

## First-Day Scenic and Swordguard Cancellations on National Park Issues

*This article incorporates some updated information identified subsequent to the publication of the August 2016 issue.*

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### Introduction

These days, new stamp issues, such as Commemorative and Special issues and Greetings issues, which have a more “national” character, have special pictorial first-day cancels that are used at officially designated post offices. For the more localized Prefectural issues there is no special pictorial cancel authorized, but instead the designated first-day post office(s) uses its scenic datestamp as a first-day pictorial datestamp. This latter practice of using scenic datestamps was also employed in the now discontinued National Park issues.

It is easy to find covers with first-day cancellations from the National Park issues. Many covers were never sent through the post (i.e., purposely unaddressed) and have only a scenic datestamp(s) cancelling the stamps. If sent within Japan it should also have a domestic comb cancel, and if sent to a foreign country it should also have a roman-letter cancellation. For those National Park stamps issued from April 1952 this roman-letter cancellation will be a swordguard. The most interesting first-day covers to collect are those sent overseas from a designated post office within the park. A number of these are rather small and many started using a scenic datestamp only from the first day that its relevant national park stamp(s) was issued. Sometimes the post office got its swordguard canceller especially for that day.

This article looks at National Park and Quasi-National Park issues from 1958 to the end of these issues in 1974. This commencement date has been selected because swordguard cancels are seldom found on National Park FDCs before 1958. In the JSCA and Sakura catalogues, all the park issues appear in their own discrete section with catalogue numbers preceded by a “P”. Descriptions of all of these stamps can be found in back issues of JP, but these reports do not include the names of authorized first-day post offices before November 1965.

Information on the national parks with descriptions for each of them including the park’s characteristics, guide of highlights, and access can be found (in English) on Japan’s Ministry of the Environment website.<sup>(1)</sup> The website has very good maps that show the actual size of each park and some names of locations, which has helped with identifying post offices within the park. All National Parks are administered by the ministry, but the Quasi-National Parks are administered by individual prefectural governments. Unfortunately, these prefectural governments do not supply (at least on their websites) maps of equal quality to those for the National Parks, so it is more difficult to check if a post office with its name on a cancel is inside the park or not.

Volume 2 of the JSCA’s “Visual Catalogue” contains a comprehensive description of the parks issues at pages 218-276. This includes maps of the parks, but they are not detailed enough to see where the first day post offices are located. Illustrations of the scenic cancels used for each issue are shown, but there are only a few pictures of actual usages on cover.

From 15 November 1965 the postal authority listed the officially authorized first day post office(s) for each park issue. These post offices are mentioned in the JSCA and Visual Catalogues. Each authorized post office was allowed to use cancellers incorporating the traditional **hato** (dove or pigeon) first-day datestamp symbol on the day of issue. This usually involved the use of modified versions (in most cases provided specifically for the event) of both the domestic mail comb canceller and the foreign-mail swordguard canceller.

A fine example to illustrate the various first-day cancellers used is a Noto Hantō (Noto Peninsula) Quasi-National Park FDC (**Figure 1**) sent from Suzu (珠洲) in Ishikawa Prefecture. At the bottom are two strikes of the Suzu scenic datestamp (introduced on 20.7.1965) with the regnal date 45.8.1 (1 August 1970) and the post office name. The scenic datestamp depicts Mitsuke Island<sup>(2)</sup> and the Iida Bay coastline in the background, while the foreground shows a pine tree, a **matsutake** (literally “pine tree mushroom”), and a monument bearing a

<sup>1</sup> URL: <https://www.env.go.jp/en/nature/nps/park/>

<sup>2</sup> Often referred to as Gunkanjima (“Warship Island”) due to its shape (see JP 70/121 for further information).



Figure 1

poem by Ōtomo no Yakamochi (718-785). In the top right corner of the cover is the modified (with *hato*) domestic comb cancel and in the top left corner the modified (with *hato*) foreign mail swordguard cancellation. This swordguard has so far been recorded as used only on this date.

There is no official list of first-day post offices for the parks stamps issued before November 1965. They were local post offices inside the relevant national park. JSCA mentions some of them but not all. Covers known from these places were cancelled with the post office's current scenic datestamp, and if sent to a foreign country they were also cancelled with a roman-letter swordguard without a *hato*.

An example is the cover (Figure 2) from Aso National Park bearing (at left) a Bōchū (坊中) post office in Kumamoto (熊本) Prefecture scenic datestamp<sup>3</sup> introduced on 2.10.1961. The cover also has a Bōchū



Figure 2

<sup>3</sup> This scenic datestamp depicts Mt. Aso in the background and *rindō* (gentians), Kumamoto's prefectural flower, in the foreground.

(romanized by the post office as “BOJU”) swordguard at right. Bōchū is a post office in Aso Town inside the national park. It is a post office that collects and distributes mail. This is the last dated park cover bearing a swordguard without a hat. Interestingly, the first recorded usage date of the BOJU swordguard (and presumably its date of introduction) was on 2.10.1961, the date on which its scenic datestamp used on this cover was also introduced. The occasion was the issue date of the stamp depicting a gentian in the 1961 Flower Series. Bōchū was the designated first-day post office for this stamp issue.

### Swordguards and scenic datestamps

From the listing of swordguard usages maintained by the ISJP Roman-letter postmarks study group we know the approximate period of use (based on first and last recorded dates) for each swordguard cancel, including those for post offices that have relevance for national parks. Sometimes a swordguard encountered on a park’s first-day cover has been identified as being used only on that date. In some cases the swordguard canceller has been in use both before and after that date on normal mail. And in other cases it seems that they were introduced on the date of the first-day cover and then subsequently used on normal mail. Interestingly, in a number of cases we find no evidence of a swordguard for a post office that was designated as a first-day office for a parks issue.

Swordguard in use	Number of post offices
Only on the date	40
Before and after	38
On date and after	29
Before date not after	7

It has been mentioned that some of these post offices have their scenic datestamp introduced only on the issue date of the National Park set for which they are the designated post office. This is not always the case as many places already had a scenic datestamp before its use on a National Park first-day cover. Also, even for a post office which might “introduce” a scenic datestamp on the date it was used on a first-day cover, this does not always mean that it did not previously have a scenic datestamp. Scenic datestamps were introduced in 1931, and most post offices periodically “introduce” new designs to depict scenes that have become more relevant. For example, the Bōchū post office mentioned above introduced its first scenic datestamp on 1.1.1948, and then replaced it with the one shown in **Figure 2** on 2.10.1961. The introduction date for scenic cancellations can be found in the *Checklist of Japanese Scenic Cancellations 1948-1993*, Japan Philatelic Publications, 1994, or newer publications.

Scenic datestamp in use	Number of post offices
First on the date	40
Before the date	106

From combining the knowledge about the scenic datestamps and the swordguard cancellations it is possible to make a list of designated post offices used for each park issue together with information about the usages of their respective cancellers. To make it easier to find information about the cancels for each park I begin each park description with a mention of where it is. A cancel used outside these prefectures is not considered a “real” first day cancel. Then I list the scenic datestamps known of post offices within the park and in some cases mention that that there is uncertainty. Lastly, I mention the swordguards used for each park, and their respective usage dates based on the recorded usage dates within the listing maintained by the ISJP Roman-letter postmarks study group (see ISJP website). In most cases I have not described the design elements of the scenic datestamps, as these can be found in the 1994 Checklist and in most cases in the back issues of JP (these can be found in the JP Index under “Scenic datestamps, Individual”).

**PART 1**  
**1958 to 1965 - without officially designated FDC post offices**

In this period the post offices mentioned have been checked against information in the JSCA catalogue and maps of the national parks.

**Sado-Yahiko Quasi-National Park (佐渡弥彦国定公園)**

This park in Niigata Prefecture was designated the Sado-Yahiko Quasi-National Park in 1950. In 1981 an area around Yoneyama (Mt. Yone) was added and the park renamed the Sado-Yahiko-Yoneyama Quasi-National Park. The expanded park now comprises Sado Island and two areas on the Sea of Japan coast.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P200-201, issued on 20.8.1958.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Aikawa (相川)	Niigata	20.8.1958 (new)
Himezu (姫津)	Niigata	20.8.1958 (new)
Koda (小田)	Niigata	20.8.1958
Yahiko (弥彦)	Niigata	20.8.1958 (new)

All four post offices introduced a scenic datestamp on the issue date of the stamps. All four have been seen on first-day covers (FDC). Aikawa, Himezu and Yahiko had an existing scenic datestamp which this new one replaced. In this case no swordguards are found from any of these four post offices. An FDC to a foreign destination is not known. If one exists it will possibly have a scenic datestamp and a domestic comb cancel.

