

The outline of the excursion

A full-day field trip to Kushiro-shitsugen wetland and Akkeshi-ko lake (Flyway Network Sites) and other site by bus is scheduled on 18th January.

-Weather in Hokkaido is very cold in January. Please dress appropriately with comfortable shoes (preferably waterproof), warm coats, hats, and other personal needs such as light rain coat, sunglasses, sun block or skin protection, motion sickness medicine. Binoculars are also recommended. Lunch for the trip is provided.

1. Date:

18th Jan, 8:00 – 17:30

2. Designated place

The lobby of ANA Crown Plaza Hotel at 8:00

3. Destination:

Birding sites	Major birds
Tsurui-Ito Tancho Sanctuary (Kushiro-Shitsugen)	Red-crowned Crane
Akkeshi Waterfowl Observation Center (Akkeshi Lake)	Migratory Waterfowls
Observation point Steller's sea eagle (Akkeshi Lake)	Steller's sea eagle

4. Group of excursion

Participants are assigned to two groups.

Please check your name tag or check the participants list.

Image of name tag



This colour of the mark represents the execution Group.

● : Group A

● : Group B

5. Road maps

【Group A】 Guide: Natsuki Murata (MOP8 secretariat)

8:00	The lobby of ANA Crown Plaza Hotel Move to Tsurui-Ito Tancho Sanctuary
9:30	Arrive at Tsurui-Ito Tancho Sanctuary Explanation of the outline of the Sanctuary and bird watching
10:30	Move to Akkeshi Lake
13:00	Lunch at Akkeshi Conchiglie
14:00	Move to Akkeshi Waterfowl Observation Center
14:30	Arrive at Akkeshi Waterfowl Observation Center Explanation of the outline of Observation Center and bird watching
15:00	Move to Observation point Steller's sea eagle
15:30	Bird watching for Steller's sea eagle
16:00	Move to the hotel
17:30	Arrive at the hotel

【Group B】 Guide: Yusuke Sawa (MOP8 secretariat)

8:00	The lobby of ANA Crown Plaza Hotel Move to Akkeshi Waterfowl Observation Center
9:30	Arrive at Akkeshi Waterfowl Observation Center Explanation of the outline of Observation Center and bird watching
10:00	Move to Observation point Steller's sea eagle
10:30	Bird watching for Steller's sea eagle
11:00	Move to lunch
11:30	Lunch at Akkeshi Conchiglie
12:30	Move to Tsurui-Ito Tancho Sanctuary
15:00	Arrive at Tsurui-Ito Tancho Sanctuary Explanation of the outline of the Sanctuary and bird watching
16:00	Move to the hotel
17:30	Arrive at the hotel

6. Other information

Lunch menu is sea foods (please see the following page). Please contact MOP8 secretariat if you can't eat the menu by 16th evening. We prepare a sandwich instead of the lunch menu.

