

Hiking Etiquette

Please follow the mountaineering manners when visiting Yakushima in order to protect its precious natural environment for future generations.



Respecting the Natural Environment



Yakushima has a rich ecosystem with a wide range of endemic fauna and flora. In order to protect its beautiful nature, disturbing the wildlife and collecting or damaging plants are prohibited. Please keep the following points in mind during your stay on Yakushima.

(1) Bring all trash back with you

Garbage in the mountains of Yakushima is a big issue. Garbage disposed in the mountains can pollute streams, have a bad effect on wildlife, and ruin other visitors' stay on Yakushima. Bring your own trash bags and carry out your trash.

(2) Let's keep public water areas clean

Be considerate of all water users. In the mountains, water sources for the mountain huts are creeks. As most mountain huts are located near creeks, it is important to keep these sources clean to ensure that everyone can have access to safe and clean water. Please do not wash your utensils or dishes at these public water areas. Oil and food residues will pollute the water. If you need to clean them, please use paper towels.

(3) No pets are allowed in the mountains

(Hunting dogs and assistance dogs such as guide, service, and hearing dogs are permitted if they are performing a service.)

For the safe and enjoyment of all visitors in the mountains, we ask that you don't bring pets with you. There may be people who have a strong fear of animals.

In addition, a major concern is that pets may transmit diseases to wildlife, such as deer and monkeys.

(4) Do not feed the animals

Feeding wild animals will affect their behavior toward people. Their fear for people will diminish and will damage local agriculture and forestry, disrupting the balance of the ecosystem. Please refrain from feeding animals, especially wild *yakushimazaru* monkeys.

* Feeding wild *yakushimazaru* monkeys are strictly prohibited under the Yakushima Town Ordinance and offenders will be fined 50,000 yen.

(5) Do not stray off the trails. You may unknowingly damage the moss growing on the rocks and fallen trees. It is important that you stay on the trail while traversing the highland marsh so as not to damage it.

The highland marsh is a fragile, delicately balanced ecological area that supports rare plants. While hiking in the mountains, please keep on the trails to protect the natural habitat.

When using trekking poles, rubber tips are required except for snowy conditions.

(6) After you have parked your car at the trailhead parking areas, turn your car engine off. We ask that you do not leave your car idling.

In order to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the mountains of Yakushima, vehicle operators should turn their vehicles off at parking areas.

In addition, taxis, local buses, and chartered buses, as well as regular vehicles use these areas. It is important to use common sense and think of other users.



Be considerate of other visitors



To have an enjoyable and safe experience for everyone, it is important to be respectful and mindful of others.

Please keep the following points in mind.

(1) It is considered good manners to yield right of way to hikers going uphill.

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(2) Please use the mountain huts and resting areas harmoniously with other users, as there is limited space there.

※ We are requesting people to refrain from using mountain huts until further notice to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus infections. (Please use mountain huts only in case of emergencies.)

The mountain huts and resting areas have limited space. During three-day weekends, Golden Week holidays, and Yakushima Rhododendron blooming seasons, the mountain huts and resting areas' capacity may not be able to handle the increase in people. It is recommended that you bring a lightweight tent. The use of mountain huts is based on

a first-come-first-serve bases. Please refrain from holding or reserving a place for other hikers.

We strongly recommend that you plan your climb so that you can be at the mountain hut by 16:00 at the latest.

Camping at an approved site near the mountain huts is allowed only when the capacity of the mountain huts has been exceeded. When pitching your tent, be careful of the vegetation as not to damage them.

(3) Quietly enjoy Yakushima's nature

There are many sounds of nature that you can enjoy, such as the sounds of flowing streams, birds singing, and the rustling of leaves in the breeze, and even the quietness of nature. While in the mountains, we ask that you keep your noise levels down so that people can enjoy Yakushima's nature.

"Enjoy the sounds of nature and let others do the same."

(4) Respect sacred places in the mountains of Yakushima

*The mountains of Yakushima are sacred places for the people of Yakushima.

In the mountains there are *hokora* shrines located throughout the mountains. Please do not desecrate these places.

(5) While hiking in the mountains, be considerate of others

The speed of each hiker is different. Good hikers' manner dictates that slower hikers give way to faster hikers. While hiking in the mountains, if a faster group of hikers come up to your location, please let them by.

(6) Do not add any markings on trails

Some trails will have pink tape markings to prevent people from getting lost. In Yakushima National Park, there are also ropes on some parts of the trails to prevent people from entering areas that are not safe. Unfortunately, there are unauthorized markings or tapes that may confuse you and are not related to your safety. These are usually done by people for their benefits. These marks may cause hikers to lose their ways. Do not place any unauthorized marks on the trails.

(7) When using a camping stove at a designated camping area around the mountain huts, be aware of your surroundings.

Always be considerate of other people when using a camping stove.

*To prevent fires and carbon monoxide poisoning, fires in the mountain huts are strictly prohibited.