# Kasari Area, Amami City Tale of Sato Community

※ The scale below is presented as an approximate guideline.

Kasari area is surrounded by the Pacific Ocean and the East China Sea, and has small mountains with altitudes of 200m or less running north and south. On the east side, here lies a flatland where sugarcane and semi-tropical fruit fields are cultivated, and livestock is raised. Kasari Bay, one of " 500 Important Wetlands in Japan," designated by the Ministry of the Environment, covers the west side. Many communities in Kasari area inherit their traditional performing arts, passing their unique culture from generation to generation through their daily lives.

**Legend**

- Toilet
- Shower
- Parking area
- Rest area
- Barrier-free toilet
- Kasari Branch, Amami City
- Major Sightseeing Spots and Facilities

**Administration: Amami City**

Amami City HP

## Sato (*Hakina* Sato in local dialect)

Akakina Community is a collective term consisting of Sato, Nakaganeku, and Sotoganeku sub communities. The origin of "*Hakina*" (Akakina) is not known, but some say it is from *Kina*, which means field burning. Akakina is one of the largest communities in Kasari area, and has been the political and economic center of northern Amami Oshima island. The community has a number of historical remains and sites.

### Site of the Oshima Magistrate's Temporary Office

The Amami islands were under reign of the Satsuma clan in mainland Kagoshima after its military strike in 1609.
The Magistrate's temporary office was the political center of Amami Oshima governance from 1649 to 1662 and from 1672 to 1801.
The stone wall reminds people of this history.
The combination of the coral stone wall and the orderly hedges represent a merging of the architectural culture of Satsuma and Amami.

### Akakina *Gusuku* Site

The mountain fortress situated on 100m high Kannon-ga-Oka Hill at the big opening of Kasari Bay at the north of Amami Oshima island is Akakina *Gusuku*.
The fortress is said to have been equipped with accommodation facilities in the 12th century, influenced by Ryukyu (Okinawa) culture in the 15th century, then by Satsuma in the 17th century. The fortress is now a representative historical site that illustrates Amami Oshima's critical role in regional trading and transportation.

### Kannonji Temple Site

After Satsuma's military attack in 1609, the magistrate's temporary office was set in Akakina and the first city function in Amami Oshima was established.
Akakina Kannonji Temple was built in 1675. Until its relocation to Itsubu in Naze, Amami City, the temple was the educational center and symbol for both *samurai* and commoners for approx. 144 years.
The tomb of the first chief priest is found at the site.

### *Funatamari* berth

The main stream of Maeda River runs, with branches from the mountains on the north and south, along the south side of Akakina. There is a salt making cabin at its mouth, and some stepping stones in Nakaganeku area allow people to go across the river. At the upstream of Maeda-bashi Bridge, there is a berth that functioned as the loading and unloading site for the magistrate's office. Today, canoes of Oshima Kita High School, a regular participant in national competitions, run in the river.

### Sato *Gakusha* Community Center

Akakina Community is composed of three sub-communities: Sato, Nakaganeku, and Sotoganeku.
Sato Sub-community is located in the southeast side, and had a facility function with Satsuma's influence. It is said that the educational facility site in Sato had a Tenmangu Shrine and a row of pine trees that illustrated Satsuma's reign. Today's Sato *Gakusha* is situated at this site.

### Fukoku Sugar Factory

Modern production of brown sugar in Amami started in 1698 when the ruling Satsuma clan appointed officers in charge of sugar cane growing (*Kibi Yokome*), sugar cane and paddy fields (*Denchi Yokome*), admission of ships (*Tsuguchi Yokome*), and sugar barrel manufacturing (*Chikamoku Yokome*).
Fukoku Sugar Factory started its operation in 1962, and its steam turbine used for in-house power generation is still in operation today.

### The Maeshima clan's Grave

A number of records of graveyards are found in Akakina, including the Maeshimas' grave, *Kannonji*, *Tofuru*, *Nyatojiri* grave, and *Mente* grave. The graves of the Maeshimas', who served both Ryukyu (Okinawa) and Satsuma (mainland Kagoshima), share the majority of *Nyatojiri* graveyard. The graveyard of the Maeshima clan on a mountain has a variety of Satsuma style tombs, including five-layered tower tombs made of precious stones and octagon tombs.

### Gishinao's Confinement Cel

Gishinao, a handsome official on the island, was a talented Shimauta folk song singer and a playboy. He lost his sanity in his later years and was confined in a cell. He was allegedly burnt to death in 1816 in his cell. His daughter Bakana was accused and executed for murdering her father. As some Shimauta songs represent historical backgrounds, the legend of Gishinao may be of a fictional nature.