

Many outcrops and fossils of the mammals of Geopark Chichibu. -Designated as a National Natural Monument -

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Six outcrops which remain in the area of the Geopark Chichibu and nine fossils of the mammals owned by Saitama Museum of Natural History were designed as a National Natural Monument in 2016. Collectively, they are called "Sedimentary layers of the old Chichibu bay, and marine mammals fossil assemblages". Above all, searching outcrops shows the geological history of the Chichibu basin from beginning to end.

That was the first case which the geological formations and a number of fossils were designated together as a National Natural Monument in Japan. (Individually, the fossils of animals are for the third case and the fossils of mammals are for the first case.)

These outcrops and fossils had been protected by only the researchers with the results for a long time, but now the government will be saved them under the protection law. That effects the promotion for Geopark Chichibu which works for environment preservation of the monuments.

*Six outcrops

"Unconformity in Maehara", "Unconformity in Inuki", "A huge outcrop in Torikata", "A big cliff, called Yo-bake", "A conglomerate outcrop in Aratabashi", "A fossil locality of Paleoparadoxia in Onohara"

*Mammal fossils

Fossil localities of Paleoparadoxia; [Chichibu city] Onohara, Terao, Tochiya, [Ogano town] Hannya, San-yama, [Minano town] Ofuchi

Fossil localities of whalebone whales; [Chichibu city] Onohara, Tatenuma, [Ogano town]Hannya

We installed the guide plates around them, and the Geo-tours including the introduction of those outcrops are often held by Geopark Chichibu Promotion Council. Viewing from the top of Mt. Minoyama located in the east of Chichibu basin reminds you of the old Chichibu bay about 15million years ago.

In spite of the active research since Meiji period, those outcrops and fossils were not familiar with the local people. However, a lot of people know those value geological places by the recent promoting activities of Geopark Chichibu Promotion Council. We conduct the lectures such as the lead to find the vertebrate fossils which takes notice of the spongy structure of bones appearing on the surface of the rock. At the same time, you can learn how to treat fossils without losing any value when accidentally you find them. We also have the Geopark field-study excursions for elementary and junior high school students, and support for exhibition of fossils at junior high school. You can experience to make a replica of fossil at Ogano Fossil Museum.

Geopark Chichibu Promotion Council hopes that our efforts lead to discover new fossils, and we continue to research on Geopark Chichibu in order to enhance awareness.

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