

Sagiura's Environment

The landscape surrounding Sagiura has remained largely unchanged over the centuries. Forested hills encircle the town on three sides, insulating it from the outside world. The Sagiura Nature Trail travels 2.5 kilometers through wilderness that is home to sika deer and wild boar. The path is bordered with abundant Japanese bayberry, Japanese chestnut, tung-oil tree, and *yabutsubaki* camellia. The trail emerges on the summit of the western cape, ending in a panoramic view of the open sea and coastline—a landscape of sheer cliffs, sea caves, and jagged islets of volcanic rock.

Between November and July, black-tailed gulls can be seen perched on jetties and breakwaters all around Sagiura Harbor. Their cries are distinctive, resembling a cat's meow, and they are often called *umineko*, meaning “sea cats.” Another creature known for its unusual call, the Kajika frog, lives nearby in the Yachiyo River. The Kajika frog's trilling song on summer nights is said to resemble the mating calls of bucks in autumn.

Much of this area's scenic grandeur is best appreciated from the water. Some enterprising locals offer guided tours that explore the many sea caves and jagged cliffs north of the harbor.