

# HIKING IN TAIWAN

Popular Hiking Areas Around the Island



# Preface

Taiwan is a great place for hiking trips.

Here's why. The common image of Taiwan as a vast factory churning out Made in Taiwan goods is far off the mark. This is a subtropical land (tropical in the far south), mountainous and surrounded by sea, to which nature has been unusually generous. The terrain variety is remarkable. About two-thirds of the island is made up of mountains and high hills. What this means for those with a love of the outdoors is an almost endless selection of well-marked hiking trails, from short to long and from easy to physically demanding. And whichever you choose, the incredible, breathtaking geological variation, even within small areas, ensures that each day's experience is a world away from yesterday's.

Another key element ensuring that you will enjoy the very best of travel experiences is the country's superb public transportation network, its domestic air, high-speed rail, regular rail, metro, and bus services weaving a dense access web that blankets the island. Unlike most other places, many trailheads in even the highest mountain areas, such as Mt. Jade and Mt. Hehuan, can be readily reached by bus. (Check out the inexpensive hop-on, hop-off Taiwan Tourist Shuttle service at [www.taiwantrip.com.tw](http://www.taiwantrip.com.tw)).

In this booklet we introduce hiking in different areas around Taiwan, from mountains close to the cities to peaks in the Central Mountain Range. The articles were originally published in the Taiwan Tourism Bureau's English publication *Travel in Taiwan*. Enjoy!

Most articles in this booklet were originally published in the bimonthly English magazine *Travel in Taiwan*.  
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Hiking in Taiwan

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# Introduction

The Taiwan Tourism Bureau has declared 2020 the “Taiwan Year of Mountain Tourism,” and has launched a major campaign to brand the island as an international mountaineering tourism destination. With its focus on sustainable mountain tourism, a series of mountain-trail routes has been specially designed highlighting Taiwan’s unique ecological and cultural features.

The defining geological characteristic of the island of Taiwan is its towering mountain ranges, caused by the timeless wrestling of two tectonic plates. Over 250 peaks soar past 3,000 meters. And with many peaks of lesser height located right on city doorsteps, looking down into urban cores, a great many rewarding easy and moderate hikes are available just a short jaunt away from city centers, making for premium half-day and full-day excursions that will have you back in the city in the evening to enjoy its nightlife – or, of course, still up in the hills, savoring the international-standard hotels, inns, B&Bs, and hot-spring spas.

You will be happy to know that you also have many choices of easy and moderate hikes even up among the higher peaks. For example, there is a daily bus run from Taichung’s Fengyuan Railway Station to the trailheads along a branch of the Central Cross-Island Highway (Route 14a), including the pathways taking you to Mt. Hehuan’s (Hehuanshan) various peaks (Main Peak 3,417m).

Each article is designed for you to take on your outing as a practical guide. In each we explain how to get to your destination, and then describe in detail recommended trail(s) and provide relevant tips. We also present other interesting tourist attractions nearby. Let’s have a look at a selection of the wonders-filled trails we’ll be taking you out on:

We head up **Mt. Qixing** (Seven Stars Mountain), the highest mountain in Yangmingshan National Park. The park, on Taipei’s north side between the city center and the north coast, is a magical place of forest, grasslands, trails, hot springs, and sulfurous fumarole activity that covers the higher reaches of the Yangmingshan massif, a cluster of extinct volcanoes.

The summits of **Mt. Hehuan** are the most accessible 3,000-meter peaks in Taiwan. Virtually at eye level and right beside a branch of the Central Cross-Island Highway, the views from roadside at Wuling, Taiwan’s highest paved-road point at 3,275m, are jaw-dropping.

The hikes to Taiwan’s two highest peaks, **Mt. Jade** – which has a worldwide reputation – and Mt. Xue (Snow Mountain), are also two of its most popular. This is not only because of their lofty positions on the Taiwan mountain-height chart; the ascents also happen to be adventures that are uniquely scenic and interesting. Mt. Jade, an 11-peak massif, is located in southern Taiwan’s Chiayi County near another renowned Taiwan hiking destination, the Alishan National Scenic Area. The standard hike to the Mt. Snow Main Peak is from Wuling Farm, one of Taiwan’s most popular high-mountain recreational farms, located close to the fruit-growing village of Lishan in rural Taichung City.

To ensure your peace of mind, wherever you choose to go the Taiwan Tourism Bureau will be at your side, whenever you need it, through its 24-Hour Toll-Free Travel Information Hotline (0800-011-765). Trained English-speaking professionals will be standing by with any needed information or other assistance. As well, be sure to explore the Taiwan Tourism Bureau website, at [www.taiwan.net.tw](http://www.taiwan.net.tw), a rich source of information on a wide range of travel-related topics. And read Travel in Taiwan online at <https://issuu.com/travelintaiwan> for many more helpful articles on hiking and other useful subjects.

# Hiking Trails Around Taiwan



# Seven Stars Mountain

## Hiking up to Taipei's Highest Peak

Text: Richard Saunders

Photos: Vision

When looking north while in central Taipei, from many vantage points you will see towering mountains in the distance. These mountains are all within Yangmingshan National Park, a natural and scenic wonderland on the city's north edge. The peak of the highest of these mountains, Mt. Qixing (Seven Stars Mountain), can be reached on a slightly demanding, but not too difficult, hike.

Over twenty volcanoes, a similar number of steaming hot-spring sources, and large areas of impenetrable wilderness covered in tall grass or forests of bamboo and many tree species make **Yangmingshan National Park** (陽明山國家公園; [www.ymsnp.gov.tw](http://www.ymsnp.gov.tw)) remarkable by any standards. Most remarkable of all, though, is that its stunning volcanic mountains lie just outside the urban core of Taipei City, within striking distance from the center of the metropolis.

The Yangmingshan massif (the national park takes up its higher elevations), like the rest of Taiwan, owes its existence to the collision of the Philippine oceanic plate and the Eurasian continental plate, the former uplifting the latter, an ongoing process that has created the land

that is now Taiwan. About 2.5 million years ago a series of huge volcanic eruptions commenced, covering the base sedimentary rock and creating the **Datun Volcanic Group** (大屯火山群) at the island's north end over the next half-million years or so. Today the volcanoes are dormant, and apart from the telltale cone-like shape of several peaks in the range, the main clue to the volcanic nature of these hills is their steaming fumaroles and many hot-spring sources.

Yangmingshan National Park covers an area of over 11,000 hectares, and has a rich variety of landscapes, so there's a lot to explore. The plethora of trails can keep both serious hikers and casual walkers busy for many weekends.



Mt. Qixing

A hike to the highest point in the volcanic group, **Mt. Qixing** (七星山; 1,120 meters), is a great introduction to the national park, since most of the attractions that make the place so special can be seen here – the remains of a volcanic crater, steaming fumaroles, hot-spring sources and pools, and rich flora and fauna. It's a hike of an hour or two to the top (depending on the trail chosen and your fitness), along clear, stone-surfaced trails, and although steep in places the walk lies within the reach of most walkers. Certainly the view from the top (weather permitting) is well worth the effort: an incredible 360-degree panorama over the national park, the sea beyond, and (to the south) the Taipei Basin. In really clear weather the Central Mountain Range can even be seen, and in winter the snow-capped, 3,000-meter-plus heights of this range are a conspicuous landmark on the horizon.

The name Qixing ("seven stars") comes from the way the mountain's seven knobby little summits surround a volcanic crater, which are said to be arranged in the form of the seven stars of the Big Dipper. The most popular trail up the mountain crosses two of these summits, the main and east peaks; among the other summits is a mysterious little pyramid-shaped peak which was once claimed to be a prehistoric man-made structure.

Fit and strapping locals appear to favor the toughest route, which starts beside the Yangmingshan National Park Visitor Center on the main Yangmingshan-traversing highway and

involves 600 meters of steep ascent. First-timers, however, might prefer the easier and also more scenic climb from the impressive fumaroles of **Xiaoyoukeng** (小油坑) on the mountain's northern side, with a descent along the eastern face of the mountain, where at the bottom the hot springs of **Lengshuikeng** (冷水坑) await your tired feet.

This trail starts at the Xiaoyoukeng car park, and before starting the long haul to the top a quick detour along a short trail to the edge of the huge, steaming gash in the side of Mt. Qixing is de rigueur. Sulfur-rich steam escaping to the surface through cracks has eaten away at the rock here and created a huge, crumbling gash in the mountainside.

Leaving the car park, the trail to the summit of Mt. Qixing immediately dives into the arrow bamboo and silvergrass that covers the exposed northern face of the mountain, and climbs up around the edge of Xiaoyoukeng. Near the top of the gash the trail draws close to the brink for a spell, then strikes left up a grassy valley, passing several much smaller steaming fumaroles. This part of the hike is stunning in November and December, when the sea of silvergrass here bursts into bloom. The flowers of the grass are normally white, but the sulfur in both the air and soil here turns the fluffy plumes a very beautiful shade of salmon pink.

The path continues upwards, passing pretty little **Seven Stars Pond** (七星池), located in a deep depression on the left. A little further on, take a right at a junction to a wooden viewing platform and enjoy a breather while absorbing the magnificent view. After a final short, steep climb, the path emerges onto the summit ridge, crosses a hollow filled with arrow bamboo, and zigzags up to the main and east peaks of Mt. Qixing.



Xiaoyoukeng

Allow plenty of time to gape at the incredible views from both summits before tackling the descent, which drops steeply off the east peak, with magnificent views towards the grassy heights of **Qingtiangang** (擎天崗) and beyond. As the trail drops lower you may just be able to make out a small pond at the foot of the mountain below. **Milk Pond** (牛奶湖), beside the Lengshuikeng car park, owes its striking white appearance to particles of sulfur suspended in the water. Another body of water, shallow **Menghuan Pond** (夢幻湖; Dream Pond), a short detour to the left of the trail shortly before it reaches **Lengshuikeng** (冷水坑), is a secluded little spot and a very important one, as it's the only place in the world where a rare form of water plant, the Taiwan isoetes, is known to grow.

