

Coming and Going on the Kuroshio

Blessings of the Kuroshio

The Kuroshio Current brings warmth from the south to Ashizuri-Uwakai National Park. It is responsible both for the mild climate along the southern coast of Shikoku and the diversity of marine life off the coast, including corals, tropical fish, and sea turtles.

Carried away

The Kuroshio sometimes flows east toward the central Pacific Ocean instead of following its usual route north. In 1841, on one such occasion, it caused a boat carrying a 14-year-old boy named Nakahama Manjiro and his friends, who had been fishing off the coast of present-day Tosashimizu, to wash out to sea. The boat floated out onto the vast Pacific, and Nakahama himself went on to have a life filled with adventure.

Unwelcome gifts

While the Kuroshio brings much good to Shikoku, not everything it carries is beneficial. The current's waters contain a significant amount of debris, from fishing nets to tiny bits of plastic called microplastics, which are rapidly becoming a global concern because of their negative impact on marine ecosystems.

[Captions]

A sea turtle caught in a wayward fishing net.

A seabird that died after accidentally ingesting waste.