

Kajitorizaki and Tomyozaki Points

Kajitorizaki Point is a beautiful coastal lookout across the Kumano Sea in Taiji, with bright green lawns and a white lighthouse.

Large-scale whaling was started in Taiji in 1606 and it is considered the birthplace of the industry in Japan. Most villagers here would have been involved in whaling. Kajitorizaki Point once played an important role in this industry. It served as a lookout and, when a whale was spotted, smoke signals were sent to alert boats and guide them the right way. These signals would have been seen from nearby Tomyozaki Point, a few kilometers away. Watchmen there would also have sent smoke signals as the whale swam toward them along the coast. A local saying was that “a single whale could feed seven villages.”

Reminders of Kajitorizaki Point’s past remain, where wooden monuments mark the location of the lookout point and smoke signal pit. Close to the lookout point is a large whale monument dedicated to the whales that lost their lives to the industry. Every year, a Buddhist ceremony is held in their memory.