From the pond it's just a short walk down to the big car park at Lengshuikeng. There's a visitor center here, with a shop selling cold and hot drinks and simple snacks. You can also pay a visit to the warm waters of Lengshuikeng's hot springs, just a couple of minutes' walk up the road to the left. The water spurts out of the ground at a blissful 40 degrees Centigrade into an outdoor foot-bathing trough that's perfect for soothing achy feet. Even better, bring a towel and plunge into the deeper pools in the huts just behind: the perfect way to end any hike!



Menghuan Pond



Milk Pond



Qingtiangang



Lengshuikeng

#### Getting There

Getting to Yangmingshan and the trailheads for Mt. Qixing is quick and easy from central Taipei City. Simply take either bus R5 (from MRT Jiantan Station) or bus 260 (from Taipei Main Station) to the Yangmingshan terminus, and change there to minibus 108, which travels along a long loop around the center of the national park, encircling Mt. Qixing and passing the trailheads of all three routes to the summit – from the national park visitor center, Xiaoyoukeng, and Lengshuikeng.

#### Information

For more information about Mt. Qixing, visit the Yangmingshan National Park website ([www.ymsnp.gov.tw](http://www.ymsnp.gov.tw)).



# Mt. Guanyin

## Walking up Goddess of Mercy Mountain

Text: Richard Saunders

Photos: Vision

Mt. Guanyin

Mt. Guanyin is one of the scenic highlights you'll see on the way to the port town of Tamsui from central Taipei. Situated on the opposite side of the Tamsui River, the mountain resembles Guanyin, the Goddess of Mercy, lying down. There are numerous trails on the mountain, ranging in difficulty from easy-but-steep to steep-and-challenging. The views from the peaks are magnificent, and there is also a very special tiny temple in a narrow cave to be explored.

Rising above the Tamsui River estuary north of Taipei City, the shapely profile of **Mt. Guanyin** ( 觀音山 ) is an eye-catching sight from the riverside promenade in Tamsui, which sits on the east bank of the river. Viewed from the east-bank Guandu ( 關渡 ) area, several kilometers upstream, it's even more striking. From this angle its various peaks, silhouetted against the sky, form a figure reminiscent of the reclining Guanyin, the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy – hence the name.

Despite its associations with calm Buddhism, Mt. Guanyin is a mountain born of fire. It's an ancient volcano, created, like the Datun Mountain Range along Taiwan's north coast east of the town of Tamsui ( 淡水 ), as a result of the eruptions of a magma chamber, which still lies underneath the mountains of Yangmingshan National Park ( 陽明

山國家公園 ). The first eruptions, about 2.5 million years ago, created the oldest mountains of the Datun range; Mt. Guanyin was created during a later series of eruptions that began about 800,000 years ago, around the same time that Mt. Qixing ( 七星山 ; the highest peak in Yangmingshan ) was created. Over the following millennia the mountain has eroded, and the crater has worn down into the present shapely series of peaks that make Mt. Guanyin one of the most instantly recognizable natural features in the Taipei area.

That fine profile is one of the main reasons why Mt. Guanyin is such a popular hiking spot in the Taipei area. There are several ways to the top of the highest of its various summits, known as **Yinghan** ( “Tough Man” ) Peak ( 硬漢嶺 ) because the Japanese military used the trail for fitness training during the 1895~1945 Japanese era.

The most popular route is the relatively easy one from the southwest, beginning at **Lingyun Zen Temple** ( 凌雲禪寺 ), which sits in a beautiful spot, backed by the sheer cliff face of an outlying peak. Below lies the much smaller **Lingyun Temple** ( 凌雲寺 ), a pretty and very photogenic place of worship.

After arriving at Lingyun Temple bus stop, walk uphill, following the signs, to the Lingyun Zen Temple complex. After exploring the temple and enjoying the magnificent view, walk past the front of the main prayer hall and through the temple grounds and car park, to reach the adjoining road. The signposted, stepped trail that leaves the road here, on the right, is the path to Mt. Guanyin's highest summit.

Winding up the wooded hillside, the first section of the climb is quite steep, so proceed slowly. Turn right at a “T” junction reached after about half an hour. From here the gradient becomes a bit more gradual as the trail gains the main ridgeline and follows its rolling curves, and there are views at intervals through the trees over the Taipei Basin and ahead to Yinghan Peak.

After about 20 minutes of hiking from the “T” junction, you come upon a trail crossroads just below the summit. Turn right up the stone steps and walk for a couple of minutes to reach the main Mt. Guanyin summit (616m). The view from the peak is tremendous, and you can see Yangmingshan on the opposite site, the whole of Taipei City laid out far in the distance to the right, and Tamsui and the mouth of the Tamsui River to the left.

To descend the mountain, you have several choices. One is to retrace your steps to the crossroads just below the summit, and then to follow the stepped trail on the right, which descends the eastern side of the mountain. After meeting a narrow lane after about 30 minutes walking,

turn left and follow the lane downhill through a cemetery and orange orchards until you reach the highway (No. 15) that follows the west bank of the Tamsui River.

Cross the busy highway with care, and walk to the bicycle path that runs parallel and right beside the river. Turn left and follow the path (north) for about 20 minutes, to the **Bali Ferry Pier** (八里渡船頭). You can take the little ferry across the river to Tamsui. There are services every 15 minutes or so. Don't forget to look back at the towering bulk of Mt. Guanyin while crossing the river, or, even better, spend an hour or two exploring the promenade at Bali Left Bank before boarding the ferry in time to see the famous Tamsui sunset, which looks especially great from the deck of the boat. The ferry docks right in the heart of old Tamsui, 10 minutes from MRT Tamsui Station.

If you don't want to cross the river to Tamsui you can take bus R22 (Red 22) from the ferryboat dock bus stop on highway 15 and get off at MRT Guandu Station. Explore the magnificent nearby Guandu Temple (關渡宮) first, then take the metro back to central Taipei.



Yinghan Peak



Guanyin statue



Tamsui

Another option for getting back down from Yinghan Peak is to retrace the route to Lingyun Zen Temple and then descend the rest of the way via **Yingzai Peak** (鷹仔尖) and the narrow rocky ravine called **Chaoyin** ("Tidal Sound") **Cave** (潮音洞). The trail is quite steep in parts, with fixed ropes, but is not too hard to manage; however, be careful during wet weather. At the foot of Yingzai Peak the trail joins

a quiet lane. Follow this lane downhill for five minutes, and pass a small shrine beside the road to the right.

About 50 meters after the shrine, turn right down a concrete path, which winds down the steep wooded hillside to the mouth of a narrow crack in the rock face: the entrance to Chaoyin Cave (lit. "Tidal Sound Cave"). Entering the narrow, dark cleft, the walls of which close in on either side blocking out the sky, a path follows a little stream for a short distance until it widens into a "chamber" in which a small roofed shrine is housed. The stream tumbles over a little waterfall into a pool at the far end of the chamber before flowing under the metal floor of the shrine; the sound of rushing water provides one explanation for the unusual name.

Follow the narrow road that connects Chaoyin Cave with the outside world, downhill, to a junction. Keep left, continuing downhill, crossing a stream along the way. At another junction beside a pond, take the road on the right. In about 700 meters it joins a larger road, right next to Mt. Guanyin bus stop. From here you can take bus O20 (Orange 20) to MRT Luzhou Station, and then ride the metro to central Taipei.



Resting on the way up to Yinghan Peak



View from Yinghan Peak

#### Getting There

To get to the main trailhead on Mt. Guanyin, take the MRT Zhonghe-Xinlu Line (Orange) to its northern terminus, Luzhou Station. Leave the station by Exit 1 and take bus O20 (Orange 20), which runs every 20-30 minutes, from the bus stop outside the station. Get off at Lingyun Temple; the ride takes about 30 minutes.

#### Information

For more information about Mt. Guanyin, visit the North Coast and Guanyinshan National Scenic Area website ([www.northguan-nsa.gov.tw](http://www.northguan-nsa.gov.tw)). Before starting your hike, you might also want to visit the Mt. Guanyin Visitor Center, about a 15-minute walk up the road from the Lingyun Zen Temple trailhead, where you can find lot of information about the area.

# Taipingshan

## Splendid Mountains and Forests

Text: Rick Charette

Photos: Aska Chi

Situated in the southern part of Yilan County, Taipingshan is one of Taiwan's three major national forest recreation areas. The area is known for its deep forests with precious trees, including Taiwan cypress, Taiwan hemlock, and Japanese cypress, making it an excellent location for invigorating hikes.

The long road up into the magnificent, sprawling, **Taipingshan National Forest Recreation Area** (太平山國家森林遊樂區), marked "Mount Taiping," starts south of the Qilan Forest Recreation Area (棲蘭森林遊樂區) off Provincial Highway 7a. After a short distance you'll see a large roadside display of logging-railway equipment and facilities, including a small wood-built transshipment station. Through the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Taipingshan was one of Taiwan's three largest logging areas; the Japanese built narrow-gauge lines throughout the region to facilitate extraction.

The drive up to **Taipingshan Villa** (太平山莊), the center of the forest recreation area, takes about an hour. On the way, you will first come to the toll station. Located just above the toll station are the **Jiuzhize (Renze) Hot Springs** (鳩之澤溫泉). There are both private and public baths, and the setting is striking: cliffs behind, rugged river before, with great bursts of sulfurous steam rising from the Earth's depths.

Further up the road you'll come to the visitor center, which has info boards and multimedia displays and provides maps of hiking trails in the Taipingshan area. About 20 minutes beyond this is the roadside **Jianqing Historic Trail** (見晴懷古步道) trailhead, which is a misty mountainside-hugging pathway of lyrical beauty lifted straight from a poem that meanders over old sections of Japanese-built tracks and past creaky moss-covered trestles.

Next, you'll arrive at the **Taipingshan Villa area**, which is pierced through its center by a long, wide staircase that lifts you up to what was originally a Shinto shrine. Directly behind is the short sacred-tree Primeval Forest Trail. From Taipingshan Villa, the road through the forest recreation area continues, now very narrow in sections, for about 16km to the exquisite **Cuifeng Lake** (翠峰湖), Taiwan's largest alpine lake. There, the premium-quality 3.7km **Cuifeng Lake Circle Trail** (翠峰湖環山步道) takes you high above and around the barrier lake, to lookouts and past more intriguing logging-era relics.



