

Wupo Marsh in Changnyeong

Inland wetlands where humans and nature coexist, Wupo Marsh in Changnyeong / Changnyeong-gun, South Gyeongsang Province /

Wupo Marsh is the biggest inland wetlands in Korea. It consists of four natural swamps – Wupo, Mokpo, Sajipo and Jjokjibeol – which were formed by the flooding of the Nakdong River 6,000 years ago. Around the Wupo Marsh area, a number of natural swamps were scattered about until the Japanese Occupation Period. However, lots of them are diminished or disappeared due to dike construction and farmland development. Fortunately, since 1990, the ecological value, beautiful scenery and conservation needs of Wupo Marsh has become widely recognized as a priority, and so destructive industrial development projects and destroying behaviors were halted so that the Wupo Marsh and its natural ecosystem could begin to rapidly revive.

Wupo Marsh, which is home to around 1,500 different kinds of species, is called a *repository ecosystem*. About 500 types of plants grow naturally in Wupo Marsh, including the Santa Cruz Water Lily, and 160 kinds of birds including the whooper swan (a Natural Monument), common swan, spoonbill, kestrel and mandarin duck all live in or visit Wupo Marsh seasonally. Mammals, such as elk and raccoon, are easy to see. The reclaimed Wupo Marsh was designated as an Ecology Protection Area in 1997, and subsequently in 1998, it was registered on the List of the Ramsar Convention. Wupo Marsh was designated again in 1999 as a Wetlands Protection Area and Natural Monument No. 524 in 2011.

If you walk amongst the beauty and revived nature of Wupo Marsh, we highly recommend you walk on the "Life Street" in the marsh. The life street passes through the reed forest, pine forest, and four wetlands of Wupo Marsh. You will sense the raw natural beauty and vitality of Wupo Marsh while walking through it.



Suncheon Bay

Marsh wetlands with healthy and glorious reed forest and mud flat, Suncheon Bay / Suncheon City, South Jeolla Province /

Suncheon Bay is situated between Yeosu Peninsula and Goheung Peninsula. The natural ecosystem of this estuary is preserved as closely as its original state. Mud flat, salt marsh, reed colony, and other ecosystems are also well developed. As it is large-sized, Suncheon Bay is considered as one of the world five marsh wetlands. It was designated as Wetlands Protection Area in December 2003 by Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, and in January 2006, the area was listed on the Ramsar Convention as the first Korean marsh wetlands.

The largest and most beautiful reed forest is developed in the natural ecology park, Suncheon Bay. Both side of the three kilometers waterway from the confluence of Dong Stream and Yisa Stream to the river mouth are reed forest. The extent of the forest is hard to measure exactly as the field is actually expanding every day. A variety of resident and migratory birds fly into the vast Suncheon Bay reed forest and mud flat. Until now, a total of 158 kinds of birds have been found including 19 kinds of natural monument. The area is especially famous as the biggest hooded crane's habitat in Korea.

The 1.2 kilometers long deck trail is installed in Suncheon Bay reed forest. You can sense the beauty of nature and scenery of Suncheon Bay only by strolling around. If you want to observe the various migratory birds and marsh organisms closely, you had better use Ecology Experience Ship travelling the mud flat in 'S' shape. Additionally, Yongsan Observatory is a must for Suncheon Bay ecological sightseeing. There you can appreciate the general view of Suncheon Bay reed forest and mud flat with the beautiful glow of the setting sun.



Ganghwa Island

One of the five world-famous mud flats, Ganghwa, where the black-faced spoonbill and snipe live / Ganghwa Island, Incheon Metropolitan City /

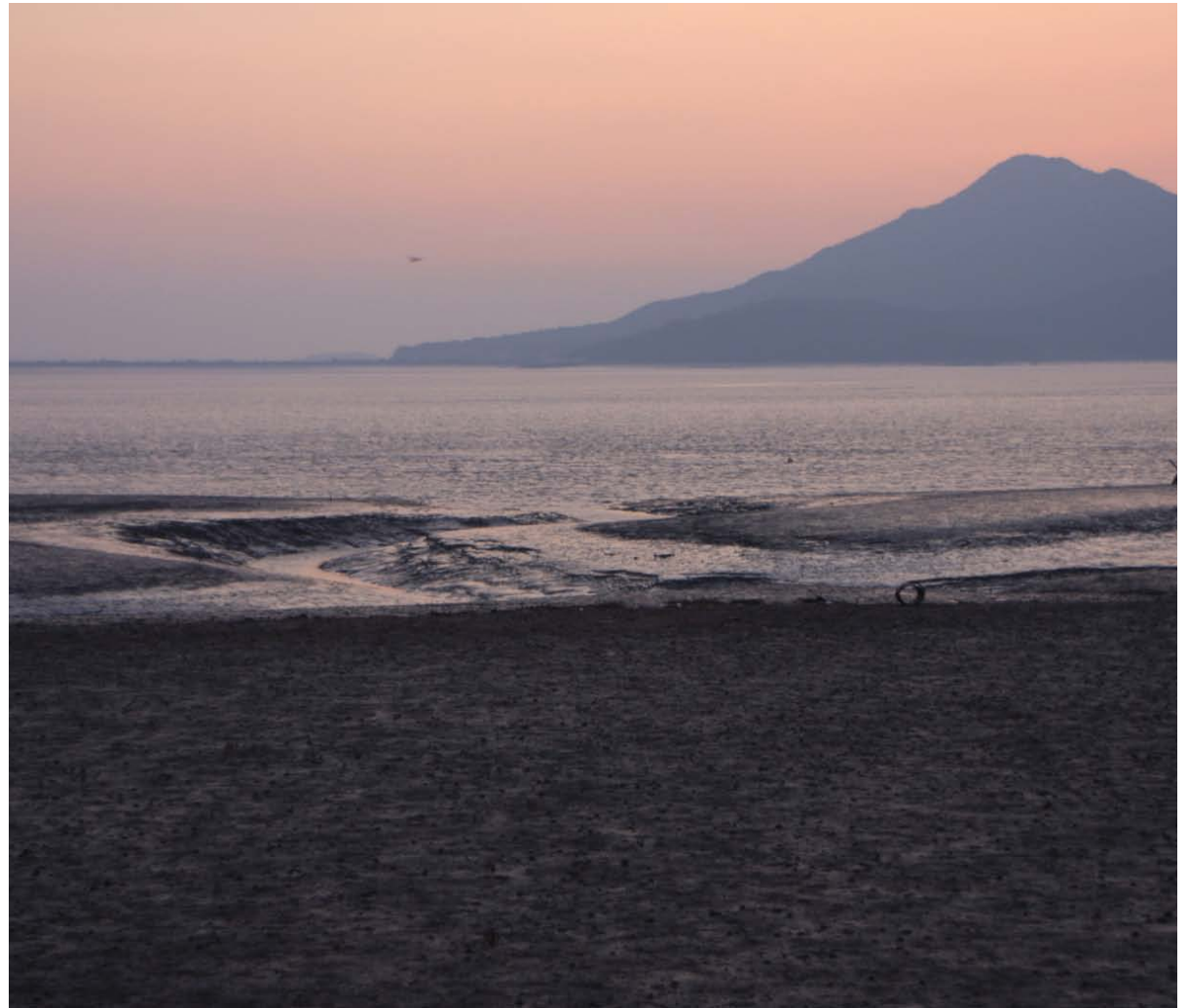
The Ganghwa Mud Flats are one of the five most popular mud flats in the world. Among all mud flats in Korea, it remains in the best condition among the mud flats in Korea, and is spread broadly around the southern coast of Ganghwa Island, Seokmo Island and Bol-eum Island. The Ganghwa Mud Flats and the breeding place of black-faced spoonbill (Natural Monument No. 419) is approximately 435 square kilometers in area.

