The Birds of Lake Miike Wild Bird Forest

Lake Miike Wild Bird Forest is a bird-watcher’s paradise. About 150 identified bird species can be observed here, either seasonally or year-round.

During the summer months, the forest is a breeding area for migratory birds that fly in from the south. The Kirishima mountains are a particularly important breeding ground for the endangered fairy pitta, with its colorful green, blue, and red plumage.

Other birds that spend the summer months in the forest include the bright-red ruddy kingfisher, the melodious blue-and-white flycatcher, narcissus flycatcher, Japanese paradise flycatcher, Oriental cuckoo, lesser cuckoo, and brown hawk owl.

Birds that have spent the breeding season in northern regions migrate south to winter in Kirishima, including a large variety of duck species.

Flocks of Eurasian widgeons—the males boasting chestnut-colored heads and necks with creamy crowns—and mallards, also known as greenheads for the males’ bottle-green heads and necks, make their home in inland ponds, rivers, and estuaries.

Mandarin ducks and northern pintails spend the winter around the rivers and wetlands. Spot-billed duck, Baikal teal, tufted duck, olive-backed pipit, red-flanked bluetail, dusky thrush, and other species also winter here.

Year-round inhabitants include the brown-eared bulbul, black kite, Japanese green woodpecker, iridescent kingfisher, and the crested kingfisher.