



SHEI-PA

NATIONAL PARK

Guide to the Exhibition Hall
in Wenshui Visitor Center



I Concept of National Park

Origin of the Concept

Regarded as splendor of ecology, a national park guarantees wildlife habitats from outside interferences and enriches human souls with spectacular landscapes. The idea of establishing national parks originated from the United States in the 1860s when a group of environmental activists urged the Congress to reserve the Wawona giant trees in the Mariposa Grove, California. In 1864, it was announced in the famous "Yosemite Act" that the Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Big Tree Grove be held by the government of California State for "public use, resort and recreation." Eight years later, the Congress passed another bill to establish the first national park of the world -Yellowstone National Park. Hence, the concept of conservation won the recognition of all other nations and was taken as a model in their national policies. Now, there have been some 1,200 national parks or protection zones on earth, set up by over 100 governments.



Functions of National Parks in Taiwan

By either the domestic National Park Law or the international standard from International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, conservation of a national park is always prior to other functions, such as research, education and recreation. The following items are the functions of the national parks in Taiwan:



- (1) to preserve the environment
- (2) to conserve species and genes
- (3) to provide recreational resources and prosper local economy
- (4) to improve academic researches and environmental educations

A national park helps to protect natural landscapes, sustain wildlife habitats, and also balance global ecosystems with its great genetic diversity. Today, a national park represents not only the emphasis a state places on conservation, but also its status as highly developed country.

Establishment of National Parks in Taiwan

The idea of establishing national parks in Taiwan was conceived during Japanese Colonial Time from 1895 to 1945. In response to the appeals of the society, the National Park Committee announced the plans to build three national parks, including the Datun, the Tsugitaka-Taroko, and the Niitaka-

Alisan National Park. However, owing to World War II, the plans were suspended. In 1972, several years after Taiwan was returned to the National Government, the National Park Law was born, and the government put more than ever emphasis on conservation. In 1981, the Ministry of the Interior set up the Construction and Planning Administration. During the years from 1982 to 1986, four national parks-Kenting, Yushan, Yangmingshan and Taroko National Park-were established. Although the plan for building Lanyu National Park was postponed because of some disagreement from the local residents, Shei-Pa and Kinmen National Park successfully became the fifth and the sixth national park in 1992 and 1995. Recently, to sustain the Cilan Forest in North Taiwan, a new national park is now under construction.



Characteristics of National Parks in Taiwan

Kenting National Park is the only national park embracing both land and ocean. Due to its low latitude, it is blessed with such an abundant tropical ecosystem that innumerable tourists swarm into the park for holidays all the year round. Yushan National Park, the vastest national park in Taiwan, is characteristic in Mount Yu of 3,952 meters above sea level, the highest mountain throughout East Asia. Another feature is the Batongguan Old Trail, which has been a cross-island route since the Ching Dynasty. Yangmingshan National Park, located on the northern outskirts of Taipei, features its volcano topography surrounding the Datun Mountains. Its high accessibility along with the abundance of plants and wildlife brings about great vitality to the park. Taroko National Park, adjacent to Shei-Pa, is famous for the Taroko Gorge severely carved by the Liwu Stream. Besides, the prehistorical remains and the Hehuan Cross-mountain Old Trail are among the most popular cultural sites. Shei-Pa National Park conserves a variety of plants and wildlife in Mid-North Taiwan. The gorgeous Holy Ridge connecting Syue Mountain and Dabajian Mountain, the heavy fogs surrounding Guanwu, and the endemic Formosan Landlocked Salmon in Wuling are all the very must-sees of the park. Kinmen National Park is settled for its noted warfare monuments and the featured civilian architectures. As a relay of innumerable flocks of migratory birds, Kinmen National Park is also a stand not to be missed for all bird-watchers and bird-lovers.



