Dondon Buchi Falls

A path of pure, tumbling water

This series of waterfalls begins high on Mt. Gongendake, but only the final few falls are visible from the end of the trail leading in from below. The name of the falls combines the onomatopoeia *don*, which describes the thunderous sound of the water striking the rocks, with the Japanese word for “deep pool” (in reference to the pool at the bottom of the falls). In the past, ascetic monks practiced *shugendo* meditation under the pounding water, but today the site is more often used by families who come to bathe in the pool to escape the summer heat.

The rocky course of the falls was formed not by a lava flow but by a porous volcanic material called welded tuff, which acts as a filter, so the water here is very clear and pure. The pure water makes this a very good area for raising rice, and *ayu* or sweetfish migrate from the ocean and up the streams toward the falls. Fireflies brighten summer nights along the banks.