of participants

When you participate in this activity, you should be in proper condition for the challenges outlined in this prospectus and equipped with the appropriate gear as stated. You should always be aware of the risks involved and conduct yourself accordingly. You are ultimately responsible for your own safety. Prior to your acceptance as a participant in this trip, you will be asked to discuss your capabilities and experience with us. We may also request references to confirm your fitness level and suitability for participating in trip activities.

This trip is designed so that everyone may experience our adventure in Norway through shared participation in activities and tasks in an organized group environment. AMC travelers are known for their cooperative efforts, and expectations are that all participants will be considerate of others sharing this AMC Adventure Travel experience.

It may happen on any trip that a trip member is or becomes unable to participate in one or more of the planned activities. Leaders in their sole judgment have the right and obligation to refuse participation in any activity to any group member for reasons of safety, whether it is of the group or of the individual. Illness, injury or lack of proper gear or fitness for a particular activity are examples of some conditions that might result in a participant’s being unable to perform one or more activity. Leaders may try to find a substitute activity for the trip member, but this may not always be possible.
Tying trip to AMC mission:

AMC Adventure Travel trips are run in a manner supportive of and consistent with the conservation, recreational and educational principles and mission of the Club. Trip leaders encourage participant conduct consistent with Leave No Trace environmental and conservation principles and local regulations.

Please be aware that, in accordance with AMC policy, you are subsidizing the leaders' costs. Beyond this, the leaders are not allowed to realize any profit from this excursion. The trip price also includes an AMC overhead fee to cover the administrative expenses of offering Adventure Travel excursions. The trip fee includes emergency medical and evacuation insurance coverage, which is required by the AMC. It does not include insurance for travel delay, interruption, or cancellation, or for baggage loss. If these possibilities concern you, individual travel insurance is recommended. More information about included emergency medical and evacuation insurance, as well as about optional and recommended travel insurance, will be provided to participants in their formal acceptance letters.

Cancellation Policy:

The AMC Adventure Travel cancellation policy is based on the fact that your cancellation may not raise the cost to the other participants or to the leaders. The published minimum penalty schedule is $100 before Sept 2019, and $200 after. **If actual costs (expenses already incurred on your behalf and any unavoidable future expenses that will be incurred as a result of your registration and cancellation) are higher, they will be assessed instead, unless they can be applied toward another acceptable participant.** Should the leaders be able to replace you, you may be charged a reduced or zero penalty. This will generally not be determined until after the trip. Please refer to insurance information in the section titled “What Trip Price Includes.”

How air travel is to be handled:

Estimated cost of airfare from USA to Japan is $1600-1900. While participant airfare is not included in the trip price, leaders may assist participants in making suitable reservations. Participants will be told when and where they must join the group for the official start of the trip's planned activities. Once your air tickets are purchased they are your responsibility – do not make any non-refundable travel plans until told to do so by the leaders. The leaders will
send out a document with a list of suggested flight from your home airport which will work to get you to Sapporo in time for the start of the trip.

The price for this excursion is based on quotes or estimates obtained at the time the trip was submitted to the Adventure Travel Committee for approval (September 2018). The final price of the trip will be adjusted in accordance with the best final arrangements we can make. If the trip’s financial position is strong enough at the start, the leaders may make partial refunds during the trip, in the form of payments toward some meals and/or free time activities which would otherwise not be included. Any savings we achieve, as well as any cost increases we incur, will be shared by trip participants. Our cost estimates are conservative, and so a refund is considerably more likely than a price increase. All Adventure Travel trips are run on a non-profit basis and refunds, if any, are issued after the trip’s financial accounting is complete.

**Conditioning and activity/fitness level:**

Participants should be comfortable hiking from 4 to 6 hours and 15 kilometers per day with elevation gain of up to 691 meters (2267 feet). Participants should have recent previous experience hiking on mountain terrain.

**Application process or how to apply:**

To apply, you must complete and submit the Participant Application, Confidential Health Questionnaire, and Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risk and Release form, enclosing a registration deposit of $1500. You will be considered qualified for the trip when the leaders have determined by conversation with you that you and the trip seem to be a good match. You will be formally accepted, and your check will be deposited.

