

## **Shirakami-Sanchi World Heritage Conservation Center Fujisato Facility**

The Conservation Center in Fujisato is both a visitor center for the Akita side of Shirakami Sanchi, and a hub for information and activities related to the Shirakami Sanchi UNESCO World Natural Heritage Site.

In 1993, 16,971 hectares of Shirakami Sanchi's mountain wilderness received the UNESCO designation in recognition of being East Asia's largest remaining pristine beech forest. More than 4,300 hectares of the site lie in Akita Prefecture, with the rest stretching north into Aomori Prefecture.

The Fujisato facility opened in 1998 and features exhibits in Japanese and English on the topography, plants, and animals that make up Shirakami Sanchi's diverse mountain ecosystems. Some center staff can provide English explanations and commentary on the exhibits and the area. Also available are maps and pamphlets on hiking trails, local sites of interest, hands-on activities, and special events. English-speaking guides can lead hikes, arrange participation in hands-on activities, and offer advice about trips into the mountains.

Admission to the center is free. From April to December, hours are from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and the center is closed on Tuesdays (and Wednesday if Tuesday is a national holiday). From January through March, hours are from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and the center is closed on Mondays **and** Tuesdays (plus Wednesday if Tuesday is a national holiday).

Access: the Conservation Center is on Prefectural Route 317, a 20-minute drive from Futatsui Station.