Taipingshan

Forest near the Bong-Bong Train's Maoxing Station

### Getting There

Once a day there is a Kuo-Kuang Motor Transport ([www.kingbus.com.tw](http://www.kingbus.com.tw)) bus between Yilan City and Taipingshan (No. 1750; 8:30am from Yilan; 3:30pm from Taipingshan; NT\$226). The bus also stops at the Qilan Forest Recreation Area.

### Information

For more information about Taipingshan, visit the Taipingshan National Forest Recreation Area website ([tps.forest.gov.tw](http://tps.forest.gov.tw)).



Forest near Maoxing Station



Bong-Bong Train



Scenery close to Taipingshan Villa

# Wuling Farm

## Gateway to Snow Mountain

Text: Rick Charette

Photos: Chen Cheng-Kuo, Vision

On the way to the Mt. Xue trailhead

After a long drive from the Yilan Plain through the magisterially meandering Lanyang River (蘭陽溪) valley, you reach the Siyuan Pass (思源啞口). From the lookout here you can enjoy a fine eagle's-eye view of vision back down through the serpentine valley.

Then, the scenery changes instantly. No more distant-view, wide-open valley sliding quickly down to the lowlands. You're in alpine country now, surrounded by coniferous trees at the headwaters of the Dajia River (大甲溪), which flows west through the mountains, on to the plains, and into the Taiwan Strait. Here, the river is little more than marsh in a shallow, narrow upland vale, struggling to gather up a stream.

Ahead, the Dajia slices ever deeper into the rock of the valley, still no wider, like a jeweler's knife on ultra-geo-slow, the highway moving up ever higher to hug the side. You meet the Wuling Farm (武陵農場) entrance road, and down into the valley you run, to the bottom, where suddenly a wide side valley pops open at a T-intersection, carved by the symphonic crystal-clear Qijawan River (七家灣溪). This is the farm's home, a true hidden-away Shangri-La setting.

Wuling Farm was settled by retired servicemen in 1963, with a focus on fruit-growing. These men had come from mainland China in the great late 1940s Nationalist exodus to Taiwan. The government set up this and other high-mountain veterans' farms along the Central Cross-Island Highway, built 1956~1960 by many of these same servicemen, to help the decommissioned vets earn a living.

These days, only a few show orchards still exist, and most of the cultivation that still goes on is dedicated to tea. A single easy-grade road traverses the farm valley, with a side road leading up to the alpine-meadow campground and beyond up past tea orchards to the **Mt. Xue Trailhead Service Station** (雪山登山口服務站), starting point of the high-mountain hiking trail leading to the peaks of Mt. Xue (雪山; Snow Mountain).

There are numerous pleasant short walking trails branching off from the main road, and you can also rent bicycles beside the farm's visitor center. Note that during the fabulous spring cherry-blossom season there can be comparatively heavy traffic into the recreational farm, though visitor numbers are controlled.

Beyond the spirit-lifting panoramic scenery, the farm's two highlights are the landlocked salmon and **Taoshan Waterfall Hiking Trail** (桃山瀑布步道). The critically endangered sub-species, one of the world's rarest fish, was trapped in the Dajia River system's upper reaches during the last Ice Age. Learn about preservation efforts at the **Taiwan Salmon Eco Center** (台灣櫻花鉤吻鮭生態中心), and view the fish au naturel at the roadside/riverside **Fish-watching Lookout** (觀魚台). The paved, pine tree-shaded 4.3km forest walk, mildly strenuous, ends with a grand view of the 50m-high falls, cascading down like twisting white ribbons of silk. Give yourself 3 hours (return).



Wuling Farm campsite



Cabbage field



Taoshan Waterfall

### Getting There

Kuo-Kuang Motor Transport ([www.kingbus.com.tw](http://www.kingbus.com.tw)) operates the daily-service No. 1751 between Yilan City (Yilan Bus Transfer Station) and Wuling Farm.

### Information

For more information, visit the Wuling Farm website ([www2.wuling-farm.com.tw](http://www2.wuling-farm.com.tw)).

# Snow Mountain

A Winter Hike on One of Taiwan's Most Beautiful Mountains

Hiking up Snow Mountain

Text: Stuart Dawson Photos: Ray Chang

Taiwan's second-highest peak, Mt. Xue (Snow Mountain; 雪山; 3,886m), is often overlooked by Westerners who come to the island for hiking. Mt. Jade (玉山), being the tallest, is the one that everyone wants to bag, but for me, Snow Mountain is a far more interesting and scenic hike.

My favorite time to be up Snow Mountain is during the winter. It's a relatively safe hike to do when there's snow on the ground, and the scenery is stunning. Arriving at the trailhead late on a Friday evening in January, the temperature difference between Taipei and this mountainous area, not far from **Wuling Farm** (武陵農場) off Provincial Highway 7a, was immediately apparent. Everyone jumped out of the vans and started digging through backpacks to find fleeces and gloves. As the group tried to stay warm, we handed out the communal equipment and the crampons we'd need to make it to the top in icy conditions.

Once everyone was ready, we headed up to the **Qika Cabin** (七卡山莊), where we spent the night. It's an easy hour-long walk to the cabin, which is very basic. The second day involved a slow walk up to the **369 Cabin** (三六九

山莊). It typically takes five hours, so we had plenty of time for everyone to get to know each other over coffee and bagels for breakfast at the Qika Cabin. By the time we left, some clouds had rolled in, and I was beginning to worry that we wouldn't get to see anything that day. But as we ate lunch on **Snow Mountain's East Peak** (3,201m), about half-way between the two cabins, they began to part and we caught teasing glimpses of the surrounding valleys.

With the sun now shining through the cloud cover, everyone seemed invigorated once more, and we made it to the 369 Cabin by mid-afternoon. Our porter and cook, Shi-Gua, had arrived earlier in the afternoon and had already prepared an enormous bowl of ginger tea for us. He then spent the rest of the afternoon preparing a delicious and hearty feast for dinner. Once the sun set, it quickly got very cold on the side of the mountain, and with us looking at a very early start the next day, everyone was tucked up in their sleeping bags by 6pm.

When we got up, Shi-Gua was already preparing breakfast for the group. We huddled up in the kitchen and ate together. Then, after a short safety briefing, we headed up toward what is called the **Black Forest** (黑森林).



High-mountain vegetation

It's very easy for hikers to get lost in the forest in the early morning before sunrise and after heavy snowfall, and we therefore walked slowly, stopping frequently to keep the group together. As we cleared the forest, the rocky path gave way to thick, hard ice, and we paused for a moment to put on our crampons.

The last section of the hike involves walking up one side of a glacial cirque before finally reaching the main peak. Climbing up the cirque in icy conditions is always very dangerous. The trail itself isn't that steep, but the drop to the right is, and hiking without crampons would be very risky. We slowly and carefully made our way up.

Around 400m before the top, a stunning orange and red glow appeared over the horizon behind us. It was almost sunrise, and we began the final push to make it up in time to see the sun come up over the sea of clouds.

Everyone made it with time to spare, and we were treated to amazing views of the Central and Snow Mountain ranges. It was freezing on the top, literally – our drinking water and chocolate snacks had all frozen! But that didn't matter, as we had achieved our goal and felt we were standing on top of the world.

#### Getting There

Kuo-Kuang Motor Transport ([www.kingbus.com.tw](http://www.kingbus.com.tw)) operates the daily-service No. 1751 between Yilan City (Yilan Bus Transfer Station) and Wuling Farm.

#### Information

For more information about Snow Mountain, visit the Shei-Pa National Park website ([www.spnp.gov.tw](http://www.spnp.gov.tw)).

# Nenggao Historic Trail

## A Wonderful Hike Deep into the Mountains

Text: Stuart Dawson Photos: Ray Chang

The Nenggao Historic Trail was first used by indigenous tribes for travel and trade. As the Japanese began to expand their influence in Taiwan during the 1895~1945 colonial era, it was expanded and garrisoned. Finally, in the 1950s, the route was used by the Taiwan Power Company during its building of east-west transmission lines. The trail has today been given over to hikers, and makes for a great 2~3-day outing.

Like most hikers, we began our 2-day trip on the Wushe (霧社) side of the trail in Nantou County. We spent the night before the hike in a small B&B in Wushe village. From there it's about a 1-hour drive to the trailhead, up a rough and winding road, passing the small hot-spring town of **Lushan** (廬山). We had to get up early to ensure we had enough time to make it to the cabin where we would stay before dark fell.

The beginning of the trail is deceptively steep, and even with the higher altitude giving us a cooler temperature, everyone began to strip off layers within minutes of starting the hike. After a short climb, however, the trail levels off, making it much easier.

One of the great things about the **Nenggao Historic Trail** (能高古道) is the abundance of good signage. There are notice boards all along the route, offering information about the local flora and fauna, and it's worth taking a moment to stop and read each one.

After a few kilometers we arrived at the first cabin, called the **Yunhai Line Station** (雲海保線所; 4.9km from trailhead; 2,360m above sea level). The station was built during the 1895-1945 colonial era by the Japanese, and there's a small garden area outside with a number of cherry-blossom trees, making it a pleasant place to stop for lunch.

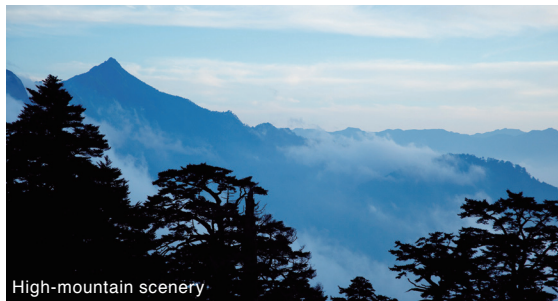


Shortly after heading out from the cabin, we reached the first and largest landslide area on the trail. The rock in this area is weak schist, susceptible to falls. This particular spot is exceptionally long, some 1,200m, and is covered in loose scree. When we crossed it we were in the clouds and, not being able to see the bottom or the top, an eerie feeling pervaded one and all. Quite a thrill.

The rest of the walk to the second cabin, **Tianchi Cabin** (天池山莊 ; 13km; 2,860m), was very enjoyable. It's relatively easy going, and there is wonderful scenery. We crossed creaking (but safe) suspension bridges, and passed by the spectacular **Three Level Waterfall** (三疊瀑布), before finally arriving at the cabin.



