A beautiful pocket beach of singing sand, and small sand dunes

Kozomi Kaigan Coast Course

The Kozomi Kaigan Coast is a beautiful beach between capes, turning into a crowded beach resort in summer. To its west, the Ushigome Kaigan Coast is also a popular coast, like a private beach. Behind these beaches are small sand dunes, whose southern part is wetlands used for paddy fields.

Don’t miss the geomorphological features of sand dunes, a work of nature!

This area features mountain ridges extending in cape-like shape into the Japan Sea, and small sand dunes behind bays between capes. The waves in the Japan Sea and strong northwesterly winds caused sand dunes to develop, turning enclosed bays and ponds into wetlands. Walk around the Kozomi area to experience the geological features of the sand dunes and local people’s lifestyles.
Kozomi Kaigan’s many places of interest

What are the black sand grains?

In the middle of the Kozomi Kaigan Coast is the estuary of a small stream, which has large sedimentation of black sand grains at the bottom. This black sand is iron sand. A dig of sand on the Kozomi Kaigan Coast reveals alternative layers of black iron sand and white sand. Iron sand is a ferruginous mineral called “magnetite” that has been separated from rocks in which it is originally contained, due to weathering.

The sands in the rivers or on the coasts in the San’in Kaigan Geopark area contain a large amount of iron sand, so they were used as a raw material for iron-making with foot-operated bellows. In wartime, iron sand was mined on the Kozomi Kaigan Coast too.

A dike as magma’s path

Magma erupts through underground joints onto the ground surface. Dikes are magma that was cooled into rock in the underground joints before reaching the ground surface and erupting. A close look at the dike on the Ushigome Kaigan Coast shows joints running at right angles to the dike edge (indicated with the dashed lines drawn on the photo). These joints formed because magma contracted while being cooled into rock. Seen from a three-dimensional perspective, the dike comprises pentagonal and hexagonal column-like fractures called “columnar joints,” as shown in the figure below. This dike traverses the cape from east to west, and also outcrops at the western end of the Kozomi Kaigan Coast. Moreover, just above the dike at the cape ridge is Kitano Shrine.

Farming in the back slough

The lowlands to the south of the Kozomi hamlet formed from a dried-up lagoon, which had resulted from an enclosed bay’s separation from the sea due to the development of the sand dunes. Because the sand dunes held back the water flow from the mountains, the lowland became wet and unsuitable for farming. Therefore, in the early Showa era, the wetlands were improved by filling them in with sand from the Kozomi sand dunes so that local people would be able to use the lowlands for farming. Since these farmlands are located at a very low altitude, local farmers face the risk of having their farmlands flooded with the sea water that flows backward along the Kozomi River during a storm surge or high tide. To reduce the risk, a tide-stopping weir has been built at the estuary of the Kozomi River. In winter, after rice is reaped and the tide-stopping weir has been built, the water from a storm surge or high tide can hardly flow backward along the Kozomi River due to the construction of the tide-stopping weir.