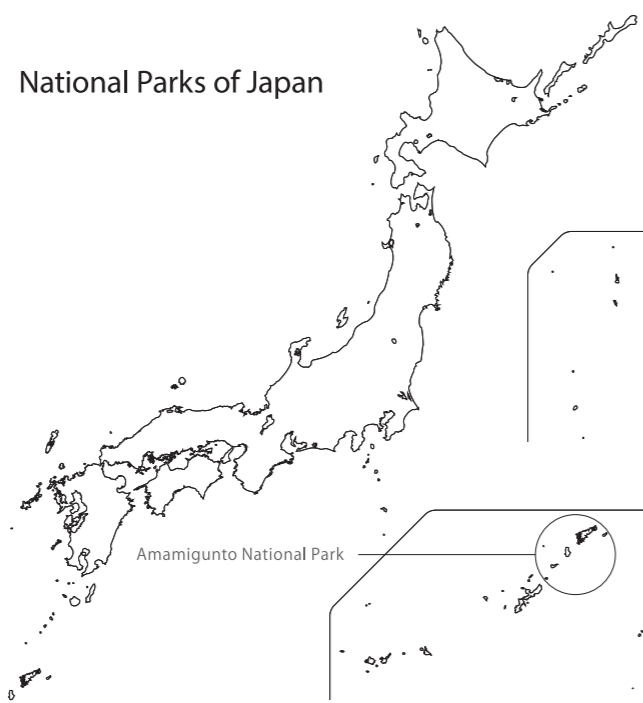
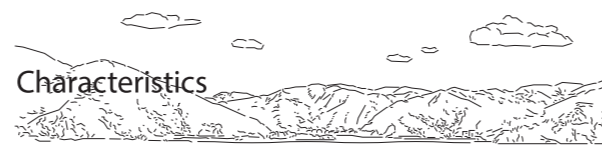


Amamigunto National Park



A national park is designated by the Japanese government as a natural landscape that represents Japan based on the National Parks Act. Thirty-four national parks are designated from Hokkaido in the north down to Okinawa and the Ogasawara Islands in the south, and more than 300 million people visit them every year. These national parks are full of precious treasures such as wild animals and plants, history and culture in addition to the scenic beauty. Japan's national parks are characterized by various environments such as forests, farmlands, villages, etc. While some are untouched, the local history and culture derived from nature and people's lives can be appreciated. Come visit our national parks to fully enjoy the beautiful nature of Japan that shows off various sceneries in each season.



Characteristics

Vibrant Subtropical Homeland - The Forests, Sea, and Life of Islanders -

Amamigunto National Park is located in the southernmost part of Kagoshima Prefecture. It was designated as the 34th national park on March 7, 2017. Amami Islands possess ecosystems consisting of rich and diverse natural environments and endemic, rare wild animals and plants. Cultural landscapes created by the relationship between people and nature also remain on these islands. Each island of Amamigunto National Park offers unique and appealing nature and experiences of the history and life of local people.

[Date of Designation] March 7, 2017 [Relevant Prefecture] Kagoshima Pref.
[Area] 42,196 ha (Land area) / 33,082 ha (Sea area)



Wild Animals and Plants

Mountainous areas are covered with subtropical laurel forests, featuring habitats of both temperate and tropical tree species. These are dominated by evergreen Fagaceae trees such as *Castanopsis sieboldii* (evergreen broad-leaved species), *Quercus glauca Thunb. var. amamiana Hatsumi* (a tall evergreen tree), and *Quercus miyagii* (a species of oak). As for plants, southern and northern species coexist and form the rich flora in the area. It is characterized by being the northern distribution limit for as many as 120 southern species and by being the home of many endemic species such as *Lilium alexandrae* (a species of white lily), *Calanthe tokunosimensis* (a species of orchid), and *Rhododendron latoucheae var. amamiense* (a species of azalea). As for animals, there are diverse fauna, including endemic species and subspecies, and a unique ecosystem is formed in Amami-Oshima Island and Tokunoshima Island with

