

Yakushima

Yakushima is situated between the East China Sea and the Pacific Ocean about 60 km to the south of the southernmost tip of the main island of Kyushu. A mountain range, of which Mt. Miyanoura-dake (1,936 m) is the highest peak, is located in the center of the island. On the mountainsides, numerous rivers have carved deep valleys as they flow downward. In its warm and rainy climate, the annual precipitation is more than 4,000 mm in the plains and more than 10,000 mm at the summits. The World Heritage property is an area of approximately 10,700 ha that extends from the central part of Yakushima to the coastal areas to the west.

Yakushima est situé à environ 60 km au sud de l'extrémité sud de l'île de Kyushu, entre la Mer de Chine orientale et l'Océan Pacifique. Une chaîne de montagnes culminant à 1,936 m (Mt Miyanoura-dake) occupe le centre de l'île. Sur les flancs de ces montagnes s'écoulent de nombreuses rivières qui ont creusé des vallées profondes. Le climat est chaud et pluvieux, et on dit que les précipitations annuelles dépassent 4.000 mm dans les plaines et 10.000 mm dans les zones montagneuses. Le site inscrit au patrimoine mondial est une zone d'environ 10.700 ha qui s'étend de la partie centrale de l'île aux zones côtières situées à l'ouest.

 World Heritage property



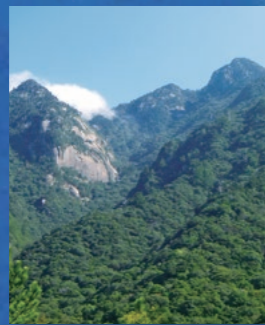
Ohko-no-taki Falls

This is the largest waterfall on Yakushima, with an enormous volume of water stirringly falling down the 88 m drop. It has been selected as one of 100 Famous Japanese Waterfalls.



Yaku-sika

This is an endemic subspecies of sika deer. It is found throughout the island. The distribution ranges from the evergreen forest close to human habitations to the areas around 1,600 m in elevation.



Yakushima macaque

This is an endemic subspecies of the Japanese macaque. Smaller than the Japanese macaques on the mainland, it has a dark greyish-brown body and is covered in long, coarse fur. The macaques inhabit nearly every part of the island, but mainly move between the coastal areas and the evergreen forest belt found around about 800 m in elevation.

