

## **Site of Kameo Fort**

The hilltop Kameo Fort southwest of central Kikuchi was one of more than a dozen medieval fortresses built by the Kikuchi clan to protect the castle town of Waifu. This fort occupied a strategic location on high ground between the Kikuchi River to the north and the Sakota River to the south. What the fort looked like in medieval times is unknown, but it is thought to have functioned mainly as a refuge and was probably not manned at all times.

In the 1370s, when the Kikuchi clan was fighting against the Ashikaga shogunate, the warrior-led central government, Kameo Fort fell into the hands of the Ashikaga general Imagawa Ryoshun (1326–1420). Ryoshun and his son are said to have amassed a force of more than 10,000 warriors at the fort to prepare for a final assault on the Kikuchi.

The site of Kameo Fort is now a park with views over the Kikuchi Plain toward the center of Kikuchi. Part of a dry moat and the site where the main compound once stood have been reconstructed. A Shinto shrine is located nearby.