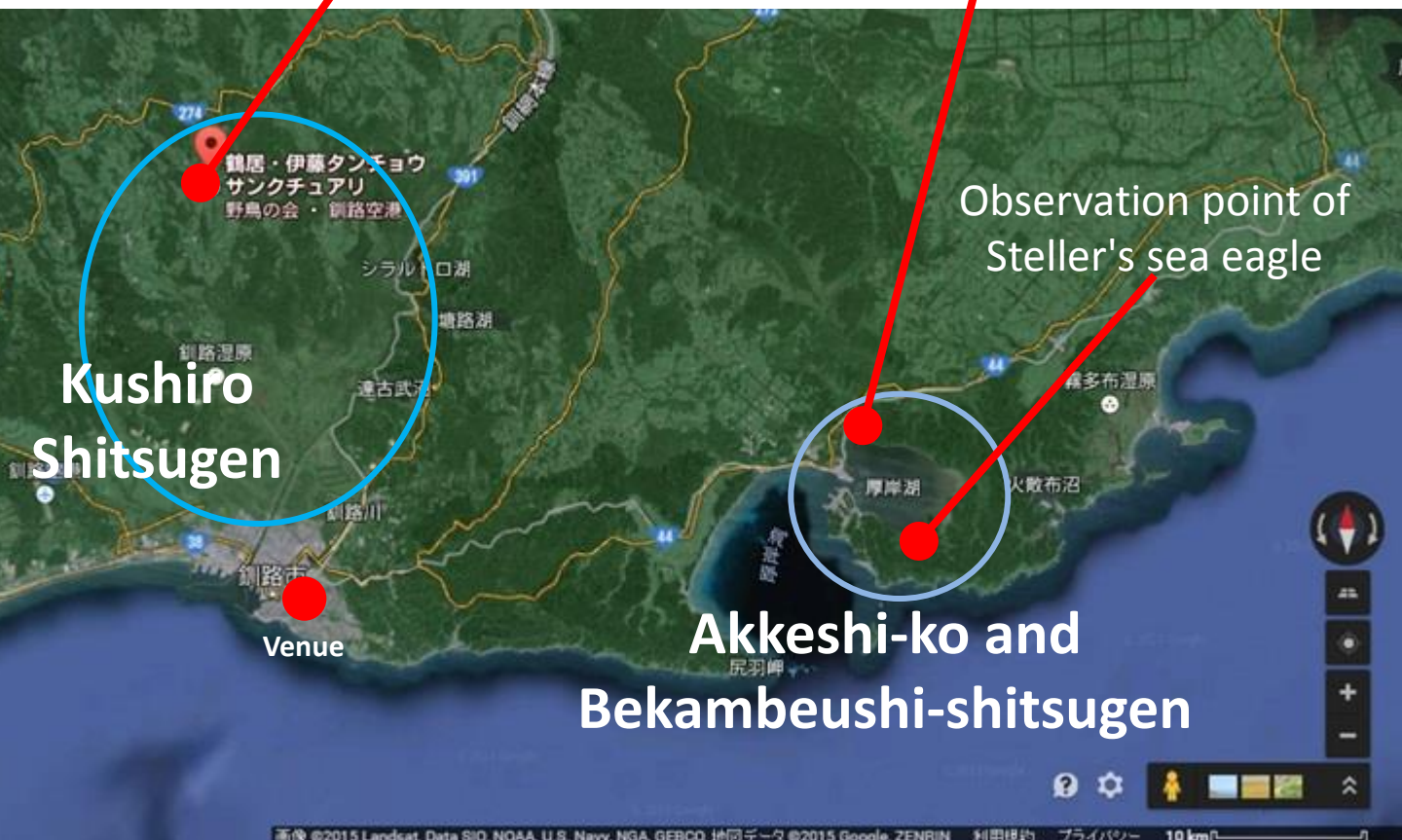
Maps of Excursion



Hokkaido

Tsurui-Ito Tancho Sanctuary

Akkeshi Waterfowl
Observation Center



Kushiro
Shitsugen

Akkeshi-ko and
Bekambeushi-shitsugen

Observation point of
Steller's sea eagle

Venue

Kushiro-shitsugen

Low Moor, Freshwater Lake, River

Geographical Coordinates: 43°09'N, 144°26'E / Altitude: 3-10m / Area: 7863ha / Major Type of Wetland: Low moor, freshwater lake, river / Designation: Special Protection Area of National Wildlife Protection Area; Special Protection Zone and Special Zone of National Park / Municipalities Involved: Kushiro City, Kushiro Town, Shibecha Town and Tsurui Village, Hokkaido Prefecture / Ramsar Designation: June 1980 / Ramsar Criteria: 1, 2, 3



Kushiro-shitsugen



Kushiro River (Photo by M. Okada)

General Overview:

Kushiro-shitsugen is the largest marshland in Japan with an area of 18,000ha. It is located approximately 5km north of Kushiro City in eastern Hokkaido. The area originally was a part of a sea before it was isolated from the ocean by a sand dune that developed along the coast. The accumulation of peat started 3000 years ago and formed the marshland seen today. The Kushiro River and its tributaries run through the area. Three large freshwater lakes, Toro-ko, Shirarutoro-ko and Takkobu-ko are located in the east.

Approximately 80% of the peatland is a low moor dominated by a reed and sedge community and alder forest. An intermediate and high moor cover the rest of the area. The plant community in the wetland has a variety of species including Marsh Jacob's Ladder, a relict of the ice age.

This wetland is blessed with rich fauna including 26 species of mammals and 170 species of birds. It also is home of the internationally endangered Japanese Crane, White-tailed Sea Eagle, and Steller's Sea Eagle. This is the only habitat in Japan for the unique amphibian Siberian Salamander.

