

Mt. Oakan Lake Taro · Lake Jiro

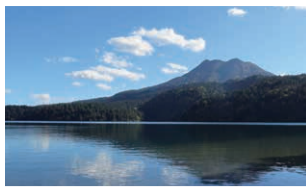
Trail Map



Akan-Mashu National Park

Mt. Oakan Profile

Mt. Oakan (1,370 m), standing to the east of Lake Akan, is popular with hikers for its sweeping views of the Akan area. It is one of Akan-Mashu National Park's most iconic peaks. From the summit, there is an all-encompassing view of the Akan Caldera and the lakes formed within it.



Originally the caldera contained a single, very large lake, but this was divided into several smaller lakes when multiple eruptions and lava flows created Mt. Oakan around 10,000 years ago. Lake Akan, Lake Panketo, and Lake Penketo are among the largest of these lakes.

The indigenous people of Japan, the Ainu, called Mt. Oakan "Pinneshiri," meaning "male mountain." In Japan, mountains are sometimes considered either male or female depending on their shape. Mt. Oakan is conical with a single peak. Mt. Meakan, ("Machineshiri" in the Ainu language), to the southwest, has two distinct peaks and is considered female.

There is only one trail leading to the summit of Mt. Oakan. It is more difficult than the trails on Mt. Meakan, so hiking experience and a good level of fitness are essential.

Access

● Mt. Oakan Trailhead
[By car]
Akankohan Eco-museum Center → National Route 240 (for Kushiro) (5 min)
→ Takiguchi Waterfall

Parking: Oakan Trailhead Parking Approx. 10 Cars
Takimi Bridge Parking Space 20 Cars, 2 Buses

[By Akan Bus (Akan Line)]
Akanko Onsen → Mt. Oakan Trailhead (Takiguchi)

Mt. Oakan Hiking Trail

Mt. Oakan is a rewarding hike, with views of Lakes Panketo and Penketo, Lake Akan, and the wider Akan area. The path starts gently from the trailhead at the eastern end of Lake Akan, just off National Route 240. It winds along the eastern shore of the lake for a few hundred meters before passing between two very small lakes, Taro and Jiro.



From Lake Jiro, the path rises precipitously through a mixed needleleaf and broadleaf forest with trees such as Sakhalin Spruce, Sakhalin Fir, and Erman's Birch. Sakhalin Spruce is distinguishable from Sakhalin Fir by its needles: the spruce's needles are short and sharp, while those of the fir are soft and flat.

From around an altitude of 1,200 meters, the trail levels out, the forest becomes less dense, and taller trees give way to Japanese Stone Pines. From here, the hike gets significantly easier, and offers views of Lake Akan and Mt. Meakan. From June to July, purple-petaled Keyflowers, Amur Honeysuckle, and white-petaled Milky Way Rhododendrons grow in abundance. At the Eighth Station are stone columns and building foundations, which are the remains of a Japanese army weather station that operated from 1944 to 1946 to monitor weather at higher altitudes for military aircraft. This is a good spot for a rest.

The peak of Mt. Oakan is 20 minutes from the Eighth Station. The views from the peak are a rewarding end to a difficult climb.

Distance	approx. 6.7 km one-way	Elevation Gain	950 m
Time	[Ascent] 3 hr 20 min [Descent] 2 hr 20 min	[Total]	5 hr 40 min

Grade 3 Full-day mountain hiking or long-distance hiking. Pay attention to the weather! Are you fully equipped?

1	Takiguchi Waterfall	10 min ↓	10 min ↑
2	Lake Taro	5 min ↓	5 min ↑
3	Lake Jiro	50 min ↓	35 min ↑
4	2nd Station	70 min ↓	50 min ↑
5	5th Station	45 min ↓	30 min ↑
6	Old Weather Station	20 min ↓	10 min ↑
7	Peak		

Before You Go

Your safety and the decisions you make while hiking the trails are your responsibility.

You must understand that there are hazards and risks of accidents when in nature. You should only enter the wilds after thorough preparation, including that of your physical condition, and with the understanding that you take full responsibility for any accidents that may happen.

With bad weather, the risks of landslides or falling rocks, trees, and branches increase, so please be ready to change or cancel your plans when necessary.

