
Rausu Wildlife: Air

From large and endangered Blakiston's fish owls and Steller's sea eagles to vast flocks of short-tailed shearwaters and small, vocal songbirds, the Shiretoko sky is full of avian species throughout the year. The peninsula is a haven for birds and bird watchers alike, and visitors to Rausu have opportunities to view the abundant birdlife on forest hikes and from observation decks overlooking the ocean.

Ocean birds

The drift ice that flows into the Nemuro Strait every winter is followed by large eagles such as the Steller's sea eagle and white-tailed eagle. View these birds on a winter bird watching tour. In early summer, thousands of short-tailed shearwaters flock to the Nemuro Strait from their breeding grounds in southeastern Australia. Visitors can view the birds from the lookout at the Whale Observation Hill Park.

Forest and mountain birds

Shiretoko supports a high population density of the endangered Blakiston's fish owl. Conservation-focused legislation has ensured the large bird has safe places to nest and reliable food sources. In the Shiretoko mountains, the pine grosbeak and spotted nutcracker feed off Japanese stone pines. In autumn, the spotted nutcracker stores pine cone seeds in cracks in the rocks in preparation for winter. Look out for these birds and others when trekking to the summit of Mt. Rausu.

Forests of birdsong

Sections of forest along the two Bokyo no Mori trekking trails are denoted as "bird song zones." Expect to hear the trills of coal tits and Narcissus flycatchers, the clacking of the great spotted woodpecker, and the distinctive call of the Oriental cuckoo (*tsutsudori*).