



Sapporo Campus Wildlife and Plants Guide



Hokkaido University's Sapporo campus is a green oasis in the heart of the city, cherished by both residents and visitors. From the expansive Experiment Farms to the iconic Poplar Avenue, it's a must-see to anyone visiting the capital of Japan's northernmost prefecture. The "Hokkaido University Primeval Forest" on North Campus offers a rare environment where many plants and animals can flourish. This guidebook was made with the goal of providing visitors with basic information about the diverse plants and animals that live on campus.



HOKKAIDO
UNIVERSITY

150th
HOKKAIDO UNIVERSITY





Sapporo Campus Highlights

There are several interesting spots on campus, as well as small trails that connect them.

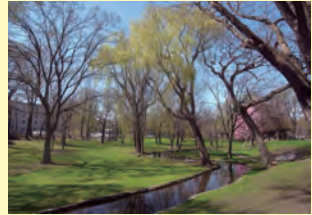
① Around the Information Center

Just left of the main gate is the Information Center, surrounded by Kamchatka trillium and chocolate lilies, both associated with Hokkaido University. Nearby, several massive Japanese elms, planted by Inazo Nitobe's wife Mary, boast trunks over 1 meter in diameter.



② Central Lawn

Home to large trees like Japanese elms, alder, and Amur corktrees, the Central Lawn offers a great place to relax with its gently sloped lawns and the burbling Sakushukotoni River flowing through it.



③ School of Agriculture – Elm Grove

One of the most iconic views on campus, the Elm Grove is dominated by large Japanese elms and encompassed by the historic main building of the School of Agriculture and the Hokkaido University Museum. In spring, it is often dotted with the pale blooms of Yellow Star-of-Bethlehem



④ Along the Sakushukooni River

Crossing main street and east of the Japanese Archery Court, the Sakushukotoni River flows next to Ono Pond. The river attracts Mandarin ducks and their ducklings, and is lined with wooden walkways and paths, perfect for summer strolls.



⑤ Ono Pond

Ono Pond was an on-campus innovation of Professor Ono from the Faculty of Engineering in the 1970s. The garden area is home to water lilies that bloom in the pond and other wild aquatic plants such as branched bur-reed and some species of the pondweed

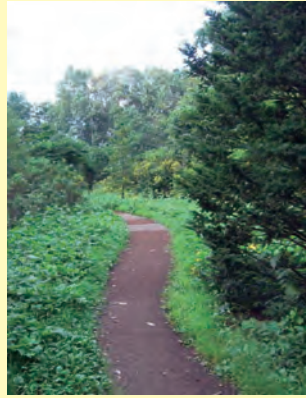
⑥ Model Barn

A preservation site of Hokkaido University's predecessor, Sapporo Agricultural College. With the semi-natural woodland and artificial forests of the Institute of Low Temperature Science and School of Veterinary Medicine, it is an important habitat for wildlife. In spring the Ezo corydalis and Radde's anemone's delicate blossoms can be seen.



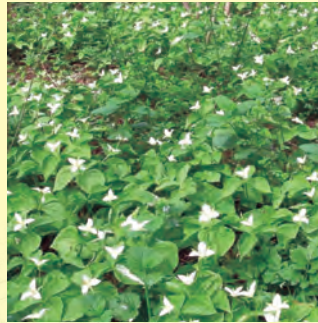
⑦ Flowering Tree Garden and Poplar Avenue

West of Central Cafeteria is the Flowering Tree Garden, featuring northern Hokkaido varieties of chocolate lilies and other plant species. Moving northwest, you'll find the famous Poplar Avenue.



⑧ Keiteki Woods (Hokkaido University Primeval Forest)

With over 260 plant species confirmed in this diverse habitat, Keiteki Woods is a gem of campus, located in the north and connecting to the Historic Preservation Park. This semi-natural woodland is home to many broadleaf trees like Japanese elm, Manchurian ash, and painted maple. In spring, blooms of Ezo corydalis and Kamchatka trillium also call these woods home.



🌿 "Ecological Conservation Area" (Red Border)

This is a designated area where development activities are prohibited. Access to areas other than walkways is restricted.

