

## The Terraced Paddy Fields of Isarigami

: Stonework and terraced paddy fields stretching out on the hillside



The Terraced Paddy Fields of Isarigami



Rice harvesting



Rice planting with a terraced paddy field owner



“Inherited through generations”

Photo contributed by: Takatoshi Matsumoto

(“Hometown Kitaharima That I Want To Preserve Photo Contest” prize-winning photo)



Isarigami is a village blessed with an abundance of nature located on the upper reach of Tatagawa River. While it is familiar as a trailhead to Mt. Sengamine, what many people are drawn to are the views of the terraced paddy fields spread out on the mountain slopes.

These terraced paddy fields were contrived to increase the cultivation area in a mountainous region lacking flatland, and its origins can be traced back to the Yayoi Period. The characteristic unique to the terraced paddy fields of Isarigami are the stone walls supporting them which are said to have been built during the Kamakura Period. For this reason, the area of these paddies is relatively wide, and together with the stone walls lined up along the hillside, makes for a unique landscape.

Takacho Town introduced a terraced rice paddy ownership system for the first time in Hyogo Prefecture in 1997. With the cooperation and support of the local residents, they are working to preserve this beautiful pastoral landscape.

Source: Top 100 Sights in Hyogo (published by Kobe Shimbun Sogo Shuppan Center), Taka Town website

<b>Main sights which make up the hometown of Hyogo</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Rich natural landscape <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rural vistas rich in nature and greenery <input type="checkbox"/> Expressive urban vistas and historic sights handed down through generations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural sights particular to the area	Location	Kamiku Isarigami, Taka Town
	Famous sights	Top 100 Terraced Paddy Fields in Japan (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries) Top 100 Sights in Hyogo That I Like (Hyogo Prefecture)
	Festivals and events	
	Associated parties	
	Organizations	
	Related sights	Mt. Sengamine

## River bleaching of Sugiharagami (Sugihara paper) and Kozo (Paper Mulberry) : Traditional Japanese paper with a 1300-year history

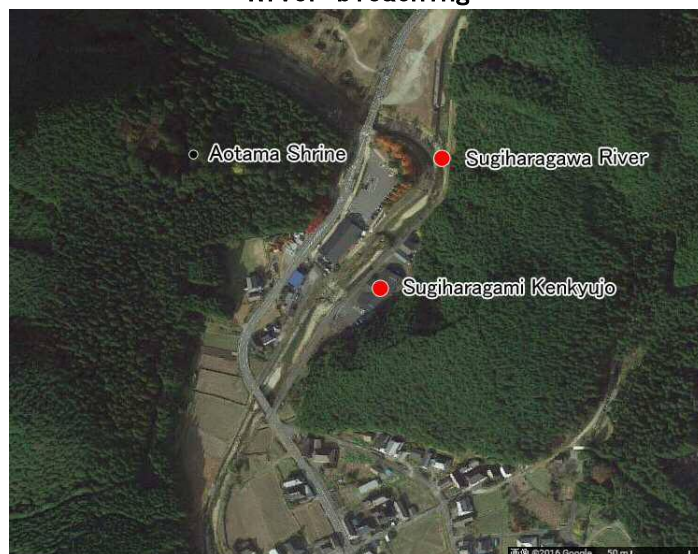


River bleaching

“River bleaching on Sugiharagawa River”  
Photo contributed by: Shigetada Tokura  
(“Hometown Kitaharima That I Want To Preserve  
Photo Contest” prize-winning photo)



Papermaking

Sugiharagami Kenkyujo  
(Sugiharagami Research  
Institute)

The clear stream of Sugiharagawa River flows through Sugiharadani Valley, which is a production center for Sugihara Paper. This variety of traditional Japanese paper possesses a 1300-year history and was treasured by Heian Period nobles and the Kamakura Shogunate.

Sugiharagami is thin, soft, and strong, and utilizes the bark of the Paper Mulberry tree (Kozo) indigenous to Sugiharadani Valley as a raw material. At the height of its prosperity, it is said that there were over 300 of these paper manufacturers. The industry declined in the Meiji Period due to the spread of western paper, and production stopped by the end of the Taisho Period, becoming the stuff of legend.

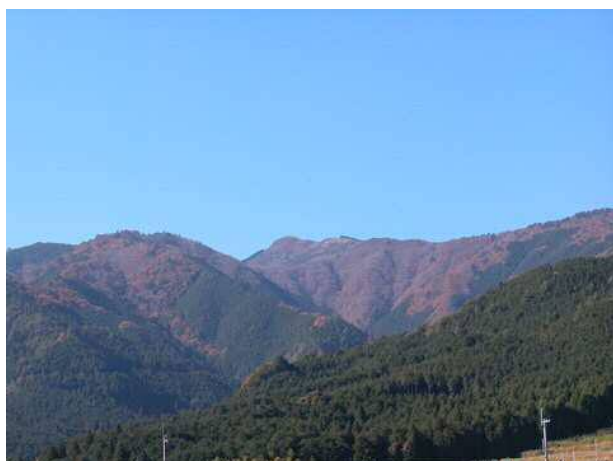
In Old Kami Town, Sugiharagami Kenkyujo (Sugihara Paper Research Institute) was established in 1972 which embarked on the restoration of traditional papermaking using the materials and techniques of olden times. The same year, the company was designated an Important Intangible Cultural Asset, and has carried on this time-honored tradition from the home of washi (Japanese paper) to present-day. The cooperation of the locals was indispensable in restoring this industry, as securing the kozo raw materials required starting a campaign to have each homeowner plant and grow two paper mulberry plants. After carrying out the age-old process of bleaching the white bark of the kozo in the Sugiharagawa River in the wintertime, Sugihara paper becomes even whiter and more beautiful.

