

One Tree, One Stone Project

Mt. Daisen is the highest mountain in the Chugoku region. As one of the “100 Famous Mountains” in Japan, the mountain attracts many climbers each year. Mt. Daisen’s alpine vegetation began disappearing in the 1960s and 70s, due to trampling by the increased number of climbers. This problem escalated in the 1980s, when the loss of vegetation led to soil erosion. In April 1985, local conservation groups and government agencies formed the Mt. Daisen Summit Conservation Group. They established the “One Tree, One Stone” project, in which climbers are asked to carry one tree and one stone to the summit to help restore the ecosystem. The stones helped stabilize the slope and protect the growing saplings. Projects of this sort were rare in Japan at the time. As a result of these efforts, the summit vegetation has substantially recovered, but further efforts are required to restore this vital habitat to its former glory.