

## **Jewels of the Islands**

Beetles with a jewel-like shine can be found in many places, from patches of woodland near the seashore to areas close to the villages.

### **Ryukyu Flower Chafer      Scientific name: *Protaetia pryeri***

These beetles have very beautiful coloring, many with a powerful metallic sheen of copper or green. The adults, which reach a length of about 2 centimeters, enjoy drinking tree sap or the juice from fruit. The habitat of the Ryukyu flower chafer extends from the southern part of Kyushu to the Ryukyu Islands. They can be seen in large numbers on the main island of Okinawa, but count yourself lucky to see one on the islands of Zamami or Aka, because they are much rarer here.

### **Aomunesuji Jewel Beetle      Scientific name: *Chrysodema dalmanni***

These large jewel beetles, which are about 2 to 3 centimeters in length, have a yellow powder on their shiny green bodies that gives them a green-gold appearance. Adults eat the leaves of the *Terminalia catappa* tree, while the larvae prefer the dead wood. They alight in the vicinity of the tropical almond trees in the harbor, as well as on houses. They are found throughout the Ryukyu Islands and can be seen in the summer.

### **Okinawa Leaf Beetle      Scientific name: *Morphosphaera coerulea***

Okinawa leaf beetles present a strong color contrast, with blue-green wings of metallic luster set against an orange pronotum marked with a row of black dots. They reach a length of about 9 millimeters at maturity, and they like to eat the leaves of the *Ficus macrocarpa* and *Ficus virgata* species of fig trees. When they proliferate they can become pests, and can kill the *Ficus macrocarpa*. They are found from Amami Oshima southward, and are seen here from early summer to autumn.