Preservation of Japanese Crane:

In Japan, Japanese Cranes are found mainly in eastern Hokkaido. Once, they were considered to be extinct around 1890, however a small population was found at a corner of Kushiro-shitsugen. After local people started feeding for the cranes in 1952, the population recovered gradually, exceeding 1300 recently.

Wetland Restoration Project:

Once, Kushiro-shitsugen was a vast wetland with an area of 30,000ha surrounded by a primeval forest. As a result of economic activities in the area including land reclamation for agriculture, marshland area decreased significantly. On the other hand, as the water level of the wetland declined to induce the drying of the marsh, low moors once covered with reed and sedge have been replaced by alder forests. In response to the enforcement of the Law for the Promotion of Nature Restoration in 2003, Kushiro-shitsugen Nature Restoration Committee was established by administrative bodies, the local community and NGOs and some nature restoration projects are under way in this wetland.

[Japanese Crane *Grus japonensis*]

It is one of the largest cranes with a body length of about 140cm and a wingspan of 250cm. It has a white body and a black neck. The black part on the wing looks almost like a black tail when the wings are folded. It is the only crane species that



Japanese Crane

breeds in Japan. They are monogamous and occupy a large territory. Most of them are protected by winter feeding conducted at places including Tsurui village.

Contact Information:

Kushiro City Office:

<http://www.city.kushiro.hokkaido.jp/>

Kushiro Town Office:

<http://www.town.kushiro.hokkaido.jp/>

Shibecha Town Office:

<http://www.town.shibecha.hokkaido.jp/yakuba/>

Tsurui Village Office

<http://www.vill.tsurui.lg.jp/>





Home

Kushiro Shitsugen

Wetland

Birds & Birding

1. Birds around the sanctuary and surrounding areas
2. Birding sites around the sanctuary
3. Birds to be watched in Kushiro Shitsugen Wetland

How to get here -> Maps & transportation

Accommodation

About Mr. ITO Yoshitaka (1919-2000)

What is Wild Bird Society of Japan?

Wild Bird Society of Japan is a private organization founded in 1934 which has over 45,000 members and 90 chapters throughout Japan. Its purpose is to protect birds and their habitats, to encourage more people to enjoy bird watching, and to carry on research concerning the status and habitats of birds.

Tsurui-Ito Tancho Sanctuary

Open seasons:	October-March
Open hours:	9:00-16:30
Closed days:	Tuesdays & Wednesdays (except national holidays) December 26-December 30 April-September
Admission fee:	Free
Address:	Aza Nakasetsuri Minami, Tsurui-mura, Akan-gun, Hokkaido 085-1205 Japan
Phone:	0154-64-2620
Fax:	0154-64-2239
E-mail:	tancho_sanc@wbsj.org

Contact us

Wild Bird Society of Japan Address:

3-9-23 Nishi-gotanda, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo 141-0031 Japan

Phone: 03-5436-2633

Fax: 03-5436-2635

URL: <http://www.wbsj.org/>

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Translating Editor:

Meenakshi Nagendran

The purpose and background of the establishment

Tsurui-Ito Tancho Sanctuary was established by Wild Bird Society of Japan to protect Red-crowned Cranes and their habitat in 1987. In 1986, the Special Committee for Protection of Red-crowned Crane set up by the members of nature conservation groups and ornithologists at home and abroad drew up a plan to establish a bird sanctuary in Tsuruimura village for the purpose of promoting protection of Red-crowned Crane efficiently. Based on the plan, the sanctuary was established by generous cash donations from all over Japan and the cooperation of Mr. Ito Yoshitaka, who had been feeding Red-crowned Cranes on the site for a long time. The sanctuary has been financially supported by membership fees provided by the members of Wild Bird Society of Japan and other donations.

The location and facilities

Tsuruimura village, where Tsurui-Ito Tancho Sanctuary is located, lies on a dairy farm to the northwest of Kushiro Shitsugen Wetland. The sanctuary has an area of about 13ha and its land is used as pasture in summer. The north side of the site has Setsuri-gawa river, where Red-crowned Cranes roost in winter, and riverside forests of Japanese oak *MIZUNARA Quercus mongolica var. crispula*, willow *YANAGI Salix(myrtilloides)* and so on. The south and west sides are covered with pastures, and the business district of the village lies in the west side.

