

Mt. Karakunidake: View of Mt. Ioyama

Mt. Karakunidake is the tallest mountain in Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park, rising 1,700 meters above sea level. The lower slopes are forested with red pine and winter hazel, but between the third and fourth stations the foliage thins out and the view opens up for the remaining 1,500-meter trail to the summit.

The fuming, yellowish-white peak to the north is Mt. Ioyama. The volcano was formed by an eruption from the flank of Mt. Karakunidake in 1768, making it the youngest mountain in the park. Harvesting sulfur from its shallow crater was a major local industry as late as the 1960s. This is one of the few locations in Japan that offer a direct view down into an active volcano, but even more spectacular views of the park can be seen from the trail higher up Mt. Karakunidake.