

# Celestial Paradise Biota

Around the center of Daisetsuzan, there is a vast plateau-like topography that expands at an elevation of 1,400-1,800m such as Takanehara, Goshikigahara, Numanohara, and Koganegahara. The area adorned with flower gardens, or the scenery of glistening marshes in the wetland is called "Kamuimintara," or God's playground. These are pyroclastic plateaus where materials released by large-scale volcanic activities accumulated heavily.



Flower garden in Mount Akadake



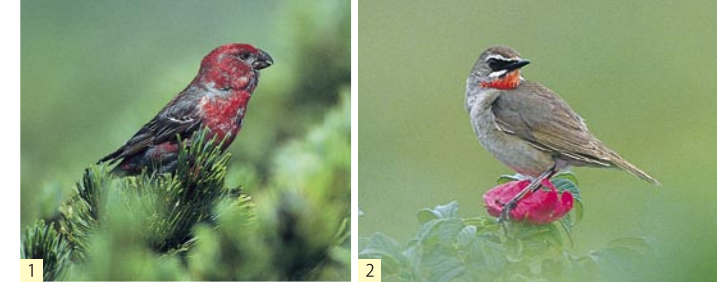
Japanese Pika

Eversmann's Parnassian (*Parnassius eversmanni*)

Freija's Fritillary (*Classiana freija asahidakeana*)

## Unique Animals Inhabiting the High Mountains

Animals that can be seen only in very limited regions or only here inhabit the alpine zone of Daisetsuzan. The Japanese Pika lives in the cold, rocky environment of Daisetsuzan, Hidaka Mountain Range, Kitami Mountainous District, and Yubari Mountains. Also, butterflies such as Eversmann's Parnassian (*Parnassius eversmanni menetries*) and Freija's Fritillary (*Classiana freija asahidakeana*) live nowhere else in Japan but in Daisetsuzan. The same species or those closely related to above species inhabit areas near the Arctic such as northern Asia and Alaska. They were more widely distributed during the period when Hokkaido was colder, but now remain only in cold regions such as in high mountains, due to global warming. These kinds of organisms are known as "relics".



1 Pine Grosbeak (*Pinicola enucleator*)  
2 Siberian Rubythroat (*Luscinia calliope*)  
3 Spotted Nutcracker (*Nucifraga caryocatactes*)

## Birds of the Alpine Zone

The bird that characterizes the alpine zone of Daisetsuzan is the Pine Grosbeak (*Pinicola enucleator*). The Pine Grosbeak is a bird that inhabits coniferous forests of the subarctic zone. In Japan, they migrate mainly to Hokkaido as irregular winter birds. However, they have been observed in areas where Creeping Pine forests grow on the high mountains of Hokkaido such as Daisetsuzan, the Hidaka Mountains, Mount Rausu, and Mount Rishiri during summer. Its breeding has been confirmed in Daisetsuzan. In addition, the Siberian Rubythroat (*Luscinia calliope*), Spotted Nutcracker (*Nucifraga caryocatactes*), and Olive-backed Pipit (*Anthus hodgsoni*) can be seen in the alpine zone.

## Diverse Clusters of Alpine Plants

On Daisetsuzan with such an expansive alpine zone, various clusters of alpine plants have developed according to their topography and weather conditions. The alpine zone on Daisetsuzan is established beyond an elevation of 1,700-1,800m. There are over 250 species of plants known to be growing in this area and colorful scenery is created by the mixture of the Creeping Pine (*Pinus pumila*) and these flower gardens. These clusters of plants can be categorized based on their environment.

The Bleeding Heart (*Dicentra peregrina*) and Boreal Sagebrush (*Artemisia arctica* var. *villosa*) grow on rocky lands. Clusters of shrubs such as Chishimatsugazakura (*Bryanthus gmelinii*) and Alpine Azalea (*Loiseleuria procumbens*) grow in windy lands where canopies cannot grow. The Creeping Pine (*Pinus*

*pumila*) grows on ridge lines at areas of low snowfall. White Anemone (*Anemone narcissiflora* var. *sachalinensis*), the Blue Mountainheath (*Phyllodoce caerulea*), Wild Geranium (*Geranium erianthum*), and others grow at areas of high snowfall and humidity. The Aleutian Mountainheath (*Phyllodoce aleutica*), Aleutian Avens (*Sieversia pentapetala*), and others grow on snowy patch. In marshes of the wetland, plants such as the Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*) can be seen. There are many rare species as well; endemic species of Daisetsuzan such as Jinyokisumire (*Viola alliariifolia*) and Hosobauruppuso (*Lagotis yesoensis*); and species with limited distribution such as the Rishiri Gentian (*Gentiana jamesii*) can be also seen.



1 Chishimatsugazakura (*Bryanthus gmelinii*)  
2 Hosobauruppuso (*Lagotis yesoensis*)  
3 Bleeding Heart (*Dicentra peregrina*)  
4 Boreal Sagebrush (*Artemisia arctica* var. *villosa*)  
5 Blue Mountainheath (*Phyllodoce caerulea*)