**Amami Oshima’s Rich Forests**

The subtropical evergreen broadleaf forests of Amami Oshima support a rich diversity of plant and animal life. Many of the island’s rare and endemic animals find shelter among the trees, including the Amami rabbit, the endangered yellow-bellied sword-tail newt (*shirikenimori*), the Ryukyu Scops-owl, the Amami jay, the Ryukyu tip-nosed frog, and the Amami Ishikawa’s frog.

**The Cloud Forest of Mt. Yuwandake**

Amami Oshima’s tallest peak rises to just under 700 meters, and a leisurely walk to the top takes around 20 minutes. The trail is surrounded by lush subtropical scenery, which is blanketed with a light mist caused by proximity to the sea and the island’s warm temperatures. The year-round humidity allows numerous species of epiphytic orchids, which grow attached to trees, to flourish. These include *kumokiriso (Liparis* *kumokiri)*, which has flowers that resemble golden foxtails. Other plants that can be seen on the mountain are the endangered *miyabikanaoi*, wild ginger (*Asarum celsum*), and the Yakushima violet (*Heterotropa celsa*).

The start of the trail that leads up Mt. Yuwandake is approximately 45 minutes by car from Mangrove Park.

**Riverside Forests**

The rivers that flow through the island’s mountain valleys create a distinct ecosystem that supports numerous rare plants and animals. The eroded banks and rocks by the rivers are peppered with endemic plants, including the Amami s*umire* violet and the Amami *seishika* rhododendron. Water levels in the rivers change dramatically according to seasonal patterns of rainfall.

The area surrounding the Materiya Falls by the Sumiyo River is a fine example of the island’s rich aquatic environment. The clear water of the falls’ basin is encircled by rich greenery. The waterfall is a 90-minute drive from Mangrove Park.

The Yakugachi River is just 10 minutes by car from Mangrove Park. Visitors can walk along a 1.5-kilometer stretch of the river, through a forest inhabited by Amami rabbits, Ryukyu wild boar, Amami spiny rats, five species of frog, and seven species of dragonfly, as well as many rare plants.

**Mountain Drive**

The broad slopes of the old-growth subtropical forests can be appreciated from the Akatsuchiyama Tenbodai observation deck, which is only a 15-minute drive from Mangrove Park and offers a bird’s eye view of the island. From there, it is another 30 minutes by car to Yuwandaketenbo Park, which offers a fine view of a long inlet that stretches out into open sea.