

## **Wildlife in the Sugatami Pond Area**

Many animals thrive in the alpine meadows around Sugatami Pond, despite the very short summer and long, harsh winter. The northern pika, for example, is a small and agile rabbit-like mammal that makes its home in crevices and burrows. It feeds on various flowers and grasses and stores food to eat during the winter months.

The Siberian chipmunk, meanwhile, is a small, hibernating rodent of the squirrel family. In Japan, it is endemic to Hokkaido and easily recognized by the stripes on its back. It feeds mainly on insects, nuts, and seeds, and hoards them in its burrow.

The red fox has dark-tinged ears and paws and grows to about 1 meter long. It mainly eats rodents, hares, and other small wildlife but will pounce on unattended or leftover human food, too. Though sighted less frequently, brown bears, sika deer, and sable also live in the area surrounding the pond.