

# Daisen-Oki National Park

◀ Oki Islands Area ▶



Matengai Cliff, Nishinoshima

Ministry of the Environment  
Chūgoku-Shikoku Regional Environment Office

## What is a National Park?

National Parks of Japan are landscape areas of national importance. They have been designed as “areas of the greatest natural scenic beauty” by the Ministry of the Environment. The purpose of a national park area is to protect and preserve the flora, fauna and natural beauty of that area, as well as for the people of Japan to learn about the importance of nature and be in close contact with the natural environment. There are currently 30 national parks in Japan, from Rishiri-Rebun-Sarobetsu in the north to Iriomote-Ishigaki in the south.

## Information

- Designation: 10th April 1963
- Area: 35,053 ha (Oki Islands Area 7,570ha)
- Prefectures: Okayama, Shimane, Tottori
- This park embraces a mountainous area from Mt. Hiruzen to Mt. Daisen (1,729m), the highest peak in the Chūgoku district. The park also features the Oki Islands, the Shimane Peninsula and Mt. Sanbe. Mt. Daisen has steep rocky areas, and the Oki Islands feature spectacular eroded sea cliffs and caves.
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## History of the Oki Islands

The Oki Islands are documented in the *Kojiki* (the oldest written work in Japan) and have a long cultural history. The island group (Chiburijima, Nishinoshima, Nakanoshima) closest to the mainland of Japan is known as Dōzen, and the largest island, a further 18km north, is known as Dōgo. The foundation of these islands was created through volcanic activity 6,000,000 - 5,000,000 years ago. After this, the land experienced tectonic movement and climatic change, repeating a cycle of being under the sea, becoming islands, then being connected to the mainland. The islands most recently separated from the mainland 10,000 years ago. These islands can be considered a “treasure chest of nature” where you can discover connections between Oki and the Eurasian Continent and the influence of the Tsushima Warm Current in the development of unusual plant and animal species such as Kuroki-zuta Seaweed, Oki Rhododendron and Oki Salamander.



Kuniga Coast (from Akao Lookout), Nishinoshima

## Facts about the Dōzen Islands (Nishinoshima, Nakanoshima, Chiburijima)

### Magnificent Cliffs and Rich Farmland Kuniga Coast

The entire west coast of Nishinoshima Island features striking cliffs and sea caves made of trachybasalt that have been eroded by the fierce waves of the Sea of Japan. There is a 7km stretch of coast that boasts impressive sights such as Matengai Cliff (257m) and a striking rock arch known as Tsūtenkyō (Bridge to Heaven). On top of the steep cliffs is an expansive farmland area where cows and horses graze. There is a picturesque walking track between Matengai Cliff and Kuniga Beach.

### Central Cone of the Dōzen Caldera Mt. Takuhi

This mountain (452m) is located in the central southern part of Nishinoshima Island and is made of rhyolite lava and pyroclastic rhyolite. The three Dōzen Islands are within a 10km radius of this central cone. These islands are on the rim of the collapsed caldera wall surrounding the inner sea. The mountain has long been used by sailors as an important landmark. Takuhi Shrine, located in the opening of a rock cave in the middle of the mountain, is worshipped both by local people and seamen from afar. A large forest area around the shrine boasts many oak trees and a very rare type of fern known as *Takuhi-denda* which can only be seen on this mountain.

### Rich Underwater Environment Designated Marine Park Areas

There are four designated marine park areas in the Oki Islands Region of the Daisen-Oki National Park. Underwater, you can see forests of *yoremoku* (a species of edible sea algae) and *arame* (a species of edible kelp), as well as *suzume-dai* (damselfish) and *mebaru* (black rockfish). In Ama Marine Park Area you can find Japan's northernmost hard coral.

