

The Kinsakubaru National Forest

The Kinsakubaru National Forest is one of the natural highlights of Amami-Oshima, showcasing the wide spectrum of endemic plant and animal life on the island. Heavy rainfall makes the forest moist and humid, an ideal habitat for plants like the tree fern, recognizable by its large spread of fronds and the oval scars left on the trunk after its stems have fallen. Visitors who pay close attention to the forest surroundings will note the endemic species of all sizes (and avoid encountering a venomous habu viper). Epiphytes—plants that anchor on tree bark—dot tree trunks from base to canopy, and many species of birds, both migratory and resident, can be seen and heard. A wide, level path covers a 1-kilometer-long route through the forest, making a U-turn at the site of a large Okinawa oak—a species endemic to the Ryukyu Islands—with massive buttress roots. Entry into the forest is limited, and is only permitted with a certified guide.