

Izu Oshima Island (Oshima)

Plants and animals living on a volcanic island.



Izu Oshima is an island in the Pacific Ocean 1,200 km south of central Tokyo. In the middle of the island is Mt. Mihara, which even today is still an active volcano.

Going down from the crater, desert-like landscapes composed of black sand from the lava rubble spread out around, and tufts of pampas grass can be seen.

The pampas grass creates a grassland, on which trees will grow, and eventually form a forest. Izu Oshima is a place where you can experience this transitional aspect of nature up close.

The effects of the eruptions can be seen right down to the coast, with rocky shores of craggy lava. On Izu Oshima, there is a lot of wildlife living in the dynamic nature created by the volcano, from the peak down to the shore.

What creatures and plants can we see?

| | |
|---|--|
| Hachijo Pampas | This grows in well-light grasslands. A separate coastal species grows on Izu Oshima. |
| Japanese camellia | It starts flowering around November, and can be seen until late April. Izu Oshima is also known as the island of the camellias. |
| Japanese white-eye | Compared to the white-eyes on the Honshu mainland, the ones of the Izu Islands are known for being slightly larger and with thicker, longer beaks. |
| Formosan rock macaque (Introduced species) | As the name suggests, this monkey is originally from Taiwan (Formosa). It can damage crops planted in fields. |
| Japanese cormorant | This bird dives and eats fish with its sharp beak. After diving, it can be seen spreading its wet wings wide to dry them. |
| Blue rock thrush | The males stand out for their bright red and blue plumage. These are often found on shore rocks, but have spread their habitat to include urban areas as well. |



Blue rock thrush



Japanese white-eye

In addition to Izu Oshima, Tokyo has many highly varied islands, each with its own unique environment. We need to protect the original natural environments of these islands to preserve the unique environments and wildlife living there.