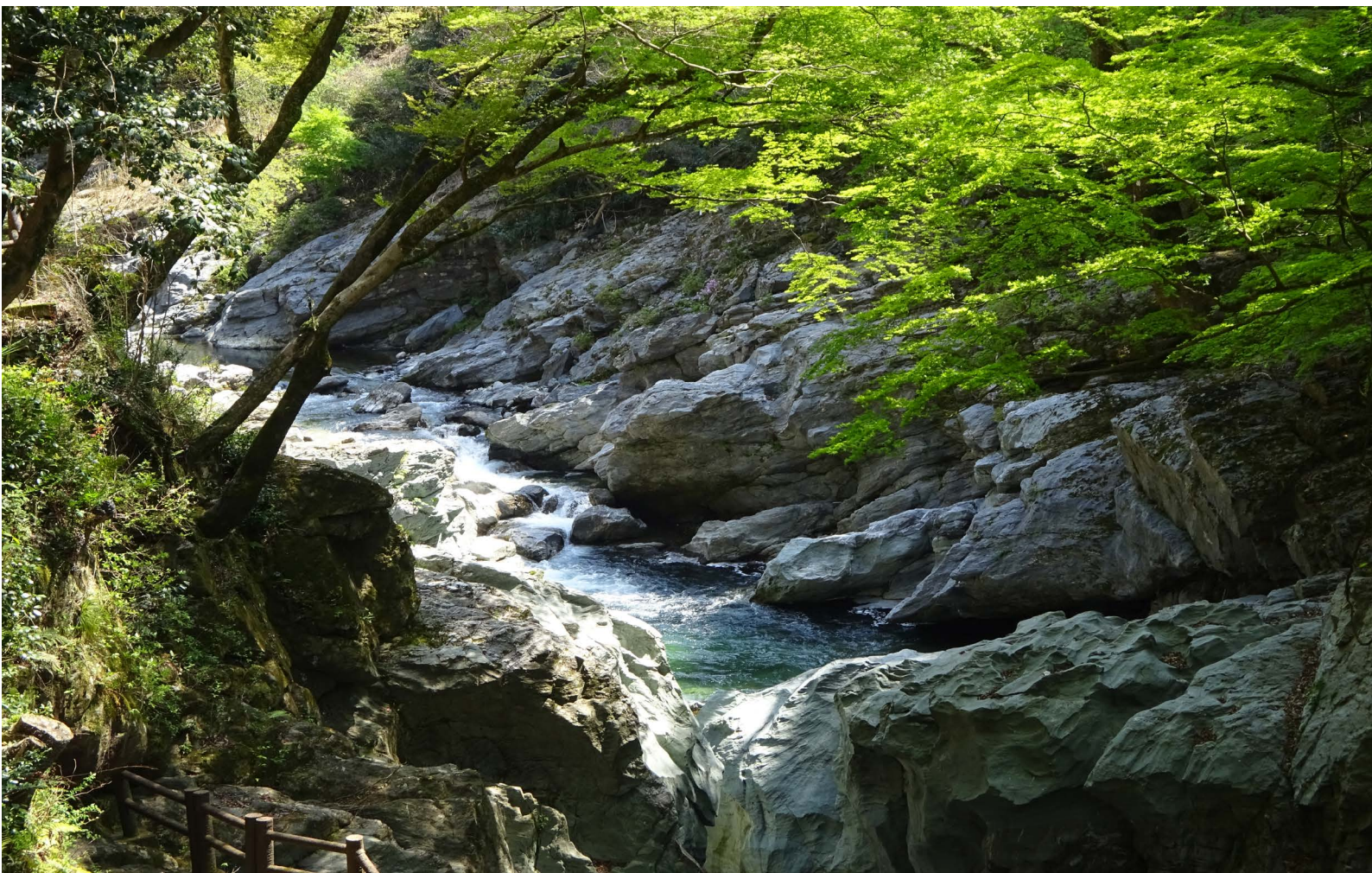


# awa life

**TOPIA Staff  
Introductions**

**Impressions from the  
Higashi-Shinmachi  
Awa Odori Parade**

June 2019  
# 345



**Awa Shoku: Okra  
- Who Knew Slimy  
was Good?**

**Nishi Awa: Hidden  
Gems in Tokushima**



## Awa Life is a Monthly Publication of the Tokushima Prefectural International Exchange Association

June means rainy season in most parts of Japan but that doesn't mean that your life has to be dull as well. Nature comes up with new ideas in every season of the year. A typical June flower for example is the hydrangea (*ajisai* アジサイ) and there are numerous spots in Tokushima Prefecture where fans are able to enjoy this beautiful flower. While hiking in the rain might not be the first idea people come up with, it can be a very relieving, romantic or even spiritual experience. However, it won't rain the whole time so you might be able to enjoy different activities before the real hot season begins.

For all of those who like writing, please feel free to submit an article to us at any point in time about basically anything. There are a few limitations though, such as you can't write about religion, politics, commercial activities or businesses or anything that we deem inappropriate. But, other than that, we would be more than happy to receive articles about anything and everything including but not limited to concerts, lectures, other events, culture, sports, community group information or anything cool that's happening in your local community.

