**Oitabe Island**

**Close by, but somewhat inaccessible**

This small, flat island lies between Akashima Island and Oshima Island, shares traits with both, and has sites of geological and archaeological interest. Like Akashima, it is surrounded by volcanic basalt deposits; like Oshima, it has lava tubes, one large tube in the eastern part of the island, the second on the north shore leading to the ocean. The entry to the former is quite steep, and requires the use of a rope to descend into the tube. The effort is worth it for those with the necessary skills, though, as the tube’s walls are covered in sparkling yellow pyrite.

Obsidian tools and human bones were discovered inside a cave at the top of the tube, proving that people lived on this small island as far back as the Jomon period (10,000–300 BCE). A shell mound containing dugong bones was found at the site where a pond once existed within the cave. Special permission is required to visit Oitabe Island, and it is not a recommended destination for children.