

Tsujitoge Pass

This is a junction on the main trail through Shiratani Unsuikyo Ravine. From here, a side trail leads to Taikoiwa Rock (0.23 km, 10 minutes one way), and the main trail goes to one of two destinations: toward the Jomonsugi Cedar on the Okabu-hodo Mountain Trail (7.6 km, approximately 4 hours and 10 minutes one way) or toward the Shiratani Unsuikyo Ravine Entrance (2.6 km, 1.5 hours).

The pass has been in use for at least 400 years. It was an essential route for loggers traveling from coastal villages, such as Kusugawa and Miyanoura, to reach mountains in the interior. Villagers from Kusugawa also traveled through the pass to make pilgrimages to the sacred peaks, a practice called takemairi. Takemairi began in the area as far back as 1488, so this route may date to that time.

Taikoiwa Rock (1,050 m) is a large granite outcrop with an expansive view of Yakushima's interior mountains, including Mt. Miyanoura (1,936 m) and Mt. Nagata (1,886 m), as well as the Anbo River. The trail to the Rock is a one-way loop; please follow the counterclockwise route as indicated on the sign.

For hikers coming from Shiratani Unsuikyo Ravine, about 100 meters past Tsujitoge Pass is Tsujinoiwaya, a large, shelf-like slab of granite that creates a small cave beneath. It can be used as a shelter in case of a sudden storm or other emergency.

The route from Tsujitoge Pass to the Jomonsugi Cedar is not recommended for novice hikers, nor is it a day hike. Those following this route should plan on spending the night at Takatsuka Hut (near the Jomonsugi Cedar) and returning the next day.

In heavy rain or snow, the risk of injury or other mishap greatly increases. Even when there is no snow at Tsujitoge Pass, it may be present at higher elevations. Weather conditions can change quickly on the island, so exercise good judgement and do not take risks. If the weather is inclement, if you have inadequate gear or supplies, if you are already tired, or if you are an inexperienced hiker, please return to the Shiratani Unsuikyo Ravine Trailhead.