the Habu viper (*Protobothrops flavoviridis*; venomous viper) at the apex of the food chain. These endemic species and subspecies include the Amami Rabbit, the Amami Spiny Rat, the Tokunoshima Spiny Rat, the Amami Thrush, the Banded Ground Gecko, the Ryukyu Ayu-fish, and *Aegista kiusiuensis oshimana* (a species of snail). The coastal areas of the islands contain nesting grounds for sea turtles, and breeding grounds for seabirds such as terns and petrels. In addition to be important breeding grounds for such animals, these areas are proven to be equally important stopover sites for animals with large territories such as migratory birds. The sea areas, with well-grown coral reefs of as many as 220 hermatypic coral species, are habitats of a wide range of creatures such as fish, shellfish, and crustacean. These coral reefs are located in the northernmost limit of the world as sizable coral reefs with the great biodiversity.



Amami Rabbit



Aegista kiusiuensis oshimana



Banded Ground Gecko



Amami Thrush



Calanthe tokunosimensis



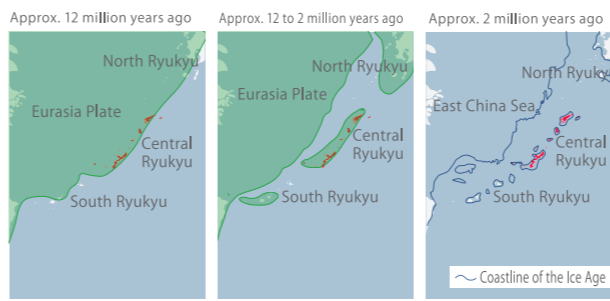
Amami Ishikawa Frog (Odorrana splendida)



Black-naped Tern

History

Amami Islands are located at the center of the crescent-shaped archipelago of Ryukyu. It has been repeatedly disconnected and reconnected to the continent or mainland Japan due to severe crustal deformation since the Neogene Period of the Cenozoic Era (approximately from 23 million to 2.6 million years ago). The movement of creatures was limited while the Ryukyu Archipelago was formed. These creatures, which were originally distributed widely on the continent, were then confined to these islands, and they have evolved into the unique species endemic to each island. Approximately 12 million years ago, a large number of creatures including the origin of the Amami Rabbit are thought to have been distributed widely on the continent in this period since this area was connected to the continent. Approximately 2 million years ago, the Ryukyu Archipelago was separated from the continent and was divided into three blocks: North Ryukyu (connected to Kyusyu), Central Ryukyu, and South Ryukyu. The Amami area with the Amamigunto National Park is included in the Central Ryukyu. Afterward, Central Ryukyu had repeatedly disconnected and reconnected among adjacent islands caused by changes in sea levels and other impacts until the current shapes of the islands were formed. During this process, many creatures were confined to these islands, and they have evolved into the unique species



Conservation Efforts

- Eradication of Mongoose -
In 1979, the mongoose was brought into Amami-Oshima Island for countermeasures against the Habu viper; however, the mongoose fed on native animals including many rare species such as the Amami Rabbit and the Amami Ishikawa's Frog. This seriously disturbed the balance of this ecosystem. In 2000, full-fledged mongoose eradication control was started, and the "Amami Mongoose Busters" has been formed and has been conducting planned systematic strategies since 2005. Currently, habitats of various native species are gradually recovering, but our ultimate goal is the complete eradication of the mongoose from the Amami-Oshima Island and the restoration of the original habitat of native species.

- Conservation Endangered Species -
Investigations on the Amami Rabbit, the Amami Woodcock, and the Amami Thrush are being conducted based on the Programmes for the Rehabilitation of Natural Habitats and the Maintenance of Viable Populations. We carefully watch over the environment surrounding these species by working on various investigations, patrols, education, and public awareness.



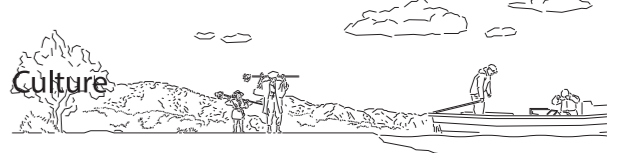
endemic to each island. Amami Islands can be divided into two kinds of islands with greatly different examples of wild animals and plants as well as landscapes determined by the difference in each island's formation process.

