

What You Can Do to Protect Yambaru

Be Considerate of Yambaru Residents

Yambaru is not only home to many wildlife species; people, too, have lived here for generations. Many of the region's attractions are located near their homes, workplaces, and sites of worship. Please respect residents' privacy and be careful not to impinge on their daily lives. Avoid driving at unsafe speeds, parking on private property, or taking photos of traditional ceremonies and other activities without permission. Okinawan places of worship are often simple, rustic structures or natural spots that are difficult to identify. While the rules of common sense are appropriate in most circumstances, it is always a good idea to ask when you are uncertain about local customs or practices.

- Please be considerate around village dwellings.
- Please ask permission before photographing people or activities.
- Please leave historic relics, such as stones or pots, in place.

- Please respect places of worship.

Show Respect for the Forest and Its Wildlife

Yambaru's environment is fragile, and it is important to treat the forest and the animals in it with respect. Certain areas have been designated as a national park, and many rare or endangered species are protected by law from poaching and harvesting. As there are few well-maintained trails, consider hiring a guide who can provide insights into Yambaru flora and fauna and explain local customs. This will also reduce the risk of accidents and encounters with rash-causing plants and dangerous animals like the *habu* viper.

- Please leave all plants and animals undisturbed.
- Please refrain from frightening the animals with light or sound.
- Please check your shoes and clothing to avoid introducing invasive species of plants or animals.
- Please drive carefully to avoid causing roadkill, including that of smaller

species.

- Please take any trash home with you.
- Please use toilet facilities before entering the forest.
- Please do not build open campfires outside of permitted areas, such as campsites.

Other Tips to Enhance Your Yambaru Experience

- Wear appropriate clothing when walking in the forest, such as sturdy hiking shoes (no sandals), long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and a hat.
- Yambaru can be quite hot, particularly during the summer. Prevent heatstroke and dehydration by carrying water and snacks with you.
- Rain is frequent, so rain gear is strongly recommended.
- If you are not traveling with a guide, be sure to share your intended route and destination with someone.