Hiking up a grassy mountain slope



High-mountain scenery



Suspension bridge on the trail

We camped outside the Tianchi Cabin. It's an impressive three-story structure that offers hikers dining facilities as well as a place to shelter from the weather. That evening, the clouds that had followed us all day Saturday began to disappear, and by the time our alarms went off at 2:30am on Sunday morning, the skies had cleared and we were entertained with countless stars. We set off after a quick breakfast, heading towards **Mt. Qilai South Peak** (奇萊主山南峰 ; 17km, 3,358m).

Hikers have to move pretty fast to cover the 4km from cabin to peak in time for the sunrise. On the way we passed by a number of deer that had ventured out from night cover to forage. After a couple of hours, we reached the peak just in time for the sunrise over Taiwan's high soaring mountains, reveling in its glory.

From Qilai's south peak, you have the option to head north and bag several of Mt. Qilai's other peaks, including the main peak (3,560m), and then end your trip at Mt. Hehuan's Songxue Lodge (松雪樓). Another option is to hike to Mt. Nenggao (能高山, 3,262m), south of Tianchi Cabin, or follow the Nenggao Historic Trail further east to reach Prov. Hwy 14 on the Hualien County side.

#### Getting There

Take Nantou Bus ([www.ntbus.com.tw](http://www.ntbus.com.tw)) bus no. 6659, 6658, or 6664 from Puli to Wushe/Lushan (note: only four buses a day to Lushan).





# Qingjing Farm

## Alpine Pastures in Central Taiwan

Text: Rick Charette  
Photos: Chen Cheng-Kuo

Qingjing Farm sheep show

Qingjing Farm bills itself as “Little Switzerland.” The reasons are clear. The major attraction is the **Green Green Grassland** ( 青青草原 ) where sheep munch on rolling mountaintop pastureland. All about are tall-peak alpine panoramas. The sheep and the skills needed to tend them were introduced decades back by government-hired Australian ranchers. You can buy feed to give the animals, and there are regular sheep-shearing and sheep-dog shows.

A highlight when we visited the farm was the horse-acrobatics show put on by a very talented, colorfully dressed troupe from Mongolia. Most amazing of many amazing feats was one rider shooting arrows at a target with deadly accuracy, sometimes turned to face backwards, as he galloped headlong in circles. Onlookers nearest the target leaned away instinctively, but he never came close to missing. Seeing the demonstration, I could well imagine the power of the attacks in days of yore by his ancestors, on horseback and in the hundreds and thousands.



Visitors can get up close to the sheep

The second big draw at the farm is the **Small Swiss Garden** ( 小瑞士花園 ), a landscaped area tucked away amidst tall coniferous trees which overflows with bright alpine flowers and is dotted with small replicas of windmills and other European touches. Ducks, geese, and turtles swim in the large pond in the middle. There are periodic water-fountain displays, and a romantic – and popular – water-and-light show at night.

The farm's administrators have set up a number of short and easy trails that let you experience the facility from different angles. On this day we tackled three: the **499 Steps Trail** ( 步步高昇步道 ), 1,800 meters long, featuring the 499 steps of a long, attractive tree-shaded wooden staircase stretched along some of the farm's cash-crop orchards; the **Cryptomeria Trail** ( 柳杉步道 ), 750 meters, takes you through a mature, pleasantly fragrant stand of the evergreens planted long ago by the Japanese and around the Small Swiss Garden; the **Tea Garden Trail** ( 茶園步道 ), 800 meters, takes you into the slope-hugging tea fields behind the Qingjing Guest House.

### Qingjing Farm ( 清境農場 )

Add: No. 170, Renhe Rd., Datong Village, Ren'ai Township, Nantou County ( 南投縣仁愛鄉大同村仁和路 170 號 )

Tel: (049) 280-2748

Website: [www.cingjing.gov.tw](http://www.cingjing.gov.tw)

### Getting There

Take Nantou Bus ( [www.ntbus.com.tw](http://www.ntbus.com.tw) ) bus no. 6659, 6658, or 6664 from Puli to Wushe/Lushan (note: only four buses a day to Lushan).

# Jade Mountain

## A Must-Hike for Any Mountaineer Visiting Taiwan

Text: Stuart Dawson   Photos: Ray Chang

At 3,952 meters, Yushan (Jade Mountain) is Taiwan's tallest peak, and one of the most prominent peaks in the world. On a clear day the views offered are quite exceptional. The star of the Yushan Mountain Range, Yushan is located in southern Taiwan's Chiayi County, close to the well-known Alishan National Scenic Area.

Typically, Yushan (玉山) is climbed in two days, with hikers spending one night in the Paiyun Lodge (排雲山莊; 8.5km from the trail entrance), getting up in the very early morning next day, making the ascent to Yushan Main Peak (2.4km from the lodge) to see the sunrise, and then hiking all the way back to the trail entrance.

For most people, the Yushan hiking adventure will entail a stay at the Dongpu Hostel (東埔山莊) – and that's just what I did when I decided to take on the one-day climb – instead of the easier two-day climb – with friends one hot summer month. The name of the hostel can be misleading, as people often assume it's in the hot-spring village of Dongpu, a two-hour drive away. It is in fact located at Tataka (塔塔加), a hamlet close to the Yushan trailhead. It's a very basic hostel, with a grubby kitchen and showers, but at an altitude of around 2,500m it's the perfect place to get some sleep and acclimate before beginning the hike.

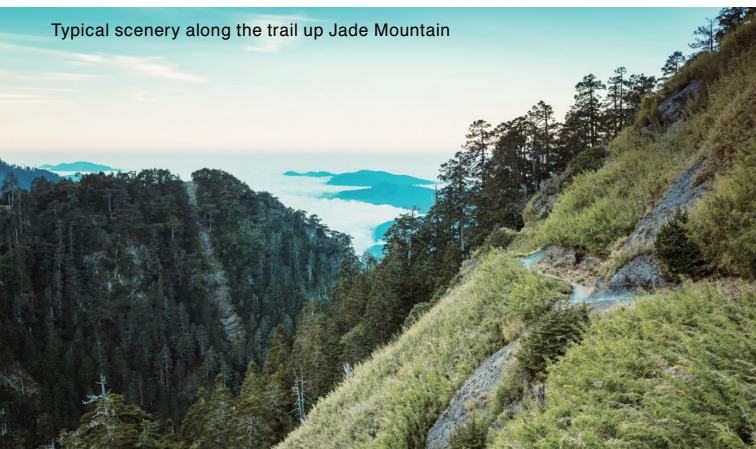




Mountains in the Yushan National Park

The Yushan National Park (玉山國家公園; [www.ysnp.gov.tw](http://www.ysnp.gov.tw)) authorities stipulate that hikers need to reach the Paiyun Lodge before 10am when doing the single-day ascent, and so we hit the trail before sunrise at 4am. It was chilly compared to the heat of Taipei, but we soon warmed up as we headed up the road to the trailhead proper.

By the time we reached the trailhead, the sun was already on its way up, revealing a cloudless sky. We stopped for a moment, gratefully soaking up its rays before heading along the trail. The single-day ascent is a challenging 12-hour hike, but it does have some advantages, one of which is not having to carry a heavy backpack. Without the weight, we made great progress. We reached the Paiyun Lodge in no time, and stopped for a quick rest.



Typical scenery along the trail up Jade Mountain

The real hiking began after the lodge. There are steep, seemingly never-ending switchbacks, and the solid rock of the trail gives way to loose scree. We all began to feel the altitude, and our pace slowed considerably as we gasped for air. However, not far up the mountain the tree line awaited us, and the promise of even more spectacular views pushed us onwards.

Along the way we passed a point named Fengkou (風口; “Wind Gap”). Many a hiker has been turned back at this point by strong winds, but fortunately on this day the air was still. From here the trail turns sharply to the right and climbs even more steeply to the peak. Exhausted, some six hours after we began the hike, we arrived at the top and were treated to stunning views.

We could have easily spent hours at the top admiring the world below us, but the looming clouds began to close in and we knew that we had to get off the peak before an afternoon thunderstorm might begin. We arrived back at the trailhead as the heavens opened, completely soaking us, but even that couldn't dampen our spirits after our successful single-day Jade Mountain ascent.

#### Getting There

Take Yuanlin Bus no. 6739 from Sun Moon Lake or Alishan to Tataka (note: reservation online required). Visit: [www.ylbus.com.tw/news/index.php?m=901&p=1000](http://www.ylbus.com.tw/news/index.php?m=901&p=1000) (Chinese)

#### Information

For more information about Jade Mountain, visit the Yushan National Park website ([www.ysnp.gov.tw](http://www.ysnp.gov.tw)).

# Mt. Hehuan

## The Most Accessible 3,000-Meter Peaks in Taiwan

Text: Grant Lovering  
Photos: Vision

The high mountains of Taiwan are among the top scenic highlights of the island. Most of the highest mountains are out of reach for most tourists, but a cluster of 3,000-meter peaks are virtually right beside the highway that spans the central mountains, the Central Cross-Island Highway, and hence invitingly accessible.

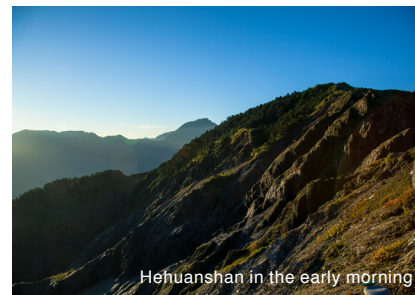


Hehuanshan seen from Mt. Shimen Trail

The peaks of the Mt. Hehuan (合歡山) area are among Taiwan's "Top 100 Mountains," a list of mountain peaks over 3,000 meters selected by expert local hikers due to their uniqueness, beauty, and prominence. Only a handful of people have climbed all 100; you can launch yourself on the route to joining them by bagging these five most accessible peaks.

The easiest is **Mt. Shimen** (石門山; 3,237m). The trail leading to this peak from the highway is only 750m long one-way, with little elevation gain. Don't be surprised to see women in high heels walking next to you.