Islands High Above Sea Level with Mountainous Areas (Islands of Amami-Oshima, Kakeroma, Uke, Yoro, and Tokunoshima)

These islands consist of strata formed in an age older than the Neogene Period of the Cenozoic Era and have many mountainous areas with large crests and valleys. Mountainous areas stretch out to the coastline surrounded by sharp cliffs, which results in few plains.

Islands Low Above Sea Level with Plains (Islands of Kikai, Okinoerabu, and Yoron)

These islands consist of Ryukyu limestone formed during the Quaternary Period of the Cenozoic Era and have flat terrain with few mountainous areas. They have well-formed terrace topography, and several tiers of terraces can be seen. Amami Islands have a temperate and humid climate with an annual average temperature of 21 Celsius and an annual total rainfall of about 2,800 mm. Together with the difference in the formation process of each island, this has resulted in a variety of natural environments, including subtropical laurel forests, mudflats, ria coasts, and coral reefs.



Culture

People of the Amami Islands have created unique traditional cultures, entertainment, faith, and deep connection with nature in their daily lives with the influence of the Ryukyu Kingdom and Satsuma domain (han). These include traditional island songs (Shimauta), "August Dance (Hachigatsu Odori)" (to dance with local folk songs for thanksgiving), and Honen Festival (a good harvest festival). Therefore, a distinctive, blended culture of Ryukyu and Yamato (an ancient name of Japan) cultures has been formed. For example, their traditional performing arts include songs and performances of both southern and northern regions mixed together. There are the sea up front and mountains at the back with the village in the middle, and they are all together creating one living space. Life of the Amami area was once united with nature by acknowledging the existence of gods in the sea and the mountains. Remains of such life, including old roads and coral stone walls, are still alive as cultural landscapes exhibiting their deep connection with nature.



Coral Stone Walls



Shochogama (a Festival to Pray for a Good Harvest by Stamping on a Half Roof Until It Collapses)

Shodon Shibuya (Local Traditional Performing Arts)

Contact List

Okinawa Amami Nature Conservation Office of the Ministry of the Environment
1F, Naha Joint Government Building No. 1,
Higawa 1-15-15, Naha City, Okinawa Prefecture
900-0022
TEL: 098-836-6400 FAX: 098-836-6401
URL: <http://kyushu.env.go.jp/naha/>

Amamigunto National Park Office of the Ministry of the Environment
(located in the Amami Wildlife Center)
Koshinohata 551, Ongachi, Yamato Village, Oshima County,
Kagoshima Prefecture
894-3104
TEL: 0997-55-8620 FAX: 0997-55-8621
URL: <http://amami-wcc.net/>

Tokunoshima Ranger Station of the Ministry of the Environment
4F, Amagi Town Office, Hetono 2691-1, Amagi Town,
Oshima County, Kagoshima Prefecture
891-7612
TEL: 0997-85-2919 FAX: 0997-85-2045



Amamigunto National Park Website
<https://www.env.go.jp/en/nature/nps/park/amami/index.html>

For Safe Travel
Please download below application in order to get information about warning for earthquake, volcanoes, tsunami and so on.

*Android: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=jp.co.rcsc.safety.tips.android>
*iPhone: <https://itunes.apple.com/jp/app/safety-tips/id888571741mt=8>



Supported by Japan Tourism Agency (<https://www.jtao.go.jp/safety-tips/eng/app.html>)



Publisher: Ministry of the Environment
Year published: 2020

* Please note that the highlights & guide map's purpose is to show an overview of the designated area; therefore, a margin of error shall be allowed.

National Parks Etiquette

Please keep in mind the importance of nature and observe the following while staying in the national park so that everyone can enjoy.

