

Jomon Sugi

The majestic Jomon Sugi is the oldest and largest *yakusugi* on Yakushima. The colossal tree stands at an elevation of 1,300 m, is 25.3 m high and has a circumference of 16.4 m. It is believed the tree dates back to the Jomon period (approx. 10000 BCE–300 BCE), hence its name. However, its hollow shape makes the tree hard to be dated precisely, and estimates have put it at between 2000 and 7200 years old. While nearby Wilson's Stump was harvested in the sixteenth century for its precious wood, Jomon Sugi was spared because of its irregular shape.

The discovery of Jomon Sugi by Iwakawa Teiji in 1968 gradually led to moves to protect the forests of Yakushima. The logging villages were all closed in 1970, leading to an increase in tourism. Once Yakushima was designated a World Heritage Site in 1993, an observation deck was built to restrict viewers from getting too close to the tree. The deck is 15 m away from the tree, and can be found toward the end of the Okabu Trail.