If you're up for a bit more of a challenge, try Mt. Hehuan East Peak (3,421m), the trailhead of which is right next to roadside Hehuan Cottage (合歡山莊). There is approximately 300m of elevation gain in the 1km hike, so it can feel steep in parts, but the two-hour round trip gives you more of a sense of accomplishment than Mt. Shimen.



Hehuanshan in the early morning

Still not challenging enough? How about four more kilometers of walking (round trip), and 200 more meters of elevation gain, for a Mt. Hehuan Main Peak (3,417m) conquest? Then, if you still have any energy left, you might want to try Mt. Hehuan North Peak (3,422). Be prepared for 475m of elevation gain over about 2.5km, and expect to walk about four hours (round trip).

If you're an experienced hiker looking to walk even further, pitch a tent near the summit of the North Peak and head for Mt. Hehuan West Peak (3,145m) the next morning. This is actually the lowest of the five peaks, but it's about 4.5km from the North Peak, and the trail has lots of ups and downs. This is a spectacular hike on a clear day, as you're often on a ridge line and have panoramic views much of the way. Expect to take about eight hours for the round trip.

Congratulations! Once you have bagged all five peaks, you've completed 5% of Taiwan's Top 100 Mountains – and you might well be hooked, as many have been before you, looking to conquer many more.

There is no lack of other pristine peaks awaiting you in Taiwan's mountain ranges. On clear days, from Mt. Hehuan you can spot quite a few of the other peaks that local hikers like to tackle. Look southwest and you'll see the Qilai Ridge, an especially popular, though specially challenging, hiking playground with several 3,000m peaks. Two other must-do mountains for avid hikers in Taiwan are the island's two highest, Mt. Jade (Yushan; 玉山; 3,952m), and Mt. Snow (Xueshan; 雪山; 3,886m), both popular and comparatively easy to scale for those with high-mountain experience.

### Getting There

Bus no. 6506 (Fengyuan-Lishan route), operated by Fengyuan Bus, plies the highway across the Wuling Pass/Mt. Hehuan once a day, leaving Fengyuan Railway Station in Fengyuan (northeast of central Taichung) at 9:10am and the stop before Lishan Guest House in the mountain town of Lishan at 8am.

### Information

For more information about Mt. Hehuan, visit the Forestry Bureau website ([www.forest.gov.tw](http://www.forest.gov.tw)).

# Zhuilu Historic Trail

## The Views of Eagles along Taroko's Most Thrilling Trail

Text: Rick Charette  
Photos: Chen Cheng-Kuo

Taroko Gorge's wonderful trails give you thrilling all-natural highs – up high on mountainsides and cliffsides, and with soaring spirits just as high.

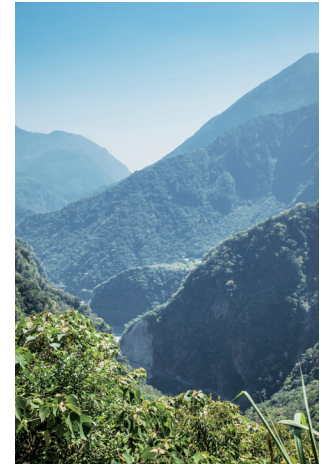
The Zhuilu Historic Trail ( 錐麓古道 ) inside Taroko Gorge ( 太魯閣峽谷 ) brings you up so high on a sheer cliff face that you must almost look down at your feet to see the gorge-bottom highway. The narrow path between cliff-face and sky leaves you feeling as though you're soaring like an eagle, peering down far, far below at colorful tour buses and motorcycles that appear far smaller than if you had Hot Wheels cars – just by chance – placed at your feet at the precipice edge.

This trail is part of the Old Cross-Hehuan Mountain Trail ( 合歡越嶺古道 ); you head high uphill from the Liwu River ( 立霧溪 ), cross Zhuilu Cliff ( 錐麓斷崖 ), rest, and come back the same way. The trail in fact continues from the rest stop, coming back down to the river further west/inland, but this section has been closed indefinitely.

You start by crossing a long suspension bridge over the Liwu at the east mouth of Swallow Grotto ( 燕子口 ), perhaps the gorge's single most popular tourist attraction. Afterward there is a fair bit of steep climbing, mostly up steps, especially in the first 30 minutes. Along the way you pass by a cave once used for ammo storage by the Japanese, the ruins of an old Japanese station that had a small police office, inn, and school, and another suspension bridge over a deep ravine. Your final rest stop before returning is a small, tree-shaded cliff-edge clearing where another Japanese police station once stood. I could not help but imagine how lonely, isolated, and dangerous these postings were.

The trail highlight, of course, is your traverse across the face of Zhuilu Cliff, a massive face of marble over 1,200 meters wide. You're about two-thirds of the way up, about 500 meters above the Liwu, and for about 600 meters the path is only about a meter wide. Need I say your excitement level will also be sky high? If you've a desire to soar like an eagle, the Zhuilu Cliff is calling.

Zhuilu Historic Trail scenery



### Getting There

The hop-on/hop-off Taroko Tourist Shuttle service ([www.taiwantrip.com.tw](http://www.taiwantrip.com.tw)) offers you a convenient option for traveling to and through the gorge. Buses depart from Hualien Railway Station.

### Information

For more information about Taroko Gorge, visit the Taroko National Park website ([www.taroko.gov.tw](http://www.taroko.gov.tw)).

# The East Rift Valley

## Pristine Outdoor-Adventure Playground

Text: Rick Charette  
Photos: Vision

The east coast of Taiwan is often described as “isolated,” kept locked away from the rest of the island by the soaring, rugged, thick central mountains. But this is meant in a decidedly positive sense, and in a relative sense – the west and north are busy and densely populated, the east coast virginal and unspoiled, sparsely populated, laid-back, even sleepy.

The valley is long and narrow, about 150 kilometers in length, framed by the north-south Central Mountain Range and the Coastal Mountain Range, with the city of Hualien just beyond its north end and Taitung just beyond its south. Since the establishment of the East Rift Valley National Scenic Area ([www.erv-nsa.gov.tw](http://www.erv-nsa.gov.tw)) in 1997, which encompasses the entire valley and a little bit more, there has been systematic tourism-facility development.

The valley is one of my favorite Taiwan playgrounds, and is certainly one of the quietest on the main island, along with the parallel East Coast National Scenic Area just over the coastal mountains.

## Walami Trail and Sixty Stone Mountain

Southwest of Yuli town on Provincial Highway 30 is the welcoming garden-style Nan'an Visitor Center (南安遊客中心), gateway to Yushan National Park's eastern section. Further up the highway is lofty, photogenic Nan'an Waterfall (南安瀑布), and at the dead-end highway's stop is the Walami Trail (瓦拉米步道) trailhead. This trail, specially targeted by hike-lovers from overseas, is part of the cross-central-mountain Batongguan Japanese Era Crossing Trail, opened to facilitate Japanese east-west communication and control of indigenous groups in the area. It's 14km from the trailhead to Walami; the return trip takes about 12 hours. The high-mountain scenery is striking, with soaring waterfalls, deep gorges, flying-high suspension bridges, and cliff-face traverses. Many choose the shorter, easier hike to Shanfeng Waterfall, which takes three hours.

Southeast of Yuli town on Highway 30, in another deep, clear-cut side valley, are the Antong Hot Springs. The waters are rich in hydrogen-sulfide, meaning the famous "rotten egg" smell dedicated soakers love. South of the springs, Sixty Stone (Liushidan) Mountain (六十石山) overlooks the rift-valley floor, its peak about 800 meters above sea level. A 300/400-hectare tableland of daylilies carpets its top, blooming in spectacular fashion August~September, with the paddy-grid far below a unique backdrop. I've been on the mountain when the big orange show is on, and it really is a thrill; on this trip, however, we found ourselves wrapped up in thick, rolling mists, which though not what we'd come for was nevertheless wonderfully rewarding aesthetically, creating myriad artistic shanshui-painting-style canvases for eye and camera. Chike Mountain (赤科山), northeast of Yuli, is also known for lovely daylily vistas.



Sixty Stone Mountain



Matai'an Wetland

## Matai'an Wetland

Located in Hualien County's Guangfu Township at the foot of Mt. Maxi (馬錫山), the Matai'an Wetland Ecological Park Area (馬太鞍濕地生態園區) covers a surface area of 12 hectares. The name Matai'an evolved from the area's indigenous name Vataan (meaning "pigeon peas" in the language of the Amis tribe). The sources for the water in the wetland are shallow Fudeng River and underground springs. Boasting a large number of water plants, the wetland is home to many waterbirds, which feed on frogs, insects, and other wetland dwellers.

There are trails and pavilions from which visitors can take a look at the rich vegetation of Matai'an; guided tours can be organized for visitors who want to gain a deeper understanding of the wetland's flora and fauna. Among the interesting plants to see in, on, and around the waters of the wetland are floating fern (turning a beautiful red over time), tape grass, coontail, water lettuce, and Asian marshweed. Among the waterbirds you can spot at Matai'an are white egrets, moorhens, and white wagtails.

Matai'an is also a great place to learn about the traditional ways of the Amis people living in the area, including their way of catching fish and shrimp with nets in the river. Shin-Liu Farm (欣綠農園), in the wetland area, offers different experiences, including indigenous dance, and also serves indigenous fare at its restaurant.

### Getting There

The most convenient way to visit the East Rift Valley is by taking a train. For the full Taiwan train schedule and prices, visit [www.railway.gov.tw](http://www.railway.gov.tw).

### Information

For more information about the East Rift Valley, visit the East Rift Valley National Scenic Area website ([www.erv-nsa.gov.tw](http://www.erv-nsa.gov.tw)).

# Jiaming Lake

## A Hike to a Beautiful High-Mountain Lake

Text: Stuart Dawson Photo: Vision

At an elevation of 3,520m above sea level, Jiaming Lake (嘉明湖) is Taiwan's second-highest mountain lake, and one of its biggest. It was once thought that the lake was created by a meteor strike, but it is now believed that it was formed by glacier movement during the last ice age. While it is quite far from Taipei, it's an excellent two-day hike destination in a more remote part of Taiwan.

