Nature Created by Volcanoes

On a map of the volcanoes in Hokkaido, this highly concentrated region forms a belt. This volcanic belt connecting Chishima Islands and north-east Japan arises from the sinking of the Pacific tectonic plate into the oceanic trench, causing magma to rise from the depths. Hokkaido is located at a point where two arched archipelagos, the Chishima Arc and the Northeast Japan Arc, meet. Shikotsu-Toya National Park is located where this volcanic belt bends. In this national park, Mount Usu and Mount Tarumae are still active and continue to transform the landscape. The three caldera lakes (Lake Shikotsu, Lake Toya, and Lake Kuttara) that emerged from past volcanic activities, and many hot springs combine to create unique scenery, rendering this national park diverse and dynamic.

Lake Kuttara and Noboribetsu Another caldera lake, Lake Kuttara, was also formed by ancient volcanic activity. Having a diameter of about 2km, it is smaller than both Lakes Shikotsu and Lake Toya. In Noboribetsu, Jigokudani Valley and Oyunuma, both filled with hot steam vents and hot springs, arose about 10,000 years ago through a series of eruptions of Mount Hiyori.