**Akiyoshidai Quasi-National Park (秋吉台国定公園)**

The Akiyoshidai (Akiyoshi Plateau) Park in Yamaguchi Prefecture includes the Akiyoshi cave and the large karst plain on the plateau.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P202-203 issued on 16.3.1959.

Scenic datestamp		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Akiyoshi (秋吉)	Yamaguchi	16.3.1959

The scenic datestamp was introduced on the issue date of the stamp. Another design was used before from 1954. A swordguard from Akiyoshi is first recorded from 1985. A first-day mailing to a foreign destination (**Figure 3**) bears the scenic datestamp and the Akiyoshi domestic comb cancel 山口・秋吉 (Yamaguchi・Akiyoshi) / 34.3.16 / time 8-12 a.m.



Figure  
3

### Yaba-Hita-Hikosan Quasi-National Park (耶馬日田英彦山国定公園)

This park spreads over the three prefectures of Fukuoka, Kumamoto and Ōita. The Yabakei and Hita post offices are in Ōita and the Hikosan post office is in Fukuoka.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P204-205 issued on 25.9.1959.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Hikosan (彦山)	Fukuoka	25.9.1959
Hita (日田)	Ōita	2.7.1951 (before)
Yabakei (耶馬溪)	Ōita	15.1.1949 (before)

The scenic datestamp from Hikosan was introduced on the issue date of the stamp. The two others are older, and were introduced on the dates shown in the table above.

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Hikosan	Fukuoka	Not found
Hita	Ōita	From 1957 to 1994
Yabakei	Ōita	Only 25.9.1959

FDCs sent to foreign destinations from the park are either from Yabakei or Hita with a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office.

### Mikawa-wan Quasi-National Park (三河湾国定公園)

The Mikawa-wan (Mikawa Bay) Park is in Aichi Prefecture. It includes coastal areas around Mikawa Bay.

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue No. P206 issued on 20.3.1960.



Figure 4

Scenic datestamp		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Gamagōri (蒲郡)	Aichi	15.6.1948 (before)

The scenic datestamp from Gamagōri had been in use before.

Swordguard		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Gamagōri	Aichi	From 20.3.1960 to 1985

FDCs sent to foreign destinations (**Figure 4**) are from Gamagōri (scenic datestamp and swordguard).

**Abashiri Quasi-National Park (網走国定公園)**

This park in Hokkaidō includes the waters, coastline and lakes along the sea of Okhotsk.

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue No. P207 issued on 15.6.1960.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Abashiri (網走)	Hokkaidō	15.7.1950 (before)
Hamakoshimizu (浜小清水)	Hokkaidō	1.5.1958 (before)

The scenic datestamps were introduced before the stamp issue. Hamakoshimizu is not mentioned in JSCA.

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Abashiri	Hokkaidō	From 1959 to 1980
Hamakoshimizu	Hokkaidō	Only 15.6.1960

FDCs sent to foreign destinations from the park are either from Abashiri or Hamakoshimizu with a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office. One has also been recorded bearing a Small Commemorative Datestamp (SCD) used for a stamp exhibition in Abashiri (**Figure 5**).



Figure 5

**Ashizuri Quasi-National Park (足摺国定公園)**

This park spreads over the prefectures of Ehime and Kōchi.

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue No. P208 issued on 1.8.1960.

Scenic datestamp		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Tosashimizu (土佐清水)	Kōchi	5.3.1956 (before)

Swordguard		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Tosashimizu	Kōchi	From 1.8.1960 to 1984

FDCs sent to foreign destinations are from Tosashimizu (scenic datestamp and swordguard), although one has been recorded bearing a swordguard and an SCD.

**Minami-Bōsō Quasi-National Park (南房総国定公園)**

This park in Chiba Prefecture includes coastal areas of the Bōsō Peninsula.

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue No. P209 issued on 15.3.1961.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Odo (小戸)	Chiba	15.3.1961
Shirahama (白浜)	Chiba	15.3.1961
Tateyama (館山)	Chiba	10.10.1949 (before)
Kamogawa (鴨川)	Chiba	1.4.1952 (before)
Kominato (小湊)	Chiba	1.4.1952 (before)
Onjuku (御宿)	Chiba	1.5.1958 (before)
Katsuura (勝浦)	Chiba	1.6.1956 (before)

Only Shirahama is described as an official first day post office in the JSCA and Visual catalogues. The other post offices are located inside the park. Both Odo and Shirahama scenic datestamps have the same design and the same first date. The other places have been seen on only unaddressed FDCs. One of these FDCs also included a scenic datestamp for Kisarazu (木更津), which is located outside the park. It is possible that other post offices along the coast had a scenic datestamp which may have been used on FDCs for this stamp issue.

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Odo	Chiba	Not found
Shirahama	Chiba	Only 15.3.1961
Tateyama	Chiba	From 1955 to 1985

FDCs sent to foreign destinations are from Shirahama (scenic datestamp and swordguard). An FDC with a Tateyama swordguard has not been seen. The other post offices with scenic datestamps (listed above) introduced a swordguard at a later date than this stamp issue.

**Biwako Quasi-National Park (琵琶湖国定公園)**

The Biwako (Lake Biwa) Park spreads over the two prefectures of Shiga and Kyōto.

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue No. P210 issued on 25.4.1961.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Ishiyama (石山)	Shiga	1.1.1948 (before)
Ōtsu (大津)	Shiga	10.3.1948 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Ishiyama	Shiga	Not found
Ōtsu	Shiga	From 1954 to 1986

There is no swordguard from Ishiyama. Ōtsu is the nearest larger town. FDCs sent to foreign destinations will normally have an Ishiyama scenic datestamp and an Ōtsu swordguard (**Figure 6**). A single FDC has been seen with a scenic datestamp and swordguard from Ōtsu. Also, a Small Commemorative Datestamp (SCD) for an unidentified event has been sighted used at Ishiyama cancelling the stamp on its day of issue.



**Figure 6**

**San'in Kaigan Quasi-National Park (山陰海岸国立公園)**

The San'in Kaigan (San'in Coast) Park along the Sea of Japan spreads across the three prefectures of Tottori, Hyōgo, and Kyōto.

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue No. P211 issued on 15.8.1961.

Scenic datestamp		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Tottori (鳥取)	Tottori	15.8.1961

The scenic datestamp was introduced on the issue date of the stamp. Another design was used before from 1949.

Swordguard		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Tottori	Tottori (Part D in cancel blank)	From 1953 to 1988

FDCs sent to foreign destinations are from Tottori (scenic datestamp and swordguard). Also, an unidentified SCD used at Tottori has been seen on an FDC.

**Ōnuma Quasi-National Park (大沼国定公園)**

This park is situated in southwest Hokkaidō. It includes the volcano Komagatake (Mt. Koma) and the two lakes named Ōnuma ("large lake") and Konuma ("small lake").

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue No. P212 issued on 15.9.1961.

Scenic datestamp		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Ōnuma (大沼)	Hokkaidō	2.7.1951 (before)

Swordguard		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Ōnuma	Hokkaidō	Only 15.9.1961

FDCs sent to foreign destinations are from Ōnuma (scenic datestamp and swordguard).

**Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park (富士箱根伊豆国立公園)**

This park centers on Mt. Fuji on the border of Shizuoka and Yamanashi prefectures. It encompasses a number of areas not only in both of these prefectures, but also in the prefectures of Kanagawa and Tōkyō. At this time it included the Izu Peninsula but not the Izu Islands (see Izushichitō park entry on page 247).

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P91-94 issued on 16.1.1962.

Scenic datestamps			
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date	JSCA & Visual
Fuji (富士)	Shizuoka (Fuji)	10.5.1952 (before)	J
Hakonemachi (箱根町)	Kanagawa (Hakone)	15.8.1948 (before)	JV
Funatsu (船津)	Yamanashi (Fuji)	15.8.1948 (before)	
(Kawaguchi (河口))	Yamanashi (Fuji)	15.8.1948 (before)	J
Minamisaki (南崎)	Shizuoka (Izu)	21.5.1952 (before)	
Mito (三津)	Shizuoka (Izu)	16.1.1962	JV
Itō (伊東)	Shizuoka (Izu)	1.7.1949 (before)	
(Toi (土肥))	Shizuoka (Izu)	10.9.1956 (before)	JV
(Matsuzaki (松崎))	Shizuoka (Izu)	10.9.1956 (before)	JV
(Gotenba (御殿場))	Shizuoka (Fuji)	10.8.1955 (before)	JV

The last column of the table identifies those post offices mentioned in the JSCA (J) and Visual (V) catalogues or both (JV). Post offices with their names in parentheses identify the scenic datestamps that I have not found on an FDC for this stamp issue. It should be noted that the Fuji and Gotenba post offices are outside the park, but are mentioned in JSCA. The Mito scenic datestamp was introduced on the issue date of the stamp. Another design was used before from 1958.

