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與海龜相遇

小琉球的永續旅遊



花瓶岩位於小琉球白沙觀光港旁，是當地最顯眼、最著名的地標。

Vase Rock beside Baisha Harbor is Xiaoliuqiu's most prominent and famous landmark.

小琉球，台灣離島中唯一的珊瑚礁島嶼，長期以來居民多以漁業為生，而有「船長多、寺廟多、校長多」之稱。近年因著得天獨厚的珊瑚礁環境與清澈的海水，吸引海龜棲息，成為與海龜相遇的絕美景點，陸上則有大自然精雕的珊瑚礁地景，純樸漁村的好客民風。這些熱帶島嶼風情，讓它年吸引百萬名遊客登島觀光。

Xiaoliuqiu is the only coral island among Taiwan's outlying islands, and its residents have long made their living mainly by fishing. In recent years, however, the island's crystal-clear waters and thriving coral reefs, which are home to many sea turtles, have become a place where visitors can encounter these majestic creatures up close. On land, meanwhile, the island boasts stunning coral landscapes sculpted by nature, as well as a warm and welcoming fishing village culture. It's no wonder that this tiny tropical paradise attracts millions of tourists every year!

Dances with Sea Turtles

— Sustainable Tourism on Xiaoliuqiu



小琉球位於高屏溪口西南方，全島面積約6.8平方公里，是台灣唯一的珊瑚礁島嶼。以潛水景觀照片，登上聯合國海洋會議「第二次全球海洋綜合評估」報告書封面的台灣水下攝影師吳永森，在小琉球潛水時，曾單趟遇見七、八隻海龜，數量多到令他驚喜。

他更發現，一般海域常見大魚，罕見幼魚，小琉球海域卻可見許多幼魚，他還以最新的黑水攝影技術，在大福漁港拍攝到手指大的旗魚幼魚，令他大感驚艷。

目前全球僅存七種海龜，台灣就記錄到五種，又以綠蠵龜最多。2021年海洋委員會海洋保育署利用空拍機調查小琉球海域，最多曾觀察到805隻，花瓶岩礁台、美人洞沙灘外礁台，肚仔坪、杉福、蛤板灣、龍蝦洞和漁埕尾等五處潮間帶，水位在20至30公分處，是海龜覓食的熱區。



「有餐廳的地方就會聚集很多人去用餐，動物亦然。」有「台灣綠蠵龜之父」之稱的海洋大學海洋生物研究所教授程一駿說，珊瑚與共生藻互助互利，海龜以海藻、海草為食，覓食的海域又少有干擾，就易吸引牠們棲息，小琉球沿岸屬淺灘，海龜在淺灘覓食，易為人們所見。程一駿主持的海大海洋生態暨保育研究室，利用嚴謹的臉部辨識（Face ID）方式，以不會改變的臉部鱗片判讀，確定小琉球近海覓食的海龜數量在200到250隻之間，有九成在此活動不超過一年。

地方創生，護海龜與海域

小琉球成為觀光勝地，也引起許多人關注小島的永續環境。自喻「海龜痴漢」的蘇淮、陳芃諭、馮加伶、何芷蔚，2017年在社群平台成立「海龜點點名」社團，向大眾募集在台灣海域發現的海龜照片（Photo ID），透過海龜臉部獨有的鱗片圖案及排列方式，建立其個體資料庫，發現新海龜者還有命名權，該網站現記錄全台700多隻海龜。

馮加伶分析，定居台灣的海龜以綠蠵龜最多，住逾一年有近四成，有兩成住逾三年，紀錄中又以棲息小琉球

「遇見海龜」是小琉球的觀光特色，若在岸上望向海面，細心等待，一定有機會看到「龜抬頭」換氣的畫面。
Sea turtle spotting is one of Xiaoliuqiu's unique tourist attractions. If you watch the sea patiently from the shore, you will likely see the amazing sight of a sea turtle surfacing for air.





小琉球擁有清澈的海域，SUP、獨木舟、浮潛等海上活動深受旅客喜愛。
Xiaoliuqiu's crystal-clear waters are perfect for activities like stand-up paddleboarding, kayaking, and snorkeling, which are a big hit with tourists.

Xiaoliuqiu is located southwest of the mouth of the Gaoping River, just 8.9 nautical miles from Donggang in Pingtung County. With an area of some 6.8 square kilometers, it is Taiwan's only coral island. Taiwanese underwater photographer Ace Wu (Wu Yung-sen), one of whose photos appears on the cover of the United Nations' *Second World Ocean Assessment*, was pleasantly surprised to encounter seven or eight sea turtles on a single dive off Xiaoliuqiu.

