




Lake Toya Zero Point

洞爺湖ゼロポイント Canoeing Map 1:25000







3hrs
Time




6km
Distance




7.5/10
Difficulty



4/5
Remoteness



4/5
Water clarity



Jun-Sep
Best season

The Lake Toya Zero Point 洞爺湖ゼロポイント is a shallow (≈1m) reef-like underwater island curiously surrounded by open water, about 700m off the shore of the lake’s central island. Also referred to as the Suichu-jima 水中島 - literally, Underwater Island - this approximately 30m² underwater rocky mound is surrounded by lake depths of up to 180m. Technically it’s essentially a fifth volcanic island in the middle of the caldera expanse that is Lake Toya. The lake’s ultra-clear water means this is a worthy destination for experienced open-water paddlers on a calm day. Enjoy the spooky delight of suddenly paddling in 1m of water, still far from the shores of Nakajima Island.

LOCATION
Lake Toya is in southern Hokkaido, about 2 hours drive southwest of Sapporo City, or one hour drive south of the international resort of Niseko. This Lake Toya Zero Point is about 750m northeast off the shore of Lake Toya’s central island (Nakajima 中島).

Put-in locations: There are plenty of locations to access the Lake Toya shoreline, but places to park a car are limited. For the Lake Toya Zero Point, the closest official put-in points with parking are the two options below. They’re both a similar distance from the Zero Point in terms of as-the-crow-flies distance.

Lakehouse at Toyako: This gorgeous private estate has a lake access point. They charge 1,000yen per person for access for the general public and parking (waived if staying at guesthouse/camping, or if renting equipment). If you’re keen to escape the madding crowds of the Takarada Campground next door, this is a very relaxing, highly recommended option. They also offer basic camping for 1,500yen per night.

Takarada Campground: Very popular and busy on the weekends, this sprawling, well-appointed campground offers day-visitor access for 500yen per person, plus 400yen per vehicle for parking. Access to the lake included.

GENERAL NOTES
Lake Toya is a volcanic caldera lake in the Shikotsu-Toya National Park in southern Hokkaido. It ranks in the Japan national “100 most beautiful places” 日本百景, and was the location for the 2008 G8 summit. As a paddling destination, it is well known for its central island and good accessibility via a quiet ring road around the lake. The central island tends to be a magnet for paddlers, and is worthy as a destination in its own right. Less known is the small reef-like underwater prominence about 700m off the shore of the central island. Depending on the lake level, the shallowest point is around 1m deep. Given the clarity of the lake, the underwater mound is nicely visible once you’re on top of it – especially so

when the lake is mirror-calm – usually in the early morning.

When to paddle: To make the most of seeing this peculiar underwater mound, we highly recommend paddling just after dawn, when the sun is low in the sky. This allows the light to enter the water at a low angle, illuminating the underwater rocks nicely. This time of day is usually the most calm too.

Weather forecast: For the most reliable wind forecast, we use Windy.com. Generally, we find that the gust forecast is usually the better indicator for actual consistent wind conditions on Lake Toya. Generally we only head out into open water on Lake Toya if it’s forecast to gust less than 20km/h (10kt) at the most during the day.

Canoe/SUP/kayak rental: Lakehouse at Toyako is the only place around Lake Toya that we know of that rents out paddlesports equipment. See their prices on their website (<https://www.lakehouse-at-toyako.com>). Includes life-jackets and basic safety instruction.

ROUTE TIMING AND NOTES
This open-water paddling route will take at least 2hrs return from Lakehouse at Toyako, plus a bit more time to enjoy the shallow water at the Zero Point.

The closest official launching spot to the Zero Point reef is the Lakehouse at Toyako. You can also launch from the Takarada Campground next door, but you may need to carry your canoe for a further distance from the carpark.

From the Lakehouse at Toyako, head roughly on a southern bearing, veering to the south-southeast. After 2.8km or so of paddling (about 45min to an hour), you’ll be at the Zero Point, about 700m before you get to the Nakajima Island.

Note, however, that you can’t see the underwater mound until you’re right on top of it. There’s nothing on the surface of the water that would give it away. No buoys, ripples, or changes in the water surface. So, you’ll need to use your GPS for this one. Return the way you came, or, if Windy.com is forecasting less than 20km/h (10kt) maximum wind gusts during the day, then consider paddling on another 700m to the central island.

TRANSPORT
By car | There are a number of car parking areas around Lake Toya – some are free, some cost money to access (around 500 yen per day). For this route, you’ll likely want to park either at the Lakehouse at Toyako (1,000yen

per person for one day parking), or Takarada Campground (500yen per person, plus 400yen per car).
Public transport | There are public buses that run around the circumference of Lake Toya. For access to the Lakehouse at Toyako or Takarada Campground, catch the Donan Bus 道南バス from the Toyako-Onsen bus terminal 洞爺湖温泉 and get off at either Takarada-bashi 財田橋 bus stop or Takarada 財田 bus stop. Google Maps has good public transport directions, timetables, and fare information. The Toyako Onsen bus terminal is accessible by public bus from Sapporo City (about 3hrs).

