

Sakhalin Spruce Forest

The Sakhalin spruce (*Picea glehnii*) is a conifer that grows mainly on the island of Hokkaido and the southern part of Sakhalin Island. Akan-Mashu National Park protects this evergreen species, which grows prominently at the foothills of Mt. Meakan, particularly around Meakan Onsen and on the western side of the mountain. The trail to Mt. Meakan from Meakan Onsen passes through forests made up almost entirely of Sakhalin spruce trees.

These trees are able to thrive in environments where other plants find it difficult to grow, including marshy areas, soil replete with volcanic ash (such as the soil on Mt. Meakan), and areas with low sunlight. Some of the Sakhalin spruces on Mt. Meakan are around 250 years old, and many have grown up to 30 meters tall.