

Ryukyu wild boar / *Sus scrofa riukiuanus* / Ryukyu inoshishi / リュウキュウイノシシ

The Ryukyu wild boar is the largest mammal on the island of Amami-Oshima. It is an endemic subspecies of the wild boar variety found in mainland Japan. Like the mainland boar, it has brown fur covering its body, but it is much smaller—weighing about 50 to 60 kilograms compared to 100 kilograms for the Japanese wild boar. This follows Bergmann’s rule of evolutionary science that species tend to grow smaller in warmer climates. The Ryukyu boar’s tusks are much less noticeable than the mainland wild boar’s, and do not protrude from the sides of its mouth. Also unlike its northern relative, it breeds twice a year—in the spring and fall. The Ryukyu boar’s habitat is primarily the forest, where it feeds on a varied diet of plant and animal life: everything from nuts and roots to snakes and rats. There is evidence that humans on Amami-Oshima have eaten wild boar since the Jomon period (10,000–300 BCE), and the meat is still a part of the island diet, often served at special events.