SAFETY NOTES
Lake Toya is one of the most notorious lakes in Hokkaido – rescues happen on a weekly, if not daily basis in the high summer months. It’s a large lake with huge fetch. That is, wind has about 10km of water surface to blow over, which results in higher waves that one might otherwise expect. The lake can transform from

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

LAKE DETAILS

This route is on Lake Toya (洞爺湖), or To-Ya in the Ainu indigenous language. The lake is a natural lake, about 10km wide and 10km long. It has a shoreline of 36km and a maximum depth of 179m (117m average). The lake is at 84m above sea level and water visibility is 17m.


a benign pond-like surface into a seriously dangerous ocean-like waves with whitecaps in a matter of minutes. Furthermore, such changes in lake surface can be unpredictable – wind conditions do not always follow weather forecasts for the wider local area.

All paddlers heading out into the open waters of Lake Toya in calm conditions must assume they are on borrowed time – assume the lake will get rough at some point during the day, so make sure to be off the lake with plenty of time up your sleeve. Generally, paddlers will find the early morning (from dawn till about 3-4hrs after dawn) will be the most calm. Avoid planning to be on the lake in the middle of the day.

ONSEN NEARBY
If it’s your first time at Lake Toya, we’d highly recommend making the drive to the other side of the lake for a soak in the Manseikaku Hotel onsen 万世閣ホテル (1100yen). At 1,100yen per person it’s pretty pricey, but the 7th floor onsen is out of this world. With massive views across Lake Toya, it really is worth the effort and cost. ■

ONLINE ROUTE GUIDE

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




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.