We highly appreciate all of your articles and we love reading them. So if that writing bug of yours is buzzing about, grab a pen or a computer and write and send away! Please send all submissions to our email:

**[awalife@gmail.com](mailto:awalife@gmail.com)**

Your editors,  
Daralyn and Nico

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*Download a PDF file of awa life or view the online version by going to TOPIA's website!*



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Miaomiao Liu, Mayumi Nishioka, Kazue Inoue, Lance Kita, and Sachiko Muramatsu



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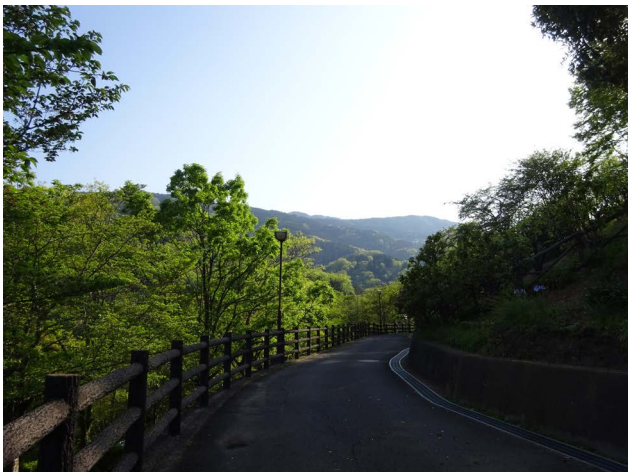
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## *Nishi Awa: Hidden Gems in Tokushima*

By: Daralyn Yee

(Special thanks to Fujikawa-san, Hashimoto-san, and Nakao-san!)



This past week I had the opportunity to visit the west of Tokushima, known as “Nishi Awa”, on two occasions. The Nishi Awa area is made up of Mima city, Miyoshi city, Tsurugi town, and Higashi Miyoshi town. This region has much to offer beyond what is written in Tokushima’s guidebooks. I would like to share a few hidden gems that I have enjoyed on my adventures to Nishi Awa.

### **Oyasu Park**

Embrace your inner child at this park by riding down its long slide! Unfortunately, the wide and steep slide has been torn down, but still offers a large park that offers nice natural space to take a nice walk and relax. There is still a very long

slide that will give you a beautiful view of the surrounding area and make you feel like a child again. I could not stop laughing out of sheer pleasure as I made my way around the slide.



