

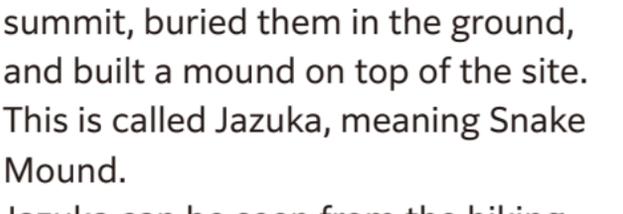
Legends of Mt. Hakusan

The Buddhist monk Taicho Taishi opened Mt. Hakusan as a sacred mountain around 717, and it has long been revered as an object of worship. Mt. Hakusan is home to many legends, and many sites linked to these stories still exist today, allowing visitors to explore the mountain while discovering its rich folklore. Here is one such legend.

Taicho Taishi and the 3,000 Snakes

When Taicho Taishi first ascended Mt. Hakusan, 3,000 giant snakes lived on the mountain. The rampaging snakes were causing terrible trouble for the people at the foot of the mountain. Using his great spiritual powers, he gathered the snakes at the summit of Mt. Hakusan and confined them in three locations.

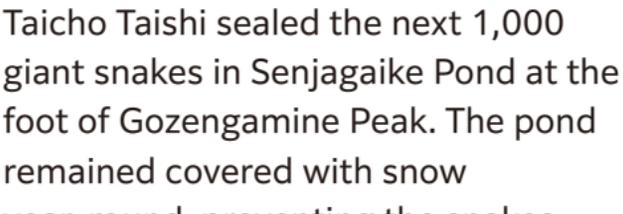
Jazuka



↑ Standing alone amid rowan shrubs.

Taicho Taishi killed 1,000 of the most vicious snakes he had gathered on the summit, buried them in the ground, and built a mound on top of the site. This is called Jazuka, meaning Snake Mound. Jazuka can be seen from the hiking trail a short distance down the Kanko Shindo Route from Kuroboko-Iwa Rock. Along the side of the trail, it is a mound made of numerous piled-up stones.

Senjagaike Pond and Otakarako



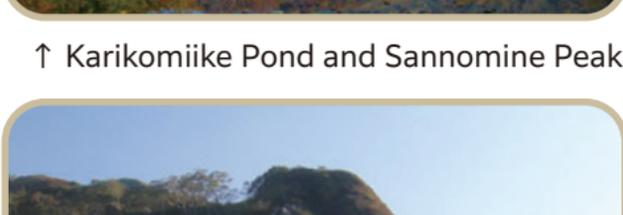
↑ Senjagaike Pond with Otakarako directly above it

Taicho Taishi sealed the next 1,000 giant snakes in Senjagaike Pond at the foot of Gozengamine Peak. The pond remained covered with snow year-round, preventing the snakes from escaping. It is said that if the snow ever melts, a large boulder called Otakarako, located directly above the pond, will fall and cover it once again.

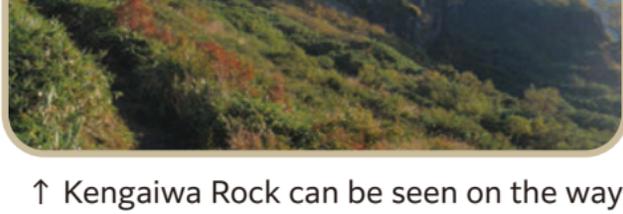
Senjagaike Pond and Otakarako can be seen from the Oike-Meguri Hiking Route around Gozengamine Peak. Senjagaike Pond remains blocked by thick snow and ice, even in summer. To hear an interpretive description of this phenomenon, join one of Ishikawa Prefecture Nature Guide Study Group's Oike-Meguri Hiking Route observation tours in summer.

*Senjagaike Pond and Otakarako directly above it (Photo courtesy of Yasushi Inui)

Karikomiike Pond and Kengaiwa Rock



↑ Karikomiike Pond and Sannomine Peak



↑ Kengaiwa Rock can be seen on the way up Sannomine Peak

The remaining 1,000 giant snakes were sealed in Karikomiike Pond. A large sword was thrust into Kengaiwa Rock, located above the pond, so that its shadow would fall on the water. The snakes, fearing the sword's shadow, could not escape. It is said that if the snakes ever did manage to escape, Tenguiwa Rock on Ninomine Peak would fall and block the pond.

Karikomiike Pond can be circled by taking the footpath up from Kamikoike in Ono City, Fukui Prefecture. Many people visit during the colorful autumn foliage season. You can see Kengaiwa Rock and Ninomine Peak reflected on the pond's surface.



Chubu Regional Environment Office, Ministry of the Environment/Association for Conservation of Circum-Hakusan Area