In winter, a part of the pasture is used as the feeding ground for Red-crowned Cranes, to which over 300 Red-crowned Cranes come flying during the peak season. There is the Nature Center in the Sanctuary which overlooks the feeding ground. The Nature Center has a crane observation room and an exhibition room, and provides explanation about Red-crowned Crane as well as various related events by our rangers. We also sell our original products.



The feeding ground in winter and Red-crowned Cranes



The Nature Center



Interior view of the Nature Center

Activities

1. Protection and conservation of the Cranes' breeding environments

(1) The establishment of Wild Bird Protection Area

Wild Bird Society of Japan protects legally unprotected areas of the Kushiro Shitsugen (Wetland) where Red-crowned Cranes breed by means of buying lands or having agreements with landowners to keep the areas preserved as Wild Bird Protection Areas. The sanctuary plays a central role in Kushiro Shitsugen. As of June 2010, there are 20 protected areas with the total of 2516.9ha, where 23 pairs are breeding.

(2) Restoration of the Cranes' nesting environment

We patrol these protected areas and do maintenance works to restore their environments if there are any environmental changes. Even though the breeding of Red-crowned Crane was not confirmed in some of these protected areas earlier, the birds began to breed there again after we restored reed beds by cutting down alders overgrown on drying marsh.



The Watanabe Wild Bird Protective Area Fureshima with an area of about 204ha (Nemuro City, Hokkaido) Cutting down alders to restore the wetland environment

2. Conservation of the Cranes' wintering environments

(1) Environmental management on the Cranes' natural feeding grounds in winter

Red-crowned Cranes are fed by humans now, but they used to feed themselves in marshes and rivers which were not frozen even in midwinter. In order to increase these grounds, we do maintenance works with volunteers such as creating shores and cutting down overgrown trees around there.



Creation of the Red-crowned Cranes' natural feeding grounds in winter by volunteers



Red-crowned Cranes using the riversides environmentally maintained

(2) Feeding

We feed the cranes dent corns in winter. At present, it is said that the number of cranes will decrease drastically to one-tenth if humans don't feed them.

3. Researches

(1) Researches on the Cranes' natural feeding grounds in winter

As the detailed facts of the Cranes' natural feeding grounds in winter are still largely unknown, we are doing research on the areas where cranes feed naturally in winter, other than our feeding grounds, and on the environment of those natural feeding grounds. At the riversides that are environmentally managed, we are researching how those areas are used by Red-crowned Cranes.

(2) Other researches

We are measuring the amount of dent corns eaten by Red-crowned Cranes for the data to be used to reduce their dependence on feeding by humans, and are collecting basic information about Red-crowned Crane such as how many cranes come flying to our feeding grounds.



Research to find the Cranes' natural feeding grounds in winter in Tsuruimura Village

Research on living things to be eaten by Red-crowned Crane in winter

4. Activities of spreading knowledge and enlightenment

(1) Tancho Teachers' Guide

Tancho Teachers' Guide (TTG) is a collection of environmental educational programs made by Wild Bird Society of Japan, with which people can study about Red-crowned Cranes and their habitats. The programs are also used to spread knowledge at school classes and relevant events. Besides, we give lectures using this TTG to schoolteachers and nature guides so as to cultivate human resources who can provide explanations about Red-crowned Cranes and the importance of their conservation.



Tancho Teachers' Guide



A lecture using Tancho Teachers' Guide

(2) Work camps for volunteers

We hold work camps for volunteers so that people can also join our conservation activities and have them do environmental management on the Cranes' natural feeding grounds in winter and so on. We accept volunteer activities by college students, too.

(3) Others

At the Nature Center, we provide explanation about Red-crowned Crane and nature information for visitors, as well as various other events. Besides, we hold photography contests which help people know about attractiveness of Red-crowned Crane and their conservation activities all over Japan.



Display of prizewinning works at the photography contest
KONICA MINOLTA Tancho Charity

Akkeshi-ko and Bekambeushi-shitsugen

Geographical Coordinates: 43°03'N, 144°54'E / Altitude: 0-20m / Area: 5277ha / Major Type of Wetland: Brackish lake, salt marsh, low moor, high moor, river / Designation: Special Protection Area of National Wildlife Protection Area / Municipalities Involved: Akkeshi Town, Hokkaido Prefecture / Ramsar Designation: June 1993 / Ramsar Criteria: 1, 2, 4, 6

**Brackish Lake,
Salt Marsh,
River, Moor**



Bekambeushi River and Lake Akkeshi-ko



The high moor in the Bekambeushi River basin (Photo by M. Okada)

General Overview:

Flowing northwards in eastern Hokkaido is the 43km long Bekambeushi River, the most pristine major river in Japan due to the small amount of human intervention. In its basin lies the 8300ha Bekambeushi-shitsugen and at its mouth the 3,230ha Lake Akkeshi-ko.