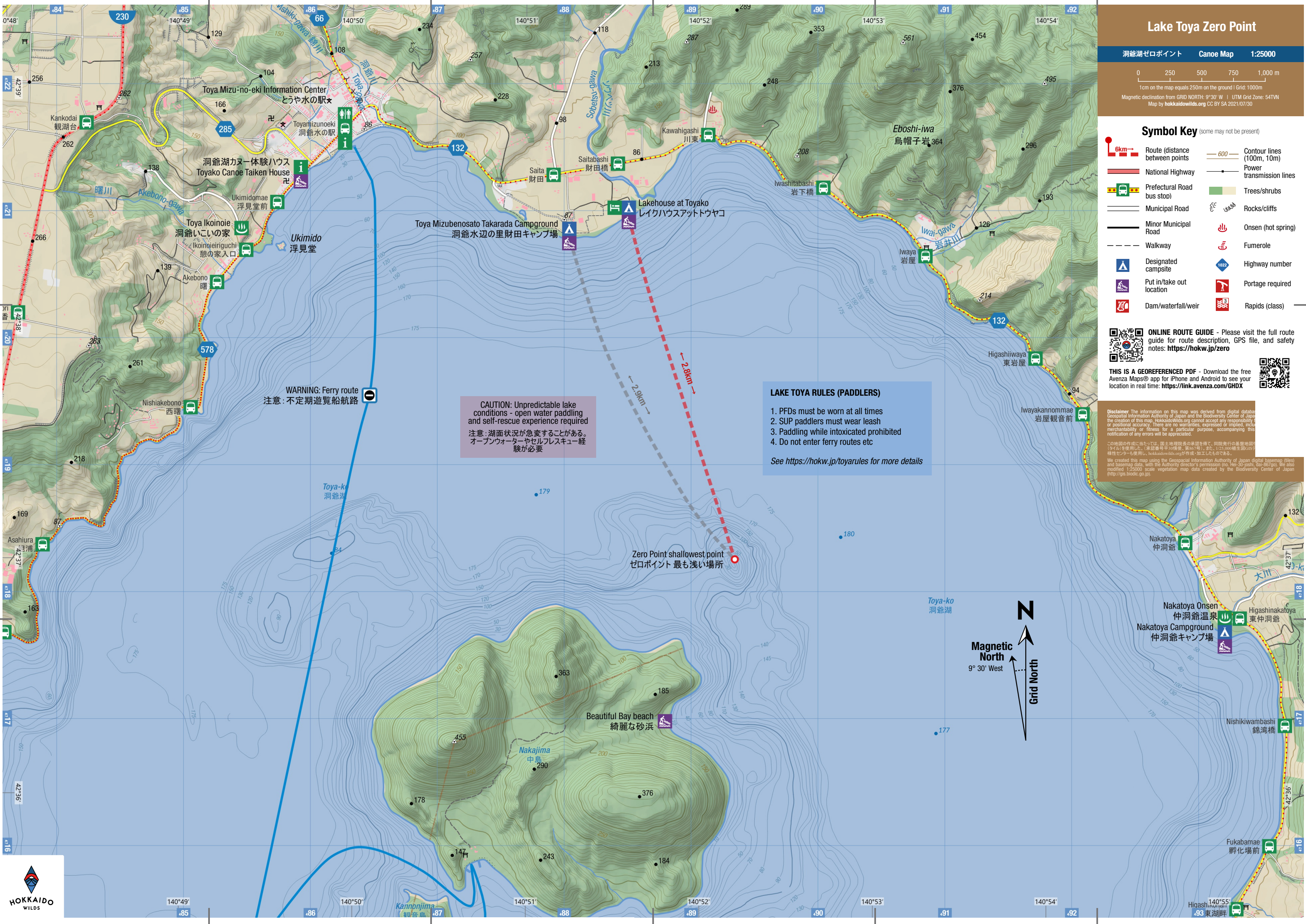
MAP, TEXT, PHOTOS | Rob Thomson

hokkaidowilds.org 2021/07/30

MAP FOLD & LAYOUT CONCEPT | Dominika Gan

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Lake Toya Zero Point

洞爺湖ゼロポイントCanoe Map1:25000

02505007501,000 m

1 cm on the map equals 250 m on the ground | Grid: 1000 m

Magnetic declination from GRID NORTH: 9°30' W | UTM Grid Zone: 54TVN

Map by hokkaidowilds.org CC BY SA 2021/07/30

Symbol Key (some may not be present)

6km→

Route (distance between points)

National Highway

Prefectural Road bus stop

Municipal Road

Minor Municipal Road

Walkway

Designated campsite

Put in/take out location

Dam/waterfall/weir

Contour lines (100m, 10m)

Power transmission lines

Trees/shrubs

Rocks/cliffs

Onsen (hot spring)

Fumerole

Highway number

Portage required

Rapids (class)

ONLINE ROUTE GUIDE - Please visit the full route guide for route description, GPS file, and safety notes: <https://hokw.jp/zero>

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We created this map using the Geospatial Information Authority of Japan digital basemap (tiles) and basemap data, with the Authority director's permission (no. Hei-30-joshi, 761-867go). We also modified 1:25,000 scale vegetation map data created by the Biodiversity Center of Japan (<http://gis.biodic.go.jp/>).

HOKKAIDO
WILDS

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.

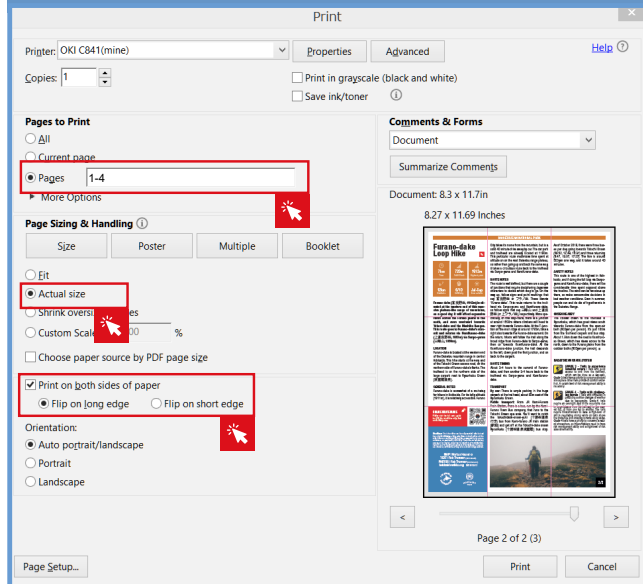
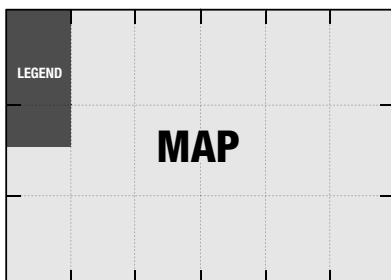


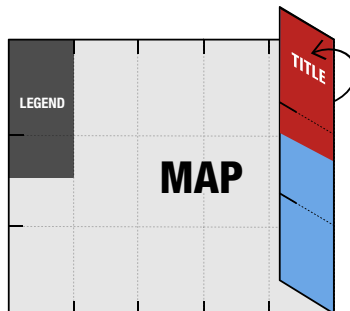
Figure 1. Ensure "Actual Size" is selected (Windows).

ORIGAMI INSTRUCTIONS

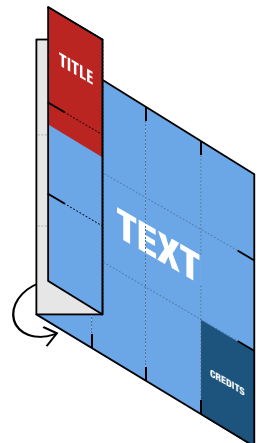
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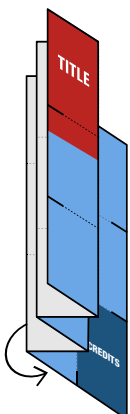
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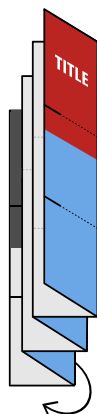
3



4



5



6



7