The Ganghwa mud flats take up the largest area of any single designated cultural heritage site in Korea. Furthermore, marine animals are abundant and include plankton, ghost crab, sand crab and lugworm, and numerous bird species migrate to the area throughout the year.

The Namdan Mud Flats between Janggot Dondae and Chojjin are the richest and most diverse ecosystem within the Ganghwa mud flats. More than one per cent of black-faced spoonbills, red-crowned cranes, Chinese egrets, Greenshank, Saunder's Gull, gray plover and dunlin, which live all over the world, fly to this mud flat. Visitors can see almost all the known diversity of snipe and plover birds that visit Korea.

The Ganghwa Tidal Flat Center is located in Yeocha-ri, Hwado-myeon, Ganghwa-gun Province. Various materials are on display regarding the ecology, function, value and history of the Ganghwa Tidal Flats. One can enjoy the natural wildlife on the observatory or bird-watching deck. Tour programs offering different information and wildlife experiences are available.

The Maehwa Mareum (*Ranunculus Kazusensis* Makino) Beds in Choji-ri, Gilsang-myeon is also remarkable. It appears to be a normal rice field at first glance, but the wetland is on the Ramsar List of wetlands. Maehwa Mareum is a rare plant that was registered as a severely endangered wild plant. This flower beds are listed as the number one civil natural heritage of the Korean National Trust. A rice farm of the beds was purchased by public donation. The Maehwa Mareum grows into a resting place for migrant birds during the winter time. One can easily observe an enormous number of migrant birds on Ganghwa Island.



Sindu-ri Coastal Sand Hill in Tae-an

The largest coastal sand dune in Korea, Sindu-ri Coastal Sand Hill in Tae-an

/ Tae-an-gun, South Chungcheong Province /

The coastal line of Tae-an-gun in South Chungcheong Province is indented like a saw. It is a typical type of ria. Tae-an coast shows superb natural scenery with uniquely shaped stones and pine forest, and so it has been designated as the only Korean coastal national park in 1978.

Big and small coastal sand dunes are formed along the 530 kilometers long Tae-an-gun coastline. Coastal sand hill of Sindu-ri, Wonbuk-myeon is the largest coastal sand dune in Korea. A variety of sand dune topography such as fore dune, rear dune, ripple mark, barchan, and sandhill wetland are developed in these sand dunes. In addition, it is a repository ecosystem in which various sand dune plants and endangered animals live.

Duwung Wetland, the back swamp of the sand dune, is located to the south of Sindu-ri Coastal Sand Hill. This is registered as the smallest Ramsar wetland in the world. As the original quality of the land is preserved and the ecological value is quite high, the area was designated as wetland conservation zone for the first time as a sandhill wetland.



Cheonsuman Reclaimed Land

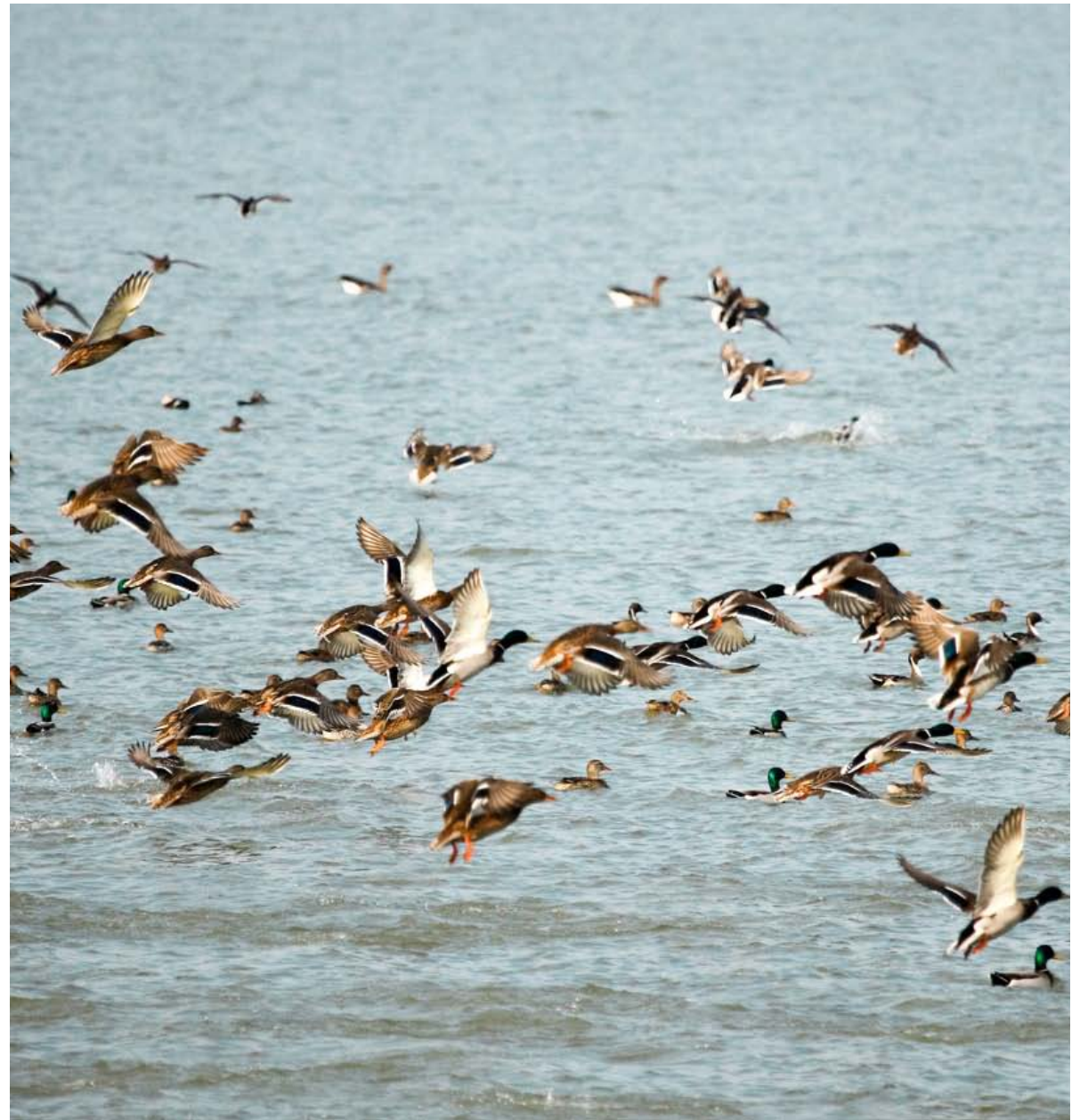
Paradise for migrating birds on a vast field and lake, Cheonsuman Reclaimed Land in Seosan

