

## Alpine Plants Growing in Dry Conditions

In the summer months this area comes alive with brilliant pink, purple, yellow, and white as alpine plants bloom in the sandy, gravelly soil around Mt. Iwate's caldera. Hikers will come across the tiny pink heart-shaped blossoms of *komakusa dicentra*—an alpine plant that takes ten years to go from seed to flower, and violet-blue mountain harebells which, in Iwate Prefecture, can only be found on these slopes. The small purple-blue flowers of the California butterwort look like violets, but are not related. This carnivorous plant catches small insects by trapping them in the sticky liquid excreted from its leaves. The fancy pink petals of the fringed galax and the deeper pinks of the keyflower orchid add more cheerful touches of color to the dry alpine landscape.