

Tomb of Emperor Ninken (Ninken Tennō-ryō Kofun)

According to the Imperial Household Agency, this keyhole-shaped *kofun* is the tomb of Emperor Ninken, the twenty-fourth emperor of Japan in the traditional order of succession. He is believed to have reigned during the fifth century.

To the northwest of the *kofun* are the two sixth-century Nonoue Haniwa Kilns. They were discovered in 1981 and are believed to be where the terracotta figures (*haniwa*) used to decorate Ninken's tomb were created. Although one kiln had collapsed, many terracotta figures were successfully excavated from it. The other was preserved *in situ*. Studying the two kilns has increased the understanding of the techniques and capabilities of the potters who made the *haniwa* figures used to decorate many of the *kofun* in this area.

The tomb of Emperor Ninken is 10 meters high and covers an area of just under 1 hectare. It is surrounded by a narrow, shallow moat. Based on the characteristics of the *haniwa* found along the moat's exterior, the tomb is believed to have been built in the early sixth century.