Situated between the larger wetlands, Kiritappu-shitsugen and Kushiro-shitsugen, the largely inaccessible Bekambeushi-shitsugen remained undeveloped, thus retaining its natural character. Its pristine condition can be considered as a rarity in Japan. In 1989, satellite imaging revealed that 100ha of high moor remained completely untouched in the river basin. Surrounding this area are low moors with their characteristic reed, sedge, and alder vegetation. This is an invaluable wetland that displays the natural development of wetlands. As Lake Akkeshi-ko is a brackish water lake, plant communities of saline environment are found in some places in the salt marsh along the shore, including Common Glasswort which has the Japa-

nese name Akkeshi-so because it was first found in this lake, Akkeshi-ko.

Paradise for Wild Birds:

Approximately 200 species of birds have been recorded in the area. As it does not completely freeze over in winter, Akkeshi-ko is an important wintering ground for the Whooper Swans. In addition, almost 300 Steller's Sea Eagles and White-tailed Sea Eagles, winter here. Akkeshi-ko is also an important habitat for Japanese Cranes. In 2005, a 381ha sanctuary for the Japanese Crane entrusted to the Wild Bird Society of Japan was added to the Ramsar designation area. The area is included in the Flyway Site Network under the Partnership for the East Asian-Australasian Flyway.

Wise Use of the Lake:

Because both Lake Akkeshi-ko and Akkeshi Bay on the coast of Pacific Ocean are rich in biodiversity, they have long been known by fishermen for their productive waters. Fishing is still one of the major industries in the area. In particular, aquaculture of oysters and clams of high



Steller's Sea Eagle *Haliaeetus pelagicus*

quality is carried out in Akkeshi-ko. In order to maintain its water environment, the local fishing cooperative plants trees every year in the catchment area.

[Steller's Sea Eagle *Haliaeetus pelagicus*] It is a black-brown eagle with white tail, white upper wing coverts, large yellow bill and yellow legs. It is the largest among sea eagle species and has a body length of about 90cm and a wingspan of 240cm. After breeding in the coastal areas of Kamchatka and Sakhalin in Russia, it winters in Hokkaido, particularly in eastern Hokkaido. It mainly feeds on fish.

Contact Information:

Akkeshi Town Office
<http://www.akkeshi-town.jp/>



the Akkeshi Waterfowl Observation Centre



What is the AWOC for?

AWOC(the Akkeshi Waterfowl Observation Centre) was set up as a facility for studying and monitoring waterfowl as well as deepening people's understanding about conservation and wise-use of Lake Akkeshi – Bekaubeushi Marsh which became a Ramsar Site in 1993.

Construction cost and Management

The facility is a wooden building with a total floor area of 329.67 m². The Japanese Environment Agency invested approximately 2 million U. S. dollars in the construction of the AWOC. The national government entrusts its management to Akkeshi town. (Open-April 1995)

Outline of the facility

Situated on the first floor is an exhibition room and a lecture theater. It is possible to observe what is happening on the Marsh via a large screen whose image is relayed by [observation camera](#). Furthermore, photographs, explanation panels and 3-dimensional models serve to instruct visitors in manners and rules of the marsh.

On the second floor is an observation corner from which one may appreciate the spectacular sight of the mouth of the Bekaubeushi river as well as Japanese Crane and many seasonal birds breeding.