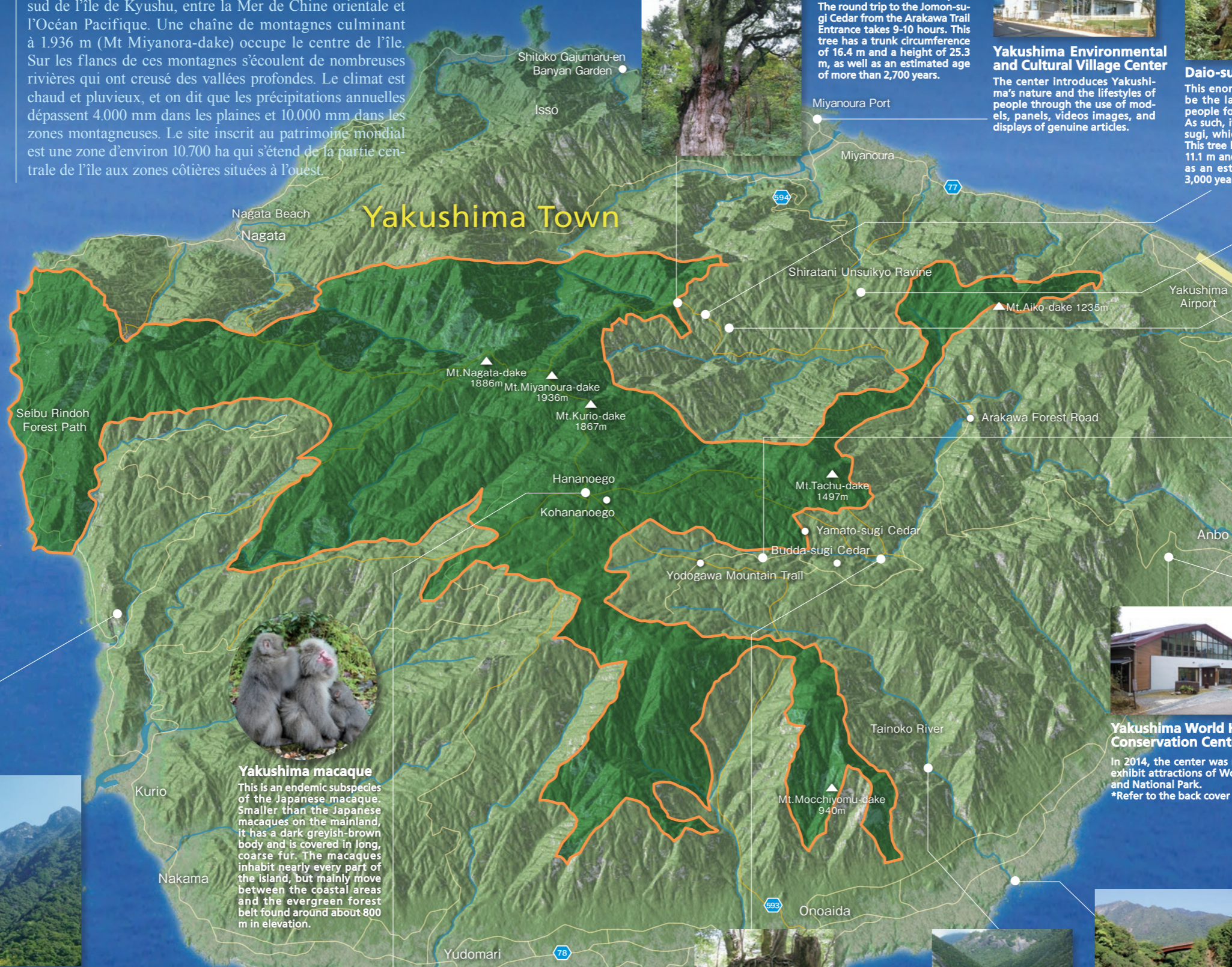
Western area

The western area of Yakushima is included in the World Heritage property from the coastline, and shows a vertical distribution of vegetation, which was highly valued when the island was inscribed as a World Heritage property. The primeval warm-temperate evergreen forest stretching for 600 ha is one of the largest in Japan.



Hananoego and Kohanoego

These are high moors situated at an elevation of roughly 1,600 m in the center of Yakushima and it is an area of the southernmost high moors in Japan. Sphagnum moss grows over its entire surface, and the alpine plants and rows of white Yakusugi trees around its periphery present a beautiful spectacle.



Jomon-sugi Cedar

At present this is the largest confirmed Yakusugi tree. The primeval cedar forest that includes the Jomon-sugi Cedar has been designated as Special Natural Monument in Japan. The round trip to the Jomon-sugi Cedar from the Arakawa Trail Entrance takes 9-10 hours. This tree has a trunk circumference of 16.4 m and a height of 25.3 m, as well as an estimated age of more than 2,700 years.



Yakushima Environmental and Cultural Village Center

The center introduces Yakushima's nature and the lifestyles of people through the use of models, panels, videos images, and displays of genuine articles.



Daio-sugi Cedar

This enormous tree was believed to be the largest Yakusugi tree until people found the Jomon-sugi Cedar. As such, it was given the name Daio-sugi, which means great king cedar. This tree has a trunk circumference of 11.1 m and a height of 24.7 m, as well as an estimated age of more than 3,000 years.



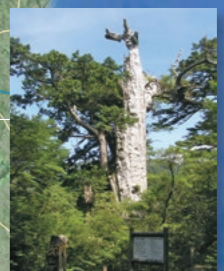
Shiratani Unsuiyko Ravine

This is a recreational forest from which visitors can appreciate the moss-covered primeval forest along the mountain stream. Walking courses have been set up here to observe mountain streams, pristine forest, and Yayoi-sugi Cedar that is roughly 3,000 years old.



Wilson's Stump

At 13.8 m in circumference, this is the largest stump in Yakushima. It is claimed that the tree was felled roughly 400 years ago. Inside there is a cavity of about 16.5 m² from which a spring wells up. It was named after Dr. Wilson, who made the world aware of Yakusugi trees.



Kigen-sugi Cedar

More than 10 species of plants, including rhododendrons, Japanese rowans, wheel trees, and hinoki cypresses grow by adhering to the Kigen-sugi Cedar. This tree has a trunk circumference of 8.1 m and a height of 19.5 m, as well as an estimated age of more than 3,000 years.



Dwarf Bamboo Grassland

Above the cedar forest extends the dwarf bamboo Grassland Zone dominated by endemic *Pseudasasa owatarii*. Plant communities of evergreen and deciduous shrubs like Yakushima rhododendron, Japanese sapphireberry, and Japanese andromedas are scattered.



Yakushima World Heritage Conservation Center

In 2014, the center was renovated to exhibit attractions of World Heritage and National Park.
*Refer to the back cover



Yakusugi Museum

This facility introduces people to Yakushima and Yakusugi trees. It displays items like a Yakusugi tree that is 1,660 years old, a chain saw with a total span of 2 m that was used for felling cedar trees, and a gigantic branch from the Jomon-sugi Cedar that snapped from accumulated snow.



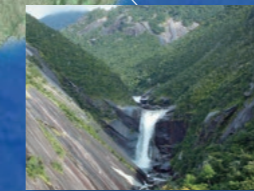
Chrysozephyrus ataxus yakushimaensis

This is a representative lycaenid butterfly of Yakushima. It is endemic subspecies of *Chrysozephyrus ataxus* that inhabit Honshu, Shikoku and Kyushu islands. It is characterized by lack of the tail protuberances at the hind wings. Its larvae feed on the leaves of Japanese evergreen oak and the Japanese willowleaf oak.



Yakusugi Cedar Land

Visitors can enjoy Yakushima's primeval forest, which includes Yakusugi trees that are thousands of years old. Four walking routes have been built and visitors can observe the 1,800 year old Buddha-sugi Cedar and other large trees, as well as tree stumps and the traces from people checking out wood grains from the domain duties era. They can also take a pleasant walk through the woods while enjoying the clear streams.



Senpiro-no-taki Falls

This is a spectacular waterfall with a drop of 60 m. The Tainoko River carved through the enormous granite bedrock in the foothills of Mt. Mochomou-dake to form a massive V-shaped valley.



Toroki-no-taki Falls

Here the Tainoko River forms a waterfall that flows directly into the ocean. Such waterfalls are extremely rare, and there are only few locations throughout the entire country, including this waterfall.

* The "trunk circumference" refers to the length measured at a height of approximately 1.3m above the ground.