Deposit checks from wait-listed applicants will not be cashed until we offer them a spot on the trip AND they accept.

**Payment Schedule:**

**Trip Cost $6400**

Deposit due with application $1500

Second Payment of $2000 due by November 1, 2019

Final Payment of $2900 due by January 1, 2020
Please make payments by check payable to the “Appalachian Mountain Club” and mail to:
Ginette Beaudoin
66 Graham Street
Biddeford, ME 04005

Risks of trip activities:
Participants should be adequately prepared for cold weather hazards such as wind chill, hypothermia, and sun exposure, icy conditions by ensuring they have sun protection and extra layers in their day pack during each day’s activities.

YOUR LEADERS:

LEADER: GINETTE BEAUDOIN

Ginette has been a member of the AMC since 1988 and has led several day and weekend trips in the White Mountains of NH, as well as various parts of Maine. She lead an Austrian Alps adventure trip with co leader Don Parker in July of 2011, with Jenni Blumenthal in August of 2012 and co lead the same trip with Terry Peters in July 2009 with 19 participants. She has also lead Adventure travel trips to Zion, Bryce, Glacier and Yosemite National Parks, Easter Island, Peru, Croatia, Slovenia, France, Minnesota, Tuscany, Dolomites, Spain, Australia and New Zealand for the AMC. She has participated in numerous AMC Major Excursions to Switzerland and Austria, involving hiking and cross country skiing. She has hiked in the Stubai valley as part of a 2006 Major Excursion and hiked to 20 high Alpine Huts throughout Austria, Germany and Switzerland. She has hiked the NH 4000 footers. Her interests include hiking, photography, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, travel, information volunteer for AMC and introducing others to outdoor activities

ADDRESS: 66 Graham Street, Biddeford, Maine 04005

PHONE: (207) 590-4431

EMAIL ADDRESS: ginette4000@yahoo.com

CO-LEADER: ANNA PANSZCZYK
Anna is a Boston Chapter INTRO (AMC) Leader. Anna has co led AMC Adventure Travel trips to New Zealand, Australia, Dolomites – Italy, Austria, Azores, Zion, Bryce, Glacier, Yellowstone and Yosemite National Park, Minnesota, Peru, Easter Island, Australia, Croatia, Slovenia, New Zealand, and Morocco. Anna leads hiking trips in the White Mountains and most recently led an excursion to Waterville Valley and Craftsbury Vermont for snowshoeing and cross country skiing. She has also co led the Claybrook ski trip on previous years. During the summer of 2014, she and the trip leader backpacked the Haute Route from Chamonix France to Zermatt Switzerland as well as the Kepler Track in New Zealand. This is in addition to trips that she takes to all corners of the world! Anna has completed SOLO Advanced Wilderness First Aid course as well as CPR training.

ADDRESS: 22 Alfred Rd, Arlington, MA 02474
PHONE: 781-648-2492;
EMAIL: annatp12@gmail.com

Background Info:

Day 2:
Tarumae Garo is a gorge in the western part of Tomakomai city. Garo means "A river flows between steep cliffs" in Tohoku dialect. The cliff face of volcanic ash deposition erupted by Mt. Tarumae was eroded by snowmelt, and banks turned into the steep cliffs with about 5-6 m in height because of a flowing river. A combination of the flowing river and mossy rocks is very beautiful, and a lot of photographers come here.

Day 3:

- Mt. Moiwa is a mountain with 531 m in height in Minami ward, Sapporo city, and is known for having an observation deck and a ski resort. It is relatively near Sapporo City Area and is a popular sightseeing spot with a good night view. Sapporo has designed as one of the 3 best new night views in Japan with Nagasaki and Kobe in 2015, so more tourists visit here.

- Moerenuma Park is designed by Mr. Isamu Noguchi, famous artist, and is the area of 188.8 ha. This park seemed to reflect an image "Harmonizing Artifact with Nature" and "Engraving Ground". This park won the Good Design Award in 2002.