II Nature

■ The Location and Management Zones

Shei-Pa National Park lies in Mid-North Taiwan, through which the Syueshan Mountain Range runs. Covering 76,850 hectares, about three times the area of Taipei City, Shei-Pa National Park comprises

Wufong and Jianshih in Sinjhu

County, Taian in Miaoli County, and

Heping in Taijhong County. Its altitude

differences and climate variations help to

enrich the natural resources of the region. For

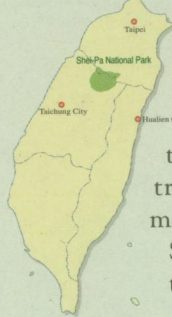
the purposes of managing these resources, the

tract of the park is divided into four types of

management zones - the Conservation Area, the

Special Scenic Area, the Recreation Area, and

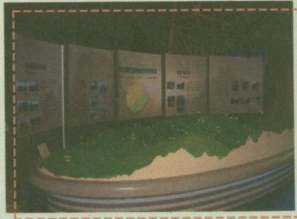
the General Protected Area.



■ The Geology and Waters

Some million years of converging movement between the Eurasian and the Philippine Plate has resulted in the loftiness of Shei-Pa National Park, which encompassed 51 mountains over

3,000 meters above sea level. The representatives among them are Syue Mountain, soaring high up to 3,886 meters, and Dabajian Mountain, 3,492 meters. The exalted territory nourishes four origins of river systems, including the Tamshui, the Toucian, the Da-an and the Dajia River. The Tamshui springs from the Takejin Creek and the Sakayachin Creek near Dabajian Mountain. The Da-an watershed spread widely to cover half the area of the park, and the Dajia River valley supplies most of Central Taiwan with its abundant hydropower. Rivers erosion, rocks twisting and mountain glaciations carved out the amazing and treacherous landscape profiles, such as the exceptional Syueshan Glacial Cirques, the tower-shaped Dabajian Rock, the severe Pintian Fold, and the arduous Bushran and Mutorop Crags. Apart from mountains and rivers, there are some other topography such as waterfalls - the Guanwu, the Jhenshan, the Taoshan Waterfall etc. - and ponds - the Shinda, the Piaodan, the Pintian Pond etc. Cui Pond, lying beneath Syue Mountain, is Taiwan's highest pond, always shining and speechless. The placid ponds, engraved in the stretching Syueshan Mountain Range, with vigorous sheets of cascades and everlasting rushes of rivers, are murmuring a long geological story.



■ The Climate

Great variances of elevation, ranging from 760 to 3,886 meters, bring about variant climates, versatile vegetations and abundant wildlife. With ascending

altitudes, the climate transforms from subtropical, warm temperate,

cold temperate to subalpine, and

likewise the forest, from broad-

leaved, broad-leaved and coniferous

mixed, to purely coniferous. Above

the timberline is the tundra, a cold

plateau where only mosses and lichens can live. Due to the

contrasting elevations of the area, seasons in the mountains are

much distinctive and characteristic, while those on the plain

resemble one another.



■ The Flora

There are over 1,100 vascular plants here, and 61 of them are rare species such as Devol's Balsamine, Taiwan Sassafras, and Kaohsiung Willow etc. Devol's Balsamine is a touch-me-not named after a professor, Charles E. DeVol, who devoted all his life to Botanic Taxonomy of Taiwan. The fragile flowers are so nearly endangered on earth that they can hardly be seen except in the Guanwu and the Syuejian area. Taiwan Sassafras, a camphor tree endemic to Taiwan, had also been endangered before because its beautiful rings are liable to invite lumbering. To our excitement, the Taiwan Sassafras Conservation Area in

Guanwu was set up, where protected are not only the trees, but also the Broad-tailed Swallowtail Butterfly, whose caterpillars live on the leaves of Taiwan Sassafras trees only.



■ The Fauna

Acquiring foods and shelters from rich vegetations, the wildlife of the park accumulates their numbers quickly. For instance, Guanwu and Wuling have become the famous points for visitors to watch birds and butterflies. Since Taiwan is isolated from other continents, a great variety of endemic species and subspecies have evolved. There are currently 26 endemic animals resting in the park. The Broad-tailed Swallowtail Butterfly, which hardly shows up under the middle sea level, has a deep dark body and a gorgeous crimson pair of tails. Because of its secrecy and beauty, it was nicknamed the "Dreamy Butterfly" by Japanese. The Formosan Landlocked Salmon, as a relic of the last ice age, had migrated to the sea to spawn its offspring, but was forced to live in the catchment area of the upper Dajia River after glacier disappeared. Called the "Treasure Fish of Taiwan", the endangered salmon is now highly protected in the Kyawan Creek and other adjoining streamlets.



