Yakushima is a mountainous island with Mt. Miyanoura at 1936 meters, the highest mountain in Kyushu. The total area of Yakushima is 540.84 square meters of which 90% is forest. Being a round island, it has a circumference of 132 kilometers. Yakushima was formed about 15 million years ago when a subterranean mass of granite uplifted through the Kumage Strata. Yakushima is a subtropical island. However, during winter the mountain peaks resemble Hokkaido with its subarctic climate. The nature of Yakushima is a microcosm of Japan.

“Jomon-sugi Millennium Branch”

In 2005 a branch from Jomon-sugi broke off. It was named “Jomon-sugi Millennium Branch” and is displayed at the Yakusugi Museum. “Jomon-sugi Millennium Branch” is an important clue to knowing Jomon-sugi’s longevity and its environment.

Yakusugi Museum

You can purchase original products such as craftworks and books on Yakushima and Yakusugi.

Yakusugi Museum Original Products Shop

Yakusugi Museum’s Original Postcards
Yakusugi Museum’s original books
1. The Sticks, Yakusugi
2. Yakusugi, Yakusugi Nature Story
3. Naka and Jomon-sugi Yakusugi Coloring Book

Yakusugi Museum Annex, "Yakusugi Cedar Hall"

At the Museum Annex, there is a display of a huge "Yakusugi" stump that was exhibited at TSEKURA EXPO95 and a craft center that makes original products.

- Route to Yakusugi
  - Kogen-sugi Cedar
    15 min. by car
  - Yakusugi Land
    30 min. by car
  - Yakusugi Museum
    5 min. by car
  - Anbo
    3 min. by car

- Information
  - Opening hours / 9:00 - 17:00
  - Admission fee: 600 yen for adults / 100 yen for University and high school students / 300 yen for Junior high and elementary school students
  - (Group discount is available for a group of 20 or more people, at a discount price of 100 yen per person.)
  - Closed / the 1st Tuesday of every month and from Dec. 29 to Jan. 1

Yakusugi Museum
2739-343 Anbo, Kusumazuka, Kusumazuka-gun, Kagoshima-shi, 891-311 Japan
TEL 0997-46-3113 FAX 0997-46-3168
URL http://yakusugi-museum.com/
Yakusugi Exploration Pavilion

Yakusugi forest has been logged for over 500 years supplementing the livelihoods of the people of Yakushima. There is a special relationship between the people of Yakushima and the forest.

A 1600-year-old Yakusugi
The Japanese cedar also known as Sugi Cryptomeria japonica is native to Japan. Cedars found on Yakushima's mountains over 1000 years old are called Yakusugi. The photograph on the left shows a cross-section of a Yakusugi with 1600 annual growth rings indicating that the tree was 1600 years old. The center of the cross-section has 500 close annual growth rings. 2cm in diameter, indicating that this period of growth was extremely slow. In addition, the long life of Yakusugi can be attributed to its high content of resin making it resistant to decay and insects.

Comparison of sugi trees from around Japan
These logs have the same diameters but their ages are greatly different. You can tell that Yakusugi trees' rate of growth is very slow compared to other cedar trees by their growth rings. The slow growth rate of Yakusugi trees is due partly to its environment and poor nutrient supply in the granite beds.

A large-sized chain saw for Yakusugi logging
In 1956, the history of Yakusugi logging changed drastically with the introduction of a 28kg 2.5m long chain saw. This implement led to the mechanized mass logging period in Yakushima.

"Hiragi", Yakusugi shingles for roofing
"Hiragi" are wooden shingles made from Yakusugi. A large number of Hiragi were made during the Edo period. These wooden shingles were very important as a means for payment of land taxes and supplementing the livelihoods of the islanders. Hiragi were made from straight Yakusugi logs and were split into small wooden shingles and carried out from the mountains by people. The logged areas with its open sky and sunlight were ideal for young Yakusugi trees (Kosugi) to grow. Older the cedar trees we see on Yakushima are Yakusugi and Kosugi trees. These Yakusugi trees were actually rejected and survived the logging because of their undesirable shapes. The Kosugi trees are the younger cedars that grew to regenerate the logged areas.

Logging Implements, Hand tools
The loggers' implements that had been passed down from the Edo period were very diverse. Many of them were made in Edo and were used around Ryukyu.

Space Yakusugi
Yakusugi grows from seed traveled into space with Mamoru Mohri, a Japanese astronaut, on February 1st, 2009. It was also certified by NASA and has a certificate showing this.

Trolley & diesel locomotive
Diesel locomotives were utilized to transport Yakusugi logs supplemented people.

Special Exhibition Room

Visitors can learn about the history of Yakushima through various perspectives, a documentary video of a revered eighteenth-century Japanese priest, monk Jeju, a chronological table of policies of the forest, a CG (virtual reconstruction) of Wilson's Stump, and an introduction to Kosugidani Village.

CG virtual reconstruction of Wilson's Stump

Chronological table of policies of the forest of Yakushima

Kosugidani Village & trolley railroad through the forest

The Kosugidani Village in 1987

Chair saw logging

Kosugidani Village founded in 1924 on the upper part of Aino River was a base camp for Yakusugi loggers. During its peak, the village supported a population of 500 people. A school was also built to accommodate the residents. Following the reduction in Forest Service operations in 1970, Kosugidani Village came to an end after half a century of history.

It’s New!
Yakushima, a story of its forests and people
We have a new corner with a wooden structure of aromatic native cedar exhibiting many rare and significant photographs showing the harvesting of yakusugi domai-boku and a new film, "story of the forest and the people".

It’s New!
Karakuri mechanical device, native cedar wood art work
There are some playful mechanical cedar devices you can operate and experience the sounds and rhythms of Yakushima. By turning a gear you will put in motion some wooden or glass balls.

Gallery
A special exhibition of Yakushima is being held at the gallery. Next to the gallery, there is a high vision theater showing the historically valuable documentary film of Kosugidani Village and Yakusugi logging.