

Ogasawara Islands, Japan

Key facts

- Recommended by IUCN for inscription on the World Heritage List in June 2011 at the World Heritage Committee in Paris, France as an outstanding example of on-going evolutionary processes in an oceanic island ecosystem.
- The Ogasawara Islands are located in the northwestern Pacific Ocean roughly 1,000 km south of the main Japanese Archipelago. The serial nomination is comprised of five components consisting of 30 islands spread over 400 square kilometres. The site is clustered within three island groups of the Ogasawara Archipelago: Mukojima, Chichijima and Hahajima, plus an additional three individual islands: Kita-iwoto and Minami-iwoto of the Kazan group and the isolated Nishinoshima Island.
- Marine areas within the Ogasawara Islands National Park are home to significant populations of dolphins, whales and turtles.
- The Ogasawara Islands provide valuable evidence of evolutionary processes through active ecological processes of adaptive radiation in the evolution of the land snail fauna and endemic plant species.

Key quote

*“The remoteness of the Ogasawara Islands has allowed animals and plants to evolve practically undisturbed in the Islands,” says **Peter Shadie, Deputy Head of IUCN’s Delegation.** “The Ogasawara Islands tell a unique story of how an oceanic island arc is born and how it evolved to its present form as an important habitat for rare and endangered species.”*

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Photos: For photos of the Ogasawara Islands, please visit:
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