Days 4 and 5:
Founded in 1882, Kunimare Shuzo is located in the western port city of Mashike on Hokkaido Prefecture. Mashike has been revered for its herring fishing heritage that dates back over 200 years. The brewery was established to provide sake that would cater to the vast number of fishermen working on the beach. As such was born the sake brand Kunimare or Pride of the Nation. Kunimare Shuzo is currently the northernmost sake brewery in Japan located beyond the Shokanbetsu Mountain range. Hokkaido is home to legendary snowfall,

The Mashike Region possesses superior quality drinking water owing to the abundant snowmelt. So much so that the Kitamaebune or northern-bound merchant vessels that traveled from Osaka through Seto and along Hokuriku headed for Hokkaido would take stores of water for the journey home. Kunimare Shuzo is dedicated to perpetuating the art of the Nanbu Toji using pristine water and exceptional ingredients to produce old world dry sake that resonates with the bounty of the sea and the soul of the port.

**Background Info about Teuri Island:**

The Shokanbetsu Teuri Yagishiri Quasi-National Park that extends north and south is located in the northern part of Hokkaido along the Sea of Japan. Its total is 43,559 ha. The size is the 8th size in 57 quasi-national parks (not include national parks) in Japan. Shokanbetsu Teuri Yagishiri Quasi-National Park is roughly divided into 2 areas, Shokanbetsu Area and Teuri Yagishiri Area. In the Teuri Yagishiri Area, points worthy of note are beautiful sceneries only in remote islands, wild birds and foods.

**Day 6:** Kitoushi Forest Park is a comprehensive leisure facility in Higasikawa town next to Ashikawa city. The area consists of Canmore Ski Village, Court Asahikawa Country Club, a golf course, accommodations, a campsite, a store, Kitoushi Observatory, and a shrine around the foot of Mt. Kitoushi which is 456 m in height.

**Day 7:**

Kawamura Kaneto Ainu Museum is a private museum for Ainu culture since 1916. This is the oldest and historical museum about Ainu. You can deeply understand Ainu culture by visiting here. The Kawamura Kaneto Ainu Museum in Asahikawa exhibits a wide range of traditional Ainu tools and goods, as well as a hut made out of bamboo grass. The museum was founded by the local Ainu leader Kawamura Kaneto (1893-1977), an outstanding surveyor in railway construction, who also worked on educating people about Ainu culture.

The Nupuri koromakuinomei is a mountain festival where you can touch Ainu culture and ecology while being wrapped in the fresh nature of Asahidake tradition. Before the full-scale
mountaineering season, the "Asahidake mountain festival" is a time of praying in the mountain opening rituals of Daisetsuzan Asahidake and for climbers’ safety. It will be held at the Asahidake youth campsite located at 1,000 m elevation of Asahidake.

**Day 8:**

Mt. Asahidake (2291m) is the highest peak, located in center of Hokkaido and it’s a part of the largest national park in Japan called Daisetsuzan National Park.

**Day 9:**

The Sounkyo Gorge, spread across the foothills of the Daisetsu mountain range, has been created through centuries of erosion by the Ishikari River. As well as having its own hot spring spa, it is also popular as an entrance to the Mt.Daisetsu climbing trail and the gateway to Mt.Daisetsu National Park.

**Day 10:**

Mt. Iou is an active volcano with 512 m in height in Teshikaga town between Lake Mashu and Lake Kussharo. In Akan Mashu National Park, here used to be a sulfur mine, so it has been called Mt. Iou. * The sulfur means "Iou" in Japanese language. But its true name is Mt. Atosanupuri that means "A naked mountain" in Ainu language. A lava dome was born from 1,000 to 1,500 years ago. There are more than 1,500 large and small fumaroles, and those still have been vomiting forth steam. A mysterious view with greenish brown and yellow ground changed colors by sulfur and native light brown ground can be seen, and it smells the sulfur like bad eggs in the air.