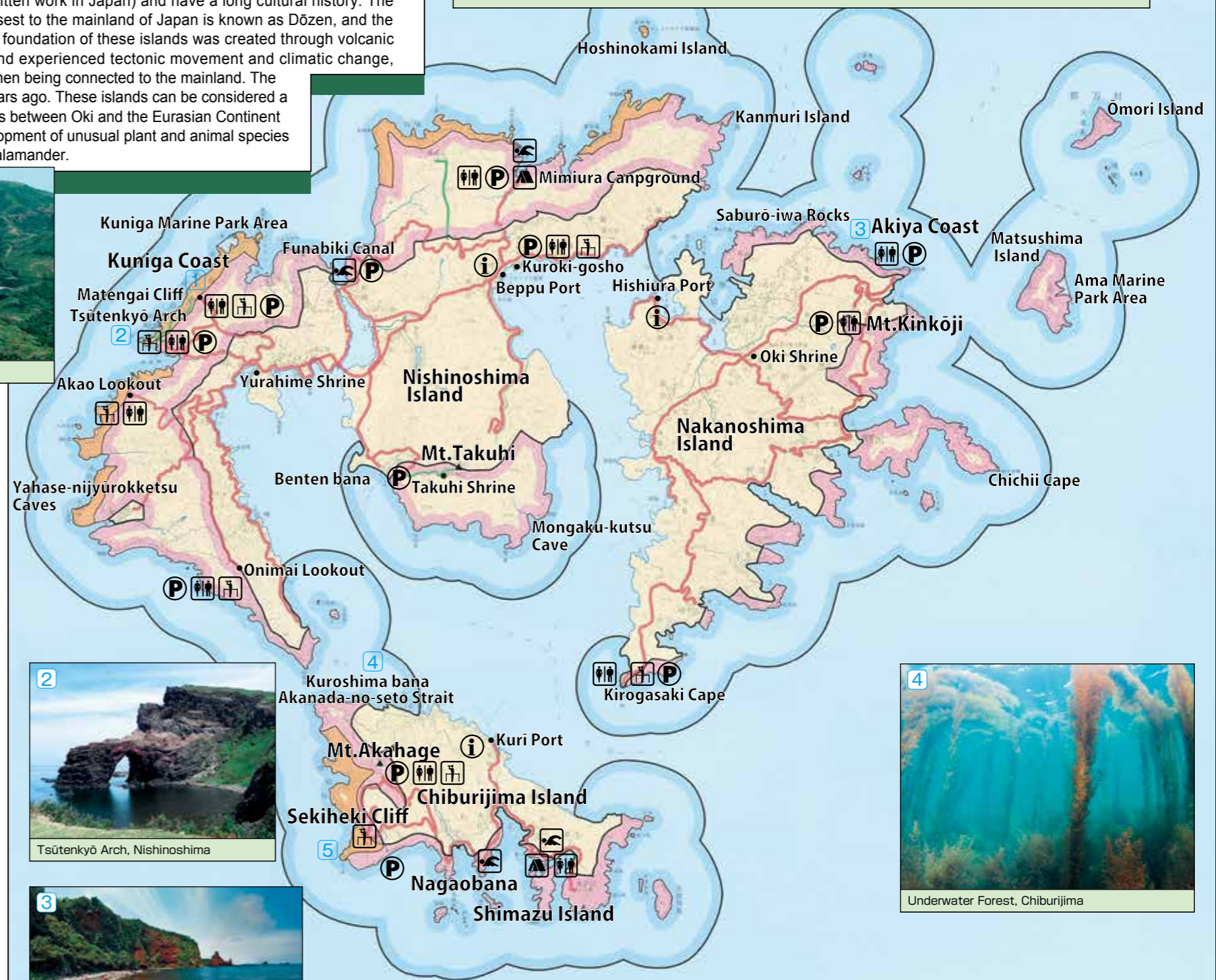
### Dramatic Colors Akiya Coast

The coast is colored by vivid red rocks, green vegetation and clear blue sea. It is featured in local mythology, and is also the location of an ancient volcano. The steep sea cliffs of the Akiya Coast stretch for 1km. This landscape was created 2,800,000 years ago by wind and waves from the Sea of Japan that eroded a coastal volcano (pyroclastic cone).