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Fuji	Shizuoka	From 15.9.1962 to 1985
Hakonemachi	Kanagawa	From 1960 to 1963
Funatsu	Yamanashi	Only 16.1.1962
Minamisaki	Shizuoka	From 16.1.1962 to 1968
Mito	Shizuoka	Only 16.1.1962
Ito	Shizuoka	From 1955 to 1980

The first recorded swordguard use for Fuji is 15.9.1962, eight months after this stamp issue. It has not been seen on FDC for this issue. FDCs sent to foreign destinations have been seen from the Hakonemachi, Funatsu, Minamisaki and Mito with both scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office in all cases.

#### Kita-Nagato Kaigan Quasi-National Park (北長門海岸国定公園)

The park includes part of the coast of Yamaguchi Prefecture.

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue No. P213 issued on 15.2.1962.

Scenic datestamp		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Nagato (長門)	Yamaguchi	15.2.1962

Swordguard		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Nagato	Yamaguchi	Only 15.2.1962

FDCs sent to foreign destinations are from Nagato (scenic datestamp and swordguard).

**Kinkōwan Quasi-National Park (錦江湾国定公園)**

This park was designated as a Quasi-National Park on 1.9.1955 and merged with the Kirishima National Park on 16.3.1964. At the same time a large part of the island of Yakushima was also added and the resultant consolidated entity renamed the Kirishima-Yaku National Park (see this park's stamp issue on page 256). On 16.3.2012 the Yakushima part was split off to form a separate Yakushima National Park, and the remainder of the park renamed the Kirishima-Kinkōwan National Park. The Kinkōwan (Kinkō Bay) part lies wholly within Kagoshima Prefecture and comprises the active volcano Sakurajima and coastal areas of the nearby Satsuma and Ōsumi peninsulas.

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue No. P214 issued on 30.4.1962.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Kagoshima (鹿児島)	Kagoshima	2.5.1955 (before)
Higashisakurajima (東桜島)	Kagoshima	1.6.1952 (before)
Nishisakurajima (西桜島)	Kagoshima	1.6.1952 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Kagoshima	Kagoshima	From 1953 to 1991
Higashisakurajima	Kagoshima	Only 30.4.1962 (see <i>Note</i> )
Nishisakurajima	Kagoshima	Only 30.4.1962 (see <i>Note</i> )

*Note:* The swordguards have been used on only one day for each of the two post offices on Sakurajima. In both cases the date in the cancel is wrong. For Higashisakurajima it is “30. V.” (30/5) and not “30. IV.” (30/4), and for Nishisakurajima it is “30. VI.” (30/6) and not “30. IV.” (30/4). The covers with these swordguards all have the relevant scenic datestamp with the correct date. JSCA mentions only Kagoshima as an FDC post office, and that is what is normally found.

**Kongō-Ikoma Quasi-National Park (金剛生駒国定公園)**

This park was established in 1958 comprising areas in and around the Kongō Mountain Range and Mt. Ikoma on the border between Ōsaka and Nara Prefectures. In 1996 it was expanded to include the Izumi Mountain Range straddling the Ōsaka-Wakayama prefectural boundary and renamed the Kongō-Ikoma-Kisen Quasi-National Park.

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue No. P215 issued on 15.5.1962.

Scenic datestamp		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Chihaya (千早)	Ōsaka	15.5.1962

Swordguard		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Kōyama	Ōsaka	Only 15.5.1962

FDCs sent to foreign destinations from the park have a scenic datestamp from Chihaya (near Mt. Kongō) and a swordguard from the Kōyama (now called Kanankōyama) post office. JSCA mentions only Chihaya as an FDC post office.

**Suigō Quasi-National Park (水郷国定公園)**

The Suigō Quasi-National Park was established in 1953 encompassing the Tone River basin and the various lakes and waterways that feed into it. The park spreads across the boundary between Ibaraki and Chiba

prefectures. When the areas around Mt. Tsukuba and Mt. Kaba in Ibaraki Prefecture were added in 1969 the park was renamed the Suigō-Tsukuba Quasi-National Park.

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue No. P216 issued on 1.6.1962.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Itako (潮来)	Ibaraki	1.6.1962
Sawara (佐原)	Chiba	10.8.1951 (before)

The Itako scenic datestamp was introduced on the issue date of the stamp. Another design was used before from 1952.

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Itako	Ibaraki	From 1.6.1962 to 1980
Sawara (spelled SAHARA)	Chiba	From 1959 to 1.6.1962

FDCs sent to foreign destinations from the park are either from Itako or Sawara with a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office. The inscription in the swordguard is “SAHARA” – after 1962 it appears as “SAWARA”. The JSCA mentions only Itako as a first-day post office.

### Nikkō National Park (日光国立公園)

The park spreads over the four prefectures of Tochigi, Gunma, Fukushima and Niigata. The main part is in Tochigi Prefecture.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P95-98 issued on 1.9.1962.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Chūzenji (中禅寺)	Tochigi	16.7.1951 (before)
Nasu (那須)	Tochigi	2.7.1951 (before)
Nikkō (日光)	Tochigi	1.2.1948 (before)
Katashina (片品)	Gunma	1.10.1951 (before)
Shiobara (塩原)	Tochigi	2.7.1951 (before)
(Kinugawa Onsen (鬼怒川温泉))	Tochigi	15.7.1954 (before)

Shiobara has been seen only with a scenic datestamp. The Kinugawa Onsen post office is inside the park and although its scenic datestamp could exist on an FDC for this stamp issue, one has yet to be found.

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Chūzenji	Tochigi	From 1959 to 1984
Nasu	Tochigi	Only 1.9.1962
Nikkō	Tochigi	From 1952 to 1980
Katashina	Gunma	Only 1.9.1962
Shiobara	Tochigi	From 1976 to 1986
Kinugawa Onsen	Tochigi	Not found

FDCs sent to foreign destinations from the park are from Nasu, Nikkō, or Katashina with a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office. The Chūzenji swordguard has not been seen on the first day of issue date.

**Ishizuchi Quasi-National Park (石鎚国定公園)**

The park spreads across the border of Ehime and Kochi prefectures. The major part is in Ehime Prefecture.

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue No. P217 issued on 11.1.1963.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Ishizuchi (石鎚)	Ehime	11.1.1963
Komatsu (小松)	Ehime	1.12.1951 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Ishizuchi	Ehime	Not found
Komatsu	Ehime	Only 11.1.1963

FDCs sent to foreign destinations from the park are mostly from Ishizuchi (scenic datestamp and swordguard), although one cover from Komatsu has been seen with that office's scenic datestamp and swordguard.

**Unzen-Amakusa National Park (雲仙天草国立公園)**

The park is in Nagasaki, Kumamoto and Kagoshima prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P99-100 issued on 15.2.1963.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Matsushima (松島)	Kumamoto	21.7.1955 (before)
Kumamoto (熊本)	Kumamoto	15.12.1960 (before)
Unzen (雲仙)	Nagasaki	1.1.1948 (before)

Only Unzen is described as an official first day post office in the JSCA and Visual catalogues. The Kumamoto post office is outside the park.

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Matsushima	Kumamoto	Only 15.2.1963
Kumamoto	Kumamoto	From 1953 to 1989
Unzen	Nagasaki	From 15.2.1963 to 1981
Amakusa	Kumamoto	Only 15.2.1963

FDCs sent to foreign destinations are seen from Matsushima, Kumamoto and Unzen with a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office. The Amakusa swordguard has been seen only on this date of issue. Amakusa had no scenic datestamp at this time and did not introduce one until 20.4.1997.

**Hakusan National Park (白山国立公園)**

Established in 1962, this park spans the borders of Fukui, Gifu, Ishikawa and Toyama prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P101-102 issued on 1.3.1963.

Scenic datestamp		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Shiramine (白峰)	Ishikawa	1.3.1963

The Shiramine scenic datestamp was introduced on the issue date of the stamp. It replaced the previous scenic datestamp with the same design but old kanji (白峯) that had been in use since 15.6.1948.

Swordguard		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Shiramine	Ishikawa	From 1.3.1963 to 1981

This is a case where a post office introduced a scenic datestamp and a swordguard on the first day and used them later. FDCs sent to foreign destinations from the park are from Shiramine (scenic datestamp and swordguard).

**Genkai Quasi-National Park (玄海国定公園)**

The park is in the Genkai coast of Fukuoka, Saga, and Nagasaki prefectures.

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue No. P218 issued on 15.3.1963.

