

Warengawa Spring

Here at the bottom of the dry Mizunashi riverbed is the Warengawa Spring, a humble symbol of community resilience that links natural disasters across centuries.

From 1791 to 1792, a series of earthquakes and volcanic eruptions resulted in the collapse of Mt. Mayuyama (819 m). Known as the Shimabara Catastrophe, the resulting landslides and tsunami destroyed the town of Shimabara. From the disaster, however, came an unexpected blessing—fresh spring water began to flow from a crack in the earth caused by the earthquake. As the townspeople returned, this spring became an essential source of water in their daily lives.

Then, in 1991, another disaster struck. The Heisei Eruptions of 1990–1995 brought more earthquakes and landslides, sending destructive debris flows down the Mizunashi River, destroying the community yet again. But the Warengawa Spring miraculously survived.

The spring served as an emergency source of water and became a symbol for the community's unity and resilience. One of the first areas to be cleared after the eruption, the Mizunashi riverbed was remade with both disaster preparedness and recreation in mind. Upstream, large dams known as *sabō* were constructed to capture and redirect future debris flows. Downstream, there are many places to relax and play. This monument was created to give thanks to the spring and represent the community that has lived alongside it for hundreds of years.