

SEORAKSAN NATIONAL PARK

Seoraksan National Park is a national park in South Korea. It is listed by the South Korean government with UNESCO as a tentative World Heritage site. The government designated the area as a nature reserve in 1965 and UNESCO designated it as a biosphere reserve in 1982. It was also the first Korean national park to be named under the National Park Law in 1970. Located on the east-central Korean peninsula, the reserve includes the Dinosaur



Ridge, Injegun, Yanyanggun, and Sokchosi. It is popular with tourists and nature enthusiasts. It is home to many rare taxa of flora and fauna.

The reserve has an area of 163.6 square kilometres (63.2 sq mi) and includes many mountain peaks measuring over 1,200 metres above sea level, the tallest being Daecheongbong, at an altitude of 1,708 metres (5,604 ft). The ranges are composed largely of dissected granite and gneiss. The annual precipitation is about 1,000 mm (39 inches) in Inner Soraksan and 1,300 mm (51 inches) in Outer Soraksan.

The park is valued for its floral diversity. There are about 1,013 species of plants known, with 822 vascular plant species. Pine trees such as the Siberian pine are abundant on the southern slope while the northern slopes of the mountain range are characterized by oaks and other deciduous trees. Thuja grow in the deep valleys. Dwarf pines and yews grow on low and high slopes. Juniper, hawthorn, and Manchurian fir can be found. Other plants include forsythias and saw-worts. Rare plants in the reserve include *Hanabusaya asiatica*.

1,562 animal species have been classified so far. Local fauna include otters, Siberian flying squirrel, kestrel, Chinese sparrowhawk, lenok, Chinese minnow, and spotted barbel. Endangered animal taxa include Tristram's woodpecker, Korean goral, and Korean musk deer.

Cultural landmarks in the reserve include the Buddhist temples Baekdamsa and Sinheungsa.

HISTORY

On 9-16 August 1991, the 17th World Jamboree was held in Mount Sorak. World Jamboree is the biggest event for boy/girl scouts and held every 4 years. In 1991 thousands of scouts from all over the world gathered in Mount Sorak to have fun in many activities and games, where they can exchange cultures, discuss environment or climate issues and create friendship.

GEOGRAPHY

Seoraksan is divided into Naeseorak (Inner Seorak), Oaeseorak (Outer Seorak), and Namseorak (South Seorak).

➤ NAESEORAK (INNER SEORAK)

The area belonging to Inje-gun in the northwest and Daecheongbong Peak is called Naeseolak,

Naeseorak features various valley views including Baekdam Valley, Gaya-dong Valley, Gugokdam Valley, Gugokdam Valley, 12 Seonnyeondang, Daeseung Falls and Yongajangseong Fortress. In addition to Cheonbul-dong Valley, it is easy to access Ulsan Rock, Gwongeumseong Fortress, Geumgang Cave, Biryong Falls, and Toseong Falls.

➤ OAESEORAK (OUTER SEORAK)

Oaeseorak is the area belonging to Sokcho City towards the east. It features easier hiking courses and is one of the most accessed areas of the park.

MOUNTAIN GEOGRAPHY, FAUNA AND FLORA

It was designated as Natural Monument No.171 in 1965, and as a national park on Mount Seorak on March 24, 1970.[4] In August 1982, UNESCO designated the area as a biosphere reserve.[5][6][7]

Depending on the climate and characteristics, the mountain's biologic features have different ecosystems. While the inland climate is composed of gentle slopes and thick layers of soil, the forest is abundant and animal form is abundant, the outcropping is a marine climate, which causes the



ground to steep and frequent visitors, which is less formal. Rare plants and animals live in the wild, including natural monuments such as mountain goats and semi-moon chest bears.

The biosphere of the Mt. Seolak is composed of different ecosystems according to climate and characteristics. It is an inland climate with gentle slopes and thick soil layers that are rich in forests and rich in animal habitats, while oyster shells have a marine climate with steep slopes and few visitors. It is home to rare animals and plants, including natural monuments such as goats and bears.

LEGEND OF ULSANBAWI



According to the legend Ulsanbawi comes from the city of Ulsan in the south east of Korea. As Kumgangsan (금강산) was built, Ulsanbawi walked to the north as the representative of the city. Unfortunately Ulsanbawi arrived too late and there was no more room. Ulsanbawi was ashamed and slowly trudged back to the south. One evening the rock went to sleep in the Seorak area. Ulsanbawi felt it was so beautiful around there that it decided to stay for good.

At the end of the main valley is Biseondae, a rock platform in a stream. Above the stream is a difficult to reach cave, which offers clear views of the surrounding rock formations.

A bit farther from the entrance is the Valley of a Thousand Buddhas (천불동계곡), the primary valley of Seorak Mountain, also sometimes referred to as Seorak Valley. The valley was so named because the rock formations that line its sides resemble a line-up of Buddha statues.