He also discovered that there are many young sea creatures in the waters around Xiaoliuqiu. Using the latest blackwater photography techniques, he captured many of these young fish at Dafu Fishing Port. Some of the most impressive shots were of tiny sailfish no bigger than a finger.

There are only seven species of sea turtles left in the world, and Taiwan is lucky enough to have five of them, with the green sea turtle being the most common. In 2021, the Ocean Conservation Administration conducted a survey in the waters around Xiaoliuqiu and spotted as many as 805 sea turtles. The hotspots for sea turtle feeding include the reefs around Vase Rock and Beauty Cave Beach, along with the intertidal zones at Duziping, Shanfu, Haban Bay, Lobster Cave, and Yuchengwei.

"Wherever there's a restaurant, there's always a crowd of people gathering to eat. And the same goes for

animals!" According to Professor Cheng I-jiunn, known as the "father of Taiwan's green sea turtles," corals and their symbiotic algae meet each other's nutritional and other needs, while sea turtles feast on seaweed and sea-grass in areas with little disturbance, making this an attractive habitat for them. The coast of Xiaoliuqiu has many areas of gently sloping beaches and rock pools, where it is easy for visitors to view sea turtles as they feed in the shallow water. Professor Cheng's Marine Ecology and Conservation Research Lab at National Taiwan Ocean University used a photo-based pattern recognition technology to determine that there are between 200 and 250 sea turtles feeding in the waters near Xiaoliuqiu.

Protecting turtles

Xiaoliuqiu has become a popular tourist destination, but has also caught the attention of many who are concerned about the island's sustainability. A group of self-proclaimed "turtle fanatics"—Su Huai, Polly Chen, Amber Feng,



的數量最多。蘇淮說，藉由辨識海龜個體，能更了解其生活、行爲、個性、棲息範圍等資訊，累積台灣水下的海龜資訊，未來會持續更新「海龜戶口名簿」。

屏東小琉球海湧工作室、在地藝術家林佩瑜與交通部觀光局大鵬灣國家風景區管理處發起小琉球限定的「海灘貨幣」，在磨圓的海廢玻璃畫上海龜、海蛞蝓、陸蟹、章魚等海洋生物，民衆參與淨灘就有機會獲得海灘貨幣並折抵消費。但林佩瑜說，該貨幣製作精緻，反成爲收藏品。去年，海湧工作室還研發保特瓶破碎機，島上的棄瓶可立即破碎回收，省去許多垃圾袋。

熱鬧的漁場，船長之鄉

小琉球成爲觀光勝地前，原是座寧靜漁村，島上的珊瑚礁石灰岩地質以致土壤貧瘠，所幸，位處北赤道洋流黑潮支流所經，洄游魚類豐富，自古以來漁業便是島上居民的經濟命脈。島上就有五座漁港，最多有九成居民從事漁業，許多人在

國中、小畢業就追隨兄長或父親跑船，現在琉球區漁會登錄的小琉球籍漁船數有640艘，累計登錄的船長人數高達8,044人，船長占鄉民的比例冠全台。

跟著船長父親跑遠洋的琉球籍漁民蔡政呈，今年僅18歲，去年考上船員證照。他返回東港碼頭時，乘隙聊起行船心得：「有回在200浬外海遇到四、五級風浪，船身嚴重搖晃，身體不適還要擔心捕不到魚，但魚上鉤、在甲板翻騰跳時，再苦也值得。」

琉球區漁會監事、現年60歲的船長洪省慧，國中畢業跟著父親跑船，從近海到遠洋，跑遍三大洋、五大洲，專捕高經濟價值的鮪魚、旗魚。他說，出海一趟短則一個月，長則兩、三年，2、30年前靠港時漁獲還有專機空運日本，返航則抓黑鮪魚，有一趟捕獲32條黑鮪魚，最高紀錄是平均每尾300多公斤重。提起當年大豐收，洪省慧臉上是一滿滿的成就感。

這段往事，也揭示小琉球人在漁業的做人地

小琉球面積僅6.8平方公里，漁港就有五座，也是全台船長占鄉民比例最高的鄉鎮。
Xiaoliuqi covers an area of only 6.8 square kilometers, but it boasts five fishing ports and the highest density of boat captains of any township in Taiwan.