↓ Website





Seasonal Highlights

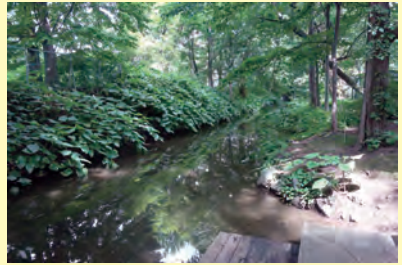
—**Early Spring:** Spring ephemerals start to bloom while there are still large patches of snow lingering on the campus. Yellow Star-of-Bethlehem, Ezo corydalis, Radde’s anemone, and wind flowers to bloom around campus

—**Spring and Early Summer:** Gradually increasing summer temperatures allow Japanese elm, white birch and ginkgo trees to come alive and flowers like Kamchatka trillium, Kusano’s violet, and white deadnettle add splashes of color to Keiteki Woods. Early summer is marked by the cotton-like fluff of poplar swirling through the air.

—**Summer:** The campus is lush with green, and Central Lawn and Poplar Avenue are bustling with visitors. Butterflies and bees visit to flowers basking in the sun.

—**Autumn:** Autumn brings vibrant colors as trees turn red, orange, and yellow, and bear fruit. The campus, with its Japanese rowan, maple, and ginkgo trees, becomes a vivid tapestry. Hokkaido squirrels busily collect Japanese walnuts amidst this colorful scene.

—**Winter:** With the campus blanketed in snow and a chill in the air, visitors decrease, but rare winter treats can be seen. You might spot the footprint of an Ezo red fox or catch a glimpse of a Hokkaido squirrel in the elegant bare branches of a Japanese elm.





Natural Features of the Sapporo Campus

High Ecological Value of the Campus' Natural Environment

This vast campus near the heart of Sapporo has offered sanctuary to several plants and animals throughout its history. Previous surveys indicate that 909 plant species (including planted varieties), 15 mammals, 143 birds, 4 amphibians, 5 fish, and 2,156 insect species call the university home, with many species tracing their origins back to the era of Sapporo Agricultural College.



Understory vegetation in Keiteki Woods



Egg sacs of the Hokkaido salamander



Catocala Patala (underwing moth) and *Psylliodes* (flea beetle) confirmed in insect surveys



Natural Environment Conservation Efforts on Campus

“The Campus Master Plan” outlines basic policies for campus management, viewing the natural environment on campus as an asset to the university and local community, and emphasizing the importance of preservation and restoration. A prime example of this plan is the restoration of the Sakushukotoni River, which was reopened in 2004 and now supports a wide range of wildlife.

With nearly 150 years since its founding as Sapporo Agricultural College in 1876, Hokkaido University continues its commitment to maintaining its environment while pursuing sustainable development. In recognition of its outstanding environmental and conservation efforts it was designated as a “Nationally Certified Sustainably Managed Natural Site” by the Ministry of the Environment in March 2024.



For more details



Water inlet/outlet of Sakushukotoni River and signboards introducing conservation efforts



Yellow Star-of-Bethlehem *Gagea lutea*



Flower Season
Late April
to mid-May

Size
10–20cm

One of the most common spring wildflowers on campus, its yellow blossoms bloom early under the elm trees alongside the likes of Ezo Corydalis and Radde's anemone.

Radde's Anemone *Anemone raddeana*



Flower Season
Late April
to mid-May

Size
10–15cm

With its stems poking up just after the snow melts, this plant has numerous basal leaves around a central white flower.

Ezo Corydalis *Corydalis fumariifolia* subsp. *azurea*



Flower Season
Late April
to mid-May

Size
10–20cm

These flowers bloom blue, pale purple, pink and white in early spring and attract bumblebees looking for a treat in their tubular blooms.

Asian Skunk Cabbage *Lysichiton camtschatcensis*



Flower Season
Late April
to mid-May

Size
25–100cm

Found near water, while most on campus are planted, some grow naturally in Keiteki Woods. They have large white spathes and spoon-shaped leaves that can extend up to 1 meter in length.

Kusano's Violet *Viola kusanoana*



Flower Season
Early to
Late May

Size
10–20cm

Typically bluish purple, these flowers have hollow spurs for nectar. After flowering, cleistogamous flowers that never bloom develop into fruit.

Wind Flower *Anemone flaccida* var. *flaccida*



Flower Season
Early to
Late May

Size
15–30cm

In Hokkaido, these plants are generally larger and may produce three flowers instead of the characteristic two. Patches of them can be found in Keiteki Woods.



Chocolate Lily

Fritillaria camschatcensis var. *camschatcensis*



Flower Season

Mid-May to early June

Size

20–35cm

A perennial plant with white bulbs hidden underground that blooms with dark brown flowers. As a triploid plant, it does not produce any seeds.

Kamchatka Trillium

Trillium camschatcense



Flower Season

Early May to early June

Size

20–40cm



A forest floor plant that grows naturally in Keiteki Woods, it has three large leaves and three white petals. It is also a primary feature in Hokkaido University's crest.

