

Summit of Mt. Kodake

Mt. Kodake's summit is surrounded by the Shirakami Sanchi wilderness. Unlike most of Japan, nothing created by humans—not even a road—interrupts the view of the primeval beech forest and the surrounding peaks. Several of the region's larger mountains are visible: Mt. Futatsumori (1,086 m) to the west, Mt. Shirakamidake (1,232 m) to the northwest, Mt. Fujisato-Komagatake (1,158 m) to the southeast, and the more distant Mt. Iwaki (1,625 m) to the northeast.

The summit has stands of the low-growing Siberian dwarf pine (*Pinus pumila*). This hardy alpine conifer is usually found only at elevations above 2,000 meters; the trees on Mt. Kodake (1,042 m) are the lowest-elevation population in Japan. Trailing arbutus (*Epigaea Asiana*) and fringed galax (*Schizocodon soldanelloides*) also grow here, dotting the slope with pink flowers in spring and summer.