

Ice flower – Natures miracle

Come winter, life becomes standstill in many parts of the earth especially where human footprint is still not so dominant. However, there is no interruption in natural activities which often turns into a miracle. In Heilongjiang province of northeast China, Kurbin river area is famous for its ‘ice flower season’. The 220 km long river running from north to south mostly goes through temperate environment. During winter, the temperature goes down to -30°C , creating a freezing condition in the northern region. As a result, trees become leafless skeleton of branches standing as guard at the river bank. However, due to the presence of a hydropower station at the upstream of the river, there is always a flow of water with temperature above 0°C . This comparatively warmer water when comes in touch of the chilly environment, a foggy condition develops along the course of the river. At night, the water droplets present in the fog get crystalized and tiny ice particles are deposited over the bare branches of the trees, thus creating millions of icy crystals across the area fondly called as ‘rime’. These crystals cover the trees in such a way that it appears as winter bloom for the trees. The rime formation is a widely known phenomenon across the cold temperate region of China. Apart from Kurbin river, Wusong island near Songhua river, Tianmenshan National Forest Park in Hunan province are few famous spots for rime vision. The scenic landscape immersed in total tranquility attracts flocks of tourist from December to March every year to celebrate the Winter Flower Season and to enjoy the winter life on the Earth.



Photo courtesy: Max Liang

Image: Max Liang, www.xabusiness.com/china-stamps-1995/1995-2.htm

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