Scenic datestamp		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Keya (芥屋)	Fukuoka	1.4.1952 (before)

Swordguard		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Kofuji	Fukuoka	Only 15.3.1963

This is a case where we have two different post offices. FDCs sent to foreign destinations from the park have a Keya scenic datestamp and a Kofuji swordguard. The two post offices are just over 1 km apart.

**Bandai-Asahi National Park (磐梯朝日国立公園)**

This park encompasses areas in Fukushima, Yamagata and Niigata prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P103-104 issued on 25.5.1963.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Ōisawa (大井沢)	Yamagata	30.11.1962 (before)
Urabandai (裏磐梯)	Fukushima	15.8.1961 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Hondōji	Yamagata	Only 25.5.1963
Azuma	Fukushima	Only 25.5.1963

FDCs sent to foreign destinations from the park have either an Ōisawa scenic datestamp with a Hondōji swordguard or a Urabandai scenic datestamp with an Azuma swordguard.

**Setonaikai (Inland Sea) National Park (瀬戸内海国立公園)**

This national park comprises areas of Japan's Inland sea and ten bordering prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P105-106 issued on 20.8.1963.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Naruto (鳴門)	Tokushima	14.5.1948 (before)
Tokushima (徳島)	Tokushima	26.11.1948 (before)
Kojima (児島)	Okayama	1.8.1959 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Naruto	Tokushima	From 20.8.1963 to 1985
Tokushima	Tokushima	From 1953 to 1990
Kojima	Okayama	From 1961 to 1986

FDCs sent to foreign destinations from the park are either from Naruto or Kojima with a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office, although some FDCs seen from Kojima have a swordguard together with an SCD rather than a scenic datestamp. Although an example has not been sighted, it is expected that Tokushima swordguards can also be found on FDCs to foreign countries.

**Daisetsuzan National Park (大雪山国立公園)**

The park is located in the central part of Hokkaidō.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P107-108 issued on 1.9.1963.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Sōunkyō (層雲峡)	Hokkaidō	1.9.1963
Shikaoi (鹿追)	Hokkaidō	1.9.1963
Urimaku (瓜幕)	Hokkaidō	1.9.1963
Asahikawa (旭川)	Hokkaidō	10.3.1949 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Kamikawa	Hokkaidō	From 1.9.1963 to 1984
Shikaoi	Hokkaidō	From 1.9.1963 to 1978

FDCs to foreign destinations with a Sōunkyō scenic datestamp have a Kamikawa swordguard. An FDC has also been seen with a Shikaoi scenic datestamp and Shikaoi swordguard. A cover from Urimaku sent overseas would probably (none has been seen) have a Shikaoi swordguard as Urimaku does not have a swordguard. The Asahikawa scenic datestamp has been seen only on domestic mailed or unaddressed FDCs.

**Izushichitō Quasi-National Park (伊豆七島国定公園)**

This park (established on 1.4.1955) encompasses the Izu Islands in Tōkyō Prefecture. On 7.7.1964 it was merged into the Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park.

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue No. P219 issued on 10.12.1963.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Hachijōjima (八丈島)	Tōkyō	15.2.1955 (before)
Ōshima (大島)	Tōkyō	1.10.1955 (before)
Sueyoshi (末吉)	Tōkyō	10.12.1963

Sueyoshi is a small post office on the island of Hachijōjima and would have had only local FDC use. It does not have a swordguard.

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Hachijōjima	Tōkyō	From 10.12.1963 to 1976
Ōshima	Tōkyō	From 1961 to 1985

FDCs sent to foreign destinations from the park are either from Hachijōjima or Ōshima with a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office.

**Wakasawan (Wakasa Bay) Quasi-National Park (若狭湾国定公園)**

The park includes part of Fukui and Kyōto prefectures. The main part of the park is the coast of Wakasa Bay.

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue No. P220 issued on 25.1.1964.

Scenic datestamp		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Takahama (高浜)	Fukui	25.1.1964

Swordguard		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Takahama	Fukui	From 25.1.1964 to 1980

FDCs sent to foreign destinations from the park are from Takahama (scenic datestamp and swordguard).

**Nichinan Kaigan Quasi-National Park (日南海岸国定公園)**

The park is on the coast of Kagoshima and Miyazaki prefectures. The main part is located in Miyazaki.

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue No. P221 issued on 20.2.1964.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Miyazaki (宮崎)	Miyazaki	20.2.1964
Toi (都井)	Miyazaki	10.6.1957 (before)
Nichinan (日南)	Miyazaki	7.4.1956 (before)

The Miyazaki scenic datestamp was introduced on the issue date of the stamp. It replaced the previous scenic datestamp in use since 10.6.1953.

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Miyazaki	Miyazaki	From 1953 to 1984
Toi	Miyazaki	Only 20.2.1964
Nichinan	Miyazaki	From 1961 to 1984

FDCs sent to foreign destinations are seen from Miyazaki, Toi and Nichinan with a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office.

**Ise-Shima National Park (伊勢志摩国立公園)**

This park is in Mie Prefecture.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P109-110 issued on 15.3.1964.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Ise (伊勢)	Mie	1.3.1955 (before)
Isuzugawa (五十鈴川)	Mie	21.7.1952 (before)
Toba (鳥羽)	Mie	10.7.1951 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Ise	Mie	From 1953 to 1985
Isuzugawa	Mie	Not found
Toba	Mie	From 1955 to 1986

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office, except for Isuzugawa which is only found as a scenic datestamp.

**Daisen-Oki National Park (大山隠岐国立公園)**

This park includes areas of Okayama, Shimane and Tottori prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P111-112 issued on 20.1.1965.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Daisen (大山)	Tottori	1.1.1948 (before)
Saigō (西郷)	Shimane	20.1.1965

The Saigō scenic datestamp was introduced on the stamp issue date. It replaced the previous scenic datestamp in use from 26.11.1959.

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Daisen	Tottori	From 20.1.1965 to May 1965
Saigō	Shimane	Only 20.1.1965

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office.

**Niseko-Shakotan-Otaru Kaigan Quasi-National Park (ニセコ積丹小樽海岸国定公園)**

The park is located in Hokkaidō's Shiribeshi Subprefecture.

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue No. P222 issued on 15.2.1965.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Konbu (昆布)	Hokkaidō	1.11.1950 (before)
Otaru (小樽)	Hokkaidō	1.2.1948 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Konbu (spelled KOMBU)	Hokkaidō	Only 15.2.1965
Otaru	Hokkaidō	From 1953 to 1988

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office. Examples from Konbu are more prevalent.

**Jōshin'etsu-kōgen National Park (上信越高原国立公園)**

This park includes mountainous areas of Gunma, Nagano and Niigata prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P113-114 issued on 15.3.1965.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Echigo-Tazawa (越後田沢)	Niigata	15.3.1965
Nojiriko (野尻湖)	Nagano	1.7.1952 (before)
Karuizawa (軽井沢)	Nagano	14.5.1948 (before)
Shinanomachi (信濃町)	Nagano	1.12.1959 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Echigo-Tazawa	Niigata	From 1958 to 15.3.1965
Nojiriko	Nagano	Not found
Karuizawa	Nagano	From 1953 to 1981
Shinanomachi	Nagano	From 1961 to 1972

The Nojiriko scenic cancel has not only the normal inscription of its name in kanji but also in Roman letters (**Figure 7**). Besides Nojiriko, JSCA also mentions Nozawa (野沢) as a first-day post office, but Nozawa did not get its first scenic datestamp until 1966. The Visual catalogue does not mention Nozawa, only Nojiriko, so it appears that the inclusion of Nozawa in the JSCA is an error (maybe for Karuizawa?).

FDCs sent to foreign destinations from the park are either from Echigo Tazawa or Karuizawa with a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office. An FDC from Nojiriko has a Nojiriko scenic datestamp and a Shinanomachi swordguard. An example from Shinanomachi has also been seen with an SCD (event unknown) and swordguard applied at that post office (**Figure 8**).

