



# Yotei-zan


## Hirafu/Kutchan Trail

羊蹄山 (比羅夫コース) Hiking Map 1:25000







8hrs  
Time




1500m  
Total Climb




1898m  
Highest point



12km  
Distance

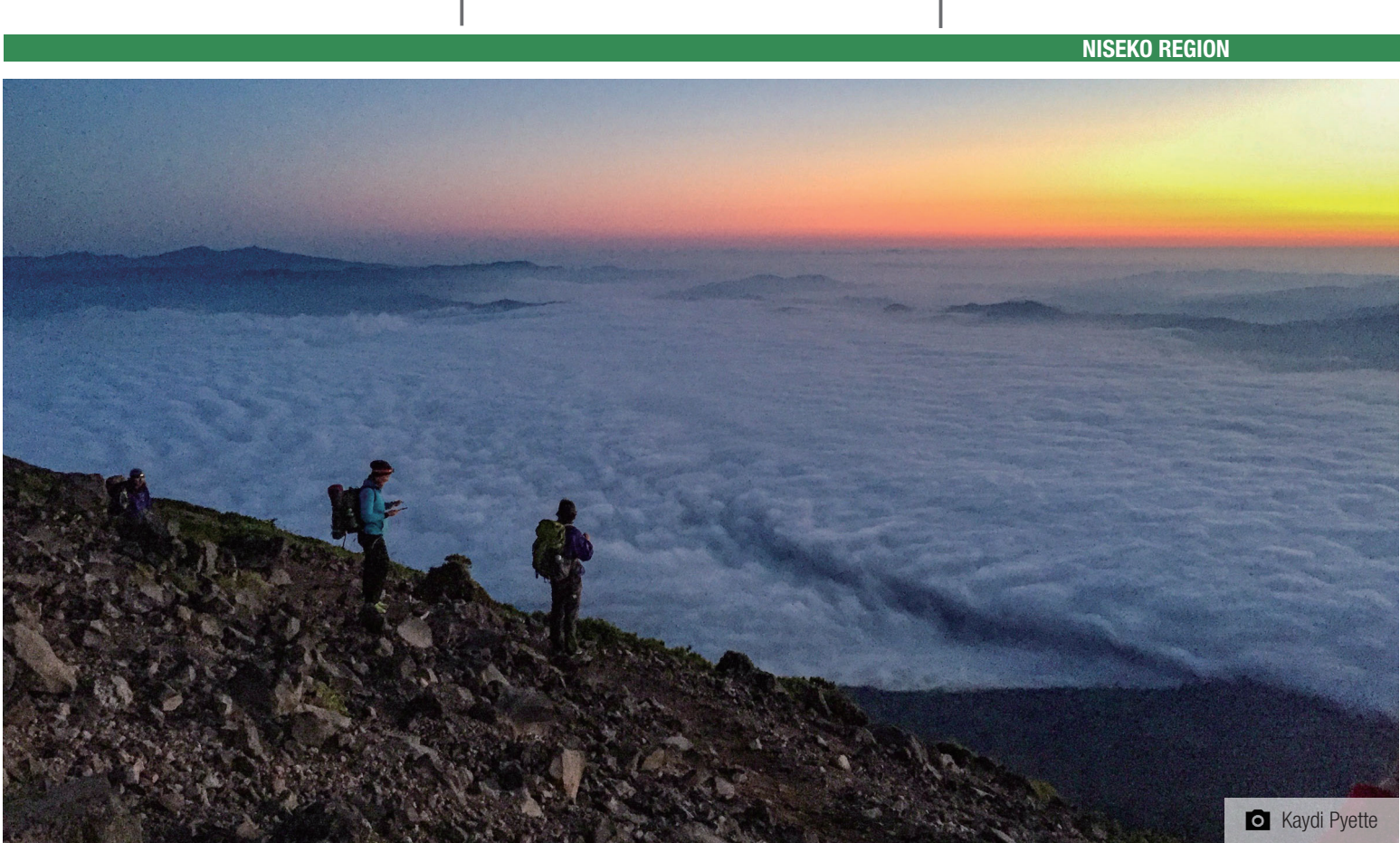


7/10  
Difficulty



Jun-Sep  
Best season

One of Japan's 100 Famous Mountains, Yotei-zan (羊蹄山, 1898m) is an iconic symbol of Hokkaido, its classic volcanic cone prominent on tourist posters and internet sites everywhere. In winter it makes the perfect panoramic backdrop for the hordes of international skiers on the Niseko slopes. In summer, the summit crater can be reached by no less than four hiking routes, all of them long and steep. On a clear day, high above the farmland and clouds, the circular walk around the crater rim is sublime. Here we describe the western route from



the Kutchan/Hirafu 倶知安・比羅夫 side of the mountain.