/ Seosan City, South Chungcheong Province /

Cheonsuman Reclaimed Land in Seosan City, South Chungcheong Province is the biggest habitat for winter migrating birds in Korea. More than 500,000 winter migrating birds visit Cheonsuman annually to spend winter. Spectacular seals show fantastic dance in line and whooper swans show off their elegance in group. Hundreds of thousands of mallard, bean goose, shovelbill, and other birds fly onto the land. Rare migrating birds such as stork, white-naped crane and spoonbill are sometimes seen.

Now Cheonsuman Reclaimed Land is becoming the paradise for migrating birds. The biggest reason for attracting winter birds is prolific food. As the rice is harvested using machine on the vast field around freshwater lake, grains of rice are found anywhere. Also fish and clams are enough in two freshwater lakes and Cheonsuman Sea. Another attraction is that the area is desolated and far from villages. This is truly a big advantage for wary migrating birds. Bushy field of reeds becomes a great shelter for the birds.

Seosan Reclaimed Land is where you can observe the largest number and kinds of migrating birds in a short time. On the contrary, Cheonsuman Reclaimed Land access is restricted to the public as the whole area is privately owned for offering the migrating birds peaceful rest and preventing from poaching. Thus, if one wishes to observe migrating birds in Cheonsuman Reclaimed Land, he or she has to join in Bird-watching tour program of Seosan Bird Land.



Reed Field in Sinseong-ri

Ecotourism destination of dense reed forest, Reed Field in Sinseong-ri

/ Seocheon-gun, South Chungcheong Province /

Seocheon-gun in South Chungcheong Province is popular for reeds. Tall reeds form dense forest at the delta of Geum River. As this Sinseong-ri reed field provides favorable environment for migrating birds to stay. A large number of migrating birds visit every year. *Phacelurus latifolius ohwi* forms a colony under the reeds. *Phacelurus latifolius ohwi* (Mosaedal in Korean) looks similar to reed. It is protected by law and designated as Rare Endangered Plant No. 194 by Korea Forest Service. Aside from it, silver grass, ditch reed and others grow in here and a great number of spectacled teal, mallard, swan, and wild goose often come in winter time. It is a treasure house of ecosystem and instructive ecological learning venue.

Reed is a very useful plant. Reed shoot is edible and its grain is used for making a reed broom or as a substitute for cotton. Tall reed stalk becomes a source of pulp and can be used to make reed blind, reed mat, and reed hat. The villagers in Sinseong-ri still make reed brooms using the reed grains that bloom in July and August. Though, they are extinct now, wetland crabs were common around the reed field before Geum River Estuary Barrage was built. The residents used to catch the crabs and fried or salted them to eat.

The vast reed field is harmonized with Geum River and creates unique and beautiful scenery. Thus, a number of movies and TV dramas have been filmed here including *"Joint Security Area"*, *"A Frozen flower"*, *"Chuno"*, and *"Yisan"*, and it has now become a popular tourist attraction. If you visit the area in late autumn or winter, you might be able to see fantastic group dance of hundreds of thousands of spectacled teal.



the mouth of Nakdong River in Busan

**Where river and sea unite, and human and nature harmonize:
the mouth of Nakdong River in Busan** / Busan Metropolitan City /

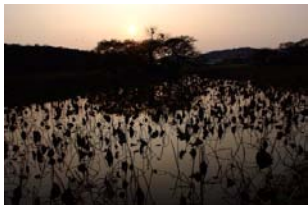
Eulsuk Island and the mouth of Nakdong River were once the largest habitat for migratory birds in the East (Natural Monument No. 179). A vast range of reed forests, mud flats and sand dunes used to provide sufficient food and shelter to migrant birds, but after the Nakdong Estuary was built, the number of migrant birds sharply decreased. Due to the rash development and construction, reed fields vanished and more people visited the area. Fortunately, some whooper swans, common swans, and other migrant birds still fly to the region every winter.

The good news is that recently, the natural ecosystem at the mouth of the Nakdong River has been revived around Eulsuk Island. The number of winter migratory birds is increasing annually: whooper swan, bean goose, white-fronted goose, mallard, pochard, pintail duck, Sheldrake, and baldpate. Spoonbill, Chinese goose, Steller's sea eagle and white-tailed sea eagle are also occasionally found. The most popular birds are Bewick's swans (Natural Monument No. 201). More than 3,000 swans spend winter time in Nakdong River every year.

If you wish to observe the migratory birds and ecosystem of the mouth of Nakdong River more closely, one can visit Nakdong Estuary Eco Center and Eulsuk Island Migratory Birds Park. Nakdong Estuary Eco Center was established with the aim of protecting and preserving the Eulsuk Island Migratory Birds Park, and to display, guide, educate and conduct research about the natural ecosystems of Nakdong Estuary, as well as the treatment and rehabilitation of wild animals. The 191 hectare-wide Eulsuk Island Migratory Birds Park used to be made of sand yard, onion patches and a landfill site. The land was later returned to our favorite guests – migratory birds.



Hak Village in Muan / Neureoji in Yeongsan River



Ecotourism destinations along the Yeongsan River (the lifeline of South Jeolla Province), Hak Village in Muan and Neureoji in Yeongsan River / Muan-gun, South Jeolla Province /

Muan is located in the south-west of South Jeolla Province. It is adjacent to West Sea in the West, and to Yeongsan River in the East. All the mountains in the area are less than 400 meters above the sea level, and most of the area is either hilly or flat. Coastline bordering West Sea is complex, and vast mud flats are developed in there. In addition, Haeje and Mangwun Peninsula stretch out to the West Sea and complete varied scenery. Yeongsan River, which borders the East of Muan, meanders to the South and flows into the sea while providing agricultural water to surrounding farmland and creating magnificent scenery.

