

Birds of Dewa Sanzan

A wide variety of both native and migratory birds inhabit Dewa Sanzan. The deep snowfields, steep slopes, terrain close to the ocean, and beech, Japanese horse chestnut (*Aesculus turbinata*), and oak (*Quercus crispula*) forests provide diverse habitats for wildlife.

Several raptors are found here year-round. These species at the top of the food chain are an indicator of abundant plant and animal life in the area. Golden eagles soar in the skies at Dewa Sanzan's highest altitudes, at around 2,000 meters.

Mt. Haguro is one of the few breeding grounds of the ruddy kingfisher in Japan. This bird is easy to recognize for its long, red beak and beautiful song, which can be heard throughout the summer. They nest in hollow trees near forest creeks, mountain streams, and ravines and hunt frogs, freshwater crabs, lizards, and small snakes. They are migratory, spending the winters in warmer areas to the south.

The mandarin duck is another migratory species that makes its home here in summer. The males' colorful plumage helps them to attract a mate. The less striking, gray coloring of the females serves as a camouflage, helping them protect their young. These birds lay their eggs beginning in early May and raise their chicks in large hollow trees near ponds and streams before flying south for the winter.

Other species commonly found in the area are Arctic warblers, which inhabit the mountains at around 1,200 to 1,700 meters, Japanese nightingales, and olive-backed pipits. Hodgson's hawk eagles, goshawks, ospreys, and various species of tits can be seen at lower altitudes.