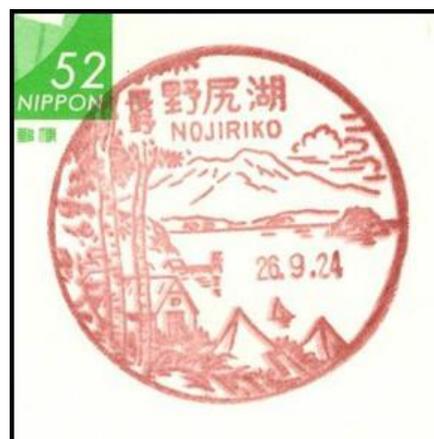


Figure 7

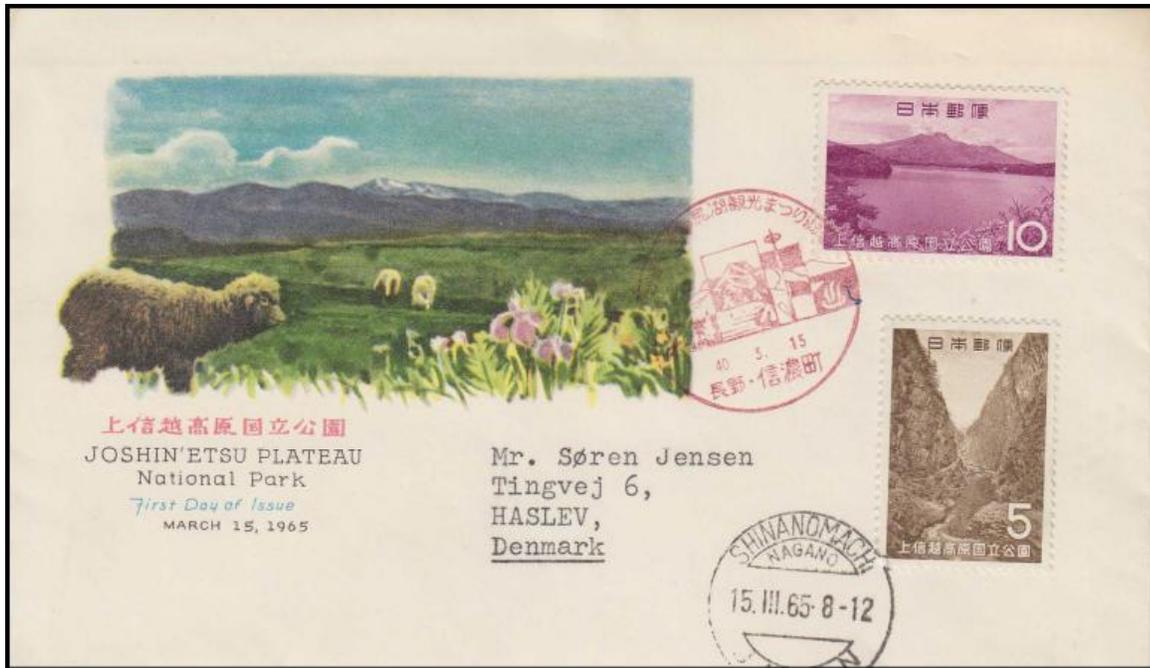


Figure 8

**Aso National Park (阿蘇国立公園)**

The park includes part of Kumamoto and Ōita prefectures. Following an extension to the park in 1986 it was renamed the Aso Kujū National Park.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P115-116 issued on 15.6.1965.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Akamizu (赤水)	Kumamoto	15.6.1965
Aso (阿蘇)	Kumamoto	15.12.1960 (before)
Bōchū (坊中)	Kumamoto	2.10.1961 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Akamizu	Kumamoto	From 1962 to 1986
Aso	Kumamoto	From 15.6.1965 to 1981
Bōchū (spelled BOJU) <sup>(4)</sup>	Kumamoto	From 1961 to 1993

Bōchū post office in Aso town is a collection and distribution center. FDCs to foreign destinations are from Akamizu, Aso, and Bōchū with a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office. The Aso swordguard has its date elements in the wrong order: DDYYMM instead of DDMMYY (Figure 9).

<sup>4</sup> See discussion on page 234.



Figure 9

## PART 2

### 1965 to 1974 - with officially designated FDC post offices

In this period the first-day roman-letter swordguards and domestic comb stamps include the **hato** (pigeon or dove) symbol in the cancel of the official post offices. Beginning with the 1967 Minami Alps National Park issue, the report of each park issue in JP articles includes a map of the park, a description of the stamp design(s), and the FD post offices and their scenic datestamps (both described and illustrated). I have provided the JP reference for the first three parks, but the others can be easily found by using the JP Index. I have included only a few illustrations from this period as the scenic datestamps are depicted in the JP reports. However, neither the information on roman-letter swordguard cancels used on FDCs to foreign destinations nor the consistent mention of introduction dates for scenic datestamps appears in the JP reports, so that information has been provided here.

#### Shiretoko National Park (知床国立公園)

The park is in Hokkaidō and covers most of Shiretoko peninsula.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P117-118 issued on 15.11.1965.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Rausu (羅臼)	Hokkaidō	15.2.1965 (before)
Shari (斜里)	Hokkaidō	25.9.1965 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Rausu	Hokkaidō	From 15.11.1965 to 1980
Shari	Hokkaidō	From 15.11.1965 to 1980

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office. The Rausu first-day swordguard has its date elements in the wrong order: YYMMDD instead of DDMMYY (**Figure 10**).



Figure 10

**Zaō Quasi-National Park (蔵王国定公園)**

The park includes part of Miyagi and Yamagata prefectures. The main part is Mt. Zaō.

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue No. P223 issued on 15.3.1966.

Scenic datestamp		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Tōgatta (遠刈田)	Miyagi	15.2.1951 (before)

Swordguard		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Tōgatta	Miyagi	Only 15.3.1966

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from Tōgatta.

**Muroto-Anan Kaigan Quasi-National Park (室戸阿南海岸国定公園)**

This park includes part of the coast of Kōchi and Tokushima prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P224-225 issued on 22.3.1966.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Muroto (室戸)	Kōchi	1.6.1960 (before)
Hiwasa (日和佐)	Tokushima	22.3.1966

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Muroto	Kōchi	From 1962 to 22.3.1966
Hiwasa	Tokushima	Only 22.3.1966

Hiwasa is one of the cases where the scenic datestamp is used for the first time and the swordguard only used on FDCs for this issue. FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office.

**Minami Alps National Park (南アルプス国立公園)**

The park includes border areas of Shizuoka, Yamanashi and Nagano prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P119-120 issued on 10.7.1967 (new-issue report at JP 22/119).

Scenic datestamp		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Nirasaki (韮崎)	Yamanashi	20.7.1965 (before)

Swordguard		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Nirasaki	Yamanashi	From 1965 to 1974

FDCs to foreign destinations have a Nirasaki scenic datestamp and swordguard.

**Chichibu-Tama National Park (秩父多摩国立公園)**

The park includes areas in Saitama, Yamanashi, Nagano and Tōkyō prefectures. On 10.8.2000 the name of the park was changed (without any increase in area) to Chichibu-Tama-Kai National Park.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P121-122 issued on 27.11.1967 (new-issue report at JP 22/271).

Scenic datestamp		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Chichibu (秩父)	Saitama	3.12.1965 (before)

Swordguard		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Chichibu	Saitama	From 1962 to 27.11.1967

FDCs to foreign destinations have a Chichibu scenic datestamp and swordguard.

**Sobo-Katamuki Quasi-National Park (祖母傾国定公園)**

The park includes areas in both Ōita and Miyazaki prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P226-227 issued on 20.12.1967 (new-issue report at JP 22/273).

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Taketa (竹田)	Ōita	1.4.1952 (before)
Takachiho (高千穂)	Miyazaki	1.3.1956 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Taketa	Ōita	From 20.12.1967 to 1981
Takachiho	Miyazaki	From 20.12.1967 to 1972

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office.

**Yatsugatake-Chūshin Kōgen Quasi-National Park (八ヶ岳中信高原国定公園)**

The park includes border areas between Nagano and Yamanashi prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P228-229 issued on 21.3.1968

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Kobuchizawa (小淵沢)	Yamanashi	1.7.1954 (before)
Chino (茅野)	Nagano	1.3.1968 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Kobuchizawa	Yamanashi	From 21.3.1968 to 1985
Chino	Nagano	From 21.3.1968 to 1986

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office.

**Rishiri-Rebun Quasi-National Park (利尻礼文国定公園)**

This park in Hokkaidō was established on 10.7.1965 and included the islands of Rishiri and Rebun. On 20.9.1974 the Sarobetsu Plain was incorporated within the park and it was both reclassified and renamed the Rishiri-Rebun-Sarobetsu National Park.

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue No. P230 issued on 10.5.1968

Scenic datestamp		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Kabuka (香深)	Hokkaidō	10.5.1968

Swordguard		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Kabuka	Hokkaidō	From 10.5.1968 to 1976

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a Kabuka scenic datestamp and swordguard.

**Hida-Kisogawa Quasi-National Park (飛騨木曾川国定公園)**

This park covers part of Aichi and Gifu prefectures along the Hida and Kiso rivers. The main part is in Gifu.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P231-232 issued on 20.7.1968

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Minokamo (美濃加茂)	Gifu	24.11.1958 (before)
Inuyama (犬山)	Aichi	1.8.1967 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Minokamo	Gifu	From 20.7.1968 to 1980
Inuyama	Aichi	From 1960 to 1982

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office.

