**Moss Gateway**

One of the most interesting “gifts” of the area’s volcanic activity is this long (400 meters), deep (up to 10 meters), narrow (1–3 meters) rock gorge on the western side of Mount Fuppushi. It is the result of eons of water erosion in the cracks of rocks left over from an ancient Mount Tarumae eruption. If it were merely a deep, narrow gorge it would still be interesting, but the unique aspect of this physical feature is that it has just the right temperature, humidity, and lack of sunlight to make it home to roughly eighty different varieties of moss. Unfortunately, visitors are no longer allowed to walk through the gorge, but a stunningly real, floor-to-ceiling photo is displayed at the Shikotsuko Visitor Center.