Hak Village of Muan and Neureoji in Yeongsan River is one of the Four Rivers Project ecology visiting courses designated by Ministry of Environment in December 2010. Thousands of egret and heron come to Sangdong Village, Yongwol-ri, every spring and present a great attraction. The egret and heron spend winter in Southeast Asia and come to Muan in order to breed in groups. Every October, they leave again to Southeast Asia. Neureoji Village, Yisan-ri, Mongtan-myeon is named as such because Yeongsan River flows very slowly ('Neureoji' means 'slow' in Korean). When you stand on the observatory of Biryong Mountain across the river, you can get the view of Yeongsan River curving Neureoji Village in 'S' shape. On the top of Yeongsan Riverside at the entrance to Neureoji, there is Sikyeong Arbor where you can see the slowly running Yeongsan River at a close distance. It is a good place for recharging your energy and soothing your mind.



Bukhan Mountain



Treasure house of green cultural heritage in the downtown area, Bukhan Mountain

/ Goyang City, Gyeonggi Province and Seoul /

Bukhan Mountain extends from the Seoul City, the capital of Korea, and to the Goyang City of Gyeonggi Province. As big cities surround the whole mountain area, Bukhan Mountain is just like an island in downtown. National park of Bukhan Mountain provides graceful landscape and approximately 1,300 kinds of animals and plants can be found in it. There are also 12 kilometers long Bukhan Mountain Fortress, the site of temporary palace and military camp. Buddhist temples, hermitages, and lots of other historical and cultural assets are kept in the area. It is unparalleled world-class treasure house of green cultural heritage in downtown.

Seventy eight point four five square kilometers of Bukhan Mountain was designated as a national park in 1983. With Wuyiryong Road forming the middle ground, the park is divided into Bukhan Mountain region to the south and Dobong Mountain region to the north. Until recently, the nature of the area was damaged and the ecosystem was also damaged greatly due to overpopulation of the area. Therefore, Korean National Park Service removed shops near the valleys in Bukhan Mountain and restricted the entrance to the alleys. The National Park Service's hard efforts paid off as wild animals began to appear more frequently and the ecosystem started to slowly recover. Despite being greatly protected, it is a blessing that the national park can be easily reached and comfortably visited daily.



Wangpi Stream in Wuljin

**The biggest ecology conservation region in Korea,
Wangpi Stream in Wuljin** / Wuljin-gun, North Gyeongsang Province /

"Fish are not frightened of people."

This happened when I visited Wangpi Stream a few years ago with my child. When we put our feet into the water, fish were not frightened and they didn't swim away. Stripe gudgeon, dark chub, long-nosed barbell rather rushed into our feet as our dead skin cells seemed to be food to them. When I visited here again at the end of October 2011, the reaction of fish has not changed.

Wangpi Stream rises in a clean valley at Subi-myeon, Yeongyang-gun, North Gyeongsang Province and runs into East Sea through Wuljin. The Wangpi Stream area is located farther from villages and it is difficult to reach. As such, the natural ecosystem has been well preserved. Endangered species, rare wild animals and plants that are found in the area include mountain goat, otter, Korean buzzard, great black woodpecker, and *Paeonia obovata* MAX. The Ministry of Environment registered the Wangpi Stream area as an ecology conservation region in October 2005.

To get to the Wangpi Stream trail from Wuljin, you can go to Gulguji Village (Gusan 3-ri). You have to fetch around nine curves from downstream of Wangpi into the inlands to reach the village. In this mountain village surrounded by Wangpi Stream, 40 families made of 70 people live. Even nowadays, no buses commute to the village, so its nature remains in a pure state.



