



The Island of Yakushima

Yakushima is a mountainous island with Mt. Miyanoura at 1936 meters, the highest mountain in Kyushu. The total area of Yakushima is 540.98 square meters of which 90% is forest. Being a round island, it has a circumference of 132 kilometers. Yakushima was formed about 15 million years ago when a subterranean mass of granite uplifted through the Kumage Strata. Yakushima is a subtropical island. However, during winter the mountain peaks resemble Hokkaido with its subarctic climate. The nature of Yakushima is a microcosm of Japan.



“Jomon-sugi Millennium Branch”



In 2005 a branch from Jomon-sugi broke off. It was named “Jomon-sugi Millennium Branch” and is displayed at the Yakusugi Museum. “Jomon-sugi Millennium Branch” is an important clue to knowing Jomon-sugi’s longevity and its environment.



Jomon-sugi's cone & seeds

The giant ancient cedar tree's life will continue in its descendants.

Yakusugi Museum Original Products Shop

You can purchase original products such as craftworks and books on Yakushima and Yakusugi.



Forest Robot



Yaku-Monkey key ring



Cute table clocks



Flying fish cell-phone charms

Yakusugi Museum's Original Postcards

Yakusugi Museum's original books

- ① [The little Earth, Yakushima]
- ② [Yakushima, Yaku-sugi cedars Story]
- ③ [Giant and famous Yaku-sugi Cedars]

It has a good reputation for easy to understand book!



Yakusugi Museum visual textbook, “Yaku-sugi”



Yakusugi Museum Main Building

Yakusugi Museum Annex, “Yakusugi Cedar Hall”



At the Museum Annex, there is a display of a huge Yakusugi stump that was exhibited at TSUKUBA EXPO'85 and a craft center that makes original products.



Information

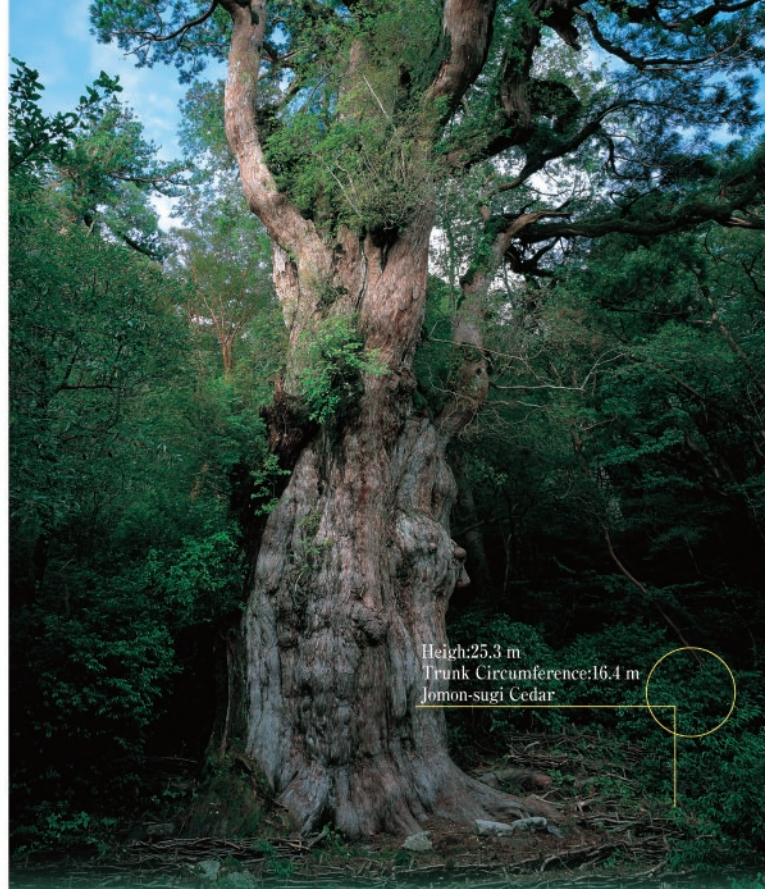
- ◆ Opening hours / 9:00 - 17:00
(Admission for the exhibition hall is at 16:30)
- ◆ Admission fee : 600 yen for adults / 400 yen for University and high school students / 300 yen for Junior high and elementary school students
(Group discount is available for a group of 20 or more people, at a discount price of 100 yen per person.)
※ If you would like to request a museum attendant to guide you around the museum, please contact us.
- ◆ Closed / the 1st Tuesday of every month and from Dec. 29 to Jan.1

YAKUSUGI MUSEUM

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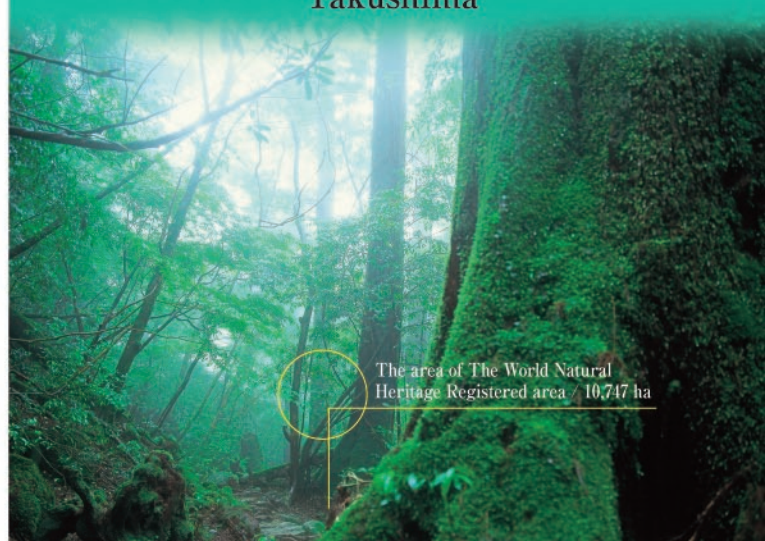
URL <http://yakusugi-museum.com/>