Source: Hyogo Fukei Hyakusen (Top 100 Sights in Hyogo) (published by Kobe Shimbun Sogo Shupan Center), Taka Town website, Kitaharima Highland Promotion Council website

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	Famous sights	Top 100 Sights in Hyogo That I Like (Hyogo Prefecture)
	Festivals and events	
	Associated parties	
	Organizations	
Related sights	Mt. Sengamine, Sugiharagawa River, Sugiharagami Kenkyujo (Japanese paper manufacturer)	

## Mt. Sengamine

: Highest peak in Harima with a 360 degree panorama



Mt. Sengamine

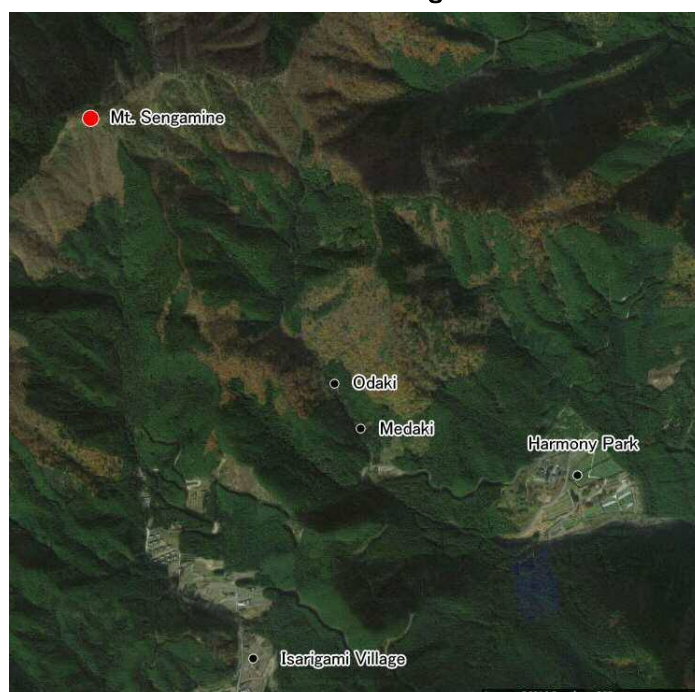


View from Mt. Sengamine

Mt. Sengamine is the highest peak in Harima at a height of 1005m. It is surrounded by 800m class mountains, and occupies a corner of Kasagatayama-Sengamine Prefectural Natural Park. As there are no trees near the peak, there is a 360 degree panoramic view from the summit.

The bamboo grass and pampas grass covering the summit area adds charm to the majestic view. The view said to be the best in the prefecture consists of Mt. Mikunidake to the north which straddles Harima, Tajima, and Tanba Provinces, the mountain range of Mt. Ryugatake and Mt. Sasagamine to the east across the Sugiharagawa River valley, and Akashi-Kaikyo Ohashi Bridge beyond Mt. Myokensan to the south-east if the weather permits. The mountain ridge extending south from of Mt. Kasagatayama, and the gently-sloping ridge to the west from Mt. Dangamine to Mt. Senchogamine demarcate the border between Harima and Tajima.

In getting to the summit of Mt. Sengamine, one can utilize trails that pass through Harmony Park and Isarigami Village.



Source: Top 100 Landscapes in Hyogo (Hyogo Prefecture), Top 100 Sights in Hyogo (published by Kobe Shimbun Sogo Shuppan Center), Taka Town website

<p><b>Main sights which make up the hometown of Hyogo</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Rich natural landscape</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Rural vistas rich in nature and greenery</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Expressive urban vistas and historic sights handed down through generations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cultural sights particular to the area</li> </ul>	Location	Kamiku Midani, Taka Town
	Famous sights	Top 100 Landscapes in Hyogo (Hyogo Prefecture) Top 100 Sights in Hyogo That I Like (Hyogo Prefecture) Top 50 Forests and Hotsprings in Hyogo (Hyogo Prefecture) 50 Hyogo Hometowns + 8 Mountains (Kobe Shimbun)
	Festivals and events	
	Associated parties	
	Organizations	
	Related sights	Odaki and Medaki Waterfalls, Harmony Park, Isarigami Village

## Hotaru-no-Shukuro (Firefly Road)

: Promenade where fireflies dance



Dance of the fireflies



Hotaru-no-Shukuro (Firefly Road)



Firefly Viewing



“Hotaru-no-Shukuro-no-Kai (Firefly Road Society)” is involved in increasing the firefly population, such as through river clean-ups and the release of fireflies with participation by all residents in Tawarada Village. Through urban-rural exchange such as “Firefly Viewing” held since 1991, it is attempting to raise its image as a hometown for fireflies representing the Kinki Region, and to increase the population of the rural area.

The Firefly Viewing held annually in June is also attended by many people from urban areas, and is a major event of the village. ‘Oohs’ and ‘aahs’ are heard as visitors view the fireflies dancing on Firefly Road, the promenade along the river.

Award winner of the 9<sup>th</sup> “Human-Sized Town Development Award” in the Town Development Activities Division (Hyogo Prefecture).

Source: Hyogo Prefecture website, Taka Town website, Hato-ni-Gutto Kitaharima website

<b>Main sights which make up the hometown of Hyogo</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rich natural landscape <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rural vistas rich in nature and greenery <input type="checkbox"/> Expressive urban vistas and historic sights handed down through generations <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural sights particular to the area	Location	Yachiyoku Tawarada, Taka Town
	Famous sights	
	Festivals and events	
	Associated parties	
	Organizations	Hotaru-no-Shukuro-no-Kai (Firefly Road Society), Tawarada Village
	Related sights	Freuden Yachiyo