

# Nature and Wildlife in the Northern Country



The climate of Shibetsu is a continental climate with a clear delineation of seasons. From May to early September, the region has relatively high temperatures with plenty of sunlight but is characterized by its large diurnal and annual temperature variations. Shibetsu is a snow country with severely cold winters and snowfall that begins in mid-November blanketing the region with a meter of snow in the plains and over two meters of snow in the mountains for nearly half of the year. It is also possible to view natural phenomenon unique to the Northern Country such as diamond dust, light pillars, and rime ice (tree frost).



Thanks to its cold climate, Shibetsu is home to many species of northern plants and animals. For example, whereas butterflies such as the European Peacock and Small Tortoiseshell butterflies are only found in the highlands of Honshu, they are commonly found on the plains in the cold climate of Shibetsu. Additionally, wild birds such as the Black Kite, which are known to be resident birds in other regions, have been found to temporarily migrate away from Shibetsu during the harsh winters. This severe cold has a large impact on the ecology of the wildlife inhabiting the area.