Wakoto Peninsula is the only peninsula extending out Lake Kussharo in the southern side of the Lake Kussharo. Fresh green, a canoe and fishing can be enjoyed in a summer, Fall foliage can be enjoyed in an autumn and a snow scenery can be enjoyed in a winter, and it is said to be a sightseeing base of the Lake Kussharo. By the way, Min-min-zemi cicada inhabits here, and they do not inhabit further north than the Lake Kussharo, so they have been designated as a special natural treasure since 1951. The Wakoto Peninsula was created by a volcanic eruption much later than that which formed the lake. A circular 'island' is connected to the mainland by a narrow neck of land and has a lovely 2.5km nature trail around it, which can be completed in an hour.

Akan Mashu National Park has Lake Kussharo, the largest caldera lake in Japan, Lake Mashu, the 6th largest caldera lake in the Japan, and Lake Akan, the 7th largest caldera lake in the Japan, in the eastern part of Hokkaido, and the oldest national park in Hokkaido along with Daisestuzan National Park also in the north part of Kushiro-Sitsugen National Park. The Akan Mashu
National Park is roughly divided into 4 areas, Akanko Area, Onneto Area, Mashuko Area, and Kussharoko Area. The area is a vast 91,413 hectares. It is a highlight that such a scenery was born by growing forests and lakes, created by water collecting in the craters of volcanoes after the volcanoes erupting in the primitive period.

Day 11:

Akan is a very popular national park in Japan and this hike is a classic and iconic destination for many hikers. The area is very famous for its high quality of “Onsen”, or hot spring water and its beautiful green algae balls called “Marimo”.

Mt. Meakan is an active volcano however it is daily monitored, and no serious eruptions are reported since early year 1900. It is located in Akan Kussharo National Park. The summit is the highest point of the crater. At the foot of the mountain is a lake and the handful of establishments that make up hot springs. The trail starts with Todo Fur dominant forest for the first half and will be alpine environment for the rest. The trail starts with a hike into an old forest with tall trees that are over 300 years old. The forest is thick and the ground covered with intertwining tree roots coated with bright green moss before arriving at the alpine zone.

Day 12:

Kushiro-Shitsugen Wetland National Park that 500,000 people visit every year is a famous sightseeing spot in the Eastern Hokkaido and is the largest wetland with 18,290 ha in Japan. It was designed as a wetland under Ramsar Convention in 1980, and developments had been limited strictly. There are many rare animals inhabit and plants including Japanese cranes, Blakiston’s fish-owls that are only 100 in Hokkaido. In the western part, wooden pathes are enriched. Enjoying views to visit observatories dotted with the wetland and walking wooden pathes and studying plants up close.

Established in 1954 as "the Citizen's Kitchen," this is Kushiro's oldest market and, along with Sapporo Ichi Jo and Otaru Hanazono markets, known as one of Hokkaido's Big Three Markets. They say the name comes from the lively calls of "Wasshoi, wasshoi" filling the market and the Japanese words for goods and trade. Along with the famous "Katte Don" bowls, you can find seasonal seafood lined up in this true port-town market.

The Kiritappu Wetland has the 5th largest area, 3,168 ha, after Kushiro Wetland, Bekkanbeushigawa Wetland, Konsengenya Wetland Groups and Sarobetsu Plain in Japan, and has been designed as the Ramsar Convention Wetland since 1993. It is called the wetland of
flowers, and Corydalis Ambigua and Skunk Cabbage are in full bloom in May, and Cotton Grass, Yezo Dailylily and Gentiana triflora bloom sequentially from June to August, and about 400 types of wild flowers can be seen. A lot of wild birds can be seen, too, and about 100-200 types of the wild birds such as Japanese Crane, Swan, Steller's Sea Eagle, Solitary Snipe and Common Redshank inhabit here. Kiritappu Wetland National Trust is a specified nonprofit corporation established for the protection of the wetland in 1986 in Hamanaka town located between Kushiro city and Nemuro city, and has wetland observation facilities in the south side of the Kiritappu Wetland.

Day 13:

Japanese Cranes were thought to be extinct in Japan due to overhunting and habitat destruction. However, in 1926 a group of about 20 birds was discovered in the marshes around Kushiro. With conservation efforts they have since made a dramatic recovery and now number more than 1000 birds. The Akan International Crane Center is a museum, breeding center, and sanctuary where cranes can be seen year round. It has a good exhibit about crane history and ecology with English explanations.