**Towada-Hachimantai National Park (十和田八幡平国立公園)**

The park includes areas in Aomori, Iwate and Akita prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P123-124 issued on 16.9.1968

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Matsuokōzan (松尾鉾山)	Iwate	16.9.1968
Towada (十和田)	Aomori	1.8.1964 (before)
Towadako (十和田湖)	Aomori	16.9.1968

The Matsuokōzan and Towadako scenic datestamps were introduced on the stamp issue date. They respectively replaced previous scenic datestamps in use from 20.8.1957 and 15.1.1949.

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Matsuokōzan	Iwate	Only 16.9.1968
Towada	Aomori	From 16.9.1968 to 1979
Towadako	Aomori	Not found

Towada is not mentioned in the Visual Catalogue, but a swordguard with hatō has been sighted on an FDC sent to a foreign destination. FDCs from Matsuokōzan have that office's scenic datestamp and swordguard. FDCs sent to foreign destinations with a Towadako scenic datestamp would probably have a Towada swordguard.

**Kirishima-Yaku National Park (霧島屋久国立公園)**

The park includes areas in Kagoshima and Miyazaki prefectures. It was formed on 16.3.1964 from a merger of the Kirishima National Park and the Kinkōwan Quasi-National Park (see this park's stamp issue on page 242), together with the addition of a large part of the island of Yakushima. On 16.3.2012 the Yakushima part was

split off to form a separate Yakushima National Park, and the remainder of the park renamed the Kirishima-Kinkōwan National Park.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P125-126 issued on 20.11.1968.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Kamiyaku (上屋久)	Kagoshima	20.11.1968
Kirishima Onsen (霧島温泉)	Kagoshima	25.6.1952 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Kamiyaku	Kagoshima	From 20.11.1968 to 1971
Kirishima Onsen	Kagoshima	From 20.11.1968 to 1984

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office.

#### Echizen-Kaga Kaigan Quasi-National Park (越前加賀海岸国定公園)

This park includes part of the coast of Fukui and Ishikawa prefectures.

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue No. P233 issued on 27.1.1969.

Scenic datestamp		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Shikaura (四箇浦)	Fukui	30.1.1961 (before)

Swordguard		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Shikaura	Fukui	From 1961 to 27.1.1969

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a Shikaura scenic datestamp and swordguard.

#### Chōkai Quasi-National Park (鳥海国定公園)

The park includes part of Akita and Yamagata prefectures. The main part is Mt. Chōkai.

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue No. P234 issued on 25.2.1969.

Scenic datestamp		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Sakata (酒田)	Yamagata	25.2.1969

The Sakata scenic datestamp was introduced on the stamp issue date. It replaced the previous scenic datestamp in use from 10.6.1959.

Swordguard		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Sakata	Yamagata	From 1956 to 1992

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a Sakata scenic datestamp and swordguard.

**Kōya-Ryūjin Quasi-National Park (高野竜神国定公園)**

The park includes part of Nara and Wakayama prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P235-236 issued on 25.3.1969.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Kōya (高野)	Wakayama	1.10.1951 (before)
Ryūjin (竜神)	Wakayama	25.3.1969

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Kōya	Wakayama	From 1967 to 1984
Ryūjin	Wakayama	Only 25.3.1969

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office.

**Shimokita Hantō Quasi-National Park (下北半島国定公園)**

This park is Aomori Prefecture. The main part is the Shimokita Hantō (Peninsula).

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue No. P237 issued on 15.7.1969.

Scenic datestamp		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Tanabu (田名部)	Aomori	15.7.1969

The Tanabu scenic datestamp was introduced on the stamp issue date. It replaced the previous scenic datestamp in use from 11.7.1953.

Swordguard		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Tanabu	Aomori	15.7.1969 to 1982

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a Tanabu scenic datestamp and swordguard.

**Hyōnoson-Ushiroyama-Nagisan Quasi-National Park (氷ノ山後山那岐山国定公園)**

This park includes part of Hyōgo, Tottori and Okayama prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P238-239 issued on 20.8.1969.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Ueno (上野)	Hyōgo	20.8.1969
Nagi (奈義)	Okayama	20.8.1969

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Ueno	Hyōgo	Only 20.8.1969
Nagi	Okayama	Only 20.8.1969

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office.

#### Akan National Park (阿寒国立公園)

This park is in Hokkaidō.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P127-128 issued on 25.8.1969.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Bihoro (美幌)	Hokkaidō	15.7.1950 (before)
Kawayu (川湯)	Hokkaidō	10.5.1948 (before)
Akan (阿寒)	Hokkaidō	15.5.1956 (before)
Akanko (阿寒湖)	Hokkaidō	15.5.1956 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Bihoro	Hokkaidō	From 1965 to 1981
Kawayu	Hokkaidō	Only 25.8.1969

FDCs sent to foreign destinations from either Bihoro or Kawayu have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office. Akan and Akanko were not officially designated first-day post offices.

#### Rikuchū Kaigan National Park (陸中海岸国立公園)

This park extends along the coastline of Miyagi and Iwate prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P129-130 issued on 20.11.1969.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Ōfunato (大船渡)	Iwate	1.7.1964 (before)
Tanohata (田野畑)	Iwate	30.9.1955 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Ōfunato	Iwate (blank in part D)	Only 20.11.1969
Tanohata	Iwate	Only 20.11.1969

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office.

**Iki-Tsushima Quasi-National Park (壱岐対馬国定公園)**

This park includes the Iki and Tsushima islands in Nagasaki Prefecture.

Stamp: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P240 issued on 25.2.1970.

Scenic datestamp		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Izuhara (厳原)	Nagasaki	11.4.1952 (before)

Swordguard		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Izuhara	Nagasaki	From 25.2.1970 to 1981

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have an Izuhara scenic datestamp and swordguard.

**Yoshino-Kumano National Park (吉野熊野国立公園)**

The park includes part of Mie, Nara, and Wakayama prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P131-132 issued on 30.4.1970.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Yoshinoyama (吉野山)	Nara	1.10.1962 (before)
Nachisan (那智山)	Wakayama	10.6.1957 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Yoshinoyama	Nara	Not found
Yoshino	Nara	From 1961 to 30.4.1970
Nachisan	Wakayama	Not found
Katsuura	Wakayama	From 1959 to 30.4.1970

Yoshinoyama and Nachisan are the designated first-day post offices but neither of them has a swordguard cancel. An FDC to Argentina (**Figure 11**) has a Nachisan scenic datestamp, a Nachisan domestic comb cancel, and a Katsuura swordguard (without the hatō symbol). Nachikatsuura is the largest town near Nachisan. An overseas FDC from Yoshinoyama is expected to have been cancelled by a Yoshino swordguard but one has not been seen.

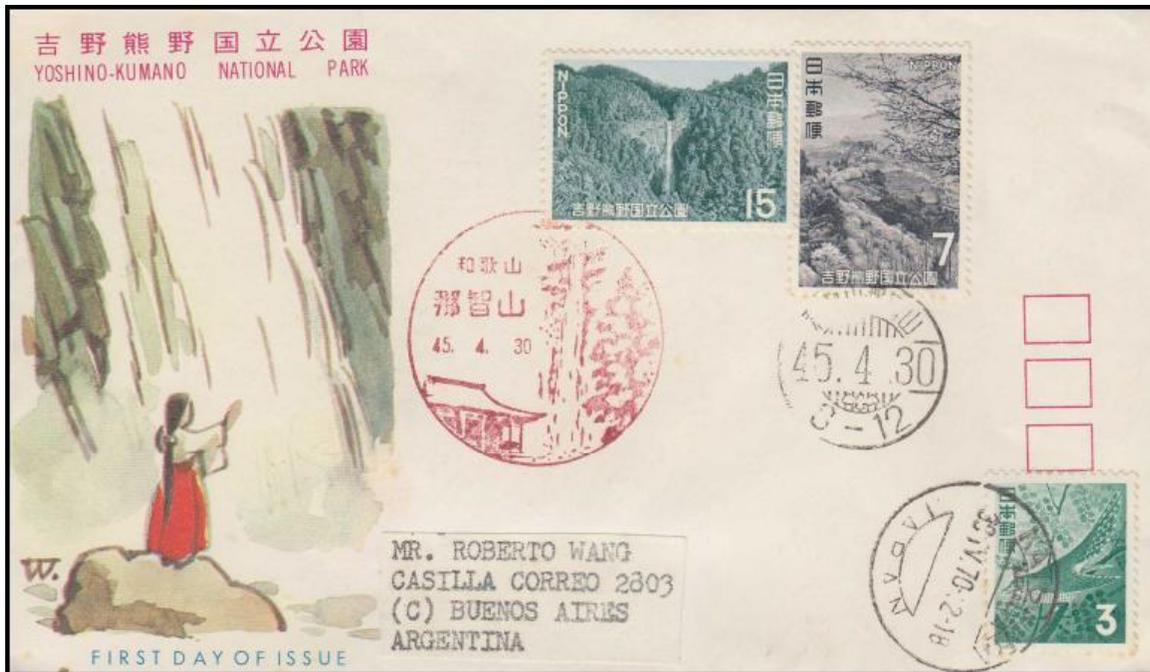


Figure 11

**Noto Hanto Quasi-National Park (能登半島国定公園)**

The park is on the Noto peninsula and covers areas in Ishikawa and Toyama prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P241-242 issued on 1.8.1970.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Suzu (珠洲)	Ishikawa	20.7.1965 (before)
Himi (永見)	Toyama	15.9.1951 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Suzu	Ishikawa	Only 1.8.1970
Himi	Toyama	From 1967 to 1.8.1970

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office. A Suzu FDC is depicted in **Figure 1** on page 233.

