

Taiwan's National Parks

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Taiwan has nine national parks that protect some of the most **spectacular** natural landscapes found anywhere in Asia. These parks cover approximately eight percent of the island's total land area and include mountains, coastlines, and forests. The national park system was **established** in nineteen eighty-four to preserve Taiwan's unique ecosystems and natural beauty. Each park showcases different geological features and **biodiversity** that reflect Taiwan's incredible environmental variety throughout. Millions of visitors explore these protected areas every year, making national parks central to Taiwan's tourism industry growth.

Taroko National Park is perhaps Taiwan's most famous park, known for its dramatic marble gorge and **towering** cliffs. The Liwu River has carved through marble rock for millions of years, creating a canyon nearly twenty kilometers long entirely. Visitors walk through tunnels and along cliff-edge paths that offer breathtaking views of the deep river valley far below. Taroko is also home to diverse wildlife including the Formosan rock macaque and many rare bird **species** found here. The park attracts both casual tourists and serious hikers who come to experience its world-class trail system.

Yushan National Park contains Taiwan's highest peak and is a **paradise** for experienced mountain climbers and adventurers. The park covers over one hundred thousand **hectares** of alpine wilderness across central Taiwan's mountain ranges beautifully. Yangmingshan National Park near Taipei is famous for its volcanic landscapes, hot springs, and seasonal flower festivals. Visitors enjoy cherry blossoms in spring and calla lilies in summer at Yangmingshan's beautiful accessible mountain meadows. Kenting National Park in southern Taiwan offers tropical beaches, coral reefs, and marine life for nature lovers.

Taiwan's national parks play a critical role in **conservation** and protecting endangered species from extinction permanently. The Formosan black bear, Taiwan's largest land animal, survives primarily within protected national park **boundaries** today. Scientists conduct ongoing research within the parks to monitor wildlife populations and ecosystem health very carefully. Reforestation programs have helped restore areas damaged by natural disasters and previous human development activities over decades. The parks serve as living laboratories where researchers study climate change effects on Taiwan's unique ecosystems.

Visiting Taiwan's national parks is both **affordable** and accessible for families, students, and international tourists equally. Most parks charge no entrance fee, and well-maintained trails have clear signs in multiple languages for all visitors. Park **rangers** lead educational tours that teach visitors about local ecology, geology, and indigenous cultural history. Camping facilities and mountain huts allow adventurous visitors to spend nights surrounded by pristine wilderness and starry skies. Taiwan's national parks represent the country's commitment to balancing economic development with environmental protection for future generations.

A. Vocabulary

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|----------------------|--|
| 1. spectacular ____ | a. the variety of plant and animal life in an area |
| 2. established ____ | b. a unit of land measurement equal to about 2.5 acres |
| 3. biodiversity ____ | c. the protection of natural environments and wildlife |
| 4. towering ____ | d. an ideal or perfect place |
| 5. species ____ | e. set up or created officially |
| 6. paradise ____ | f. extremely tall and impressive |
| 7. hectares ____ | g. low in cost; not expensive |

8. conservation _____

9. boundaries _____

10. affordable _____

h. the edges or limits of an area

i. extremely impressive and beautiful to see

j. a specific group of animals or plants

B. True or False

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1. Taiwan has nine national parks. _____ | 2. The national park system was established in 1994. _____ | 3. Taroko National Park has a marble gorge. _____ |
| 4. Yushan National Park contains Taiwan's highest peak. _____ | 5. Yangmingshan is located in southern Taiwan. _____ | 6. The Formosan black bear lives in national parks. _____ |
| 7. All national parks charge high entrance fees. _____ | 8. Park rangers lead educational tours for visitors. _____ | 9. Kenting National Park has tropical beaches. _____ |

C. Fill in the Blanks

Word Bank: spectacular, established, biodiversity, species, conservation, boundaries, affordable

- Taiwan's national parks protect some of the most _____ landscapes in Asia.
- The national park system was _____ in nineteen eighty-four.
- Each park showcases different _____ that reflects Taiwan's variety.
- National parks play a critical role in _____ and protecting wildlife.
- Visiting Taiwan's national parks is both _____ and accessible.

D. Comprehension Questions

- How many national parks does Taiwan have?
- What is Taroko National Park famous for?
- What endangered animal survives primarily in national parks?
- What makes Yangmingshan National Park unique?
- How do park rangers help visitors?

E. Discussion Questions

- Why is it important for countries to create national parks?
- Would you prefer to visit a mountain park or a coastal park? Why?
- How can tourists help protect national parks while visiting them?

Answer Key

A. Vocabulary: 1-i, 2-e, 3-a, 4-f, 5-j, 6-d, 7-b, 8-c, 9-h, 10-g

B. True/False: 1-T, 2-F, 3-T, 4-T, 5-F, 6-T, 7-F, 8-T, 9-T

C. Fill Blanks: 1-spectacular, 2-established, 3-biodiversity, 4-conservation, 5-affordable

D. Comprehension: 1. Nine national parks; 2. Its dramatic marble gorge and towering cliffs; 3. The Formosan black bear; 4. Volcanic landscapes, hot springs, seasonal flower festivals; 5. They lead educational tours about ecology, geology, and indigenous culture