

Spreading activities for 'Amakusa Geopark' conception

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¹Goshoura Cretaceous Museum

One of the objects of the Amakusa Goshoura Geopark is to maintain existing sites while developing new sites. In support of this objective, volunteer guide groups for the geopark were created as introductory and intermediate level volunteer guides to perform auxiliary activities at the Goshoura Cretaceous Museum and at fossil places for visitors. As a broader reaching prospectus, the "Amakusa Geopark Promotion Association" was created in December, 2010 as a cooperative effort by Amakusa city, Kamiamakusa city, and Reihoku town with the concept of including the whole of the Amakusa area into one geopark where related activities for the entire Amakusa region have started. At the inception of the formation of this cooperative, promotion began with the explanation of what a geopark is, visiting potential spots of interest within the proposed area of the geopark and ensuring an understanding of the geopark concept for sightseeing volunteer guide groups in Hondo, Itsuwa, Tsuji Island, Ushibuka and the Kamiamakusa area.

Furthermore, in order to present a general understanding, a lecture course entitled "Amakusa study on geology and relationship to human life" has been offered once every month from April, 2011 for the general populace in Amakusa city and Kumamoto city until now. The main measures of the activities in Amakusa are introduced as follows:

1 Geopark volunteer guide training in the "Amakusa Goshoura Geopark"

- * Theoretic and practical introductory class training.

- * Theoretic and practical intermediate class training for those holding an introductory level qualification.

- * The independent organization of the "Goshoura volunteer guide group", which cooperates with the Goshoura Island Tourism Promotion Association, carries out and its member services for visitors.

2 Explanation of the "Amakusa Geopark concept" for the sightseeing volunteer guide organization

- * Briefing sessions for sightseeing volunteer guides in the Hondo area, Itsuwa town, Tsuji Island, Ushibuka town, Reihoku town, and Kamiamakusa city are given to explain the aspects of geopark sites in each area.

3 A lecture "Amakusa study for geopark" from the viewpoint of geopark concepts

- * A lecture is offered for the general public once every month at the Amakusa Citizen's Center at Hondo in Amakusa city and at the Eastern Public Center of Kumamoto city.

The advantages of a geopark in Amakusa will become apparent to people who live in the area as they familiarize themselves with Amakusa's unique geographical features, the geology of the land, and its nature through the efforts of geopark training and information sharing. Residents will come to know the merits of the area further by understanding the relationship of present-day Amakusa to its history and culture and by sharing this native perspective with visitors to the area. From this viewpoint, a general educational campaign, including volunteer guide training, is performed in Amakusa while informal educational activities concerning Amakusa are offered in outlying areas.

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