

Fumishima Island: Home of the Black-Tailed Gulls

This islet near Cape Hinomisaki, known as Fumishima Island (Sutra Island), is a vital wintering and nesting habitat for black-tailed gulls (*Larus crassirostris*). The name of the islet is said to derive from the prism-shaped vertical rock formations, known as columnar joints, found all over the island, which resemble stacks of sutra scrolls. Every November, approximately 3,000 black-tailed gulls descend upon Fumishima Island. From April to May they breed here, hatching and raising their chicks. Then, around July, they depart north. In 1922, the western shoreline of the island, facing the Sea of Japan, was designated as a Japanese Natural Monument for its role as a breeding ground for black-tailed gulls.