Ueyama Highlands
Beautiful highlands and Japanese beech forests created by volcanic activity

Lava that spread over the mountains formed the beautiful Ueyama Highlands, which offer various natural spectacles throughout the year. Visitors can get close to the rich natural environment of the highlands, including Japanese silver grass fields, as well as native Japanese beech forests that are inhabited by wild animals.

"Furusato-kan," the core facility of the Ueyama Highlands Eco Museum
The Ueyama Highlands Eco Museum provides outdoor activities, such as wildlife tours, and various hands-on learning activities. It is also involved in monitoring and conservation activities of the Japanese beech forest, Japanese silver grass fields, and wild animals.

More Info: Ueyama Highlands Furusato-kan (Tel: 0796-99-4600) URL: http://www.ueyamakougen-eco.net/

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Basic Course
- 7 min. / About 200m
- Parking lot
- Ueyama, a small volcano
- Pasture in Japanese silver grass fields
- View from the Highlands
- Shobu Pond
- Japanese beech forest
- Parking lot

Estimated walking time: 30 min. / About 3km
Total distance: About 6km

Short Course
- 12 min. / About 400m
-Parking lot
- Ueyama, a small volcano
- Pasture in Japanese silver grass fields
- View from the Highlands
- Shobu Pond
- Parking lot

Estimated walking time: 12 min. / About 600m
Total distance: About 1km

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View from the Highlands
- Pasture in Japanese silver grass fields

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Waking among the Japanese beech trees

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The summit of Ueyama Highlands

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Shobu Pond

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Japanese beech forest

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Japanese silver grass field

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Best spot for lunch

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Ueyama Highlands Mountain Shelter

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Quiz!

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Main animals and plants that can be observed in the Ueyama Highlands

- Yellow-bellied marmot
- Siberian musk deer
- Japanese serow
- Japanese marmot
- Japanese badger
- Japanese otter
- Japanese pheasant
- Japanese black bear
- Japanese rabbit
- Japanese squirrel
- Japanese wild goose
- Japanese camel
- Japanese zebra
- Japanese deer
- Japanese elk
- Japanese bear
- Japanese lynx
- Japanese bobcat
- Japanese weasel
- Japanese marten
- Japanese sable
- Japanese fox
- Japanese badger
- Japanese otter
- Japanese pheasant
- Japanese black bear
- Japanese rabbit
- Japanese squirrel
- Japanese wild goose
- Japanese camel
- Japanese zebra
- Japanese deer
- Japanese elk
- Japanese bear
- Japanese lynx
- Japanese bobcat
- Japanese weasel
- Japanese marten
- Japanese sable
- Japanese fox

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Ueyama Highlands’ many places of interest

1. “Ueyama,” a small volcano

Ueyama is a cinder cone volcanic created by volcanic activity long ago. The area has been eroded beyond recognition. However, the present convex topography looks like an upside-down bowl. It gives visitors a glimpse of its original form. Some natural trails lead to the summit, allowing visitors to explore the highlands while enjoying a refreshing breeze. The view from the summit is definitely a sight to behold.

2. Pasture in Japanese silver grass fields

Japanese silver grass fields spread out over the lava-covered highlands. These fields offer scenic landscapes throughout the year: buds in spring, dark green foliage and blue sky in summer, pink in autumn, and silver white in winter. The area is also used for cattle pasture during summer. Visitors will doubt enjoy the scenery, made all the more charming by the fine-coated grazing cattle.

3. View from the highlands

Looking down from the highlands, visitors are afforded a great view of the Seto inland Sea, the Sea of Japan and the mountains in the distance. 

4. Shobu Pond

Reflecting the surrounding landscape of broad-leaved forests, the peaceful surface of the water offers a natural spectacle that varies greatly between seasons. This pond is particularly attractive for waterfowl, and is an oasis where cranes and other wild creatures gather.

5. Japanese beech forest

An abundant oak and Japanese beech forest surrounds Mt. Ogino and the Ueyama Highlands. This forest, which lines the trail that leads to Mt. Ogino, is a peaceful backdrop to tired climbers. Various kinds of creatures live here and you may be lucky enough to encounter some lovely forest animals.

6. An Extra a : Komatagawa Valley

With steep cliffs and many curiously-shaped waterfalls, Komatagawa Valley is designated as a place of scenic beauty by Hyogo Prefectural Natural Park. Visitors can enjoy the waterfalls from inside the cave. Waterfalls in the valley exist, such as Komatagawa Waterfalls, Umeda Waterfalls and Umeda Waterfalls. The natural environment has been preserved, including giant kauri trees, Suma-kauri (Cryptomeria japonica), a kind of rhesus, and some cows.

7. An Extra b : Kirigatuki Valley

Located at the end of the Ueyama Highlands, Kirigatuki Valley is a 750 m above sea level, 45 m in width and 60 m in height. The waterfalls flow down from the top of the 20 m thick lava that covers the strata of Mt. Ogino. The mountain itself is made of an andesite, and (500000 years ago). A natural Japanese beech forest, something of a rarity these days, is maintained and serves as the natural habitat of various creatures. On sunny days, the top of the mountain commands panoramic views of Mt. Daisen, Koyama Lake, the Lake Tottori city area and the Sea of Japan in the distance.

8. An Extra c : Mt. Ogino

Mt. Ogino is a volcano which is 1398m above sea level located on the border of Hyogo and Tottori prefectures, with its summit in the Tottori Plain. The mountain itself is made of an andesite, and its lava flow which erupted between 500 thousand and 1.2 million years ago. A natural Japanese beech forest, something of a rarity these days, is maintained and serves as the natural habitat of various creatures. On sunny days, the top of the mountain commands panoramic views of Mt. Daisen, Koyama Lake, the Lake Tottori city area and the Sea of Japan in the distance.

Geo-Column 1

How was the Ueyama Highlands formed?

The area around the Ueyama Highlands was once covered with lava

A cinder cone was formed on the solidified lava

The ground was eroded by wind and rain

Lava flowed out from Ueyama and covered the surrounding area.

Geo-Column 2

Japanese silver grass fields in the Ueyama Highlands

While the Japanese beech forests grew naturally, the Japanese silver grass fields in the Ueyama Highlands were grown as a result of the day-to-day activities of the local people. However, those fields changed into bamboo grass fields as local people became unable to maintain them by mowing and pasturing. Measures to restore the Japanese silver grass fields are underway:
the grass is mowed, burned, used as pasture for cattle and utilized effectively alongside bamboo as animal feed, at the while maintaining a continuous link between people and the natural environment.

Quiz & Answer

Umagami Kasa-iroi (Folk dancing using an umbrella)

*Why don’t you ask local people about the details?*

Geo-Column 3

Lush Japanese beech forest

Japanese beech forest serves as the natural habitat of various creatures. The area is a habitat for deer, martens, hares, wild boars and raccoon dogs. Moreover, the Ueyama Highlands is the habitat of birds such as Blue-and-white Flycatcher, Japanese Pygmy Woodpecker, Tawny Eagle, and Bucephala japonica. While the ecosystem of this mountain region was gradually damaged around 1965 due to cedar afforestation, these days various measures for regeneration of the natural environment are taken mainly by the local residents.

Hiking among the Japanese beech in the late winter