

We *himemasu* are a species of landlocked salmon called *kokanee* salmon in some parts of the world. “Landlocked” means that we never return to the sea, but we are more than happy to spend all our days in beautiful Lake Towada. Our ancestors first arrived in this lake more than 100 years ago. They didn’t travel here themselves, though—it was humans who brought them here. The water was cold and clear, and it suited them very well. There were also plenty of tasty water fleas to feed on. If you go out to the lake, you can see them for yourself!

Wainai Sadayuki and Himemasu

Long ago, there were no edible fish inhabiting Lake Towada. In the early 20th century, a man named Wainai Sadayuki (1858–1922) had a dream that locals would be able to eat fresh fish. His attempts at cultivating carp and *masu* salmon were unsuccessful, but in 1905, Wainai succeeded in breeding *himemasu*.

Originally native to Lake Akan in Hokkaido, *himemasu* salmon were successfully moved to Lake Shikotsu, Hokkaido in 1895. Following this example, Wainai Sadayuki imported fish from Lake Shikotsu for breeding in 1905. To this day, eggs are collected in autumn, hatched and bred at the local hatchery, and then the fingerlings are released in the spring.

Himemasu salmon is a Lake Towada delicacy, so be sure to try it while you are here!