- Do not litter.
- Do not pick plants.
- Do not feed any wildlife.
- Do not catch/capture any wildlife.
- Smoking while walking and littering of cigarette butts are strictly prohibited.
- Watch out for mudslides when it is raining.
- Drive slowly and safely in a manner that is friendly to island creatures.
- Do not bring in any alien species.
- Be aware of hazardous creatures such as venomous vipers (Habu viper; Protobothrops flavoviridis).
- Be careful of high waves, high seas, tidal current, and strong winds. (Pay attention to changes in tide level)
- Do not damage corals with swim fins and marine/diver boots.
- Do not get unnecessarily close to the animals when taking pictures. Do not disclose any location information of rare species.
- Do not disturb sea turtles during nesting season of May to August. Use a red light and keep quiet when observing sea turtles.

Koshinohata 551, Ongachi, Yamato Village, Oshima County,
Kagoshima Prefecture
TEL: 0997-55-8620 <http://amami-wcc.net/>
OPEN: 9:30 to 16:30
(Closed on Mondays and for New Year's holidays)



Traffic Accident Prevention Campaign

Warning Sign



Amami Wildlife Center

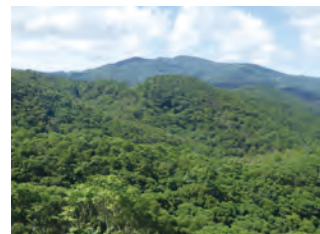
Exhibits at the Amami Wildlife Center



It is the largest stopover site for migratory birds among the Amami Islands. A wide variety of birds can be observed throughout the year. Binoculars or a field scope will be useful when observing the vast mudflat.



It is a representative forest of Amami-Oshima Island dominated by *Castanopsis sieboldii*, *Schima wallichii* (a tall evergreen tree with white flowers), and *Machilus thunbergii*. *Cyathea lepifera* (a large tree fern) and *Alocasia odora* with big paddle-shaped, bright green leaves can be found among the laurel forest, which is creating subtropical ambience.



This is the highest peak (altitude of 694 m) of the Amami Islands. The primeval forest near the summit consists of wind-swept bushes affected by strong winds, and some endemic plants of Mt. Yuwandake can be found. It is also designated as a Natural Monument of Japan.



This is the second largest mangrove forest in Japan, following Nakama River of Iriomotejima Island. The Silver-lined mudskipper, *Mictyris brevidactylus* (a species of crab), the Bowed Fiddler Crab and others can be observed in the mudflat that appears during low tide. Canoe tours can also be enjoyed.



This is the sea area surrounded by ria coasts between Amami-Oshima Island and Kakeromajima Island. The sea in this area is very clear with thriving coral reefs. Swimming, sea kayaking, and diving can be enjoyed.



This plateau formed with raised coral reefs with an altitude of 200 m lies in the center of the island. A panoramic view of the sea with coral reefs, villages surrounded by fields, a terraced terrain showing the formation of the island, and forests can be appreciated from the observation deck of the Hyakunodai Park.



"Mushiroze" means straw mats in Japanese, and as its name suggests, a series of enormous granite rocks cover the coastline, resembling tightly laid straw mats. This presents a very distinctive landscape among the Amami Islands.