From Taipei it's a long drive to Xiangyang National Forest Recreation Area (向陽國家森林遊樂區), where the hike begins. The area is located close to the 155km marker on Provincial Highway No. 20 (the Southern Cross-Island Highway). If you don't have your own means of transport, the easiest way to get there is to take a train down to the town of Chishang (池上) in Taitung County and then hire a driver there – as we did on an outing last summer.

There's a great campsite around the back of the police station at Xiangyang, with shower and kitchen facilities. We put up our tents and set about preparing a hotpot dinner. That evening there was no moon in the sky, and being so far away from the city, we could see the Milky Way and seemingly millions of other stars.

The next morning we packed up early and walked through the forest recreation area to the trailhead. From this point, it was a gentle and very pleasant walk through pine forest to the first mountain hut, the Xiangyang Cabin (向陽工寮). From there the trail became much steeper, all the way to the point where we came out of the forest. On a good day there are spectacular views here, but on this day clouds had already begun to billow up, and we could only just make out the famous twisted and gnarly Xiangyang Tree.

Typically, during the summer months in Taiwan the weather is clear in the morning, giving way to thunderstorms in the afternoon. With the clouds coming in, we pressed on towards the second cabin, the Jiaming Lake Hut (嘉明湖山屋), to avoid getting caught in this day's inevitable downpour.

At the cabin, we met a group of Taiwanese hikers, who mentioned that there was the possibility of a typhoon arriving in two to three days' time. I headed out further along the trail to a point where I could get a mobile-phone signal and called a friend in Taipei, who confirmed that there was indeed a typhoon on the way.

Our original plan was to stay in the mountains for three days, and while the typhoon was unlikely to affect us before the end of the hike, the authorities usually close the highway to/from Chishang a day before, and we thus might have ended up stuck at Xiangyang for a time. So we decided to hike to the lake early the next morning and then hike back out in the afternoon.

We woke up at 2am, and were greeted by a group of deer who had come to drink from a water source near the cabin. It's incredible how unaffected they are by the people and headlamps. They simply stare back at you, and then continue on their way. After a quick breakfast, we set off towards Jiaming Lake.

It was a very cold morning, especially when we arrived at the exposed peak of Mt. Sancha (三叉山; 3,496m). The wind was strong, and even though it was August it still stripped us of heat. We waited ten minutes or so for the sun to rise, and then turned and headed south towards the lake. By this time the glow of the rising sun had hit the grass on the hills surrounding the lake, making it seem like the mountains were on fire. It was a spectacular view.

After a quick break and a hot drink by the lakeshore, we started back. With the typhoon looming we had to move quickly to get back down in time, and we eventually got back to Taipei safely that evening.

### Getting There

There is no public transport to Jiaming Lake. Take a taxi from Chishang.

### Information

For more information about Jiaming Lake visit [jmlnt-en.forest.gov.tw](http://jmlnt-en.forest.gov.tw).





# Chishang



Chishang

Bicycling along paddy fields in Chishang

## Bicycling Through Paddy Fields

Text: Rick Charette  
Photos: Ray Chang, Vision

The East Rift Valley's flat terrain and painting-like scenery makes it a popular leisure-cycling destination, with many routes to choose from. One of the most popular is at the town of Chishang. The long loop route, almost entirely free of vehicle traffic, brings you into picturesque paddy-field tapestries interlaced with networks of gurgling-water irrigation channels, and to many sites of historical and/or cultural interest. There are numerous bike-rental outlets around the starting point, located at the edge of town. Most biking needs will be satisfied, up to pedal bikes for four people and e-carts for six.

Just outside of Chishang town, on the cycling loop, is one of the rift valley's most photographed roads, **Bolang Dadao** ("Brown Avenue"), made famous in a Mr. Brown Coffee commercial and an EVA Air commercial starring Japanese-Taiwanese pop-idol heartthrob Takeshi Kaneshiro.

The loop also takes you around small **Dapo Lake**, directly east/southeast of the town. "Chishang" literally means "on the lake." The tree-surrounded body of water is at the end of the suggested cycle route, and is a pleasant oasis at which to cool off after all your pedaling.

This lake was over twice its present size in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Early residents caught small fish and shrimp in this natural wetland, using them with the local rice to make tasty "Chishang rice dumplings" that were sold to passing travelers. Many of today's local *biandang* (boxed lunch) sellers include these treats in their offerings, though the fish and shrimp now come from elsewhere.

You have two options for getting right out onto the lake, renting a pedal boat or a raft. With the rafts, which have sun-protection roofs, you do your own paddling. You're also provided with a long bamboo pole that will enable you to push the raft, gondolier-style, into the thick forest of lotus plants on the lake's east side. Dapo Lake was long used for lotus and water chestnut cultivation.

### Getting There

Chishang can be conveniently reached by train. For the full Taiwan train schedule and prices, visit [www.railway.gov.tw](http://www.railway.gov.tw).

### Information

For more information about the East Rift Valley, visit the East Rift Valley National Scenic Area website ([www.erv-nsa.gov.tw](http://www.erv-nsa.gov.tw)).

# The East Coast

Text: Rick Charette  
Photos: Vision



Shitiping

Traveling north of Taitung City along Provincial Highway 11, you'll soon arrive at **Xiaoyeliu** (小野柳). This is a natural scenic area right on the coast where land meets ocean. Along the shore are extensive rock formations – honeycomb rock, mushroom rock, tofu rock, and cuestas. There is a visitor center with well-crafted scale models and rock samples introducing the geological features of both Xiaoyeliu and the Coastal Mountain Range, which runs along the coast from just north of Taitung City to just south of Hualien City.

## Jialuluan and Jiamuzi

**Jialulan** (加路蘭) is a seaside art park that is also an eco-engineering showcase. It's on a remediated waste-soil site created during construction of the adjoining air-force base. Artworks are spread out over the expansive grassland. Most are made of wood, notably driftwood, a favorite material with Taitung artists. Photographers love to take shots of the art pieces with

Green Island in the background, the blue of the ocean and the green of the island creating a compelling contrast. The island, though about 33km from the mainland coast, is seen clearly on blue-sky days.

## Shitiping

The name **Shitiping** (石梯坪) means “stone steps.” The dramatically terraced volcanic rock and raised-coral formations here form what looks like a staircase rising out to sea. The sea's great erosive powers are in visually inspiring evidence – all about are kettle holes and surging tide pools. The teeming marine life draws fishermen, shellfish collectors, and scuba divers. The distinctive ecology also features such oceanside-adapted plants as screw pine, cactus, and morning glory. There isn't much shade, so bring water; there's also ice cream, popsicles, and other cooling goodies available at the visitor center.

## Hualien Fengbin Sky Trail

The **Hualien Fengbin Sky Trail** (花蓮豐濱天空步道) is a double-thrill attraction. The "sky trail" is a 150m cliff-clinging skywalk that hangs you right out over the ocean, breakers and shore fishermen at your feet. A 20m section is transparent. The trail follows a narrow old path hacked from the cliff face, which connected local villages during the Japanese period. The second thrill is that your access walk is along a retired cliff-edge section of Highway 11. Your skywalk return is through an old highway tunnel, today filled with gift and snack stands.

## Jiqi Beach and Dashibi Hill

The hill on the south side of Jiqi Beach (磯崎海水浴場) is easily ascended. It juts out into the sea, and the highway curves around it inland. The wood-stair pathway to the top, the **Dashibi Hill Trail** (大石鼻山步道), starts at a highway-side parking lot and takes about 15 easy minutes to conquer. Your reward is splendid views of the rugged coastline north and south, local fishing craft out at sea, and the highway-side indigenous village inland.

### Getting There

Hualien and Taitung can be reached by train from points around Taiwan's perimeter on the round-island railway loop. The fastest trains (Puyuma Express) from Taipei take a little less than 2.5 hours to Hualien. For places along the coast, take buses operated by the Hualien Bus Company ([www.hualienbus.com.tw](http://www.hualienbus.com.tw)).

### Information

For more information about the East Coast, visit the East Coast National Scenic Area website ([www.eastcoast-nsa.gov.tw](http://www.eastcoast-nsa.gov.tw)).

Hualien Fengbin Sky Trail



Jinzen (Daylily) Mountain

## Jinzen (Daylily) Mountain

Toward the southern end of Taitung County lies a coastal strip of land fronted by the endless blue waters of the Pacific. **Taimali Township** (太麻里鄉) has abundant sunlight and fertile soil, and is a place where numerous agricultural products are grown. Chief among them are the bright orange-and-gold daylilies, which carpet the steep mountainsides and manmade terraces during the summer months.

In order to reach the daylily farms on Jinzen (Daylily) Mountain (金針山) you need to follow a winding road up the mountain. At vantage points along the route you can take in the great views encompassing Green Island to the north and Lanyu (Orchid Island) to the south. Signs point the way to the **Flowers Route** (賞花路線), and when you reach an elevation of around 600 meters above sea level you will see the blossoming petals curling up and outward, black stamens raised toward the sun.

Farms on the mountain specialize in dishes made using the daylily as the main ingredient, including daylily soup, with the faint but noticeable natural sweetness of the lily adding a pleasant floral note. You can also try daylily buns, which are just a touch sweet, nicely complemented by cheese added to the dough for contrast. Then there are fresh-fried daylily buds, their seasoning countering the sweet highlights with an appealing savoriness.

### Getting There

TRA trains run from Taitung City to Taimali Township (20 min., NT\$53). From Taimali Railway Station take a taxi up the mountain. During the flower season (August~ September) there are also tourist buses that take travelers on day-trips to the various farms dotting the mountain.

# Guanwu

## An Uplifting Road Climb into the Snow Mountain Range

Text: Rick Charette  
Photos: Chen Cheng-Kuo

The spacious Guanwu Visitor Center is at the entrance of the **Guanwu Recreation Area** (觀霧遊憩區). Bursting with information on park and region, with first-rate English, every second spent here will double your rewards when you probe on foot deeper. Learn – among many other takeaway info-gems – how Guanwu was originally called Maoyili by the Atayal tribe, meaning “high-rising hills.” How in days gone by this was a hard-to-access Atayal hunting area, and how the Japanese built a high-mountain police outpost on this site in the 1910s to control rebellious hold-out native warriors.