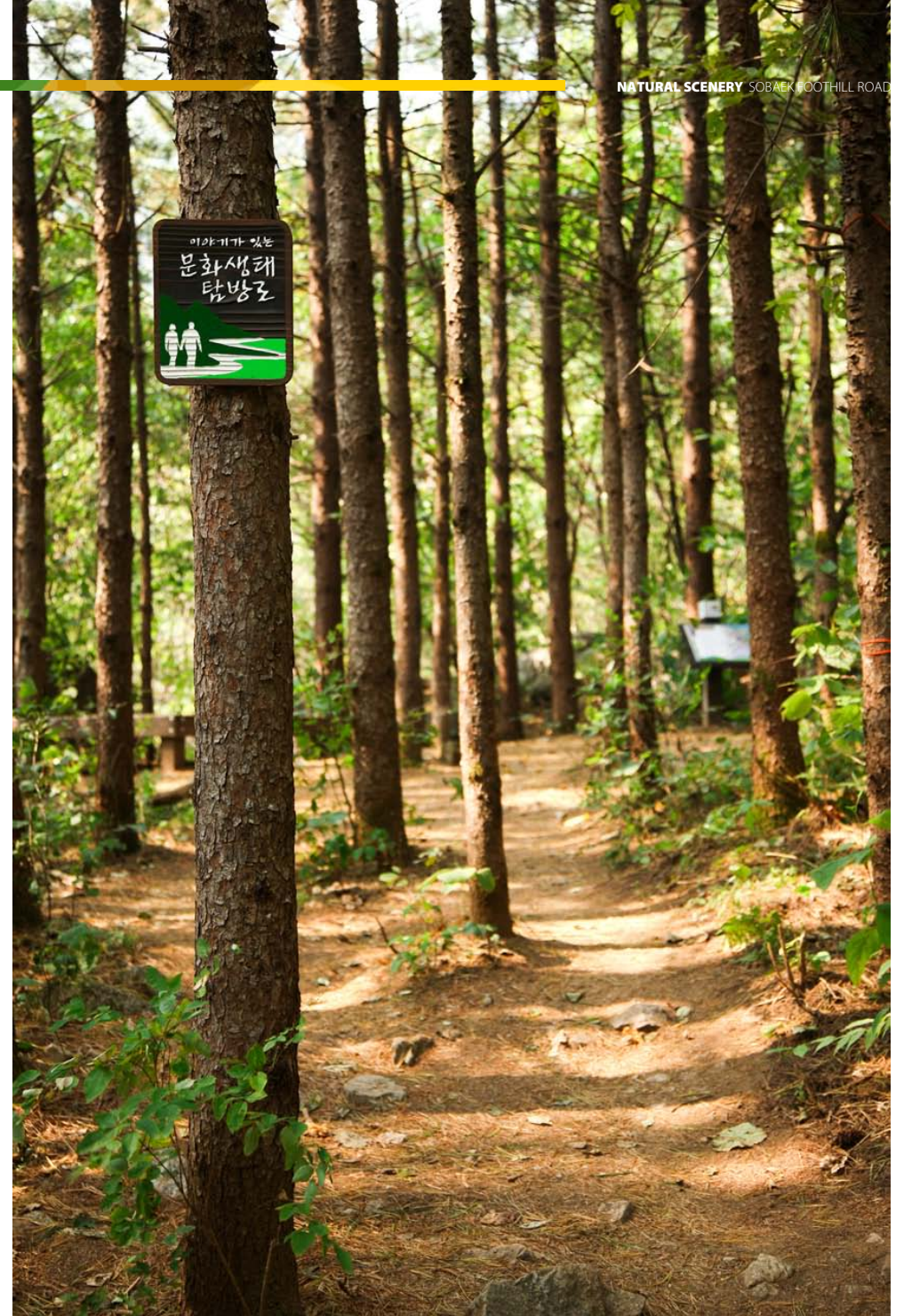
Sobaek Foothill Road

Beautiful nature and historic sites in harmony,

Sobaek Foothill Road / Yeongju-gun, North Gyeongsang Province /

Sobaek Mountain was designated as the 18th national park in 1987. High peaks including the highest Biro Peak (1,439m), Gukmang Peak (1,421m), The Second Yeonhwa Peak (1,357m), Dosol Peak (1,314m), and Sinseon Peak (1,389m) are in the middle of Baekdu Daegan mountain range. The Road is established on the gentle and solid foothills Sobaek Mountain. Similar to the 300 kilometer Dulle-gil of Jiri Mountain, this is a circular trekking course that rounds Yeongju City and Bonghwa-gun of North Gyeongsang Province, Danyang-gun of North Chungcheong Province and Yeongwol-gun of Gangwon Province.

Sobaek Foothill Road was first introduced as a demonstration project of Story-telling Cultural Ecology Trail promoted by Korea Tourism Organization in June 2009. In March of 2010, the road was noted as one of the best ten Korean green tourism business models under the supervision of the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism. In 2011, it was recorded as the best ecology tourist place in the field of ecotourism. As such, healthy ecology, beautiful nature, historic sites and traditional culture of Sobaek Mountain achieved wider recognition. Sobaek Foothill Road runs a total of 170 kilometers and consists of 12 walking courses. The courses pass through four cities and three provinces that lie around Sobaek Mountain. Out of 12 courses, the one which belongs to Yeongju City is the longest; it is 110 kilometers in total. Most people think that the first foothill road that is between Sosu Seowon, Sunheung-myeon, Yeongju City and Samga-ri, Punggi-eup, is the best as it passes through old historic sites that are beautifully harmonized by undamaged nature. This is the course that was designated as one of the top ten Korean green tourism business models.



Eight Great Views of Danyang / Gosu Cave

Land of clean nature and unique landscape of limestone region, Eight Great Views of Danyang and Gosu Cave

/ Danyang-gun, North Chungcheong Province /

Danyang is a limestone region. As limestone easily melts in rain or underground water, it usually forms unique and mysterious topography. In addition to this, rough ridges of Sobaek Mountain Range and meandering Namhan River complete the wonderful scenery. The natural monument, Gosu Cave, is a different world that leads you to the mystical underground world. There are also famous eight great views of Danyang – Dodamsam Peak, Stone Gate, Sayin Rock, Sangseon Rock, Jungseon Rock, Haseon Rock, Oksun Peak, and Gudam Peak. Danyang is the land of long history. The evidences of residence and stone ax used in the Prehistoric Age were found in Gosu Cave, and stoneware from the middle Paleolithic Age were discovered from Suyanggae historic site in Namhan Riverside. For a long time in history, Danyang has been a good area to live in with the surrounding mountains, rivers and fields.

Since the opening of Jungang Expressway, it has become easy to commute to the area. It was difficult to get to Danyang 10 years ago. However, the poor transportation system was rather helpful for the protection of the original nature of Danyang. Many magnificent views and stories of nature are found in every corner of Danyang. Danyang is the place where clean nature and mystical underground world unfolds.



Demi Spring in Jinan / Seongak Mountain Recreational Forest

The source of clean Seomjin River, Demi Spring in Jinan, and Seongak Mountain Recreational Forest

/ Jinan-gun, North Jeolla Province /

Jinan in North Jeolla Province is highlands with an average elevation about 400 meters above the sea level. About 79 per cent of the area is mountainous and its dense forests were perfectly preserved. It is also the source of Seomjin River which is known as the cleanest river in Korea. Demi Spring, the source for Seomjin River is located in Baekwun-myeon, the highest area in Jinan-gun. The village is located between Noryeong Mountain Range and Sobaek Mountain Range. Recreational forests are located in nearby Seongak Mountain (1,141m), Deokdae Mountain (1,113m), Palgong Mountain (1,151m), and others. It is one of the most remote areas in Korea where transportation is still underdeveloped and snow heavily piles up in winter.

Demi Spring is in Sangchumakyi Valley between Ogyechi Hill of Seongak Mountain and Seoguri Hill of Palgong Mountain. Clean water endlessly bubbles up from this small spring that is surrounded by rocks, and from here Seomjin River begins. Seomjin River passes through Baekwun-myeon in Jinan-gun, Imsil, Gurye and Hadong, and flows to Gwangyang Bay.

Baekwun-myeon area is located far from cities and the transportation to the village is very poor. In winter time, it is very cold and snowy. Buses linking to Wonsinam Village, on the road to Demi Spring and Seongak Mountain Recreational Forest, and Jinan come into the area only three times a day. To get to the area from Jangsu, you will have to cross the winding road, Maryeong Pass. Thus, from the old days the area had not been visited by many, and even now there are only a few residents living there. Therefore, ultimately clean environment is perfectly preserved in this area and a variety of animals and plants live on and on. Seongak Mountain Recreational Forest is currently under construction aiming to open in July 2012, and an ecology forest has been developed around Demi Spring since 2011.



Damyang

Damyang, the famous ecological tourist place for bamboo and metasequoia tree lined street

/ Damyang-gun, South Jeolla Province /

Damyang is often called as the land of bamboo. Bamboo trees are found everywhere in Damyang including Juknokwon, Bamboo Valley Theme Park and bamboo forest. Among these, Juknokwon (bamboo garden) is the best ecological tourist spot that was formed using natural bamboo forest in Hyanggyo-ri, Damyang-eup. While walking on the dense bamboo forest, you will soon feel light and refreshed. Eight walking paths with different themes are in the forest and so your stroll will be much enjoyable.

Another symbol of Damyang is metasequoia tree lined street. The old 24th national highway from Hakdong Intersection (the east of Damyang-eup) and Geumwol Bridge is regarded as the best tree lined street in Korea. Thousands of large metasequoia trees are grown along the highway. As a new national highway was established right next to it and bicycles are restricted by signs, visitors can freely walk along the street forest.

Besides bamboo stroll, there is also famous bamboo food – Daetongbab (rice with grains and nuts in bamboo tube) and Bamboo shoot sushi. Damyang hot springs are also nearby. As a healthy and ecological tour spot, Damyang hosts more visitors day by day.



