

***Meoto Ike* (Married-Couple Ponds)**

The larger of these two pools is Kagami Pond, and the smaller is Suribachi Pond. These two bodies of water are known as *meoto* ponds—literally, “married-couple ponds.”

The pond craters were formed by one or more of Mt. Asahidake’s multiple eruptions. There are no definite dates for these eruptions, but the volcano is thought to have begun forming around 20,000 years ago. The large rocks strewn around the ponds and the wider area were thrown out during explosive eruptions.

During the long Hokkaido winter, the two craters fill with snow. They are only without snow cover for a few months in summer. Some members of the rose family, however, have adapted to the soil around these pools, including *meakankinbai* (*Sibbaldia miyabei*) and *chinguruma* (*Sieversia pentapetala*). These species bloom between June and August.