





<u>TOP</u> > <u>Available Issues</u> > <u>Table of Contents</u> > <u>Abstract</u>

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Research on red snow 'Akashibo' in the Ozegahara mire —Relationships between the vertical distribution of red snow and alga—

Yoko YAMAMOTO¹⁾, <u>Takashi HAYASHI</u>¹⁾, <u>Masahiro OCHIAI</u>²⁾, <u>Haruo</u>
<u>FUKUHARA</u>³⁾, <u>Akifumi OHTAKA</u>⁴⁾, <u>Seiichi NOHARA</u>⁵⁾, <u>Manabu FUKUI</u>⁶⁾, <u>Yoshiaki</u> KIKUCHI⁷⁾ and Oze Akashibo Research Group

- 1) Faculty of Agriculture, Meiji University
- 2) Faculty of Engineering, Tokushima Bunri University
- 3) Faculty of Education and Human Sciences, Niigata, University
- 4) Faculty of Education, Hirosaki, University
- 5) National Institute, for Environmental Studies
- 6) The Institute of Low Temperature Science, Hokkaido University
- 7) Center of Water Environment Studies, Ibaragi University

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Abstract

The red snow phenomenon called 'Akashibo' is usually observed from May to June during the melting snow season in Ozegahara, Japan. The red snow takes its color from the reddish-brown particle about $10~\mu m$ in diameter that were found to be the round resting spores of snow alga, Phacotaceae *Hemitoma* sp. They were covered by spiky lorice with Fe compounds as their major components. These results suggest that the red snow phenomenon is mainly caused by the spores of *Hemitoma* sp. The vertical distribution of spores in snow suggests that water movement from the marshland surface towards the snow surface causes on accumulation of spores in the snow, and thereby giving rise to the red snow phenomenon.

Key Words: red snow, Ozegahara mire, alga, Hemitoma, Fe

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