

Shishiku Spring

Ingetsuchi Pond is fed by a small stream that emerges from what is designed to look like a mountainside spring and flows down an artificial hill into the Shoseien garden pond from the northeast. This is the Shishiku, or “lion’s roar cascade,” which gets its name from the sound the water makes as it descends from the spring.

When it was built, the meticulously shaped fountainhead received its water from the Takase River, a canal just east of Shoseien dug in the early 1600s. In 1897, the spring was hooked up to a system of pipelines that joined Higashi Honganji Temple with the Lake Biwa Canal, which originates at Lake Biwa in neighboring Shiga Prefecture. This system was built mainly as a firefighting measure to protect the temple’s wooden buildings. The Lake Biwa pipelines are no longer in use, and groundwater is now pumped into the Shishiku to keep the spring flowing.