

Plant Diversity Created by Rising Altitude

One of the key features of Oku-Nikko is the diversity of flora resulting from the altitude of the area spanning 1,200 to 2,500 meters. For every 100 m increase in elevation, the temperature drops around 0.6°C, and the flora changes with elevation. The lower reaches of the mountains are dominated by Japanese oaks (*Quercus crispula* Blume), Northern Japanese hemlock are found (*Tsuga diversifolia*) in the higher sub-alpine zones, and Lingonberry (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*) in the highest alpine zones. Oku-Nikko is thus a highly complex environment since the mountains are combined with wetlands, with their many moisture-loving plants.