LOCATION

Yotei-zan is a couple of hours drive southwest of Sapporo, southeast of the small town of Kutchan 倶知安 and close to the international ski resorts of Niseko ニセコ. This Hirafu/Kutchan trail up the western side of the mountain starts from the Kangetsu-ko Campground, near the Hangetsu-ko Lake.

GENERAL NOTES

The Ainu name for Yotei-zan is *Makkarinupuri*.

This route involves a long climb (about 1550m from the trailhead) and descent and is steep in places – not recommended for anyone with bad knees or questionable fitness. There are no water sources past the trailhead so take plenty on a hot summer's day. The nearby resort area of Niseko/Hirafu and Kutchan Town have many options for accommodation and facilities, including campsites. The closest campsite is a small free site right by the car park at the trailhead itself (Hangetsu-ko campsite 半月湖野営場). It is very basic but has a toilet and pot washing area. Nearby is the small crater lake of Hangetsu-ko 半月湖

which can be circumnavigated on a clear trail in 35 mins. The summer hiking season is from mid-June through to the end of September. Fresh snow on the summit is a possibility from early September onwards.

ROUTE TIMING AND NOTES

Moving time on this route is about 4.5hrs for the climb, and 3.5hrs for the descent. The above are average walking times, with stops for lunch etc. count on around 9 hours.

The Hirafu Course 比羅夫コース trail is well defined with signposts at junctions and way stations (合目, –gome) marked along the trail (ten including the summit). From the trailhead at 350m elevation climb up gently at first through forest to a blowhole 風穴 after about 45 mins, shortly before the 2nd station 二合目. From here the path gradually steepens and for the next two to two and a half hours goes through sasa and then birch and haimatsu dwarf pine zones.

Around the 9th Station 九合目 a signed path branches off right to the Yotei-zan Refuge 羊蹄山避難小屋. The ground here is open and rocky and another trail soon heads off up to the left to the subsidiary peak of Kitayama 北山. Take this or continue straight on; either trail will lead you to the crater rim in about 30 mins. Walk clockwise (left) around the crater for 20-30 mins past some smaller craters and over some minor bumps, passing the junction

with the Kyogoku Course 京極コース trail, to the summit marker on the opposite eastern rim. The Kimobetsu Course 喜茂別コース path joins here. Continue round the crater, over a tougher section of large boulders and past the Makkari Course 真狩コース trail that goes down to the hut after 25 mins or so. A few minutes beyond this the return path to Hirafu 比羅夫 turns down to the left for the long descent.

TRANSPORT

**By car:** From Kutchan take Route 5 south for a few km till a signed road turns left (east) to Hangetsu-ko Lake 半月湖 and the trailhead 登山口. There is a car park, and a small basic campsite with a toilet and a water source.

**Public transport** | **BUS:** There is a bus stop (Yoteizan tozanguchi 羊蹄登山口) on the main Route 5 where the minor road turns off east to the trailhead. It is about a 30 mins walk up the road to the trailhead itself. Donan Bus (0136-22-1588) run 7 services a day in each direction, the earliest from Kutchan at 06.40. Niseko Bus (0136-44-2001, English 092-286-9555) have buses starting at Otaru Station and going via Niseko, not really early enough for doing the hike but perhaps useful if staying at the trailhead campsite. **TRAIN:** From JR Hirafu Station (比羅夫駅) walk up the road east for about 15 mins to the junction with Route 5 mentioned above, then on to the trailhead. The service is infrequent.

SAFETY NOTES

The upper slopes and crater rim are exposed to the wind and it can be much colder up there than down at the trailhead. Take appropriate bad weather gear and warm layers. Although

the path around the crater is obvious in good weather the open slopes could be confusing in mist. Bears are supposedly less common here but take precautions nonetheless.

ONSEN NEARBY

There are many onsen in Hirafu and Kutchan. Our pick for onsen close-ish to the trailhead is Kira-no-yu (ニセコ駅前温泉 綺羅乃湯, 500yen) next to JR Niseko train station. It's about a 20 minute drive from the Hirafu trailhead to Yotei-zan. ■






### YOTEI-ZAN REFUGE HUT

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**Details:** Built in 2014, this new two-story Yotei-zan hut is well insulated, perched high up near the western edge of the Yotei-zan crater rim. Hutkeeper present in summer hiking months. No water supply at hut. Booking required for overnight stay. **Capacity:** 20 persons (40 at a pinch). **Cost:** 1000yen per night. **Maintenance/management:** Mt. Yotei Management & Conservation Liaison Committee (羊蹄山管理保全連絡協議会), TEL: 0136-23-3388