### **A Rickshaw in Udatsu?**

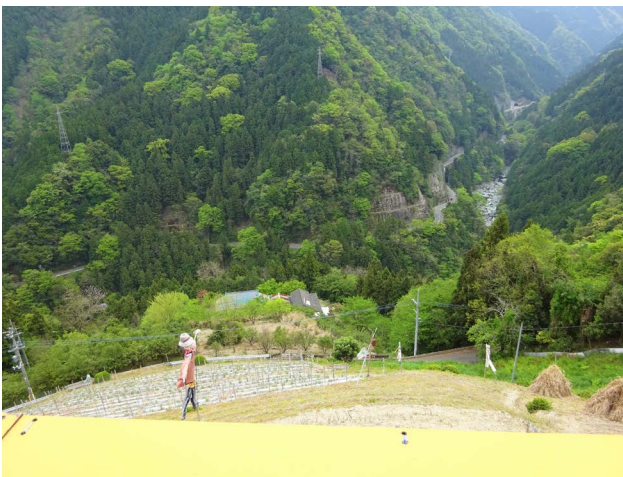
Yes, you can ride a rickshaw in Udatsu now! Escape the crowds of large tourist destinations, and ride down the Udatsu Townscape on a rickshaw with Fukurou-ya. I had the chance to ride a rickshaw for the first time and it was an interesting perspective to see the street. It made me feel as if I rode on a time machine to the Edo period! I was impressed by the rickshaw driver and the amount of strength he was using to carry



the rickshaw down the street. When there was a downhill, he even ran to match the speed of the rickshaw.

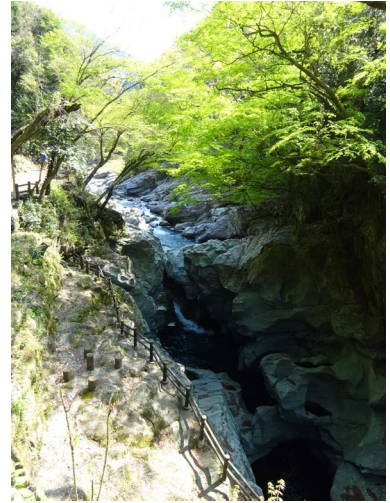
### **A Peaceful Workspace above the Steep Slope Land Agricultural System**

The Nishi Awa Steep Slope Land Agricultural System has recently been named as a GIAHS (Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System) for its unique farming system that adapted to life on a slope by developing a land management system to utilize the land. I was impressed that people were actually growing things on a nearly 40 degree slope, but there was something that I saw that amazed me even more. We unlocked the animal protection gate to a specially made outdoor work space and a stunning view of the green mountains folding into each other, and a rocky river located above the agricultural system. It was quiet and the air was nice and crisp. I wished that I brought some work to do, because it was so peaceful and serene. There is no electrical outlet, and you will have to bring your own Wi-Fi device to get internet connection. Despite that, it is still a nice place to get some manual work or writing done. You will have to see this place with your own eyes!



### **Dogama Basin and Narutaki Falls**

The Dogama Basin is located 12 km from the Sadamitsu River. The powerful stream carved the rocks into the shape of a basin. This basin is surrounded by lush maple trees



and greenery. The bold colors of the trees and river and the sounds of the river will make you feel as if you are in a Bob Ross painting. Sitting on the edge of the river is a good way to refresh and cool down. 700m from this beauty is Narutaki Falls that is 85m in height, making it the tallest waterfall in the prefecture. When I visited, the sun was shining from the top of the falls making the water falling down glitter. I hope that you can catch a glimpse of this beauty in the nice summer weather.

Despite living in Tokushima for three years, there are still many places I have yet to visit. Finding these hidden gems made me feel even more thankful to have the opportunity to live in Tokushima.



How about a trip down to Nishi Awa this summer? You will surely make treasured memories here with all of the unique places it has to offer, and you may even discover something new. Have you been to any interesting spots in Tokushima? Feel free to share with us at [awalife@gmail.com](mailto:awalife@gmail.com).



## Impressions from the Higashi-Shinmachi Awa Odori Parade

By: Miaomiao Liu



On May 1st, which marked the beginning of the Reiwa Era, about 100 members of various Awa Odori groups such as Aho-ren, Honke Daimyo-ren, and groups of foreigners danced the Awa Odori through the central Higashi-Shinmachi shopping street to celebrate the beginning of the new era.



