

## **Ikemeguri Nature Trail: Lake Rokkannon-miike**

Rokkannon-miike is the largest of the three lakes on the Ikemeguri Nature Trail, at 500 meters across. It is also the deepest, at 14 meters. The lake is a brilliant cobalt blue, partly because of its depth and partly because of volcanic particles in the water. The color is even more striking in autumn, when the surrounding oaks and maples turn crimson and gold. These trees are interspersed with evergreens, creating a rich tapestry reflected in the deep blue water. The ever-present Mt. Karakunidake rises beyond the trees.

“Rokkannon” means “Six Kannon”—one manifestation of the Buddhist deity Kannon, the bodhisattva of compassion, for each of the six states of existence. The Rokkannon-do Shrine on the lake’s shores originally held a full set of these statues, carved by a monk named Shoku after a lakeside vision. These were later replaced with a single sculpture of Bato Kannon, guardian of cattle and other livestock.