

Story of Life Continuing Since Time Immemorial.



Forest of Yambaru

Ugan Banyan

Yambaru, across which the largest subtropical evergreen forest in Japan extends, is a precious treasure of value to the entire world and inhabited by a wealth of animals and plants, which only live and grow here. Over history, the Ryukyu archipelago has repeatedly separated and linked up with the continent, so creatures that crossed over and stayed behind here have evolved into unique species over hundreds of thousands of years.

Daiseikirinzan is within the specially protected area of Yambaru National Park.



Walk Through the Primordial Mountains



Daiseikirinzan emerged on the earth's surface as crustal movements pushed up limestone, which had formed in the sea during the Paleozoic era 250 million years ago. Over millions of years, wind and rain eroded the limestone to create this unique scenery of a forest of unusually shaped sheer mountains shooting upright close together. These mountains have been here since the Okinawa main island began to take shape. Rain and bacteria have ever so slowly eroded the limestone, sights which can be seen even today throughout these mountains.

Daiseikirinzan is the world's northernmost tropical karst. The area is abundantly interspersed with unique karstic features including doline (sinkholes), tower karst, pinnacles, karren (pavement karst) and other forms.



Nabe-Ike Pond



Sago Palm Community

A Country Over There



Churaumi Observation Deck



Daiseikirinzan viewed from Cape Hedo

Daiseikirinzan is a series of four rocky mountains known as Ashimui. From the peaks, Yoron and Okinoerabu islands may be seen along the horizon. When viewed from far off, these majestic mountains have served as a guide for people crossing the seas in search of a new land.

Still today, Ashimui is home to more than 40 uganju or worship sites. *Mirror of Chuzan*, the first official history of the Ryukyus compiled in the 17th century, describes Ashimui as the first sacred site created by the ancestral deity Amamikyo. *Omoro Soshi*, Okinawa's oldest compilation of ancient poems and songs collected by the royal government between the 12th and 17th centuries, refers to the king ordering that the spring waters of Ashimui be the first water drawn on the morning of New Year's Day when prayers would be offered beseeching the gods for longevity of the royal family. In the forest, there remain several stone structures that appear to be sheds for housing livestock as well as fences for keeping out wild animals. Also, the Uzahama site is located at the base of the mountains. The prehistoric remains of this settlement dating from the Jomon to Yayoi periods. It is presumed that people made their way to this land, settled and lived here in ancient times.



Ryukyu robin (Nationally protected species)



Rusty-leaf Mucuna (March - April)



Agarimee

Wild Boar Stone Fence

Livestock Shed Remains