I just arrived in Tokushima two weeks ago but it was the second time I saw an Awa Odori Performance with a large number of dancers. My first time was the Hana Haru Festa but this time I watched the Awa Odori parade to welcome the new era Tokushima-style.

I viewed the dance in the shopping arcade from such a close distance that I could feel it through my bones.



At the end, the whole audience was invited to join the dance and men and women of all ages had fun dancing. After watching all the young children dancing the Awa Odori, I believed that Awa Odori will be carried on to the future generations here.

During the breaks, the shops of the shopping arcade caught my eyes as well. Both expensive products and everyday items were sold there. When the parade ended, I made the decision to go again to shop next weekend.

“The Higashi-Shinmachi shopping arcade was once a flourishing shopping area, but in recent years, due to the population decrease, the situation worsened. Holding the parade here in the shopping street was also done for the revitalization of the arcade.” my friend explained. I felt this was a great idea. My friend then added, “You can truly say that this concept of revitalization is effective. I decided to come here for shopping next week, too.”

## TOPIA Staff Introduction

By: Mayumi Nishioka

Hello, my name is Mayumi Nishioka and I started working at TOPIA since April 15. I was formerly working as the receptionist at the Culture Center. I like interacting with people, and thought that I would be able to be helpful at TOPIA, but unfortunately I am linguistically limited to only Japanese. However,

I hope to interact using my body language and heart. I also hope to rediscover Tokushima's greatness, and study so that I am able to help



overseas residents living in Tokushima and visitors who come to TOPIA.

It is my hope that people of different nationalities and cultures can recognize their cultural differences, and build relationships in order to live together in harmony.

I will do my best to do each task carefully and accurately, and am looking forward to working with you all.

## Letter from SUKETO NAKAYOSHI

By Kazue Inoue (Center for Early Childhood Education and Care SUKETO NAKAYOSHI)

It is said that babies usually start to crawl after eight months but recently there has been an increase in babies who start to walk without much experience with crawling. However, crawling is an important process for a child's growth.

First, infants are able to support their own neck and turn over, then are able to crawl with their belly on the floor (crawling forward) and sit once strength in the arms and lower back are developed. Once this occurs, the back bone and trunk of the body is strengthened and infants become able to crawl. It will take more steps until your child will develop enough leg muscles and bones in order to crawl.

If an infant crawls a lot...

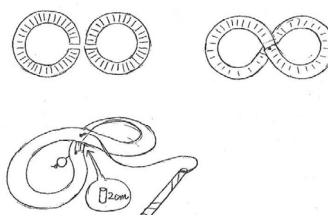
- In addition to the hands, feet, lower back, and back, but the whole body will be strengthened.
  - It stabilizes the trunk and will help your child master a sense of balance and reflexes.
  - It will build the basics for hand-eye coordination.
  - The child's range of motions and curiosity increases (also supports emotional growth)
  - The excessive use of hands and feet promotes brain development
- When babies start to crawl many dangers

emerge, so be sure to set up rooms that are crawling-friendly.

\* \* \*

### Paper Plate Pin Wheel

1. Prepare two paper plates and cut out the inner part as shown in the picture.
2. Turn the paper plates over. Allow the cut portion to intersect to form a figure eight and tape both sides together.
3. Make a hole in the center where both plates intersect and push a 50cm long kite string through (attach a bead at the end of the string and put a 2 cm piece of straw in the gap of the figure eight).
4. Connect the other side of the kite string to stick made out of a rolled up piece of paper. The paper plate windmill will spin when running while holding the stick.





## Awa Shoku: Okra - Who Knew Slimy was Good?

By Lance Kita

Japanese food is as much about texture as it is about taste. Even a plate of sashimi is a circus of mouthfeels, from the chewy octopus to tender tuna and firm yellowtail. Some ingredients like **konnyaku** こんにゃく (devil's tongue jelly) are used seemingly as a texture accent, as they have little flavor.