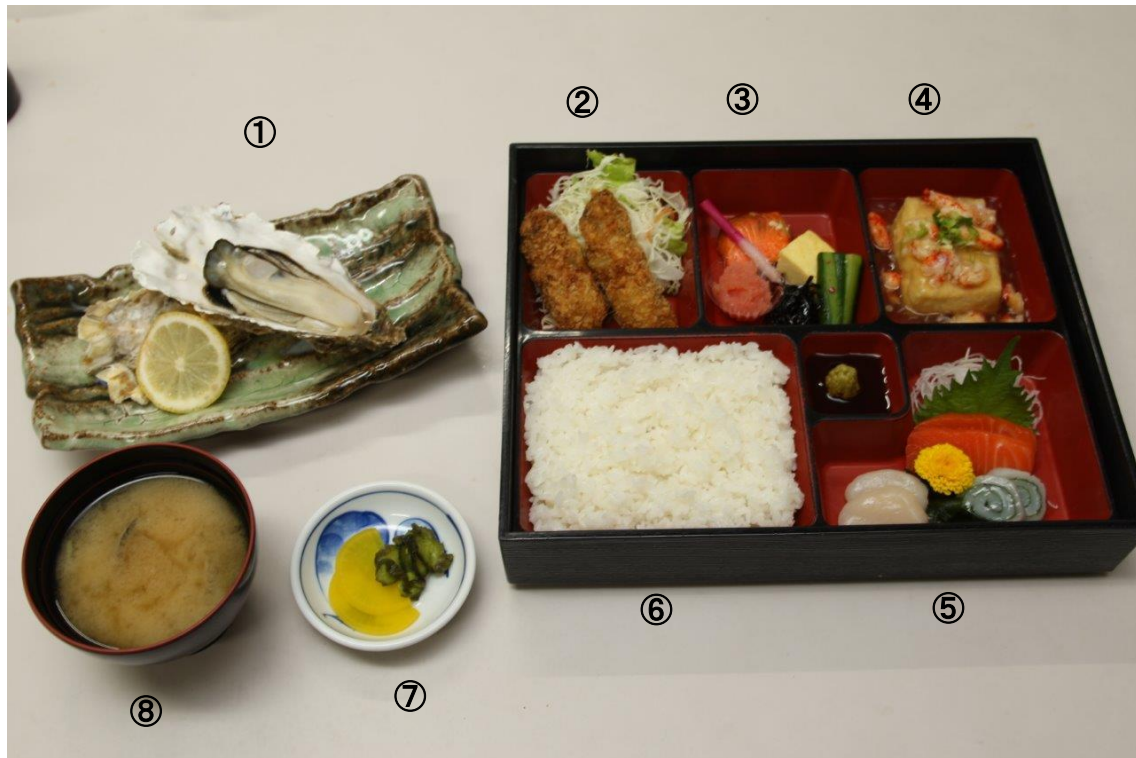
A RAMSAR SITE LAKE AKKESHI – BEKANBEUSHI MARSH

Lake Akkeshi is a shallow and brackish lake adjoining Akkeshi bay with a perimeter of 26 km. It is famed for its oyster and short-necked clam farming. At low tide several "tidelands" become exposed which provide good feeding grounds for waterfowl. For this reason, Japanese Crane breed here from spring to autumn whilst Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*), over ten species of wild geese, ducks, White-tailed Sea Eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*) and Steller's Sea Eagle (*H. pelagicus*) are to be found here from autumn to spring.

The Bekaubeushi Marsh is an 8,200 hectare fen in which most of the plants are reeds, sedges and alders. Sphagnums grow in the middle of the Bekaubeushi river. Beyond this, alpine plants flourish in a 100 hectare bog which was discovered in 1989. Such a find was scientifically valuable since all of the habitats of the fen lay untouched by human hands for such a long time. Moreover, this discovery has revealed something of the development of wetland from fen to bog.



Lunch menu (mainly sea food)



- ① Grilled oysters (焼き牡蠣)
- ② Fried oyster (牡蠣フライ)
- ③ cod roe (タラの子), Grilled salmon (鮭), Tsukudani (foods boiled in soy) of kelp (昆布の佃煮), omelet (卵焼き)
- ④ Boiled pork (豚の角煮)
- ⑤ Sashimi (raw fish) (刺身盛り合わせ)
- ⑥ Rice (白米)
- ⑦ Pickles (漬物)
- ⑧ Miso soup of clams (あさりの味噌汁)