White Deadnettle

Lamium album var. *barbatum*



Flower Season

Mid-May to mid-June

Size

30–60cm

Originally native to campus, this plant prefers sunny forest areas. Leaves grow in pairs along the stem, and flowers are arranged in rings with hood-like upper petals.

Mountain Hogweed

Heracleum sphondylium subsp. *montanum*



Flower Season

Late May to mid-June

Size

70–150cm

This plant can be found in and around the campus forest. With large, three-part leaves, it blooms white flowers that fill the air with a distinct fragrance.

Giant Heartleaf Lily

Cardiocrinum cordatum var. *glehnii*



Flower Season

Mid-July to early August

Size

70–150cm

This plant grows in slightly moister forest areas. It takes several years to mature, first developing bulbs underground before sprouting above the soil to bloom.

Ezo Hawthorn

Crataegus jozana



Flower Season

Mid-May to early June

Height

10–15m

A designated endangered species, this slow-growing tree has sturdy wood. In June, small white flowers bloom at the tips of its branches and turn into blackish-purple berries.



Japanese Elm

Ulmus davidiana var. *japonica*



Flower Season

Late May to early June

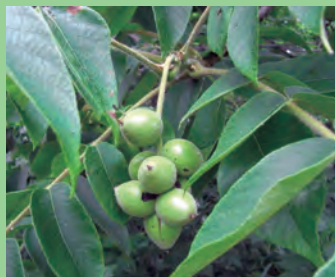
Height

30 m

As a representative tree of Hokkaido, it's a distinct feature of the university's landscape with some campus trees exceeding 30 meters tall. It is often found growing on fertile flatlands.

Japanese Walnut

Juglans mandshurica var. *sachalinensis*



Flower Season

Mid-May to early June

Height

15 m



Popular among Hokkaido squirrels and large Japanese field mice for its cluster-like autumn fruit, this deciduous tree favors moist areas. Its large leaves are divided into 4 to 10 leaflets.

Painted Maple

Acer pictum



Flower Season

Early May to mid-May

Height

25 m

This maple tree blooms with pale yellow flowers in clusters around the same time as cherry blossoms. Its large, winged seeds spin when they fall to the ground.

Siberian Crabapple

Malus baccata var. *mandshurica*



Flower Season

Mid-May to late May

Height

8 m

This tree blooms in May with white flowers and produces small, round red fruits in September. It grows bush-like in sunny areas with a dense, rounded canopy.

Lombardy Poplar

Populus nigra



Flower Season

Late May to early June

Height

30 m

They grow quickly, with trunks reaching over 1-meter in diameter. As dioecious trees, their seeds ripen around June and are released with cotton-like fluff.

Black Locust

Robinia pseudoacacia



Flower Season

Early June to late June

Height

25 m

A North American tree is often planted in parks and streets, blooming in early summer with fragrant white flowers. Thanks to rhizobia, it grows quickly in poor soil and spreads horizontally.



Mandarin Duck

Aix galericulata



Season

Early April to late October

Size

45cm



A species of wild duck, males are vividly colored during mating season. While they nest in cavities of large trees like Japanese oak, on campus, these birds can be found at Ono Pond.

Mallard

Anas platyrhynchos

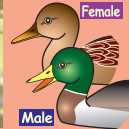


Season

Early April to late November

Size

60cm



This large duck, often seen near water, forms mixed flocks of males and females. Outside the autumn season, the male has a distinctive green head.

Japanese Tit

Parus minor



Season

All year round

Size

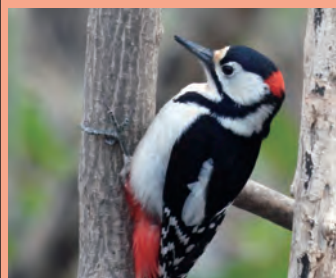
14cm



A member of the tit family, these birds are commonly seen in parks and forests and can often be spotted on campus. Their black markings resemble a necktie against their white bellies.

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Dendrocopos major



Season

All year round

Size

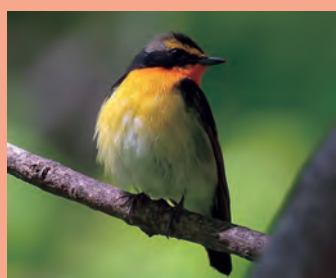
24cm



This woodpecker can often be seen flying around campus. It raises its young in nests it creates by drilling into tree trunks in early summer.

