

Takinohai waterfall

Takinohai is a 200-meter stretch of the Kogawa River, a tributary of the Kozagawa River, which cuts through potholed bedrock, forming a small but powerful waterfall.

Millions of years ago, the sandstone and mudstone riverbed was covered by a shallow sea. An underground magma chamber heated it, leaving it hard and brittle like porcelain when it cooled. Stones rotated by the current gradually eroded the rock and created potholes. A local legend recounts that a samurai, Takinohai Taro, created the potholes with his sword but then dropped the sword into the waterfall. When he went to retrieve it, he disappeared into the falls. Some local legends say he returned, others that he disappeared forever.

In late August, small monk goby (*Sicyopterus japonicus*) fish use their mouths and fins as suction cups to climb the rocks as they search for algae to eat. Konpira Shrine, a moss-covered shrine dedicated to the Shinto deity that protects seafarers, is located beside the falls.