小琉球海域漁獲豐饒，市場的漁貨多是「現流仔」，海味是必吃、必買的名產。

The waters around Xiaoliuqiu are teeming with fish, and the markets are full of fresh catches. Seafood is a must-buy and must-try local specialty.



and Daphne He—founded the “TurtleSpot Taiwan” community on social media in 2017. They asked the public to submit photos of turtles spotted in Taiwan’s waters and used the unique scale patterns on their faces to create a photo ID database of individual turtles. Those who discover new turtles even get to name them! The group has so far recorded more than 700 individual turtles from all over Taiwan.

According to Feng’s analysis, the green sea turtle is the most common of the sea turtles resident in the waters around Taiwan. Su adds that they are constantly updating their turtle registry.

Land of fisher folk and sea captains

Before becoming a popular tourist destination, Xiaoliuqiu was a peaceful fishing community. Located in the path of a branch of the Kuroshio Current, the island is visited by a rich variety of migratory fish. It has five

fishing ports, and historically up to 90% of residents have been engaged in the fishing industry. Many people have followed in the footsteps of their older brothers or fathers and started working on boats right after graduating from middle school, or even elementary school. Currently, there are 640 fishing boats registered with the Liuqiu Fishermen’s Association (LFA), and a total of 8,044 captains have registered with the association since it was founded in 1953, the highest concentration of captains in Taiwan.

Eighteen-year-old Cai Zhengcheng has been sailing with his captain father on long voyages since gaining his seafarer’s certificate last year. While it can be tough work, he says, seeing a fish caught on the hook makes it all worthwhile.

Hong Shenghui is a 60-year-old captain and a member of the LFA’s supervisory board. He’s been on the water since he graduated middle school, first traveling with his father across three oceans and five continents in pursuit of high-value tuna and billfish. Back in the day, they used to fly their catch to Japan on special planes when they docked in foreign ports, and on their return trips they caught bluefin tuna. One time they caught 32 of them, with an average weight of over 300 kilograms each. Hong beams with pride when he talks about those bountiful years.

位。琉球區漁會股長曾毓宗說，漁業興盛時期，東京築地市場的鮪魚拍賣價是小琉球人說了算。

黑鮪魚的召喚

小琉球海域有豐饒的底棲、迴游性魚類，各漁汛期分別有土魷魚、飛魚、白帶魚等，全年有鬼頭刀、石斑魚、黃魚可捕，餐桌上的海味四季都繽紛。台南知名的土魷魚料理，肉源多來自小琉球籍漁船捕獲。近海及遠洋漁船以捕鮪魚、旗魚等經濟漁獲為主。

每年四到六月是重頭戲——黑鮪魚汛期，洄游性的北方黑鮪魚（俗稱「黑變申」），現蹤台灣南端的巴士海峽海域準備產卵，此時正是黑鮪魚最肥美之時。2001年屏東縣府在東港推出黑鮪魚季，打響東港名號，還創造數十億元的商機，黑鮪魚拍賣價更是逐年攀高。今（2023）年三月「第一鮪」報到，拍定價來到一公斤10,200元的新高價位，也宣告鮪魚季開鑼。

黑鮪魚潮來臨也燃起漁夫魂。停靠小琉球碼頭的近海漁船幾乎全員出動，捕抓黑鮪魚，頻繁進出的船隻展現「海上淘金」的榮景。

受限於港口吞吐量，島上僅能停靠近海作業的漁船及舢舨、漁筏，且無拍賣場，大船卸載、拍賣需至東港或高雄。琉球區漁會推估，東港漁獲逾六成來自琉球籍漁船所貢獻，屏東鮪魚季「第一鮪」也多是琉球籍漁船拔得頭籌。

捕魚兒歌：「白浪濤濤我不怕，撐起舵兒往前划，撒網下水到漁家，捕條大魚笑哈哈。」描述漁獲豐收之樂，不過，近年漁源遞減，燃料、漁工薪資墊高了捕魚成本，出海抓不抓得到魚、能否損益平衡都在未定之天，但船長們仍想出海一搏。

船長王士堂的船剛進港，就被聞風而來的婆媽及餐廳老闆包圍，油魚子被訂走了，壯碩肥美的鬼頭刀待價而沽。但他說，這趟不合成本，「出港才有機會（抓黑鮪），跟買樂透一樣。」



琉球區漁會監事洪省驊，十幾歲就跟著父親討海，他征戰過三大洋、五大洲，早年專撿鮪魚等經濟價高的漁種，漁獲還有專機直送日本拍賣。Hong Shenghul of the Liugiu Fishermen's Association started fishing with his father when he was a teenager. He has fished across three oceans and five continents. In his early years, he specialized in catching high-value fish such as tuna, which were then flown directly to Japan for auction.