III Recreation

Wuling

Wuling, surrounded by the tributaries of the Dajia River, is a valley located on the southeast of the park. The north route can be accessed through the Yilan Branch of the Central Cross-Island Highway. The south route can only be taken currently through the 14th Taiwan Provincial Road, by way of Puli, Wushe, Hehuanshan, Dayuling and Lishan. The area covers the Formosan Landlocked Salmon Conservation Area, the Wuling Recreation Area, and the General Protected Area. On the trail to the Taoshan Waterfall, tourists can take a rest to watch the precious salmon in the Cijiawan River. The best season to watch them is October and November. Along the Wuling Quadruple Trail are innumerable layers of spruces, attracting climbers and hikers to come. In winter, the East Syue Trail provides several suitable locations for snow activities because of its relative accessibility and its sufficient snowfall.



Guanwu

Guanwu stands 2,000 meters high, with an annual average temperature of 15° centigrade. It is only accessible from Jhudong, through the Cingcyuan Checkpoint and the Dalu Forest Road. The way to Guanwu is difficult because the bus does not go beyond Cingcyuan, and the Dalu Forest Road is merely 3 to 4 meters wide. The tourists usually enter by their own cars. The area covers the Taiwan Sassafra Conservation Area, the Guanwu Recreation



Area and the General Protected Area. Beneath the Guanwu Cabin is the Guanwu Waterfall Trail, which leads up to a pavilion for people to watch the cascade. Along the trail to Jhen Mountain are the best points for people to enjoy sunrise and cloudscapes. On the East Branch of the Dalu Forest Road, tourists can pass the Taiwan Sassafra and reach the trailhead to Dabajian Mountain. Between Syue Mountain and Dabajian Mountain, the Holy Ridge leads to over 3,000 meters above sea level, dominating the most gorgeous sceneries and the most immense prospects of the tract.

Syuejian

The Syuejian Recreation Area, currently under construction, embraces the upper Da-an River. Syuejian is usually accessed through the Sihmasian Forest Road, the later half of which is difficult to drive on for the present. Having a slope with its east higher than the west, Syuejian is one of few great spots to clearly watch the Holy Ridge and the ridge of Dasyue Mountain. Beikeng River Historic Trail, once the Atayal hunting path and the Japanese lumbering route, is now full of vestiges of the predecessors. Along the trail are the ruins of the police checkpoints, including Hagioka, Hyuga, Yukimi, Satihara, Hokko, Akebono, Sikayama, Yizumi, Hasibami and Chiugan. The Sihmasian Forest Road and Beikeng River Historic Trail both provide nice stands for people to behold the grandeur of the Holy Ridge, especially when it is capped with spectacular silvery snow in winter.



V Mountaineering

■ The Mountain Trails

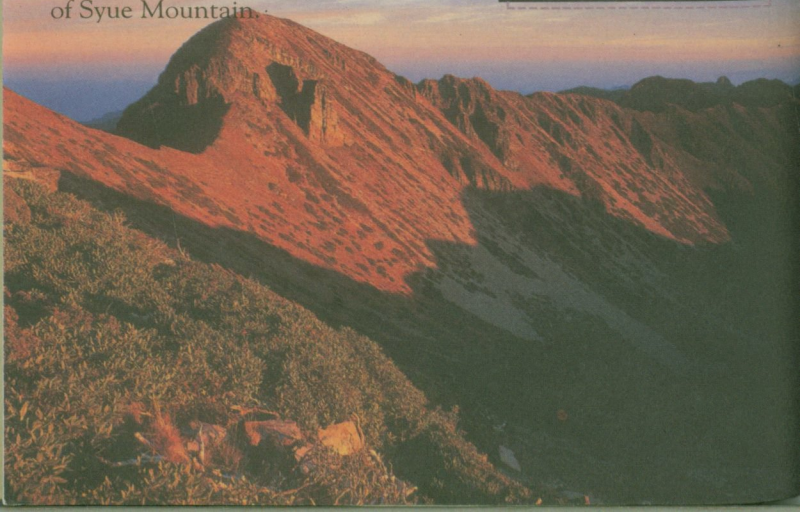
Mountaineers are longing for climbing the mountains in Shei-Pa, of which 51 reach over 3,000 meters above sea level, and 19 rank among "Taiwan Centuple Mountains". Syue Mountain, listed in "Taiwan Quintuple Mountains", ranks the second highest mountain in Taiwan, and Dabajian Mountain, listed in "Taiwan Triple Sharp Mountains" possesses the most peculiar and precipitous shape. The primary mountain trails include the Daba Peaks, the East Syue, the Wuling Quadruple, the Sikayo, the Syue-Jian, the West