Nogodan Peak in Jiri Mountain / Seomjin River



Sky garden, Nogodan Peak in Jiri Mountain, and Seomjin River / Gurye-gun, South Jeolla Province /

Seomjin River that rises in Demi Spring in Jinan and runs around Jiri Mountain is the cleanest river in Korea. The 212.3 kilometers long Seomjin River meets Jiri Mountain, the biggest mountain in Korea, in Gurye and creates cleaner and beautiful scenery. When river joins the mountain, water becomes cleaner, and at its base diverse animals and plants can be found.

Nogodan Peak in the south of Jiri Mountain National Park is a heavenly garden. From spring to autumn, various wild flowers come out around Nogodan Peak such as royal azalea, day lily, and Geranium thunbergii Siebold & Zucc. The 1507-meter high Nogodan Peak is subalpine zone, as such distinctive natural ecosystem is found here. The area, centering Nogodan Peak and Banyan Peak, is registered as 'Natural Ecosystem Special Protection Area in Jiri Mountain'. Endangered species, rare wild animals and plants live in primeval forest that stretches out.

Pure Seomjin River provides great living conditions to diverse animals and plants. Corbicula, king crab, sweetfish live in clean water only, and they are found in Seomjin River. The endangered wild animal, otter, also lives in here. Seomjin River runs through Muncheok-myeon, Ganjeon-myeon and Toji-myeon in Gurye-gun, and it is protected as otter's habitat ecology and nature protection area. Mountain and river layout is natural and harmonious in Gurye (where Nogodan Peak and Seomjin River are) and Hadong. It is the land of healthy ecology in which various kinds of animals and plants live together.



Namhae Island

Hermit's island in clean South Sea, Namhae Island

/ Namhae-gun, South Gyeongsang Province /

Namhae Island in South Gyeongsang Province is where beautiful nature is well preserved. The island is surrounded by Hanryeo Marine National Park and other big and small islands. Geum Mountain, which resembles Geumgang Mountain, is in the south of the island, and so the sea, mountain and coast create a graceful figure altogether. From a long time ago, Namhae Island used to be called 'Yil-jeom-seon-do', meaning 'a piece of hermit's island'. Its natural environment is also greatly conserved. Bangjoeobu Forest in Mulgeon-ri (Natural Monument No. 150), evergreen forest in Mijo-myeon (Natural Monument No. 29), Galhwa-ri zelkova tree in Gohyeon-myeon (Natural Monument No. 276), and Hwabang Temple Wikstroemia trichotoma spontaneous land (Natural Monument No. 152) are protected as they are valuable academically and ecologically.

However, the life of residents of the island was not easy. As most of the island belongs to the mountain, there was lack of farmland, and port was difficult to be built because the rocky, steep mountain linked to the beach. But the residents diligently cultivated and have farmed the land. There is Gacheon Village in the south-west where people set up the base and worked at terraced paddy field, and Mulgeon-ri Village is in the south-east of the island that is famous for Eobubangjo Forest. The Strait of Jijok between Namhae Island and Changseon Island is known for bamboo weirs, the traditional fishing method in Korea.

There are historic sites in Namhae Island regarding General Sunshin Yi: Chungryeol Shrine and turtle ship is in Noryang Village and the site of General Sunshin Yi's death is near Gwaneum Port. The nature of the island is perfectly preserved and beautiful, and so visitors marvel as they look around.



Jeju Ollegil course 8

Coastal road of clean nature and unique scenery, Jeju Ollegil course 8 / Seogwipo City, Jeju Island /

'Olle' is a native Jeju dialect, meaning an alleyway from the main road to one's home. However, olle is more famous as the name of a popular trekking course in Jeju these days. From September 2007 to November 2011, Jeju Olle Corporate opened 376 kilometers' for Jeju Ollegil (Olle road) with 23 courses. Course number 8 is especially loved by many people because there, the unique ecosystem and volcano topography of Jeju are well-preserved and the scenery is especially remarkable.

Jeju Olle course 8 is a typical Badang olle (sea road). You can see almost every kind of scenery and topography of Jeju coast along the road. There is a clean stream where fireflies live and pillar shaped-joints are commonly seen, the hardened lava in pillar shape. Also course 8 covers the Marine Corps Road and Yeolli coastal road where rape flower and silver grass wave. The artwork of wave 'Deulleonggwe Cave' and the ancient dwelling 'Squirrel Cave' are also popular tourist attractions on course 8. The steps of visitors become naturally slow on Jeju Olle course 8 as there are lots of sites worth visiting and its scenic beauty is absolutely fascinating.



Wulleung-do / Dok-do



Wulleung-do and Dok-do (Island) where a unique ecosystem is found

/ Wulleung-gun, North Gyeongsang Province /

The two millions years old Wulleung-do and Dok-do Islands in the East Sea exhibit unusual topography and ecosystems. As the two islands are far away in the ocean and have never been connected to land, a large variety of plants are found hardly anywhere elsewhere in Korea. Plant names that have 'island', 'Wulleung', or 'Wusan' are specialties of Wulleung-do Island. The plants that only live here are: island bellflower, island liverleaf, golden turk's cup lily, island thyme, island aster, rock spray, island abelia, island linden, island maple, island nut pine, Wulleung chrysanthemum, Wulleung arisaema, Wulleung goldenrod, and Wulleung painted maple.

Twenty-four kinds of resident birds live on Wulleung-do Island. Among all, the Wuldo white-backed woodpecker, island reed warbler and island sparrow live in this area only. Migrating birds such as starlings and mallards are easily found. Mammals are rare except for mice and snakes, which are rarely seen. Freshwater fish are difficult to find as well. About 690 kinds of insects live in the islands, and out of them, the Wuldo longicorn beetle is an endemic species. Besides these, Chlorophorus diadema, stag beetles, and green-banded swallowtails live here and are registered as specific wild plants and animals by the Ministry of Environment.

Wulleung-do and Dok-do retain the very first original feature of nature and the basic ecological resources are abundant. Nari Basin, which was formed in a crater hole, Seongyin Peak of the outer rim of the crater, and other peaks create special landscape. For these reasons, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and the Ministry of Environment added Wulleung-do and Dok-do regions as Korean eco tourist sites on the 18th April 2011. Wulleung-do and Dok-do Island are mystical tour destinations that feature markedly different and unique ecosystem from the mainland.



Heuksan-do / Hong-do



Jewels of Sinan Dadohae ecosystem, Heuksan-do and Hong-do (Island) / Sinan-gun, South Jeolla Province /

Heuksan-do and Hong-do Island shine like jewels in Daedohae, on the southwest of the peninsula and are a repository of the ecosystem. Owing to the beautiful scenery, migrating birds rest here, and various rare fauna and flora flourish. These islands are regarded as highly valuable ecology. With these reasons, the whole area was registered as Daedohae Marine National Park in 1981 and biosphere reserves by UNESCO in 2009. Unlike the mainland environment, mountain, sea and coast greatly exist in harmony in Heuksan-do and Hong-do and they create unique scenery together.

