

Grassland Views from the Kuju Plateau

The Kuju Mountain Range is a group of volcanic peaks standing at an average elevation of 1,700m and stretching 15km from east to west. The most famous peaks, Mt. Kuju (1,787m), Mt. Io (1,762m), Mt. Mimata (1,745m), and Mt. Nakadake (1,791m), are the site of the range's only active volcano, Mt. Io, and the tallest peak in Kyushu, Mt. Nakadake. The range, known as the "Roof of Kyushu," is on the Yamanami Highway, an impressive route connecting the Aso area in Kumamoto to Yufuin in Oita.

At the southern end of the Kuju Mountain Range lies the Kuju Plateau, a feature formed by volcanic ash and debris of historic seismic activity. The plateau itself is located at a height of about 1,000 m and is surrounded by a fertile natural environment and open grassland areas. Meadows of wildflowers cover the plateau, and herds of Japanese Akaushi cattle can be seen grazing on the lush grass.

The plateau also serves as a great viewpoint over the grasslands of the Chojabaru area against a backdrop of rugged mountains. There are many natural volcanic hot springs and hiking trails in the area.