

The Kuroyachi Wetlands

The distinctive dense dark-green forests of Kuroyachi (“black marsh”) are made up of clustered Maries’ firs.

In the foothills where Mt. Chausudake and Hachimantai meet, the earth is black with peat. When the deep winter snow melts in spring, the extensive Kuroyachi peatlands bloom with swamp pinks, fringed galax, and other marshland plants that flourish among the dead grasses of previous years. In summer, geranium, deer cabbage, and small avens flowers sway in the wind. In the fall, clustered gentians color the landscape a vivid purple.

Located 700 meters from the entrance to the wetlands, the Kuroyachi observation deck provides views of the Kuroyachi wetland and its ponds. Along the boardwalk trail is Kuma no Izumi (Bear Spring).

Plants accustomed to dry conditions grow along the ridgeline where the winds are strong. In sheltered areas beneath cliffs, where the snow never fully melts, plants adapted to wet conditions can be found. This environment delays plant growth, however, so wildflowers like Amur daylilies, Aleutian mountainheath, *kurumayuri* “wheeled” lilies, *ugoazami* thistle, and St. John’s wort bloom only after the spring alpine plants in the summit areas have begun to fade.