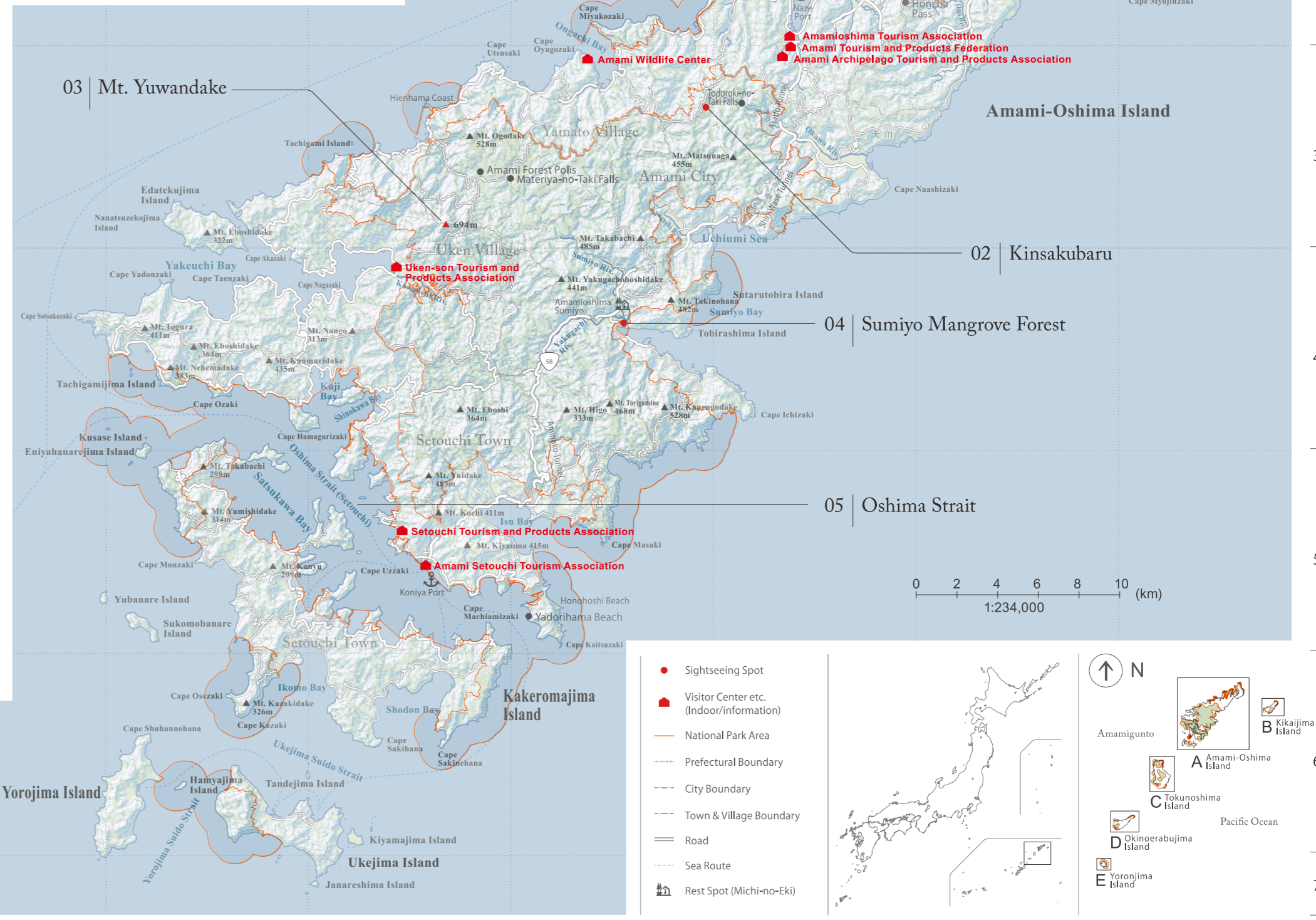
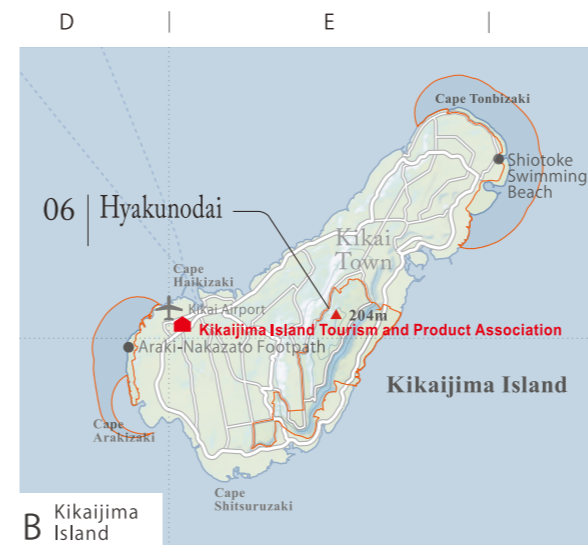
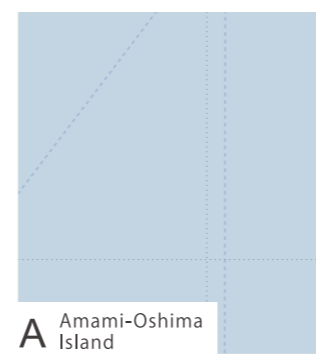
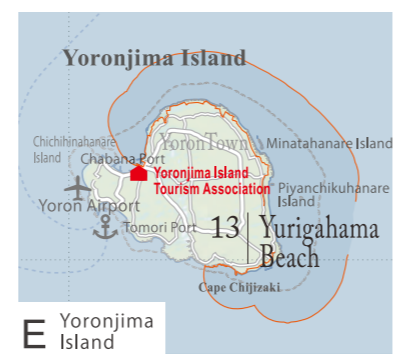
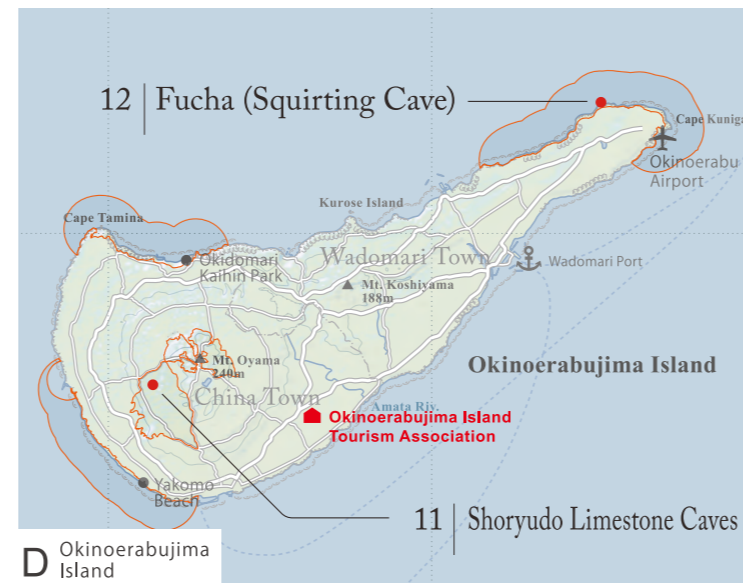
This is the most impressive sandy beach of Tokunoshima Island. Communities of the Coral can be observed with snorkeling in this extraordinarily clear sea.