**Myōgi-Arafune-Saku Kōgen Quasi-National Park (妙義荒船佐久高原国定公園)**

The park spans the border between Gunma and Nagano prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P243-244 issued on 11.9.1970.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Shimonita (下仁田)	Gunma	11.9.1970
Nozawa (野沢)	Nagano	11.9.1970

Both scenic datestamps were introduced on the stamp issue date. The Nozawa cancel replaced the previous version in use from 28.2.1966 and the Shimonita cancel replaced a previous version in use from 10.6.1953. The Visual catalogue made an error by depicting the earlier Shimonita datestamp.

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Shimonita	Gunma	Only 11.9.1970
Nozawa	Nagano	From 1966 to 1978

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office.

**Saikai National Park (西海国立公園)**

This park is in Nagasaki Prefecture.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P133-134 issued on 26.6.1971.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Sasebo (佐世保)	Nagasaki	7.4.1956 (before)
Wakamatsu (若松)	Nagasaki	10.12.1956 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Sasebo <sup>(5)</sup>	Nagasaki	From 1954 to 1989
Wakamatsu	Nagasaki	Only 26.6.1971

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office.

**Shikotsu-Tōya National Park (支笏洞爺国立公園)**

The park is in Hokkaidō prefecture and named after Lake Tōya and Lake Shikotsu.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P135-136 issued on 6.12.1971.

<sup>5</sup> This post office's first swordguard was inscribed "SASEHO", an earlier romanization of "Sasebo". A swordguard spelled "SASEBO" was introduced in 1960.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Sōbetsu (壮瞥)	Hokkaidō	25.9.65 (before)
Tōya Onsen (洞爺温泉)	Hokkaidō	10.10.1949 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Sōbetsu	Hokkaidō	Only 6.12.1971
Tōya Onsen	Hokkaidō	From 1960 to 1985

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office.

**Hiba-Dogo-Taishaku Quasi-National Park (比婆道後帝釈国定公園)**

This park is in areas of Tottori, Shimane and Hiroshima prefectures. It includes a number of mountainous areas.

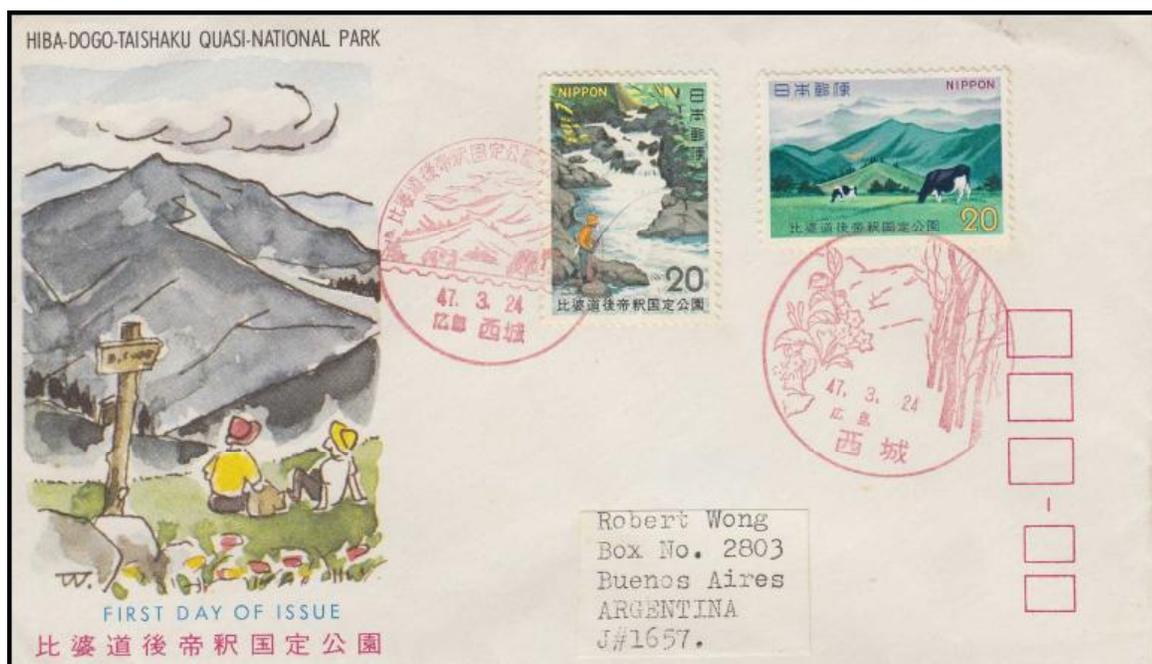
Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P245-246 issued on 24.3.1972.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Saijō (西城)	Hiroshima	24.3.1972
Taishaku (帝釈)	Hiroshima	16.4.1952 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Saijō	Hiroshima	From 1958 to 1980
Taishaku	Hiroshima	From 1967 to 1980

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office. From both Saijō (**Figure 12**) and Taishaku there are also examples with a scenic datestamp and a SCD for an unidentified event.



**Figure 12**

**Kurikoma Quasi-National Park (栗駒国定公園)**

The park includes areas of Akita, Iwate, Miyagi and Yamagata prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P247-248 issued on 20.6.1972.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Yuzawa (湯沢)	Akita	20.6.1972
Naruko (鳴子)	Miyagi	1.8.1957 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Yuzawa	Akita	Only 20.6.1972
Naruko (spelled NARUGO)	Miyagi	20.6.1972 to 1980

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office.

**Chūbu-Sangaku National Park (中部山岳国立公園)**

The park includes part of Nagano, Gifu, Toyama and Niigata prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P137-138 issued on 10.8.1972.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Kamikōchi (上高地)	Nagano	15.6.1949 (before)
Tateyama Sanchō (立山山頂)	Toyama	1.7.1970 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Kamikōchi	Nagano	Not found
Tateyama Sanchō	Toyama	Not found

I have not seen any swordguards. An FDC to a foreign destination from Kamikōchi has a scenic datestamp and a domestic comb cancel with the hatō symbol. A cover from Tateyama Sanchō has the same. It is possible that no roman-letter datestamps were ever used.

**Tsurugisan Quasi-National Park (剣山国定公園)**

This park spans the border of part of Tokushima and Kōchi prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P249-250 issued on 20.2.1973.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Ichiu (一字)	Tokushima	20.2.1973
Ōboke (大歩危)	Tokushima	1.4.1967 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Ichiu	Tokushima	Only 20.2.1973
Ōboke	Tokushima	Only 20.2.1973

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office.

**Meiji no Mori (Meiji Forests) Quasi-National Parks (明治の森国定公園)**

This park comprises two separate Quasi National Parks—the Meiji no Mori Minoo Quasi-National Park in Ōsaka Prefecture and the Meiji no Mori Takao Quasi-National Park in Tōkyō Prefecture. Their two respective mountains of Mt. Minoo and Mt. Takao are joined by the Tōkai Nature Trail.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P251-252 issued on 12.3.1973.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Hachiōji Nishi (八王子西)	Tōkyō	12.3.1973
Minoo (箕面)	Ōsaka	10.9.1967 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Hachiōji Nishi	Tōkyō	From 12.3.1973 to 1985
Minoo	Ōsaka	From 1961 to 1985

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office.

**Suzuka Quasi-National Park (鈴鹿国定公園)**

The park includes part of Mie and Shiga prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P253-254 issued on 25.5.1973.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Komono (菰野)	Mie	1.5.1973 (just before)
Seki (関)	Mie	1.5.1973 (just before)
Yunoyama (湯ノ山)	Mie	10.6.1961 (before)
Asake (朝明)	Mie	1.10.1955 (before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Komono	Mie	From 1961 to 1978
Seki	Mie	25.5.1973 to 1976

The officially designated post offices are Komono and Seki. FDCs sent to foreign destinations from each of these two post offices have a scenic datestamp and swordguard (with hatō) from that office. FDCs are also found from both the Yunoyama and Asake post offices in Komono Town within the park. These are found with a scenic datestamp and a domestic comb cancel (without hatō). In addition, these FDCs have not been sent outside Japan and are usually unaddressed. An example is depicted in **Figure 13** bearing a Yunoyama domestic comb and scenic datestamp at left and a Komono domestic comb and scenic datestamp at right.



