

## Wild Birds

Birds are among the most varied and easily observed forms of wildlife on Mt. Sanbe. They are most easily seen in early spring, before the trees put forth leaves, or in late autumn and winter, after the leaves have fallen. The breeding season between April and June is the best time to identify songbirds by their mating calls.

Because the mountain is home to many migratory birds, different species are present at different times of year. Some arrive in spring and early summer, raise their young, then depart for warmer climates in winter. These include the White's thrush, whose long, piercing whistle can be heard at dusk, and the narcissus flycatcher and blue-and-white flycatcher, which fill the mountains with the sound of their elegant trilling. Two species of cuckoo—the lesser and the Oriental—also reside on Mt. Sanbe during the warmer months.

In fall and winter, other migrants arrive from colder climates. Among them are the pale thrush, dusky thrush, yellow-throated bunting, Daurian redstart, and long-tailed rosefinch. The male rosefinch's striking coloration extends even to the beet-red area around its beak.

Other birds are year-round residents. These include the long-tailed tit, varied tit, great tit, Japanese white-eye, Eurasian jay, and the highly vocal brown-eared bulbul. Visitors may hear the white-backed woodpecker and Japanese pygmy woodpecker knocking on tree trunks as they hunt and nest.

A few species are associated with particular habitats on Mt. Sanbe. The fork-tailed swift prefers the area around the summit, and the Eurasian nuthatch can be found in the beech forest. Rivers and ponds are the abode of the common kingfisher. One might even spot the Japanese pheasant, Japan's national bird, bobbing through the grasslands near the foot of the mountain.