### Striking Coastlines Sekiheki Cliff

The west coast of Chiburijima Island features 50m – 200m high cliffs. The color of the cliff face varies depending on the characteristics of the rock and the effects of weathering. Here you can see many shades of red, yellow and brown. The main feature of this area is Sekiheki (Red Cliff). This cliff is most impressive when the setting sun strikes the coast, turning the rock face into a radiant deep red color.

## Oki - Dōzen Islands



Tsūtenkyō Arch, Nishinoshima



Akiya Coast, Nakanoshima



Sekiheki Cliff, Chiburijima



Underwater Forest, Chiburijima



Legend			
	Special Protection Zones		Information Board
	Special Zones		Parking Area
	Ordinary Zones		Toilets
	Marine Park Areas		Observatory
	Main Road		Campground
	Walking Track		Beach
Zone	Explanation	Example	
Special Protection Zones	Exceptional landscape areas inside parks that have maintained their original state and are subject to the strictest restrictions on permissible actions.	In addition to the Special Zone regulations, an act such as the collection or removal of any plant or animal requires the permission of the Minister of the Environment.	
Special Zones	Natural landscape comparable to a Special Protection Zone in which local industry is considered alongside protection of the current landscape.	In addition to the Ordinary Zone regulations, acts such as tree felling or the collection and removal of specified plants requires the permission of the Minister of the Environment.	
Ordinary Zones	Buffer zone between Special Zone or Marine Park Zone and non-park zone.	Acts such as the establishment of facilities, extraction of soil or stones, changes to the land or the building of advertising displays requires notification to the Minister of the Environment.	
Marine Park Areas	Superb area that features coastal scenery (tidal flats, shore reefs etc.) and exceptional underwater landscape (coral, seaweed etc.) where development is strictly regulated.	In addition to the Ordinary Zone regulations, an act such as the collection or removal of tropical fish or coral requires the permission of the Minister of the Environment.	

# Oki - Dōgo Island

## Facts about Dōgo Island

### Striking Cliffs Shirashima Coast

This coast, located at the tip of Dōgo Island, features striking white-grey alkali rhyolite cliffs that have been weathered by the elements. There are many islands here, such as Matsushima, Okinoshima and Shirashima. Okinoshima is home to a streaked shearwater (nationally protected bird species) breeding ground.

### Impressive Rock Formations

**Yoroi-iwa (Armor Rock) and Kabuto-iwa (Helmet Rock)**  
Noritabana Cape is located at the north-east tip of Dōgo Island. The rocky cliff here is formed by whitish-grey alkali basalt rock and features a series of impressive columnar joints. A columnar joint is a structure that forms in basalt lava. The columnar-shape of the rock is formed by fractures that occur systematically in the rock when it contracts during cooling. The joints here appear in a radial pattern. These rocks are thought to resemble a warrior's armor (*yoroi*) and helmet (*kabuto*).

### Unique Island Scenery

#### Jōdogaura Bay

Along the north-east coastline of Dōgo Island is an area where many rock layers are exposed. The resistance of the rocks to weathering and erosion has created many islands that form a small archipelago and feature many interesting rocks of different color and shape. The entire area is designated as a Marine Park Area and is known as Jōdogaura. This name was given to the bay by Ikkyū Oshō, a famous satirical poet from Kyōto, who visited this beautiful bay and thought it looked like paradise – Jōdogaura (Paradise Bay).

### Interesting Biodiversity

#### Yui Pond

On the west side of Dōgo Island is a 250m wide, circular depression known as Yui Pond. The shape of this pond was created by a large-scale landslide. It is now a large wetland area that boasts a precious ecosystem. It features many rare species of flora and fauna such as a large number of dragonfly species. It is also frequented by a number of migratory birds such as mallard ducks and mandarin ducks.