Narcissus Flycatcher

Ficedula narcissina



Chirping Season

May to June

Size

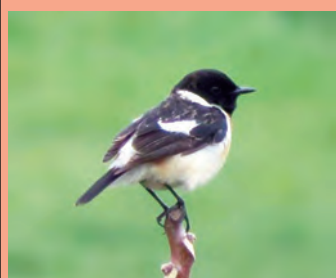
13.5cm



Males of this forest bird variety are known for their yellow belly with a particularly vibrant orange throat. They can often be found perching on branches and catching flying insects.

Siberian Stonechat

Saxicola torquata



Chirping Season

May to June

Size

13cm

This summer bird lives in open grasslands and can often be seen around the Experimental Farms. The male has a black head, white belly and orange chest markings.



Swallowtail Butterfly

Papilio machaon



Season

Late May to late September

Size

6–9cm

With wings with yellow and black markings, this butterfly is hard to miss. While the caterpillars feed on Apiaceae plants, this butterfly enjoys nectar from flowers of the Asteraceae and Fabaceae families.

Peacock Butterfly

Aglais io



Season

Late April to late September

Size

5–6cm

The wings of this butterfly resemble peacock feathers with eye-like markings. Their spiny black caterpillars feed on Japanese nettle.

Ezo Long-Tongued Bumblebee

Bombus diversus



Season

Mid-May to late September

Size

1–2.5cm

This bumblebee species, with long tongues, collects nectar from tubular flowers like white dead nettle. Despite declining numbers, some can still be found on campus.

Giant Dragonfly

Anotogaster sieboldii



Season

Mid-July to early September

Size

7–9cm

A particularly large dragonfly, with females being larger than males. They have dark bodies with yellow stripes, with adults exhibiting glossy green compound eyes.

Brown Darter

Sympetrum infuscatum



Season

Early July to mid-October

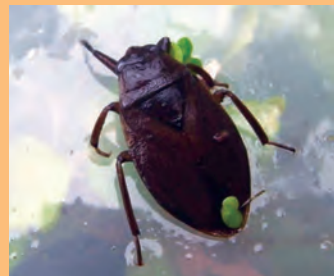
Size

4cm

The larvae of this species, known as dragonfly nymphs, live in bodies of water. Upon maturing, their bodies turn dark red with dark-tipped wings.

Ferocious water bug

Appasus major



Season

Late April to early October

Size

2cm

A member of the stink bug family, this species lives around aquatic plants. It uses its sickle-like front legs to capture and feed on snails and insects. The females lay their eggs on male's backs.



Hokkaido Squirrel

Sciurus vulgaris



Season
All year round

Size
20–30cm

With its dark brown coat that turns gray in winter, this squirrel, with its thick, long tail can be found in green spaces, even in urban areas. It lives in trees and feeds on nuts and insects.

Large Japanese Field Mouse

Apodemus speciosus



Season
All year round

Size
8–14cm

This long-tailed field mouse lives in forests and does not hibernate. Instead, it survives the winter on nuts, like walnuts and acorns, stored up in autumn. It also feeds on insects.

Ezo Red Fox

Vulpes vulpes



Season
All year round

Size
60–75cm

This nocturnal, long-tailed fox feeds on rodents, insects, and fruit. While it can be found on urban outskirts, contact should be avoided due to the risk of *echinococcus*, a parasitic disease.

Ninespine Stickleback

Pungitius sinensis



Season
Early April to late November

Size
4–5cm

This small fish prefers calm, slow-moving waters. During breeding season, males build nests on riverbeds to attract females and stay to protect their young even after their eggs hatch.

Larvae (Tadpoles)

Hynobius retardatus



Season
Late May to mid-August

Size
14–19cm

A native amphibian of Hokkaido, they inhabit forests, making the campus a valuable habitat. They spawn after the snow melts, with gilled larvae. Adults move onto land when they mature.

Ezo Brown Frog

Rana pirica



Season
Late May to early August

Size
4–6cm


Rare on campus, these Hokkaido native frogs spawn after the snow melts. Adults can be seen in forests and occasionally in urban green spaces.

Hokkaido University Sapporo Campus

~ An Island of Green in the Heart of Sapporo ~

Ecological and Environmental Conservation Policy

Hokkaido University strives to preserve its natural environment and has established an initiative to protect areas such as Keiteki Woods, Historic Preservation Park, and the surroundings of the Sakushukotoni River. These spaces have been designated as "Ecological Conservation Area," with access generally prohibited except for walkways.

 Ecological Conservation Area



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For more details,
visit the website