How the Japanese then launched regional logging, how until 1964 ropeways and pushcarts on narrow rails were used to bring logs down-mountain, and how the road you’ve just traveled up was blazed to enable access by trucks. How, once logging was commenced, Japanese mountaineers followed, and how Shei-Pa’s peaks and the Holy Ridge (聖稜線) were opened up by the Taiwan Mountaineering Association in the late 1920s/early 1930s with the help of indigenous guides.

A salamander’s quick dash away from the visitor center is the informative **Guanwu Formosan Salamander Ecology Center** (雪霸觀霧山椒魚生態中心). Did you know that Taiwan is home to five salamander species? And that one is the protected, dark-brown Guanwu salamander, denizen of the Snow Mountain Range’s northern part, living at altitudes of 1,200 to 3,100 meters? I didn’t, but now I do. Through displays featuring good English, learn who it preys on, who preys on it, the habitat-destruction threats it faces (logging in the past, increased typhoon and torrential-rain frequency today due to climate change, etc.), systematic habitat-restoration efforts since 2008, and much beyond.

Step out of the last gallery and you step into the airy, glass-fronted **Yunwu (“Cloud and Mist”) Café** (雲霧咖啡廳). Sit down to a heart-warming cup of fresh-made local-brand tea or coffee and such light foods as beef and chicken cheese rolls. The mist-swept terrace outside has umbrella-shaded tables from which white moistness rolling up from the waterfall-base valley before and the Holy Ridge, spread out like a model set far in the distance beyond, are savored. Wild avians of much-differing shapes and paint schemes flit about the humans looking for freebies (be a true friend – don’t feed them!).





Guanwu Waterfall Trail



Guanwu Formosan Salamander Ecology Center

Further along the road past the Honeymoon Path entrance to the waterfall-trail entrance is the **Zhenshan (Mt. Zhen) Trail (榛山步道)** head. The geo-position of Mt. Zhen was indicated in the Yunwu Trail section above. This is a trail of open views, chirping birds, and flowers in blossom year-round that stretches 4.13km and takes about 4 hours to conquer (return). Your outward prize is the Mt. Zhen peak – if you thought the Snow Mountain Range and Holy Ridge views from the Yunwu Trail were exhilarating, here you'll find them extraordinary.

Tip: Be aware that beyond the Yunwu Café and a beverage-vending machine in the visitor center no food and drink is available in the recreation area.

The short boardwalk of the **Yunwu Trail (雲霧步道)** begins beside the Yunwu Café, running in a loop up and down the high hill overlooking it. It provides clear looks down into the deep valley below, **Mt. Zhen (榛山)** across the valley, and the Holy Ridge far beyond that. Explanations on these, with clear picture maps and English, are found at the trail's viewing decks.

The **Guanwu Waterfall Trail (觀霧瀑布步道)** starts beside a parking lot not far down the road beyond the visitor center. With a total length of 1.5km, it takes 1.5~2 hours to complete. Descend deep into the valley through a mix of broadleaf and fragrant coniferous forest, your reward found at trail's end – the lofty Guanwu Waterfall. The trail has long, easy sections interspersed with steep stepped sections, the most demanding toward the bottom.

A short distance along the road past the waterfall-trail entrance is the starting point of the short, easy 450m **Honeymoon Path (蜜月小徑)**. This brings you to the head of **Kuaishan Big Trees Trail (檜山巨木群步道)**, also reachable via another road from the Guanwu entrance. This 4km trail takes about 2.5 hours (return) to complete. The highlight, beyond the terrific high-point panoramas, is the trail's five gigantic thousand-year-old Formosan Cypress trees. History buffs will be thrilled that the path was once an artery for timber-pushcart tracks, with physical traces still in evidence.



Guanwu Waterfall

#### Getting There

The Taiwan Tour Bus service ([www.taiwantourbus.com.tw](http://www.taiwantourbus.com.tw)) features an English-language two-day tour visiting the towns of Zhudong and Qingquan, Sheipa Leisure Farm, and Guanwu Recreation Area.

#### Information

For more information about Snow Mountain, visit the Shei-Pa National Park website ([www.sprp.gov.tw](http://www.sprp.gov.tw)).

# Aowanda

Text: Vision Photos: Forestry Bureau, Vision

Aowanda (奧萬大) is a national forest recreation area located in Nantou County, southeast of the town of Wushe (霧社). It is best known for its maple trees, the leaves of which turn a beautiful red and orange in the winter. The area is home to a number of rivers and creeks, most notably the Wanda River, the main source for the Wanda Reservoir (萬大水庫). While Aowanda is most famous for its maple trees, each season of the year has its own attractions for visitors. In the winter, this includes the beautiful deciduous cypresses and blooming cherry trees. Spring is the time to see the area's fireflies in action. In the summer, Aowanda is a popular destination for escaping the stifling heat of the cities. Lastly, throughout the year visitors can enjoy a broad array of flowers.

Going on long walks through the forest, gazing at waterfalls, watching birds, and breathing in the fresh mountain-forest air are among the simple pleasures to enjoy when spending time at Aowanda. Perhaps the best views of the recreation area you can take in are from the Aowanda Suspension Bridge, which spans the North River and connects to the Pine Tree Zone.

If you want to stay overnight at Aowanda, there is hotel-style accommodation available in two larger buildings and more rustic close-to-nature-style accommodation in wooden cabins.



Aowanda Suspension Bridge

#### Aowanda National Forest Recreation Area (奧萬大國家森林遊樂區)

**Add:** No. 153, Da'an Rd., Qin'ai Village, Ren'ai Township,  
Nantou County (南投縣仁愛鄉親愛村大安路 153 號)

**Tel:** (049) 297-4511

**Website:** awdonline.forest.gov.tw (Chinese)

#### Getting There

Take Nantou Bus ([www.ntbus.com.tw](http://www.ntbus.com.tw)) bus no. 6659, 6658, or 6664 from Puli to Wushe. Take a taxi from Wushe to Aowanda.

#### Information

For more information about Aowanda, visit the Forestry Bureau website ([www.forest.gov.tw](http://www.forest.gov.tw)).



Maple leaves in autumn



Aowanda maple trees

# Alishan

Text: Rick Charette  
Photos: Chen Cheng-Kuo

Longgong Waterfall

Located in Chiayi County, the Alishan National Scenic Area (阿里山國家風景區; [www.ali-nsa.net](http://www.ali-nsa.net)) is a well-developed tourist resort and recreation area that brings countless numbers of sightseers on trips to take in spectacular sunrises over what the Taiwanese poetically call *yunhai*, or “sea of clouds,” which dramatically roll into the deep valleys like a great incoming tide, and which you witness from above. The pristine, tranquil region is defined by lofty peaks, long and deep valleys, soaring stands of cedar, cypress, and pine, massive “sacred trees” over a thousand years old that stand like immortals amidst their much younger brethren, picturesque tea and coffee plantations, an attractive network of trails, Tsou tribe culture, fresh and tasty mountain produce, and fun alpine forest railway rides.

## Alishan National Forest Recreation Area

The drive to the Alishan National Forest Recreation Area (阿里山國家森林遊樂區) from Chiayi City takes about two hours. Along the way, you are presented with ever more impressive peak/cliff/valley vistas and ever more impressive road-engineering feats. Arrival at the forest recreation area brings you into a busy complex of eateries and retailers primarily selling Alishan-theme goods. There is also a visitor center. From the main area, which is at about 2,200 meters above sea level, you launch into the latticework of pathways and eco-friendly raised boardwalks further on uphill and downhill. There are short forest-railway runs from Alishan Station, up behind the food & retail complex, to Zhaoping Station, the Sacred Tree, and, in the early morning, to Zhushan (祝山) for the famous sunrises.

Among the many images of natural beauty that will become part of your album of memories will be Zhaoping Park's (沼平公園)

decorative cherry trees (planted throughout Alishan by the Japanese), the laid-to-rest Sacred Tree (神木), estimated at over 3,000 years old and long revered by the Tsou indigenous people, the Giant Tree Trails (巨木群棧道), featuring dozens of massive, ancient red cypress trees, the forest-surrounded Sisters Ponds (姊妹潭), one prettified with two wooden “love pavilions” built on Formosan red cypress bases (said to be named after two lovely native sisters who long ago drowned themselves to avoid a forced marriage), and the fantasy-like Three-Generations Tree (三代木), which has one tree growing from the dead trunk of another, which originally grew from the dead trunk of a third, that one 1,500 years old.

## Alishan's Sunsets and Sea of Clouds

Here are my votes for the best locations to take in Alishan's sunsets and sea of clouds:

**Sunsets:** The Eryanping Trail (二延平步道), which starts beside Highway No. 18 at Xiding (隙頂) (53.5km mark), below Shizhuo (石棹) village. “Xiding” means “top of the crevice,” indicating the pass/crevice used by early settlers when heading to Mt. Eryanping. You walk among bamboo stands, tea fields, and strangely shaped rocks, and have grand views of the plains in the far distance. This trail is also good for the sea of clouds.

**Sea of clouds viewing:** The Upper Shizhuo Trail (頂石棹步道), which starts just off Highway 18 just up a Shizhuo side road, and moves upslope through tea farms. There is a large cluster of homestays here, one close to the trailhead. As you wait for the sea and it then moves massively past and below you, a calming sense of serenity envelops you.

## Northern Alishan

For most tourists, local and from overseas, the “Alishan” brand means a single place – the Alishan National Forest Recreation Area. But this captivating, oft enchanting, oft bewitching tourist-busy alpine enclave of soaring coniferous trees is merely one part, and a small portion at that, of the far-flung Alishan National Scenic Area. The northern part of the scenic area attracts the type of traveler that likes to spend days on trails used by locals for generations and nights in local villages rather than in tourist hotels.

## Zhukeng Stream Trail

The 3.3km Zhukeng Stream Trail (竹坑溪步道) has a trailhead at each end on Highway 162A, west of Ruifeng (瑞峰) village. Formerly called the “Old Charcoal Way” – early residents used it to take charcoal off the mountain to trade – it passes over 12 bridges, each of different design. There are a number of cataracts, including the hikers’ grand prize of the 120m-high Longgong Waterfall (龍宮瀑布), reached via a dead-end side trail about mid-way along the main trail. This is a “hanging valley waterfall,” and as it shoots out into space the waters do indeed seem to hang momentarily in mid-air before making their way to the bottom of the deep gorge here. Behind the lofty natural artwork is Water Curtain Cave (水簾洞), through which the side trail runs.