**Okura** オクラ (okra) is one of those love/hate vegetables for texture. These edible seed pods are relatives of cotton and hibiscus, and tolerate severe growing conditions. The southern part of the prefecture is the largest producer of okra in the prefecture. Available year-round but usually harvested in summer, its high nutritional value makes it perfect for the hot, languid season. Okra is rich in vitamins C and K, folic acid, and dietary fiber, and also contains many minerals.



Okra's crunchy but slimy seed pods are a nutritious stamina booster during summer.

So back to that texture... okra contains a lot of mucin (slimy goo), and can become very sticky and slimy when chopped fine or cooked for a long time. This is also apparently supposed to be good for you, by promoting good digestion and combatting summer fatigue. Japanese food often uses this as a textural element, and is one of the "Three Ns," my term for the three flavors/textures that are usually considered undesirable by most food cultures, but is favored by the Japanese.

Okra is very **neba-neba** ねばねば (sticky and gooey), and is often paired with other neba-neba foods like minced raw tuna belly or **natto** 納豆 (fermented whole soybeans), or with **nuru-nuru** ぬるぬる (slimy) foods like **yamaimo** 山芋 (mountain yam) or **nameko** なめこ mushrooms. The third N is **nigai** 苦い, or bitter...see the August 2018 article about

bittermelon).

Slice or mince the okra and combine with the other sticky/slimy ingredients over rice and season with soy sauce or ponzu to make a **neba-neba don** ねばねば丼 or as a topping for cold noodles (udon or soba) with a chilled dashi sauce. That mixture (or just the okra) also makes a refreshing side dish on its own with a touch of ponzu or **bainiku** 梅肉 (salty pickled plum paste). Its slippery texture slides right down your throat, and hits the spot when the humid, oppressive heat of summer saps your appetite.

What if you're not into the Three Ns? Okra won't be as slimy if you deep-fry it. Try it as tempura (plain or with a hint of curry powder) or breaded with panko bread crumbs, served with a dip of soy sauce and mayonnaise. Be sure to trim the base of the pod and remove the stem and leaf ring.

You can also boil or sauté them whole for a short time to keep the sliminess to a minimum. The easiest recipe is a Korean namul. Boil the pods for a minute, then drain and put in a bowl. While warm, add a generous sprinkle of salt and a good splash of **goma-abura** 胡麻油 (sesame oil) and toss well. You can also add soy sauce, chili paste, and/or whole sesame seeds.



Okra is an essential slimy part of nebaneba rice bowls, salads, and noodles.

Or wrap them in thinly sliced **buta baraniku** 豚バラ肉 (pork belly), season with salt and pepper, sauté them until meat is browned, and pour a sauce of soy sauce, sake, mirin, and grated ginger over them and cook 30 seconds so the sauce coats the okra. The ginger will whet your appetite, and the recipe is so fast, you won't be sweating in the kitchen.

So embrace the sliminess of okra, or try the other recipes above for some quick, nutritious summer meals!

## Using 「～てしまいました」 correctly

This month let's study the expression 「～てしまいました」! The sentence pattern has two meanings:

- ① 「物事の完了を表す」 (expressing the completion of a matter) and ② 「残念・後悔の気持ちを表す」 (expressing the feeling of regret). Let's clarify the difference in the following conversation.

## Conversation ① 物事の完了

A: わたしが貸してあげた本、もう読みましたか。

B: ええ、とても面白かったので、一晩で全部読んでしまいました。

A: そうですか。すごいですね。

This expression indicates the completion of an action and 「全部、完全に、早く」 is used to emphasize that an action is completed. When used in situations where emphasis isn't needed, it sounds unnatural.