Japanese Map Glossary		
Romaji	Kanji	English
<i>bunki</i>	分岐	junction
<i>cho</i>	町	town
<i>dake/mine</i>	岳/峯	peak
<i>eki</i>	駅	station
<i>goya/koya</i>	小屋	hut
<i>hinangoya</i>	避難小屋	shelter
<i>ike</i>	池	pond
<i>kawa/gawa</i>	川	river
<i>kako</i>	火口	crater
<i>ko/mizumi</i>	湖	lake
<i>kyo</i>	峡	gorge
<i>numa</i>	沼	pond
<i>onsen</i>	温泉	hot spring
<i>sawa</i>	沢	stream
<i>taira/daira</i>	平	plateau
<i>tani/dani</i>	谷	valley
<i>taki</i>	滝	waterfall
<i>toge</i>	峠	pass
<i>yama/san/zan</i>	山	mountain



### ONLINE ROUTE GUIDE

Please visit the full route guides for GPS files, interactive maps, and extra safety notes: <http://hokw.jp/yothira>



**Disclaimer** The information on this map was derived from digital databases provided by the Geospatial Information Authority of Japan and the Biodiversity Center of Japan. Care was taken in the creation of this map. HokkaidoWilds.org cannot accept any responsibility for errors, omissions, or positional accuracy. There are no warranties, expressed or implied, including the warranty of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose, accompanying this product. However, notification of any errors will be appreciated.

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MAP FOLD & LAYOUT CONCEPT I Dominika Gan

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## PRINTING INSTRUCTIONS

### STEP 1

Load your printer with A3 printer paper (297mm x 420mm). If you've only got Tabloid or Ledger size (279mm x 432 mm), just follow the instructions below. You'll achieve an accurate scale, but the map will be clipped a little at the top and bottom.

### STEP 2

Open the print window by clicking on File > Print (or hitting Ctrl + P on your keyboard).

### STEP 3

Make sure "Actual Size" is selected.

### STEP 4

For double-sided printing, select "Print on both sides of paper".

### STEP 5

For best results, select the highest quality print option available on your printer (settings will vary).

### STEP 6

You won't need this instructions page, so just select the pages that don't include this instruction sheet.

### STEP 7

Click "Print".

## PLEASE PRINT AT 'ACTUAL SIZE' (NO SCALING)

The 1:25,000 scale used in the map is accurate if the PDF is printed without scaling (i.e., ACTUAL SIZE). Follow the instructions on this page to ensure an accurate rendering of the scale.

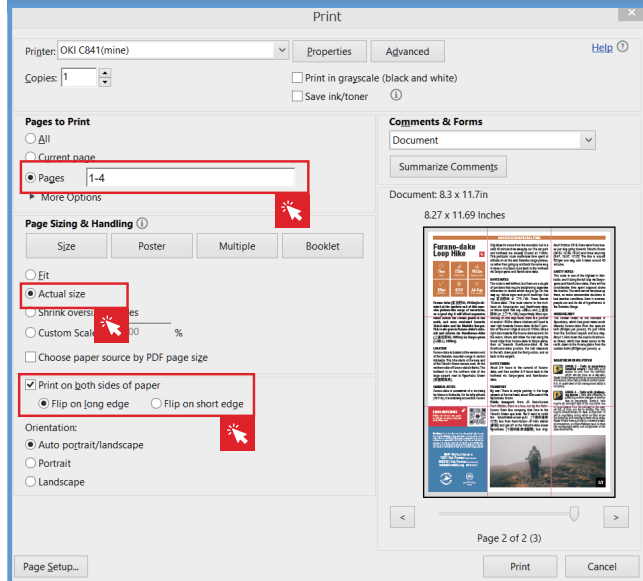


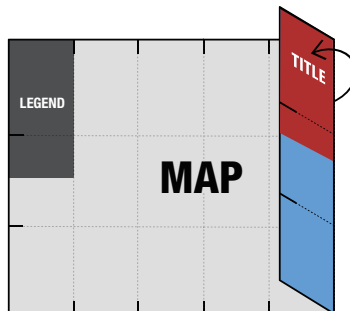
Figure 1. Ensure "Actual Size" is selected (Windows).

## ORIGAMI INSTRUCTIONS

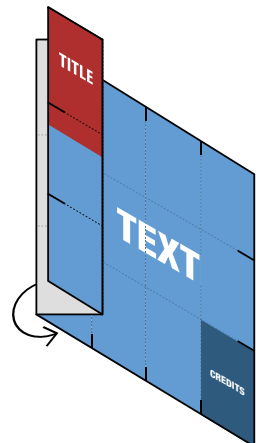
1



2



3



4



5



6



7

