



Column Kijimun's Monologue

"Some Mysterious Secrets Hidden in The University of The Ryukyus"

No. 4 – Our Adventure to a Waterfall Located on Uehara Campus, University of the Ryukyus

Haisai and Greetings! Kijimun here.

I hear that there's a waterfall on Uehara campus. Do you know about this? Well, we had to go and check this place out! So we asked Masahiro Asato of the Department of Subtropical Agro-Production Sciences, Faculty of Agriculture, University of the Ryukyus to show us around the faculty's research forest. In addition, an investigation for finding the remains of victims of the Battle of Okinawa was carried out in August, so let me tell you about that as well.



Sign to Research Forest



Iju



Albizia retusa Benth



White Deigo



The waterfall! It has no name. How about "Kijimun Fall?"

[What? There's a Waterfall Here? The Faculty of Agriculture's Captivating Research Forest]

The Faculty of Agriculture's forest nursery (research forest) is located on the northern end of the Faculty of Medicine campus and stretches roughly 1.35 ha. It was originally a pine forest but most of the trees died after being infected by the *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus* (pine wilt nematode).

According to Asato, the soil in the forest consists mostly of a red soil layer and surrounding it are various other types of soil such as Jahgaru (weathered mudstone) and Shimajiri Maji (weathered Ryukyu limestone). Asato says that it is this soil that allows tree species such as the *iju* (*Schima liukuensis* Nakai), which make their habitat in northern Okinawa, to grow in the forest. Amazingly, this forest is the southernmost habitat for the *iju*! Asato also showed us various other rare plants, such as the White Deigo and *Albizia retusa* Benth, which is an endangered species. After the tour of the forest, it was on to the waterfall—the main attraction! Before our eyes was a natural waterfall roughly 12 meters high! It is located upstream along the Hiyara River, and crustaceans and fish such as lake prawns, Japanese mitten crabs, Asian swamp eels, and guppies make their habitats in the surrounding water.

As a side note, I was bitten by mosquitos (20 bites!!) during our excursion. One word of caution! Be sure to take a *katori senko* (mosquito coil) with you when going to the research forest!

[Investigation for the Collection of War Victim Remains: Traces of the Battle of Okinawa]

This year marks 74 years since the end of the Battle of Okinawa and numerous traces of the war—including the remains of a *senshago* (tank trench) — can be found on our campus. On August 20th, the Information Center for the Collection of War Victim Remains, Okinawa Prefectural Peace Memorial Foundation carried out an investigation to find the remains of war victims at two locations on our campus: *Ishigusuku* (a designated cultural property of Nishihara Town) and *Shijimata* (located near Senbaru pond), and I had the chance to speak to representatives of the foundation while they were surveying the land. Over 20,000 people (Japanese as well as those of foreign nationalities) died in the Battle of Okinawa. Sadly, many of the remains are yet to be found. As such, efforts for post-war cleanup are by no means over, and it is vital that efforts are continued to unearth as many remains as possible. When surveying the land, a metal detector was used to find areas where there may be war relics. The areas were then marked with red flags. Let this serve an opportunity to raise awareness that efforts for post-war cleanup are continuing to this day and to think of war and peace as an immediate issue. Cooperation: Information Center for the Collection of War Victim Remains, Okinawa Prefectural Peace Memorial Foundation



Land being surveyed using metal



Red flag

We invite you all to explore and find the various little-known allures of the University of the Ryukyus! Stay tuned for the next issue of Kijimun's Monologue (M&S&M).