Example: ×もう阿波大学に合格してしまいました。→○阿波大学に合格しました。

## Conversation ② 残念・後悔の気持ち

A: どうしたんですか。

B: 財布を落としてしまいました。かばんの中を探してもないんです。

A: それは大変ですね。早く交番に届けたほうがいいですよ。

Here the speaker uses the sentence pattern to express his or her feelings

of pity/regret such as "I'm sorry for having done something I shouldn't have" or "I got into a very difficult situation which I shouldn't be in". It is often used with verbs such as 「忘れる」「まちがえる」「落とす」「遅れる」「転ぶ」 that have a negative meaning.

The sentence pattern is: 動詞て形＋てしまいました



## 練習問題

Change the underlined verbs into 「て形＋てしまいました」 and indicate with the respective number if it carries the meaning of Conversation ① Completion or Conversation ② Feeling of regret.

Examples :

会議が12時から始まるので、先に食事を済ませました。

→会議が12時から始まるので、先に食事を済ませてしまいました。①

田中さんの電話番号を聞きました。忘れました。

→田中さんの電話番号を聞きましたが、忘れてしまいました。②



1. バス停まで走りました。バスは行きました。

→ 2. 掃除や洗濯は土曜日に全部やりました。それで、日曜日はゆっくり過ごすことができました。

→ 3. この仕事はもっと時間がかかると思いましたが、30分でできました。うれしいです。

→ 4. きのう、階段で転びました。→

5. タクシーで行きました。約束の時間に遅れました。



- ① 1. 行っていました。 ② 2. やってしまいました。 ① 3. できてしまいました。 ② 4. 転んでしまいました。 ② 5. 遅れてしまいました。



# Events & Memoranda

## 2019 Tokushima Prefecture Japanese Speech Contest 2019 徳島県日本語弁論大会

Overseas residents whose native language is not Japanese will be giving a speech in Japanese on various topics such as cultural differences, their experiences with life in Tokushima, and more. Please come watch and cheer on the participants! A tea party will follow after the contest.

When: July 21 (Sun) 13:30 - 16:30; Tea Party 16:45~  
Where: Awagin Hall (Tokushima Prefecture Kyodo Bunka Kaikan) 5F  
Info: 088-656-3303 (TOPIA)  
Admission Fee: FREE

## Misato Firefly Festival 美郷ほたるまつり

The whole Misato district in Yoshinogawa City was designated as "Misato Firefly and its birth place" and categorized as a national natural monument in 1970. It is known nationally as a prominent area for the size of the basin area where the fireflies fly, amount of fireflies, and period that the fireflies can be seen.

When: June 1st (Sat) – 16th (Sun)  
Where: Misato, Yoshinogawa City  
(around Kawata river)  
Info: Misato Hotaru Museum  
Tel: 0883-43-2888  
URL : <https://www.misato-hotarukan.jp/>

吉野川市美郷地区は 1970 年に地区全域が「美郷のホタル及びその発生地」として国の天然記念物に指定されており、ホタルが飛ぶ流域面積、数、期間とも全国でも有数の地域です♪

日時 : 6月1日(土) ~ 16日(日)  
場所 : 吉野川市美郷 川田川周辺  
お問い合わせ : 美郷ほたる館  
TEL: 0883-43-2888  
URL : <https://www.misato-hotarukan.jp/>

## The Tokushima Prefectural Awa Jurobe Yashiki Suiseki Exhibition 阿波十郎兵衛屋敷「水石展」

"Suiseki" is a part of Japanese culture to appreciate stones inside of rooms. "Distant mountain stones" in the shape of mountains, "waterfall stones" in the shape of waterfalls, figure stones associated with birds, animals or human beings, pattern stones where patterns of flowers or clouds appear and other "suiseki" collected by the members of the Awa Suiseki Association from mountains inside and outside of the prefecture can be seen here.