Bird List around Kushiro and Akkeshi in winter

No	English name	Japanese name	Habitat	Kushiro shitsuge	Akkeshi
1	Red-throated Loon	アビ	offshore		
2	Black-throated Loon	オオハム	offshore		
3	Leach's storm petrel	コシジロウミツバメ	offshore		
4	Japanese Cormorant	ウミウ	offshore		
5	Pelagic Cormorant	ヒメウ	offshore		
6	Brant Goose	コクガン	lake, offshore		
7	Whooper Swan	オオハクチョウ	lake, river		○
8	Mallard	マガモ	lake, river		○
9	Eurasian Wigeon	ヒドリガモ	lake, river		○
10	Northern Pintail	オナガガモ	lake, river		○
11	Northern Shoveler	ハシビロガモ	lake, river		○
12	Tufted Duck	キンクロハジロ	lake, river		
13	Greater Scaup	スズガモ	lake, river		○
14	Black Scoter	クロガモ	offshore		
15	Harlequin Duck	シノリガモ	offshore		
16	Common Goldeneye	ホオジロガモ	lake, offshore		○
17	Red-breasted Merganser	ウミアイサ	lake, offshore		○
18	Common Merganser	カワアイサ	lake, offshore		○
19	Smew	ミコアイサ	lake, offshore		○
20	Black Kite	トビ	everywhere		○
21	White-tailed Eagle	オジロワシ	lake, river, forest	○	○
22	Steller's Sea Eagle	オオワシ	lake, river, forest	○	○
23	Northern Goshawk	オオタカ	forest		
24	Japanese Sparrowhawk	ツミ	forest		
25	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	ハイタカ	forest	○	
26	Common Buzzard	ノスリ	forest	○	○
27	Mountain Hawk-Eagle	クマタカ	forest		
28	Peregrine Falcon	ハヤブサ	coastal line		○
29	Hazel Grouse	エゾライチョウ	forest		
30	Red-crowned Crane	タンチョウ	wetland	○	
31	Dunlin	ハマシギ	tidal flat in lake and river		
32	Black-headed Gull	ユリカモメ	lake, river, forest		○
33	Slaty-backed Gull	オオセグロカモメ	lake, river, forest		○
34	Glaucous-winged Gull	ワシカモメ	lake, offshore		○
35	Glaucous Gull	シロカモメ	lake, offshore		○

No	English name	Japanese name	Habitat	Kushiro shitsuge	Akkeshi
36	Black-tailed Gull	ウミネコ	lake, river, offshore		
37	Common Murre	ウミガラス	offshore		
38	Spectacled Guillemot	ケイマフリ	offshore		
39	Ancient Murrelet	ウミスズメ	offshore		
40	Rhinoceros Auklet	ウトウ	offshore		
41	Tufted Puffin	エトビリカ	offshore		
42	Blakiston's Fish Owl	シマフクロウ	forest, river		
43	Ural Owl	フクロウ（亜種エゾフクロウ）	forest, glassland		
44	Grey-headed Woodpecker	ヤマゲラ	forest	○	
45	Black Woodpecker	クマゲラ	forest		
46	Great Spotted Woodpecker	アカゲラ（亜種エゾアカゲラ）	forest	○	
47	Japanese Pygmy Woodpecker	コゲラ（亜種エゾコゲラ）	forest	○	
48	Brown-eared Bulbul	ヒヨドリ	forest, urban area	○	○
49	Bohemian Waxwing	キレンジャク	forest		
50	Japanese Waxwing	ヒレンジャク	forest		
51	Naumann's Thrush	ツグミ	forest		○
52	Goldcrest	キクイタダキ	forest		
53	Long-tailed Tit	エナガ（亜種シマエナガ）	forest	○	
54	Marsh Tit	ハシブトガラ	forest, wetland, glassland	○	
55	Coal Tit	ヒガラ	forest	○	
56	Varied Tit	ヤマガラ	forest	○	
57	Japanese Tit	シジュウカラ	forest, wetland, glassland	○	
58	Eurasian Nuthatch	ゴジュウカラ（亜種シロハラゴジュウカラ）	forest	○	
59	Eurasian Treecreeper	キバシリ（亜種キタキバシリ）	forest	○	
60	Brambling	アトリ	forest		
61	Oriental Greenfinch	カワラヒワ	forest, glassland		
62	Eurasian Bullfinch	ウソ	forest		
63	Hawfinch	シメ	forest		
64	Russet Sparrow	ニュウナイスズメ	forest		
65	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	スズメ	urban area		
66	Eurasian Jay	カケス（亜種ミヤマカケス）	forest, urban area		
67	Carrion Crow	ハシボソガラス	forest, urban area	○	
68	Jungle Crow	ハシブトガラス	forest, urban area	○	