Height:25.3 m
Trunk Circumference:16.4 m
Jomon-sugi Cedar

YAKUSUGI MUSEUM

Yakushima



The area of The World Natural Heritage Registered area / 10,747 ha

Yakusugi Exploration Pavilion

Yakusugi forest has been logged for over 500 years supplementing the livelihoods of the people of Yakushima. There is a special relationship between the people of Yakushima and the forest.



● A 1660-years-old Yakusugi

The Japanese cedar also known as Sugi, *Cyptomeria japonica*, is native to Japan. Cedars found on Yakushima's mountains over 1,000 years old are called Yakusugi. The photograph on the left shows a cross-section of a Yakusugi with 1,660 annual growth rings indicating that the tree was 1,660 years old. The center of the cross-section has 500 close annual growth rings, 37cm in diameter, indicating that this period of growth was extremely slow. In addition, the long life of Yakusugi can be attributed to its high content of resin making it resistant to decay and insects.



● Yakusugi - History of Forest

During the Edo period large numbers of Yakusugi were selectively cut. Kosugi, descendants of these Yakusugi trees, eventually restored the forest. After experiencing massive logging in the high economic growth period of Japan, Yakushima entered an age of sustainable forestry that makes the best use of its natural recovery force.



● Logging Implements, Hand tools

The loggers' implements that had been passed down from the Edo period were very diversified. Many of them were made in Tosa and were used around Kyushu.



● Comparison of sugi trees from around Japan

These logs have the same diameters but their ages are greatly different. You can tell that Yakusugi trees' rate of growth is very slow compared to other cedar trees by their growth rings. The slow growth rate of Yakusugi trees is due mainly to its environment and poor nutrient supply in the granite bed.



● A large-sized chain saw for Yakusugi logging

In 1956 the history of Yakusugi logging changed drastically with the introduction of a 20kg 2m long chainsaw. This implement led to the mechanized massive logging period in Yakushima.



● "Hiragi", Yakusugi shingles for roofing

"Hiragi" are wooden shingles made from Yakusugi. A large number of Hiragi were made during the Edo period. These wooden shingles were very important as a means for payment of land taxes and supplementing the livelihoods of the islanders. Hiragi were made from straight Yakusugi logs and were split into small wooden shingles and carried out from the mountains by people. The logged areas with its open sky and sunlight were ideal for young Yakusugi trees (Kosugi) to grow. Today the cedar trees we see on Yakushima are Yakusugi and Kosugi trees. These Yakusugi trees were actually rejected and survived the logging because of their undesirable shapes. The Kosugi trees are the younger cedars that grew to regenerate the logged areas.

Trolley & diesel locomotive



Diesel locomotives were utilized to transport Yakusugi logs, supplies, and people.

Must see!

Space Yakusugi

Yakusugi grown from seed traveled into space with Mamoru Mohri, a Japanese astronaut, on February 12th 2009. It was also certified by NASA and has a certificate showing this.



Special Exhibition Room

Visitors can learn about the history of Yakushima through various perspectives, a documentary video of a revered eighteenth century Buddhist priest, Tomari Jochiku, a chronological table of policies of the forest, a CG (virtual reconstruction) of Wilson's Stump, and an introduction to Kosugidani Village.

*Tomari Jochiku was a historical person who persuaded and led islanders to use Yakusugi.

● CG virtual reconstruction of Wilson's Stump



● Chronological table of policies of the forest of Yakushima



● Kosugidani Village & trolley railroad through the forest



The Kosugidani Village in 1967



Hauling out Yakusugi by trolley



Chainsaw logging

Kosugidani Village founded in 1924 on the upper part of Anbo River was a base camp for Yakusugi loggers. During its peak, the village supported a population of 500 people. A school was also built to accommodate the residents. Following the reduction in Forest Service operations in 1970, Kosugidani Village came to an end after half a century of history.

It's New!

Yakushima, a story of its forests and people

We have a new corner with a wooden structure of aromatic native cedar exhibiting many rare and significant photographs showing the harvesting of yakusugi domai-boku and a new film, "story of the forest and the people".



[Yakusugi Exploration Pavilion]

It's New!

Karakuri mechanical device, "native cedar wood art work"

There are some playful mechanical cedar devices you can operate and experience the sounds and rhythms of Yakushima. By turning a gear you will put in motion some wooden or glass balls.



[Nature Panorama Pavilion]

Gallery

A special exhibition of Yakushima is being held at the gallery. Next to the gallery, there is a high vision theater showing the historically valuable documentary film of Kosugidani Village and Yakusugi logging.