

## Geopark activity in Itoigawa City, Niigata Prefecture

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[1] Fossa Magna Museum, Itoigawa City

Itoigawa City, central Japan, is the small city of about 50000 populations facing the Japan sea and being close to mountain areas in the back. Because of its superior nature, the city has two national parks, three prefectural nature parks and three prefectural protected areas. Geological characteristics of the city are the start point of the Itoigawa-Shizuoka Tectonic Line, dividing the Honshu Island into the eastern and western areas, to the Pacific ocean side, and variety of rocks and minerals including gem quality jadeitites and fossils ranging from Paleozoic to Cenozoic.

Itoigawa City framed the policy of promoting the economic development of the city by using its various geological heritage sites in 1987. Under the policy, the Fossa Magna Museum named after well known geological structure, was constructed in 1994, and from then, has made some educational activities such as geological hiking, school excursions, lectures and so on for the citizens. Moreover, the city has provided the Geopark since 1993. We call the area including outcrops showing significant geological events, typical rock and mineral localities, and geographical scenes the Geopark. Each Geopark is equipped with promenades and explanation boards in field for geotourists to understand geological information. The Geopark of Itoigawa in present is as follows.

Fossa Magna Park (outcrop of the Itoigawa-Shizuoka Tectonic Line), Kotaki Hisuikyo Gorge (jadeitite boulders in river bed), Takanaminoike (Land slide and pond), Tsukimizunoike (megaboulders caused by land slide), Yakeyama volcano (Volcanic products and hot springs), Renge Spa (hot spring and steaming area), and Sankyotoge-pass (erosional valley of Pliocene volcano).