### Radiant Sunsets

#### Rōsoku-jima (Candle Island)

On the north-west coast of Dōgo Island, 500m offshore north-east from Ojirobana Point, a 20m high rock protrudes out from the sea. This rhyolite rock has been carved by wave erosion and resembles a candlestick. When the sun sets over the rock, it looks as though this candle has been lit. Rōsoku-jima is best seen from aboard a sightseeing boat or in the distance from the lookout platform at Ojirobana Park.

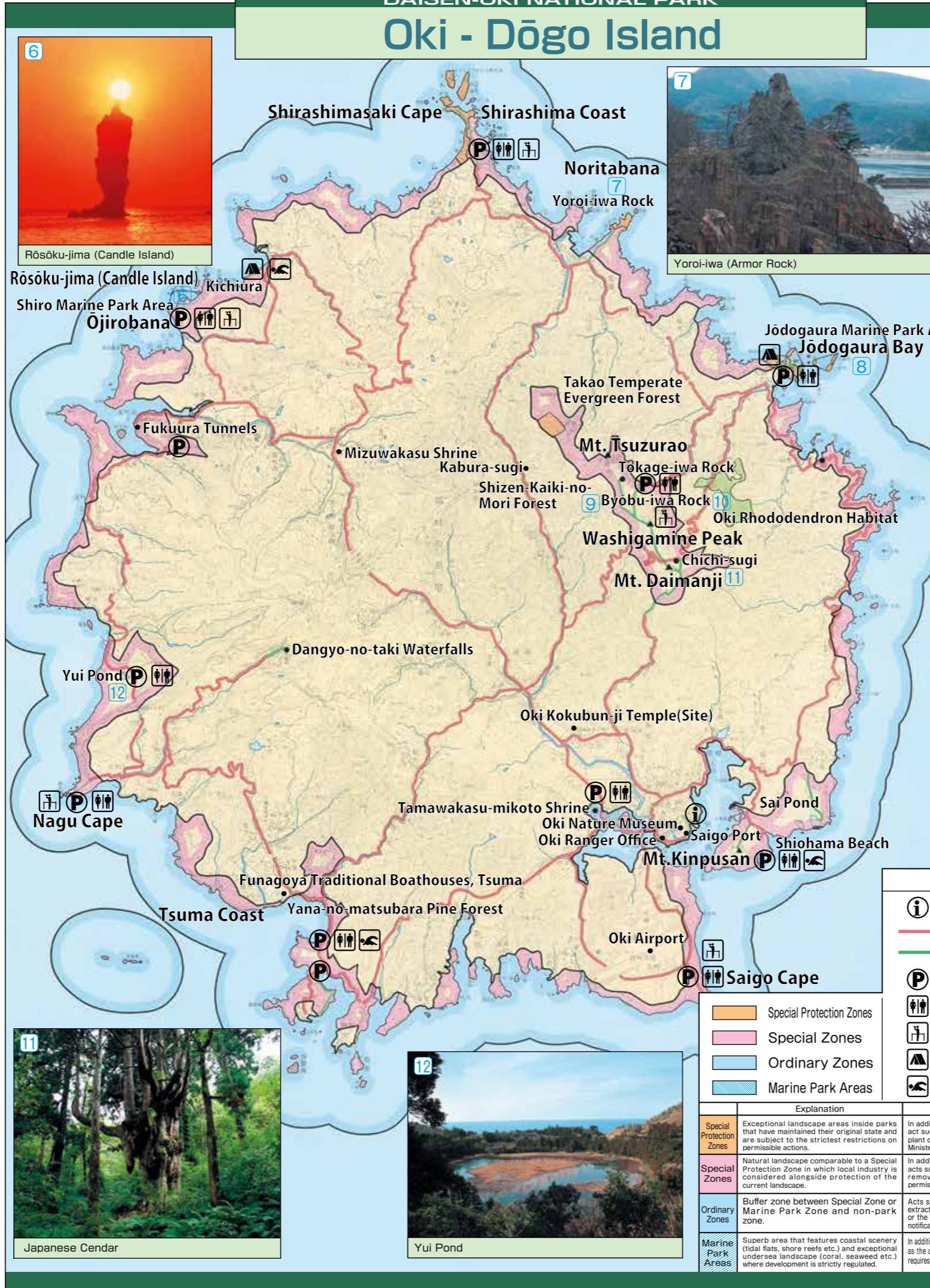
### Oki Islands Global Geopark

In recent years, local people have come together to help protect and utilize the special geological, natural and cultural features of the Oki Islands through activities in areas such as education and geo-tourism. There are many new initiatives being carried out with the goal of ensuring the sustainability of the Oki Islands now and for future generations.

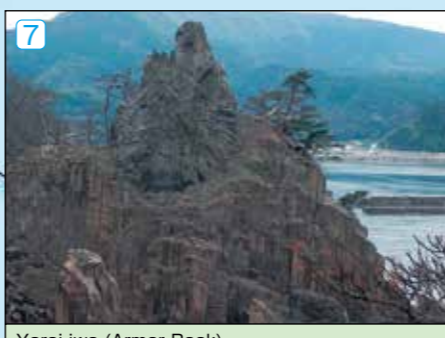


## Our Request

There are many precious plants and animals in this national park. Please do not remove anything, cause damage to the area, or bring in any introduced species. Also, please make sure you take all your rubbish with you after recreational activities such as fishing or camping.



Rōsoku-jima (Candle Island)



Yoroi-iwa (Armor Rock)



Jōdogaura Bay



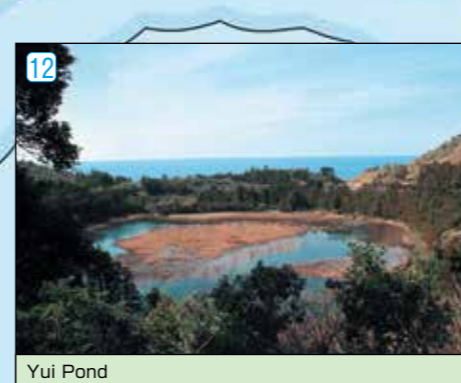
Oki-sanshōuo (Oki Salamander)



