



- ◆ Amami Oshima Nature Conservation Council
(Amami, Yamato, Uken, Setouchi, and Tatsugo)
- ◆ Tokunoshima Nature Conservation Council
(Tokunoshima, Amagi, and Isen)
- ◆ Kagoshima Prefecture
- ◆ Amamigunto National Park Management Office,
Ministry of the Environment
- ◆ World Natural Heritage Conservation Consortium

Learn more



A gentle request: To preserve the natural environment of Amami Oshima and Tokunoshima, please leave all plants and animals where they belong.



KEEP WILDLIFE

WHERE THEY BELONG



Joint Statement on the Removal of Plants and Animals from Amami Oshima and Tokunoshima



The ecosystems of these two islands
have been shaped over a long period of time
by their **unique natural environments**
and
by the **diverse plants and animals**
that have sustained life here across generations.
So that the living things here today
can continue to thrive,
and so that this one-of-a-kind ecosystem
may endure into the future,
we ask everyone traveling to
and from the islands
for their cooperation.

Amami Oshima and Tokunoshima are islands rich in plant and animal life. Shaped by the geological history of the Ryukyu Islands, they have undergone distinctive patterns of biological evolution and speciation. As a result, the islands are home to many endemic species—symbolized by the Amami rabbit—along with a wide variety of other plants and animals.

On a global scale, the islands are recognized as an area of exceptionally high biodiversity. Their outstanding universal value as an important region for biodiversity conservation, including many endemic and rare species, led to their inscription as a UNESCO World Natural Heritage site in July 2021.

The islands' natural environment forms a continuous whole, with the designated World Heritage areas and their surrounding regions extending across the islands. Not only endemic and rare species, but all plants and animals together sustain the islands' natural ecosystems as an interconnected system.

Rooted deeply in the islands since ancient times, these plants and animals have continued to live here across generations. If Amami Oshima and Tokunoshima are each likened to a single home, they can be thought of as the irreplaceable **“family” of the islands**. However, in recent years, cases of plants and animals being taken off the islands have been confirmed.

When plants and animals are taken off the islands, these precious **“members of the island community”** are lost. This threatens the islands' biodiversity and may lead to the degradation of their ecosystems. There is also concern that plants and animals from the two islands could become invasive species if introduced elsewhere. To prevent this, **please do not take any plants or animals off the islands**.

The plants and animals that live and grow on Amami Oshima and Tokunoshima have adapted to the islands' natural environment over many years, sustaining life across generations and existing here today. Through their diversity and their very presence, they provide us with many benefits.

With the shared commitment of the entire community, we will continue to watch over these plants and animals so that they can keep reproducing in their respective habitats and so that their natural state will not be lost.

We ask for your understanding and cooperation in our conservation efforts so that the natural environment of Amami Oshima and Tokunoshima—recognized worldwide for its exceptional value—can be passed on to future generations as a shared heritage of humanity in even better condition.