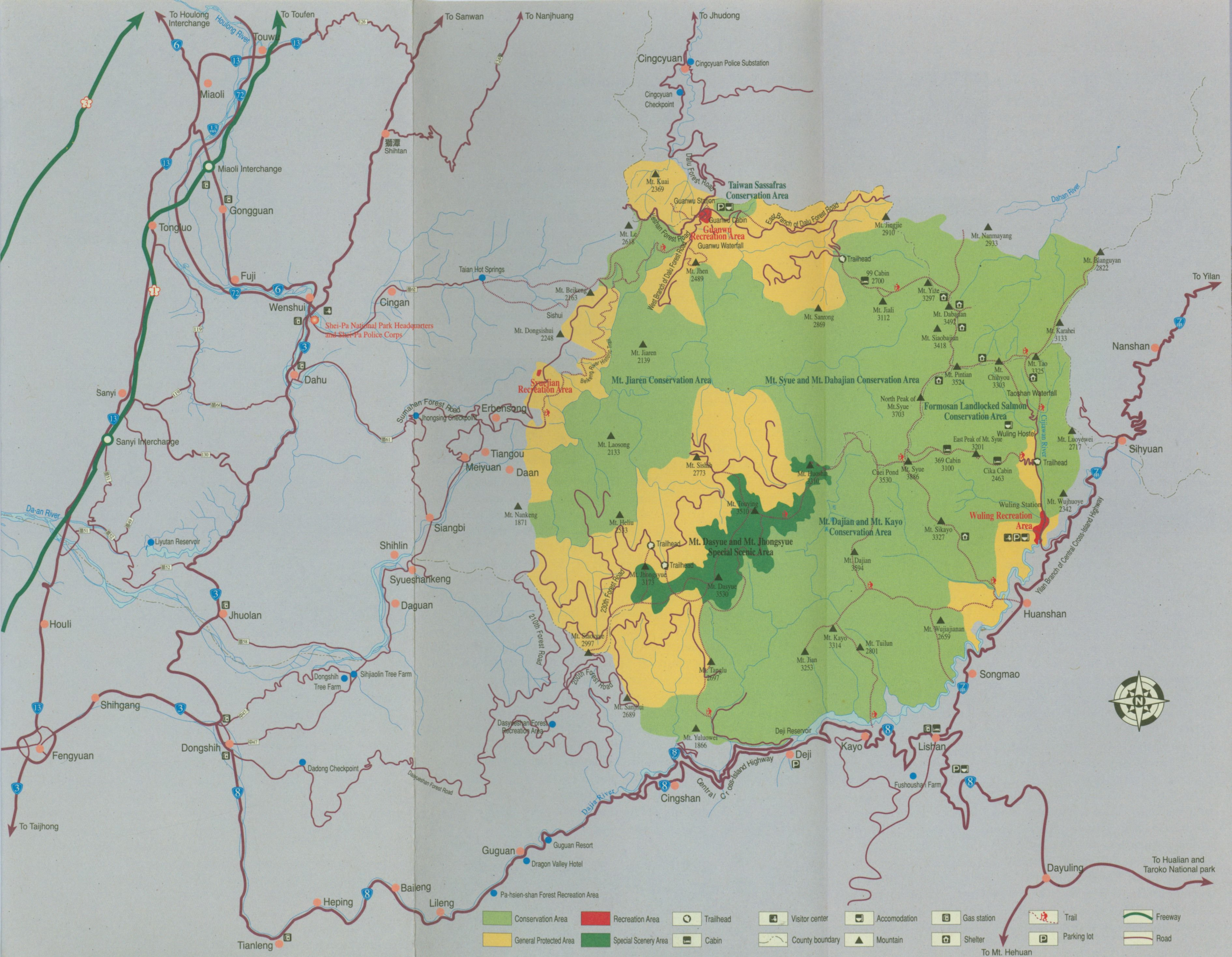
Syue and the Holy Ridge Trail. Among the above, the Holy Ridge Trail, connecting the summits of Syue Mountain and Dabajian Mountain, is the loftiest and steepest spine attracting the bravest adventurers.