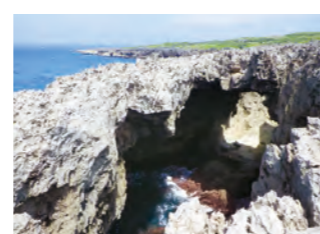
It features the sea cliffs comprised of eroded, raised coral reefs. The scenery of these cliffs boasts the grandeur and best view among the Amami Islands. A cenotaph for the battleship Yamato is built at the tip of the cape, and a memorial service is held on April 7 every year.



Trails for nature observation and a wooden observation deck have been installed within the subtropical laurel forest, and wild birds such as the Amami Jay and the Ryukyu Robin can be observed. The observation deck offers superb views of the sea of Tatsugo Bay along with the subtropical laurel forest.



These are limestone caves discovered in 1963, and 600 meters out of approximately 3,500 meters in total length are open to public. The overall formation of stalactites is magnificent, and there are many enchantingly beautiful places inside the caves, where stalactites sparkle brightly when illuminated.



It is a blowhole on the coast, which is a raised coral reef shaped by marine erosion of raging waves of the East China Sea. As rough waves pass through the blowhole, seawater gushes out between the rocks, just like a whale forcefully expelling air through his blowhole. This can reach occasionally up to over 10 meters.



This is a pure white sand beach that emerges in about 1.5 km off the coast of Oganeku Beach at low tide. The shape and number of beaches that emerge vary depending on the day. Snorkeling can be enjoyed among the coral reefs.

Information	Facilities
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- Entire Amami Islands -		- Kikajima Island -	
Amami Archipelago Tourism and Products Association	H3	Kikajima Island Tourism and Product Association	E1
Amami Tourism & Products Federation	H3	Tokunoshima Island Tourism Organization	B2
Amamioshima Tourism Association	H2	Okinoerabujima Island Tourism Association	B5
Uken Tourism and Products Association	F4	Yoronjima Island Tourism Association	B6
Setouchi Tourism and Products Association	F5		
Amami Setouchi Tourism Association	F5		