

# Maniwa City's Japanese Giant Salamander Conservation Center “Hanzaki Center”

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As caring for the Giant Salamanders gained momentum in Yubara in 1971, the former “Hanzaki Care Center” opened (now : the Hanzaki Center).

At the time, it was the first specialist exhibition and care facility regarding Giant Salamanders in Japan, with several breeding ponds and a display of Hanzaki-related cultural information, including the historical works by Chiyomatsu Ishikawa.

The Center gathered several Hanzaki that had been looked after within various area of the prefecture, and with an excellent reputation for the display tanks where one could see giant Hanzaki behind the glass, it was popular not only with tourists, but the local residents too.

The first director of the center was Kaname Kagami, who was the author of “Hanzaki Regional Climate/Culture”.

After it opened, it was the main facility focusing on Hanzaki culture in Yubara, and in April 2017 the Center was renewed to display new information from research conducted by the local Giant Salamander Research Group and local experts on the regional Hanzaki culture.

The Hanzaki is Yubara's symbol.

Starting with the Hanzaki signs that guide you around the town, everywhere you look, there is a Hanzaki.

Furthermore, Hanzaki still live in the Tabane River which flows through the town, and the Asahi River in front of the Hanzaki Grand Shrine.

It is said that long ago, in front of the Hanzaki Grand Shrine, the Hanzaki agreed that “from now on, we will no longer eat humans, and you humans will not eat us.”

Since then, they have been watching over us and working so that we can coexist peacefully.

Welcome to the Hanzaki's hometown, Yubara!

