

Audio Guide: Native Insects

From late spring to summer, a variety of insects can be seen along the paths through the hot springs. One is the *hanmyō*, or Japanese tiger beetle, whose scientific name is *Cicindela japconica*. It is the largest tiger beetle in the Japanese archipelago, measuring approximately 20 millimeters in length. This shiny beetle uses its sharp pincers to eat ants and earthworms. Its nickname is *michi-oshie*, which means “trail guide.” If you get close to it, the beetle will jump 2 or 3 meters ahead. If you keep following it, it will leap forward again and again, as if it were helpfully leading you down the path.

There are many other insects that call Unzen home. At night you can hear the chirping of crickets, and if you look, you are likely to find lots of different beetles, moths, butterflies, and other insects. If you don’t get a chance to see them in the wild, pay a visit to the Unzen Visitor Center for a close look at preserved specimens.