Byōbu-iwa (Folding Screen Rock)



Japanese Cedar



Yui Pond

### Impressive Nature

#### Shizen-Kaiki-no-Mori Forest, Mt. Daimanji Area

Mt. Daimanji (608m) is located in the center of Dōgo Island. To the north is a mountain range (500m) that includes Washigamine Peak and Mt. Tsuzurao. This area is known as the Takao Temperate Evergreen Forest and features *Urajiro-gashi*, a variety of oak tree. On the north-east side of Washigamine Peak is a natural forest that contains *sugi* (Japanese cedar) that are over 300 years old, and an impressive 800 year old Japanese cedar called Chichi-sugi. This tree has giant 2.6m roots that hang down from the branches. This entire area is known as Shizen-Kaiki-no-Mori. In this rich, deep green forest, you will forget that you are on an island! There are many walking tracks you can take to explore the forest, and lookout platforms with views of the impressive Byōbu-iwa (Folding Screen Rock) on Washigamine Peak and Tokage-iwa (Lizard Rock). Tokage-iwa, a 26m lizard-shaped rock, can also be seen from Saigō-misaki Cape. Byōbu-iwa, a 80m high cliff, features stunning columnar joints. This forest area is also home to the endemic species *Oki-shakunage* (Oki Rhododendron) and *Oki-sanshōuo* (Oki Salamander), which are examples of biodiversity in an isolated island region.



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