## Youth Ridge Trail

The challenging, visually thrilling 2km Youth Ridge Trail (青年嶺步道) starts at the highway-side trailhead in Ruili (瑞里) village, across from Ruili Elementary School. In the past this was an important trade route. The 1,000m-long Haohan (“Hero”) Slope (好漢坡) has an average grade of 60 degrees – yes, 60. Porters who could tackle it without stopping were praised for their “youthful bodies” – origin of the “Youth Ridge” moniker.



Alishan sunrise

There is a lost world Jurassic Park-like atmosphere at the bottom of the gorge. I half-expected to see a pterodactyl come swooping by, eyeing us as potential lunch. The countless bat-roost holes in the Bat Cave (蝙蝠洞) were formed over millions of years by river erosion. The deep grooves in the mesmerizingly striated Swallow Cliff (燕子崖) are also erosion-etched, the softer sandstone levels wearing away faster than the harder shale.

## Yuntan Waterfall

A few kilometers further west along highway 166 is the entrance to the steep 600m Yuntan Waterfall (雲潭瀑布) boardwalk path and, just before it, Yuantan Natural Eco Park (圓潭自然生態園區). The two-tiered cascade is 26.3m high; the terrain features alternating thick sandstone strata sandwiching thin shale layers, twisted in a wild jumble of folds and faults. The waters have cut their way through a weak tectonic line, and pour forth from the bottom of a “V” shape. Massive boulders that have fallen from the cliffs surround the 2m-deep plunge pool. Yuantan Visitor Center, at the eco-park entrance, has a good display on the area’s flora, fauna, geology, and other topics; the picture-perfect park features shady landscaped grounds, short and easy trails, and a number of comely waterfalls.



Alishan Forest Railway



High-mountain tea plantation



Forest recreation area

### Getting There

Take a Taiwan Tourist Shuttle ([www.taiwantrip.com.tw](http://www.taiwantrip.com.tw)) bus (Alishan Route) from either Chiayi's High Speed Rail station or Chiayi Railway Station to the Alishan National Forest Recreation Area.

The northern part of Alishan has only very infrequent public-bus services. Twice a day buses run between Chiayi Railway Station and Ruifeng (bus no. 7315, leaving Chiayi at 09:30 and 16:30) and also twice a day between Chiayi Railway Station and Fenqihu village (bus No. 7302, leaving Chiayi at 07:10 and 15:10).

Trains of the Alishan Forest Railway depart Chiayi at 09:00 (daily) and at 10:00 (only Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays), arriving at Fenqihu 2 hours and 20 minutes later. Many homestays/B&Bs in the Alishan northern area will pick customers up in Fenqihu.

### Information

For more information about Alishan, visit the Alishan National Scenic Area website ([www.ali-nsa.net](http://www.ali-nsa.net)).



# Maolin

## Butterfly Paradise

Text: Rick Charette

Photos: Ray Chang

The Maolin National Scenic Area is northeast of central Kaohsiung, in the western foothills of the Central Mountain Range and the southernmost section of Taiwan's thick mountain spine. The area is heavily forested, and three major rivers run through it. Long and comparatively slender, it has a north-south orientation.

### Butterfly Watching in Maolin

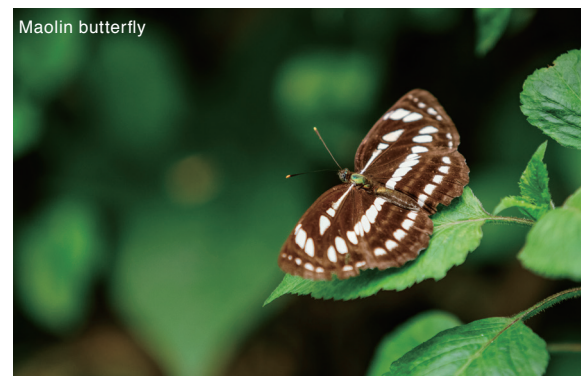
The Purple Crow Butterfly, an intrepid traveler that, like Mexico's Monarch Butterfly, accomplishes impossibly challenging annual migrations, winters in tremendous number in the Maolin area. In the Purple Butterfly Valley and **Maolin Ecological Park** (茂林生態公園) you may well see thousands at a time flitting about in the woods.



Forest trail in Maolin

The **Maolin NSA** (茂林國家風景區) is one of only two overwintering butterfly valley areas in the world, the other Mexico's Monarch Butterfly Valley. The southern mountains provide winter nesting grounds during Taiwan's short but at times chilly winter season for the Purple Crow Butterfly, which at other times can be found throughout the island. When the northeastern winter winds arrive in northern Taiwan in late autumn, millions of Purple Crows – like migratory birds – move to the south and gather in the valleys. You'll view four sub-species: Dwarf Crows, which account for almost 75% of Maolin's population, which at times may total one million; Double-branded Black Crows, which make up much of the rest; Striped Blue Crows; and Blue-banded King Crows.

"The Maolin National Scenic Area is the only place in the world where traffic signs have been set up to protect butterflies!" So said Liao Jin-shan, our deep-knowledge volunteer guide at Maolin Ecological Park, situated on a low mountaintop dramatically overlooking **Maolin** (茂林) village. The visitor center in the village has solid displays (with English) on the region's butterflies, but going on a guided tour is highly recommended. The guides provide so much more, and they can show you the best sites to spot the butterflies. When disturbed by visitors the butterflies, often looking just like dark leaves on branches when still, burst into flight en masse in such a dense, visually dramatic spectacle that, it struck me, if seen on a movie-theater screen I'd declare it special-effects fake.



Maolin butterfly

#### Getting There

The Pingtung Bus Co. ([www.ptbus.com.tw](http://www.ptbus.com.tw); Chinese) offers services between Pingtung City and various NSA locations on four lines, one to Maolin.

#### Information

For more information about Maolin, visit the Maolin National Scenic Area website ([www.maolin-nsa.gov.tw](http://www.maolin-nsa.gov.tw)).

# USEFUL INFORMATION

## Transportation Information

### Taiwan Tourist Shuttle

(台灣好行)

**Add:** 9F., No. 290, Sec. 4, Zhongxiao E. Rd., Taipei City

(台北市忠孝東路4段290號9樓)

**Tel:** (02) 2349-1500

**Website:** www.taiwantrip.com.tw

### Taiwan Tour Bus Service

(台灣觀光巴士)

**Add:** 9F., No. 290, Sec. 4, Zhongxiao E. Rd., Taipei City

(台北市忠孝東路4段290號9樓)

**Tel:** (02) 2349-1500

**Website:** www.taiwantourbus.com.tw

### Travel Service Center of the Tourism Bureau (Taiwan Taoyuan Int'l Airport)

(桃園國際機場旅客服務中心)

**Add:** No. 15, Hangzhan S. Rd., Taoyuan City (桃園市航站南路15號)

**Service Hotline:**

**Terminal One:** (03) 398-2194

**Terminal Two:** (03) 398-3341

**Website:** www.taoyuanairport.gov.tw

### Travel Service Center of the Tourism Bureau (Kaohsiung Int'l Airport)

(高雄國際機場旅客服務中心)

**Add:** No. 2, Zhongshan 4th Rd., Kaohsiung City (高雄市中山四路2號)

**Service Hotline:** 0800-252550, (07) 805-7888

**Website:** www.kia.gov.tw

### Taiwan Railways Administration

(臺灣鐵路管理局)

**Tel:** (02) 2381-5226

**Website:** www.railway.gov.tw

### Taiwan High Speed Rail

(台灣高鐵)

**Service Hotline:** (02) 6626-8000

**Website:** www.thsrc.com.tw

### Metro Taipei

(台北捷運公司)

**Add:** No. 7, Ln. 48, Sec. 2, Zhongshan N. Rd., Taipei City

(台北市中山北路2段48巷7號)

**Tel:** (02) 2181-2345

**Website:** www.metro.taipei

## Tourism Information

### Taiwan Tourism Bureau

(交通部觀光局)

**Add:** 9F., No. 290, Sec. 4, Zhongxiao

E. Rd., Taipei City (台北市忠孝東路四段290號9樓)

**Tel:** (02) 2349-1500

**24-Hour Toll-Free Travel Information**

**Hotline:** 0800-011765

**Website:** eng.taiwan.net.tw

### TRAVEL.TAIPEI

(臺北旅遊網)

**Tel:** (02) 2720-8889

**Website:** www.travel.taipei

### New Taipei City Travel

(新北市觀光旅遊網)

**Tel:** (02) 2960-3456

**Website:** tour.tpc.gov.tw

### Yilan Travel Website

(宜蘭勁好玩)

**Add:** No. 1, Xianzheng N. Rd., Yilan City, Yilan County

(宜蘭縣宜蘭市縣政北路1號)

**Tel:** (03) 925-1000

**Website:** tourism.e-land.gov.tw

### Northeast and Yilan Coast National Scenic Area Administration

(東北角暨宜蘭海岸國家風景區管理處)

**Add:** No. 36, Xinglong Street, Gongliao District, New Taipei City

(新北市貢寮區興隆街36號)

**Tel:** (02) 2499-1115

**Website:** www.necoast-nsa.gov.tw

### Shoushan National Nature Park

(壽山國家自然公園)

**Add:** No. 350, Wanshou Rd., Gushan

Dist., Kaohsiung City

(高雄市鼓山區萬壽路350號)

**Tel:** (07) 262-0610

**Website:** snnp.cpami.gov.tw

### Forestry Bureau, Council of

Agriculture, Executive Yuan

(行政院農業委員會林務局)

**Add:** No. 2, Hangzhou S. Rd., Sec. 1,

Taipei City

(台北市杭州南路1段2號)

**Tel:** (02) 2351-5441

**Website:** www.forest.gov.tw/EN

### Taiwan Forest Recreation

(台灣山林悠遊網)

**Tel:** (02) 2351-5441 ext. 343

**Website:** recreation.forest.gov.tw/

English

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**Web:** taiwan.net.tw



**Taiwan**  
THE HEART OF ASIA