When: June 14th (Fri) – 16th (Sun)  
9:30 – 17:00  
Where: Tokushima Prefectural Awa Jurobe Yashiki  
(Puppet Theater and Museum)  
Fee: 410 Yen (adults), 300 Yen (high school and university students), 200 Yen (elementary and junior high school students)  
Info: Tokushima Prefectural Awa Jurobe Yashiki  
(Puppet Theater and Museum)  
Tel: 088-665-2202  
URL: <http://joruri.info/jurobe/>

水石（すいせき）とは、室内で石を鑑賞する日本の生活文化です。山の形をした「遠山石」、山中の滝を思わせる「滝石」、鳥や動物、人などを連想させる「姿石」、花や雲などの紋様が現れている「紋様石」など、阿波水石会の会員が、県内外の山や川から採取した様々な表情を見せる水石の数々をご覧ください。

日時 : 6月14日(金) ~ 16日(日)  
9:30 ~ 17:00  
場所 : 徳島市川内町宮島本浦 184 徳島県立阿波十郎兵衛屋敷  
参加料 : 410 円 (大人)、300 円 (高・大学生)、200 円 (小・中学生)  
お問い合わせ : 徳島県立阿波十郎兵衛屋敷  
TEL: 088-665-2202  
URL: <http://joruri.info/jurobe/>

# Events & Memoranda

## The 34th Nishi-Iya Amego Fishing Tournament 第34回 西祖谷あめご釣り大会

The Queen Amego is a beautiful fish mainly living in the Iya River and also a precious regional speciality as well. The event committee welcomes many people to the Amego Fishing Tournament and wants everyone to have a wonderful fishing day while enjoying the deep nature of the unexplored Iya region.

清流の女王アメゴは、祖谷川に広く生息する美しい魚で、地域の貴重な特産品でもあります。実行委員会では、多くの人々にあめご釣り大会にお越しいただき、秘境祖谷の大自然を満喫しながら終日釣りを楽しんでいただきたいと考えております。皆さんのお越しをお待ちしています♪

When: June 9th (Sun)

Registration from 6am

Entrance from 8pm

Weighing from 10pm

Where: Nishiiyayamamura Oinouchi around Iya Fureai Park, Iya River and Iyakei Bridge

Fee: 3000 Yen (adults), 1000 Yen (elementary school children)

Info: Office of Iya Fureai Park/Miyoshi City Association of Commerce and Industry

Tel: 0883-76-8585 or 0883-86-1059

日時：6月9日（日）

会場受付：6:00～

入場開始：8:00～

計量：10:00～

場所：三好市西祖谷山村字尾井ノ内 祖谷ふれあい公園周辺、祖谷川、祖谷大橋付近

参加料：3000円（大人）、1000円（小学生）

お問い合わせ：祖谷ふれあい公園事務所 または三好市商工会

TEL: 0883-76-8585、0883-86-1059

## We want YOU to tell Tokushima about your country!

Give presentations or demonstrations to people in Tokushima. Share in Japanese about topics such as your country's cultures, traditions, languages. If you need help planning a presentation, our coordinator will give you guidance. Presentations will be given to students or the community at international exchange events. We will ask you when we receive requests from schools and organizations. It takes 3~4 hours including travel time, a few times a year. Honorarium are about 4,000 yen plus transportation expenses.

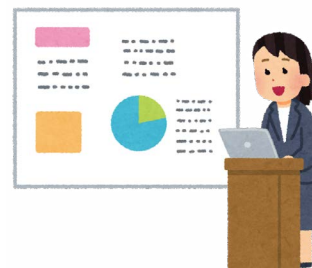
Info: TOPIA

TEL: 088-656-3303

FAX: 088-652-0616

URL: <http://www.topia.ne.jp>

E-mail: [coordinator3@topia.ne.jp](mailto:coordinator3@topia.ne.jp)



## Counselling Service at TOPIA・トピアの相談窓口

TOPIA provides consultation on everyday life, education, labor, medical institutions, and disaster prevention; and information on sightseeing spots to overseas residents and visitors. When necessary, we will refer you to the appropriate organization that can assist with your needs. Counselling is available in English, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Japanese. Please note that although every effort will be made, we may not be able to deal with all cases.

Everyday, 10:00 - 18:00 (closed during the New Year's holidays)

Tel: 088-656-3303 or 088-656-3320 (allows three-way conversations with an interpreter)