Mt. Meakan and Lake Onneto Area

Eastern Hokkaido's Akan-Mashu National Park was established in 1934, making it one of the oldest national parks in Japan.

Mt. Meakan and Lake Onneto lie in the southwestern part of Akan-Mashu National Park and attract visitors with their rugged landscapes, natural beauty, and remote location. The landscape of the area was forged around 50,000 years ago by a series of volcanic eruptions.

Meakan Onsen (Meakan Hot Spring) is an area at the western foot of Mt. Meakan with a hot spring inn and parking lot, and is the location of the trailhead for the Meakan Onsen Trail, which leads to the peak of Mt. Meakan. Another path leads through the forest to Lake Onneto. Meakan Onsen is 20 minutes by car from the town of Akanko Onsen, which is on the shore of Lake Akan.

Lake Onneto is one of the highlights of the area. There is a walking path around the eastern lakeshore with a wooden observation deck that offers views of the lake and both Mt. Meakan and Mt. Akanfuji in the background. The color of Lake Onneto appears to change depending on the weather, wind, and time of day, earning it the nickname Lake of Five Colors. Onneto Campground, on the southern shore of the lake, is a convenient base for exploring the area.

Onneto Yunotaki Falls, located near Onneto Campground, is an unusual hot-spring waterfall with rare manganese deposits. The area is notable for its diverse array of animals and plants. Catch glimpses of wildlife such as large black woodpeckers, Japanese deer, and Siberian chipmunks (Asia's only native species of chipmunk). On the southwestern foot of Mt. Meakan there is a forest of Sakhalin spruce, and the slopes of the mountain are home to a number of endemic plant species.

Be aware that the road to Lake Onneto from Meakan Onsen is closed from December to April because of snow, but the lake is still accessible with snowshoes or cross-country skis.

It is necessary to arrange private transportation to explore this area of the park, as there is no public transportation.