

## **Izumiyadoike Pond**

Izumiyadoike Pond is a spring-fed pond on the western edge of the Senjogahara Marshland, along the hiking trail from Yudaki Falls. Benches and tables next to the pond offer resting spots where the trail leaves the forest for the wide-open wetlands. The pond is part of a transitional zone where wetlands are slowly turning into dry land and, eventually, a forested area. Despite the dead and decaying trees, the water in the pond is remarkably clear, providing a habitat for the mallard ducks that make this their year-round home.

The pond offers superb views of Mt. Nantai (2,486 m) rising above the marshland, particularly after the autumn leaves have fallen. It is also known for an unusual natural phenomenon: the mounds of sedge plants that blanket the area around the pond. These mounds are created when soil erodes, leaving clumps of the plants, each about the size of a human head, which seem to emerge from the ground. The mounds are affectionately called *yachi-bozu*, or “marshland monks,” referring to the shaved heads of Buddhist priests. The picturesque landscape and the unique features of this pond make it a popular spot for nature enthusiasts and hikers.