**Figure 13**

**Ogasawara National Park (小笠原国立公園)**

The park is in the Ogasawara islands administered by the Tōkyō Metropolitan Government.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P139-140 issued on 26.6.1973.

Scenic datestamp		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Ogasawara (小笠原)	Tōkyō	15.6.1973 (just before)

Swordguard		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Ogasawara	Tōkyō	From 1962 to 1984

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have an Ogasawara scenic datestamp and swordguard.

**Nishi-Chūgoku Sanchi Quasi-National Park (西中国山地国定公園)**

This park is in part of Shimane, Hiroshima and Yamaguchi prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P255-256 issued on 28.8.1973.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Togouchi (戸河内)	Hiroshima	15.8.1973 (just before)
Kake (加計)	Hiroshima	20.9.1957 (before)

Swordguard		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Togouchi (spelled TOGAWACHI)	Hiroshima	28.8.1973

FDCs from Kake have the Kake scenic datestamp and domestic comb cancel without the hato symbol. Thus Kake is not a designated first-day post office but it is located inside the park. An example of an FDC from Togouchi showing its swordguard inscription of “Togawachi” is depicted in **Figure 14**.<sup>6</sup> Note that this swordguard has its date elements in the wrong order: DDYYMM instead of DDMMYY.



**Figure 14**

<sup>6</sup> [Editor's Note: It is of particular interest that the addressee of this FDC is the late Kr Wilhelmsen of Tromsø, Norway (i.e., not “Sweden”). Mr. Wilhelmsen was an ISJP member and one of the pioneers in the research of the forgeries of Japan’s classic stamps. He was certainly the first person to undertake a comprehensive study of the fake cancels used on these forgeries. He was co-author with Varro E. Tyler of ISJP Monograph 8 on the Koban forgeries.]

**Tenryū-Okumikawa Quasi-National Park (天竜奥三河国定公園)**

The park is in part of Shizuoka, Aichi and Nagano prefectures.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P257-258 issued on 18.9.1973.

Scenic datestamps		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Hōraiji (鳳来寺)	Aichi	21.5.1952 (before)
Tenryūkyō (天竜峡)	Nagano	20.8.1973 (just before)

Swordguards		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Hōraiji	Aichi	Only 18.9.1973
Tenryūkyō	Nagano	Only 18.9.1973

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have a scenic datestamp and swordguard from the same post office.

**Iriomote National Park (西表国立公園)**

The park is in Okinawa Prefecture. It is located around the Yaeyama islands. In 2007 the park was extended to include the island of Ishigaki and renamed the Iriomote-Ishigaki National Park.

Stamps: JSCA/Sakura Catalogue Nos. P141-142 issued on 15.3.1974.

Scenic datestamp		
Post office	Prefecture	First usage date
Iriomotejima (西表島)	Okinawa	15.1.1974 (before)

Swordguard		
Post office	Prefecture	Usage period
Iriomotejima	Okinawa	From 1972 to 25.3.1974

FDCs sent to foreign destinations have an Iriomotejima scenic datestamp and swordguard.

## Concluding remarks

For the scenic datestamps it can be seen that many of the well-known post offices introduced a scenic datestamp in the period 1948 to 1952. That includes a number of post offices located in the National Parks. In other cases the post office first introduced a scenic datestamp on the date when the park stamps were issued. That is typical for small post offices in the parks, which could be near the site shown on one of the stamps. In some cases we can also find scenic datestamps from post offices inside the park that were not officially designated as a first-day office.

In some cases like Suzuka Park (see page 266) we find FDCs with scenic datestamps and domestic comb cancels from places that are not designated as first-day post offices, but are still inside the park and have a scenic datestamp related to the park. It appears that these covers are much rarer. If you search for parks FDCs you will find that there are many post offices which have used their scenic datestamps on FDCs in both the Minami-Bōsō Quasi-National Park (see page 238) and the Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park (see pages 240-241). Many unaddressed covers with scenic cancels from several post offices in these parks were made in Japan by people who knew the geography and the post office locations in the parks. Only in few cases were such FDCs sent abroad.

For the swordguards it is interesting to see that in a number of cases the post office got a swordguard cancel that was used only on the day of the stamp issue. This was typical for small offices that did not normally process mail posted to foreign countries. The table below provides an estimated number of inhabitants for some of these small offices with a calculation based on an average number for each post office in the district. For instance: Hōraiji is a post office in Shinshiro-shi, a town with 47,000 inhabitants and with 18 post offices, giving an average (rounded) of 2,600 inhabitants per post office.

Post Office	Prefecture	Date	Inhabitants
Hōraiji	Aichi	1973.09.18	2,600
Matsuokōzan	Iwate	1968.09.16	2,000
Nasu	Tochigi	1962.09.01	4,200
Ōnuma	Hokkaidō	1961.09.15	4,000
Tenryūkyō	Nagano	1973.09.18	3,000
Tōgatta	Miyagi	1966.03.15	3,000
Yuzawa	Akita	1972.06.20	2,000

The number of inhabitants is typically 2-4,000 for these post offices and that is not realistic to handle mail for foreign countries. In each of the districts there are other post offices that can process the foreign mail. For instance in Shinshiro, the Shinshiro post office is a major post office with a Yū-Yū window for handling mail outside of normal hours. It has a swordguard cancel, for which use has been recorded between 1964 and 1980.

On the other hand, if it was a larger post office like Abashiri in Hokkaidō (a town of 39,000 inhabitants), it already had a swordguard cancel which was used before and after the stamp issue date. In Abashiri's case it was from 1959 to 1980, with its park issue dated 15.6.1960. The town of Abashiri has other post offices that do not handle foreign mail. The table gives some similar examples of larger towns where the post office's swordguard cancel was used before and after the date it was used on a parks issue.

Post Office	Prefecture	Period of swordguard use	Inhabitants
Abashiri	Hokkaidō	1959-80	39,000
Inuyama	Aichi	1960-82	74,000
Ise	Mie	1953-85	129,000
Minoo	Ōsaka	1961-85	130,000
Nikkō	Tochigi	1952-80	84,000
Sasebo	Nagasaki	1954-89	261,000

The post office can be the major post office in the town, whose services include collecting and sorting of mail and therefore which handles foreign mail for the whole area.

In some cases we have a date for swordguard use before the parks issue date but none after. That is the case for seven post offices. This looks strange but it is possible that later usage took place without such instances having been seen and recorded. They range from the largest post office in the town to a normal post office with a distribution center. The examples are listed below together with the first and last recorded dates on which each post office's swordguard was used.

Post Office	Prefecture	First usage	Last usage	Inhabitants
Echigo-Tazawa	Niigata	1958.11.21	1965.03.15	59,000
Muroto	Kōchi	1962.12.15	1966.03.22	16,000
Chichibu	Saitama	1962.12.17	1967.11.27	62,000
Yoshino	Nara	1961.04.28	1970.04.30	9,000
Katsuura	Wakayama	1959.12.01	1970.04.30	17,000
Himi	Toyama	1967.07.12	1970.08.01	53,000
Shikaura	Fukui	1961.01.30	1969.01.27	??

Shikaura post office in Fukui Prefecture is special as the first recorded usage date for its swordguard was the issue date of JSCA C327, for which it was the designated first-day post office. This was a special stamp issue depicting a narcissus and formed part of the 1961 Flower Series. As it is such a small post office, it is my conjecture that its swordguard was used only on dates for which it was a designated first-day post office. Other post offices also seem to fit into this category including Iriomotejima in Okinawa Prefecture, which has usage dates before and after its park issue usage on which it was the designated first-day post office, and Daisen in Tottori Prefecture. So, more post offices could be added to the group for which their swordguards were used only on FDCs if we include FDCs for issues in addition to parks issues.

The final group covers those cases can where the swordguard was first used on a park issue date, and subsequently used to process normal foreign mail. For larger post offices it is probably only a coincidence that we have sighted no usages before. For minor post offices it is possible that a swordguard could have been used initially on the FDC date and then in a later period if it was a collecting and distribution center. We know that all distribution and collecting centers were allowed to use a swordguard datestamp, but not when they were introduced. Of course, we have to remember that many post offices especially in remote areas like inside national parks seldom send mail to foreign countries, which may explain why there have been limited sightings of swordguard use on mail other than on FDCs. ■