

Forests of Cape Jizozaki Park

The inland areas of the Shimane Peninsula were formerly covered with pine forests (*Pinus thunbergii*). Most of these pine trees, however, were lost in a nematode infection that started around 1980. Today the forest consists primarily of evergreen broad-leaved trees such as machilus or Japanese bay tree (*Machilus thunbergii*), Japanese camellia (*Camellia japonica*), and Japanese privet (*Ligustrum japonicum*).

Washed by the warm Tsushima Current, the area around Cape Jizozaki Park has a broad diversity of plant life. The hamabiwa or Japanese litsea (*Litsea japonica*) is an evergreen shrub with thick, 15 cm–long leaves that are covered with thick hair on the undersides. These leaves resemble those of the biwa or Japanese loquat (*Eriobotrya japonica*). The “hama” in the name indicates a coastal species. The Shimane Peninsula is the easternmost limit in distribution for the Japanese litsea.

From the top: Japanese litsea leaves; dense hair on leaf underside