Heuksan-do, which is famous for the thornback ray, is an evergreen island. As the whole island is very leafy, it appears as almost black from a distance. That's where the name comes from ('Heuk' of Heuksan-do means 'black'). Evergreen trees and pines cover the island entirely. Along with Hong-do, Heuksan-do is a habitat of many migrant birds visiting Korea. Also, *saussurea polylepis nakai*, which almost disappeared from Hong-do, was found in Heuksan-do. With that said, all of the small island of Hong-do Island is a natural resources conservation area. About 545 kinds of plants live here and lush forests are found everywhere. *Castanopsis cuspidate* var. *sieboldii nakai*, silver magnolia, camellia trees and others form a colony, and the Hong-do day lily, Hong-do loosestrife, Hong-do *saussurea polylepis nakai* and Hong-do plantain lily only live on Hong-do Island. As such, the two islands are truly the jewels of the Sinan Dadohae ecosystem.



Maha-ri, Pyeongchang / Baekryong Cave



Eco tourism destinations in Dong River, Maha-ri (Eoreumchi Village), Pyeongchang and Baekryong Cave

/ Pyeongchang-gun, Gangwon Province /

Dong River basin is famous for its wonderful scenery. River meanders through limestone gorges, and there are a lot of limestone caves formed by underground water corrosion. Moreover, poor transportation made it difficult to commute to the area, and so it has hardly been developed or modernized. Therefore, the nature in the area is very well preserved. It is a repository ecosystem where white Aconite root, Paeonia obovata MAX, Liliun cernuum, Tabularis, Encephalartos Senticosus, Pulsatilla tongkangensis Y. N. LEE & T. C. Lee grow, and mountain goat, otter, red bat, and golden eagle live in.

Maha-ri (Eoreumchi Village) located in the Southeast of Pyeongchang-gun is a very popular destination for ecotourism along with Dong River and Baekryong Cave. Baekryong Cave preserves diverse organisms that originally emerged in it; its outstanding landscape is highly valued among academia. Maha-ri consists of Bon-dong and Munheui Villages. To begin with, tourists may visit the Freshwater Fish Ecology centre at Bon-dong and learn about freshwater fish living in Dong River and other rivers in Korea. Baekryong Cave Ecology Learning Center is located 3.5 kilometers away in Munheui Village, and can be easily reached by walk along the riverside.

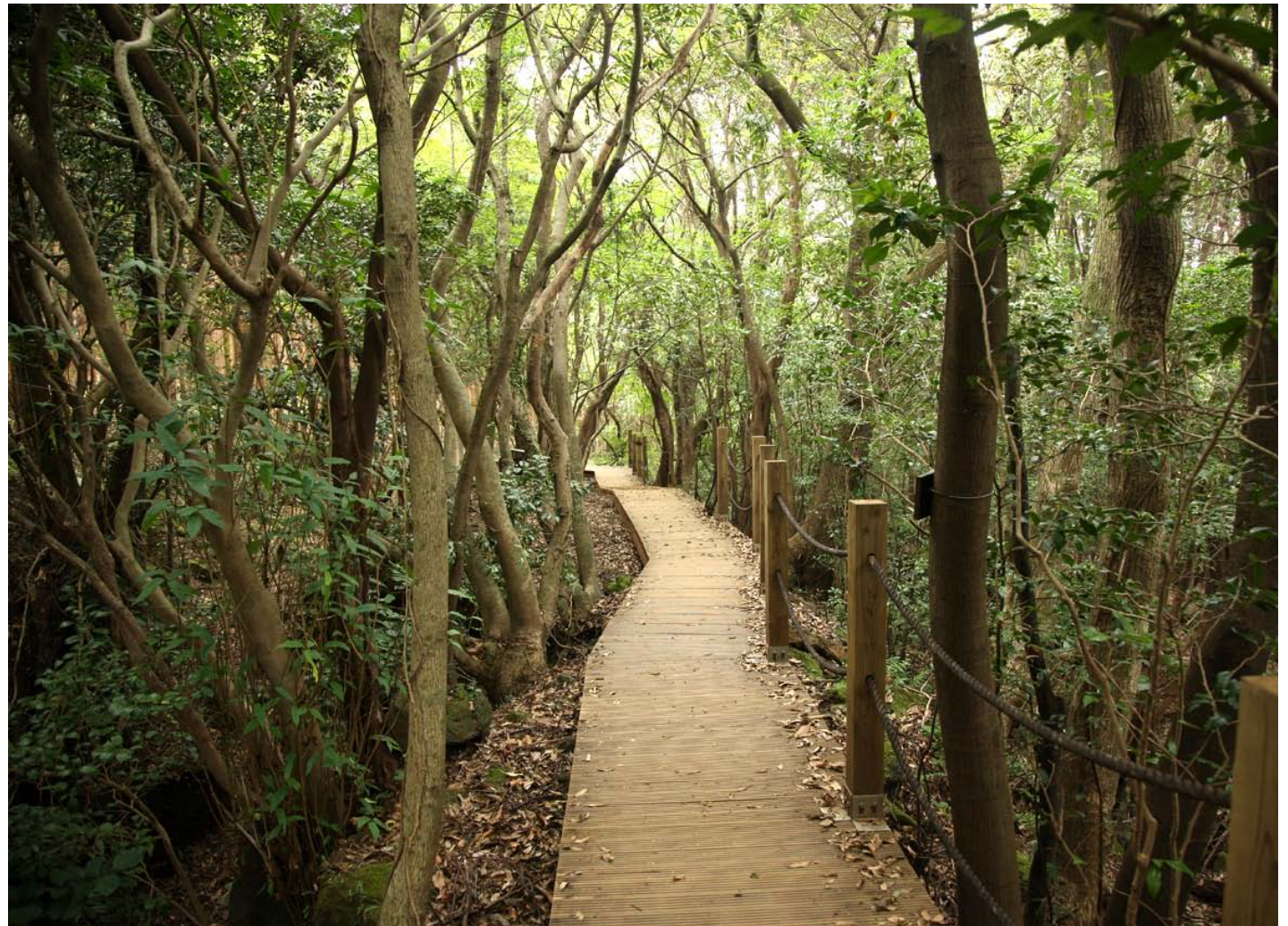
There are many other places of attraction along the Dong River such as Andol Rock, Stork Rapids, Seal Cave, Shaman Marsh, and Baekryong Cave that allow seeing beautiful subterranean sights. A panoramic view of mystical Dong River flowing through the limestone cliffs can be seen from the observatory in Chiljok Ridge trail that starts from Munheui Village. Large oriental oak trees and Mongolian oak trees, forming a colony around the trail, make the trekking more enjoyable.