■ The Mountaineering History

Most of the crossing trails in the mountains follow the paths well worn by aborigines in their hunting expeditions and wedding travels, but records were hardly left except footprints. The precise mountaineering records started during the Japanese Colonial Period. In 1908, an expedition first explored Le Mountain and its adjoining terrain; then, they gradually began to trot the trails linking Syue Mountain, Sikayo, Dabajian, Karantakun, Mutorop and Jian. Kano Tadao, a Japanese explorer and scholar, first accomplished mounting the Holy Ridge in 1931, and more importantly, he left us a series of studies concerning the anthropology, biology and geography of the area, including the first records of the glacial terrain around the main peak of Syue Mountain.





To Houlong Interchange
 To Toufen
 To Sanwan
 To Nanjhuang
 To Jhudong
 To Yilan
 To Mt. Hehuan

- | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|-----------|-----------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|---------|
| Conservation Area | Recreation Area | Trailhead | Visitor center | Accomodation | Gas station | Trail | Freeway |
| General Protected Area | Special Scenery Area | Cabin | County boundary | Mountain | Shelter | Parking lot | Road |





Wenshui Introduction

The Wenshui Visitor Center of Shei-Pa National Park lies in Dahu, Miaoli County, near the converging point of the Wenshui, the Dahu, and the Guijhulin River. Apart from winding rivers, it is also surrounded by verdant hills and green mountains. Standing on the south bank of the Wenshui River is Mount Yaopo, the figure of which resembles with that of the eagle. The word, "Yaopo", in Hakka is referred to the "eagle."

The Wenshui Visitor Center includes a Service Counter, an Ecological Exhibition Hall, a Special Exhibition Hall, and two Audio-visual Rooms. Professional interpreters will provide you consulting services, and visitors will easily acquire an overview of the national park through interpretations, multimedia, and exhibitions.

The bi-level octagon pavilion in back of the Visitor Center provides a nice stand to appreciate the ecological lake. Food, drinks, and publications are available there, and the pavillion is indeed a good occasion for passing leisure time and communing with nature.

How to reach us ?

By car: Drive your car from Miaoli Interchange to Gongguan via the 6th Taiwan Provincial Road, and reach the headquarters at the intersections between the 3rd Taiwan Provincial Road and the 62th Miaoli County Road.

By bus: Get on the Hsinchu Bus (Miaoli-Dahu Line) and get off at Shuiwei station.

Opening Time:

09:00-16:30 (Closing on Monday or the next day when Monday is a holiday)

Timetable of Multimedia: 09:30, 10:00, 11:00, 14:00, 15:00, 16:00 (Extras on holidays: 12:30, 13:00)

Ecological Films: Introduction to Shei-Pa National Park, Discovering She-Pa National Park, The Rendezvous of Mandarin Ducks, Legend from the Hidden Valley - Broad-tailed Swallowtail Butterfly. (Groups are welcomed to book the films by telephone at least one day before.)

Publisher: Young-Fa Lin

Chief Planner: Mao-Hsung Peng, Hsiang-Chien Wu

Chief Editor: Michael Lee

Editor: Hsuan-Jui Lo

Compiler and Translator: Bai Fengshuo

Designer: Li-Lan Chang

Address: No. 100, Shuiweiping, Dahu, Miaoli County, Taiwan 364, R.O.C

Tel: 886-37-996100 Fax: 886-37-996302

Website: <http://www.spnp.gov.tw>

First Edition: March 2003