- Choose an appropriate course for your physical ability, condition, and outfitting.
- Mountain weather is prone to variability, so make sure to gather as much information as possible in advance. Also, be sure to bring rain gear.
- The mountains of Hokkaido can see sudden temperature drops below even 1,000 meters, so bring cold-weather gear even in summer.
- There are no drinking water supplies on the hiking trails, so you must bring your own drinking water.
- There are no toilets on the hiking trails. Bring a portable toilet. Keep in mind that there are no stalls for portable toilets, either.
- Be sure to write your information in the Hiker Register located at the trailhead.
- Do not deviate from the trails.
- Take your trash home with you.
- Do not approach or feed any wild animals.
- When driving on forest roads, it's best to use a high-clearance 4WD. Be aware that forest roads can be closed according to season or road conditions.

■ Dangerous Animal Information

Brown Bears : Carry a bear bell and bear spray. It's important to avoid meeting brown bears. Bears tend to avoid humans, so try to announce your presence by making noise in order to ward them off.

Ticks/Mites & Biting flies : Wear long sleeves and long pants, and try to avoid baring skin. Also, bring insect repellent.

Hornets : Avoid wearing black or very dark clothing. If a swarm approaches, wrap a white towel around your head and neck, and back up slowly to escape the area.

Red Foxes : To avoid echinococcosis (from tapeworms spread by foxes), do not drink any un-boiled water from rivers, etc.

■ Course Grading:

Grade 1 Walking	Grade 2 Light hiking	Grade 3 Day-long hiking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · For those wanting to enjoy an easy walk through nature for about an hour · For those with little or no hiking experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · For those who want to enjoy mountain hiking for about a half-day · For those with some mountain hiking experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · For those wanting to enjoy a day-long mountain hike · For those with mountain hiking and long-distance hiking experience
Hat · Comfortable clothes · Athletic shoes	Hat · Hiking clothes · Hiking boots	
Backpack · Trash bags · Water bottle · Map · Rain Gear		
	Provisions · Cold weather gear	Provisions · Cold weather gear · Headlamp · Portable toilet · Compass

This trail grading system is used only inside the Akan-Mashu National Park.

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■ About this map

The Ministry of the Environment has created this map to introduce the regularly accessible walking trails within Akan-Mashu National Park. Each trail and facility is owned and maintained by different organizations, so they are not all the property or responsibility of the Ministry of the Environment. Every trail and facility is available for use based on the understanding that users accept full responsibility for their actions and understand the risk of accidents, and that no organizations are obligated to accept any responsibility for accidents that may happen when using these trails or facilities.

※The Ainu design on this map is certified by the General Corporate Judicial Person Akan Aynu Konsarun

Highlights Lake Taro



Lake Taro was formed in an eruption of Mt. Oakan. It is approximately a ten-minute hike from the Mt. Oakan Trailhead located at the Takiguchi Waterfall. The lake is connected to Lake Akan by a river, and shares very similar water quality with its larger neighbor. In spring, the purple-flowered Ezo Primula blooms, and in autumn, the surrounding forest is transformed when the foliage turns fiery red and orange. Depending on the season, White-tailed Eagles and Whooper Swans can also be spotted around the lake.

Highlights Lake Jiro



Lake Jiro is approximately a fifteen-minute hike from the Mt. Oakan Trailhead. It is five minutes on foot past Lake Taro. Like Lake Taro, Lake Jiro was the result of an eruption of Mt. Oakan. But unlike Lake Taro, Lake Jiro has no inflowing or outflowing rivers. As a result, the lake has few waves and is very placid. The still surface of the lake mirrors the surrounding forest and sky above, a scene particularly beautiful in autumn when the leaves change color.

Highlights Takiguchi Waterfall



This small dam on the eastern edge of Lake Akan marks the start of the Mt. Oakan hiking trail, and is where the Akan River begins. At the trailhead, you will see a hiking register and warnings about bears. Be sure to fill out the register before starting your hike. Takiguchi waterfall is a scenic spot with views of Lake Akan. Pink and purple Rhododendrons flower along the lakeside near the dam in summer and the leaves of trees turn vibrant colors in autumn.

Highlights Takimi Bridge



Takimi Bridge is a scenic spot popular in autumn for fall colors. It is not on the Mt. Oakan hiking trail, but it is only a few minutes by car from the turnoff to the trailhead on Route 240. The bridge spans the Akan River, fed by water from Lake Akan and Lake Taro. Views from the bridge are best from early to mid-October, when the fast-flowing river is framed by red-leaved maples and the yellow-leaved Japanese Judas trees.