Geomun Oreum

The matrix of lava tunnels in Jeju Island, Geomun Oreum / Jeju City, Jeju Island /

The natural landscape of the volcanic island, Jeju, is exceptionally beautiful. There are especially unique volcanic topographies with their own ecosystems. UNESCO appraised these assets of Jeju Island highly, and registered them as 'Jeju volcanic island and lava tunnels' as the first Korean world natural heritage in 2007. Three assets are on the list of UNESCO natural heritages sites also include – Halla Mountain, Seongsan Ilchul Peak, and Geomun Oreum lava tube system. Among the above, the Geomun Oreum lava tube system refers to lava tunnels that were formed by a volcanic eruption from Geomun Oreum and debris fell down into the north-east coast of Jeju Island: they are Bengdwi Cave, Manjang Cave, Gimnyeong Cave, Dangcheomul Cave, and Yongcheon Cave (all are registered as natural monuments). Geomun Oreum is the matrix of these lava tubes.



Hwacheon DMZ / Paro Lake

Eco-paradise where otter and trout swim around, Hwacheon DMZ and Paro Lake / Hwacheon-gun, Gangwon Province /

Hwacheon is the city of lakes: Hwacheon Dam, Peace Dam, Chuncheon Lake and Paro Lake are all located in Hwacheon. The number of dams and lakes in Hwacheon are as many as the lakeside city, Chuncheon, and so most streets coming in and out of Hwacheon next to lakes. When travelling by car, there'll be a lake beside one whichever road you take. People feel peaceful on the road running parallel to water as water is the source of life. Thus, vibrant nature surrounds where water is abundant. Stunning natural plant life is abundantly visible when touring the "water town" of Hwacheon. Especially in the clean Paro Lake and Yangeui Wetland (in an access controlled district), otters and mountain goats still roam around areas designated as natural monuments and endangered species in Korea.

Hwacheon is a typical mountainous area that is located along the central front of DMZ. High, rugged mountains are everywhere. There is an old saying – "clothes get wet as the clouds if they are too close in Hwacheon". With its beautiful natural bounty, Hwacheon is a dream of an eco-paradise, where ecosystems remain undamaged and development is minimized. The value of healthy eco-tourism and the possibility of success were understood early in Hwacheon's development. There are two festivals that represent this eco-friendly tourism philosophy of Hwacheon – the Trout Festival held every January at Hwacheon Creek and the Dugout Canoe Festival in July at Bukhan River near Bungeo Island.



Yanggu DMZ / Yongneup



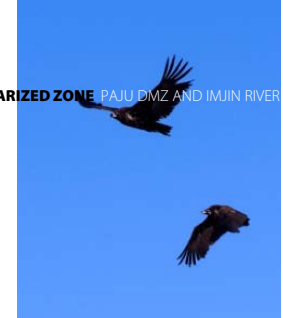
Revival of nature from the damages of the war in Yanggu DMZ and Yongneup

/ Yanggu-gun, Gangwon Province /

Yanggu-gun is situated right in the middle of the Korean peninsula in Gangwon Province. Dochon-ri, Nam-myeon, Yanggu-gun is located in the centre of Korean territory. Due to its geographical location, Yanggu had been constantly invaded by opposing forces and became a place where the fiercest battles took place. Especially after truce talks opened in June 1951, a large number of soldiers died at Baekseok Mountain, Blood Ridge, Danjang Ridge, Daewoo Mountain, Dosol Mountain, Christmas Hill, Gachil Peak, and Punch Ball while fighting in battlefield in order to seize advantage and take more lands. Artillery shells and bullets piled up like a mountain and young soldiers' blood ran like a stream.

It has been about fifty years since the end of the Korean War. Yanggu, a place where once extreme and fierce battles had endlessly ensued, has now changed into a land of life and peace. The nature had revived on its own despite the extensive damages done to the environment during the war. Although there is still tension around the DMZ and many plants and animals in the area are endangered, Dutayeon, which once used to be a restricted zone, has become the biggest habitat for lenok. With its piercing wind and thick fog, Yongneup in Dae-am remains to be the only high moor in Korea.





Paju DMZ / Imjin River

Into the international spotlight as destination for ecotourism, Paju DMZ and Imjin River / Paju City, Gyeonggi Province /

One of the spots of ecotourism in Korea that is gaining world acknowledgement is demilitarized zone (DMZ), which lays four kilometers in width and 248 kilometers in length to the east and west. Since Korean War Armistice Agreement was signed in July 1953, the zone was restricted to the public and its natural ecology has been preserved in perfect condition.

More specifically, Paju DMZ is put on the spotlight as it gains the attraction of international tourists for not only its vast flora and fauna around the clean Imjin River, swamps, and mud flats in the region, but its unique history and significant role in national security. Additionally, Dora Observatory, The Third Underground Tunnel, Ohdu Mountain Unification Observatory are worth visiting for understanding the present state of relationship between North and South Korea. There is also the old Jangdan-myeon Office building which remains to remind the wounds of war. Tomb of Heojun, the noted doctor of the Joseon Dynasty, and Deokjin Fortress can also be seen there.

The river that runs on the southern part of Paju DMZ is called Imjin. The alluvial island of Imjin River, Chopyeong Island, forms swamps at the opening of the river. There are various kinds of animals and plants which live in Chopyeong Mud Flat and Munsan Wetland. Endangered birds and animals such as white-naped crane, bean goose, eagle, and wildcat, elk, Korean golden frog, as well as rare plants such as arisaema heterophyllum blume, aristolochia contorta bunge, and gastrodia elata blume can be found along the river, the swamps and the mud flats. Jangdan Bando is the largest shelter in Korea for eagles in winter time, and so hundreds of eagles provide a magnificent sight at those times of a year. In this regard, the place was designated as one of the Korean green tourism models, and the Ministry of Environment applied to UNESCO in September 2011 for designation of 'DMZ biosphere reserve'.

More than 600,000 of local and foreign tourists visit Paju DMZ annually. The situation of the only divided country left in the world becomes more meaningful as people visit the place. Also since it is closely located to the capital area and tourism resources regarding ecology, history and national security are more abundant.



Cheolwon DMZ

Paradise for migrating birds, Cheolwon DMZ

/ Cheolwon-gun, Gangwon Province /

From the old times, Cheolwon-gun has been the largest granary in Gangwon Province. Cheolwon Odae Rice from Cheolwon Plain is the region's well-admired specialty rice known for its stickiness and delicious taste. Historically, the seat of Taebong founded by Gungye also belonged with Cheolwon because its abundant products were generated from this expansive field. However, since the division of Korean territory over half of this open field now belongs to civilian access control line and DMZ. The land of silence has now been transformed as a paradise of migrating birds. The land where once gunfire never ceased and bullets endlessly rained changed into the land of peace that cranes fly around in groups.