屏東黑鮪魚文化觀光季打響東港名號，每年進港的「第一鮪」則多由小琉球籍的漁船拔得頭籌，2023年的第一鮪，就是琉球籍船長洪明全駕駛的「新發財1號」所捕獲。

Pinglung's Bluefin Tuna Cultural Festival has made Donggang famous, and most years the first tuna landed there is caught by a fishing boat from Xieoliuqu. In 2023, the first tuna was caught by Captain Hong Mingquan on the Xieoliuqu boat Xin Fa Cai No. 1.



These memories reveal the proud position of the people of Xiaoliuqiu in Taiwan's fishing industry. LFA staffer Zeng Yuzong says that in the industry's heyday, the auction price of tuna at Tsukiji Market in Tokyo was determined by the people of Xiaoliuqiu.

The call of the bluefin

The waters around Xiaoliuqiu are teeming with a large variety of bottom-dwelling and migratory fish. During different fishing seasons, you can catch species like narrow-barred Spanish mackerel, flying fish, and largehead hairtail. And all year round, you can reel in fish like mahi-mahi, grouper, and yellow croaker. No matter the season, there's always a colorful array of seafood to enjoy at the dinner table. Offshore and deep-sea fishing boats mainly focus on catching economically valuable fish like tuna, billfishes, and sharks.

Every year from April to June is the main event—the bluefin tuna fishing season. The migratory northern bluefin tuna can be found in the waters of the Bashi Strait south of Taiwan, preparing to spawn. This is when bluefin tuna is at its most delicious. In 2001, the Pingtung County Government launched the Bluefin Tuna Cultural Festival in Donggang, creating billions of NT dollars in business opportunities. The auction price of bluefin tuna has been climbing every year. This year's "first tuna" was landed in March, going for a new high at auction of NT\$10,200 per kilogram and marking the start of the tuna season.

The arrival of the bluefin tuna season gets the fishermen fired up! Almost all of the offshore fishing boats that dock in Xiaoliuqiu set sail to catch these prized fish. It's a sight to behold as the boats come and go, showcasing the thrill of the seas and the excitement of earning big bucks.

「打船」風勢高，使得小琉球人對信仰相當虔誠，許多婦女大清早就到信仰中心碧雲寺做早課，祈求家人平安順遂。

Due to the high risks of sailing, the people of Xiaoliuqiu are very devout in their faith. Many women get up early in the morning and go to Biyun Temple to pray for the safety and success of their family members at sea.

Due to limited port capacity, the docks in Xiaoliuqiu can only accommodate small fishing boats, sampans, and rafts that operate in inshore and offshore waters. There is no auction market on the island, so larger vessels must unload and auction their catch in Donggang or Kaohsiung. According to the LFA, over 60% of the catch in Donggang comes from boats registered in Xiaoliuqiu. In fact, many of the "first tuna" of each tuna season in Pingtung are caught by boats from Xiaoliuqiu.

In recent years, fishing stocks have been depleted, and the cost of fishing has gone up due to higher fuel prices and crew wages, making it uncertain whether a voyage will even result in a catch, let alone turn a profit. But when the bluefin tuna season comes around, captains are still willing to take a chance and head out to sea.

Captain Wang Shitang says, "Leaving port is like playing the lottery—you can't win if you don't play."

Right now, the star catch in Xiaoliuqiu is mahi-mahi. Mahi-mahi jerky, mahi-mahi fried rice, and even mahi-mahi *zongzi* for Dragon Boat Festival—all of these special treats would not exist without the local fishing industry.

Go with the gods

Because of the high risks involved in taking to the sea, the people of Xiaoliuqiu are deeply devoted to their religious beliefs. The local government estimates that there are over 100 public and private temples on the island, giving it the densest concentration of places of worship in Taiwan. Major faith centers such as Biyun



琉球鄉公所秘書陳盈宏說，目前琉球鄉主打漁獲是鬼頭刀，鬼頭刀魚乾、鬼頭刀魚乾炒飯、端午節肉粽加入鬼頭刀魚乾、鬼頭刀魚卵，口味更香更好吃，皆是因漁業而生的特產。此外，討海人的零嘴麻花捲，隨處可見店面販售，陳盈宏說，早期經濟不佳，小孩討糖吃，或爸爸去討海，媽媽就用麵粉作成麻花捲（繩仔條）當零嘴。

「請神同行」捕魚去

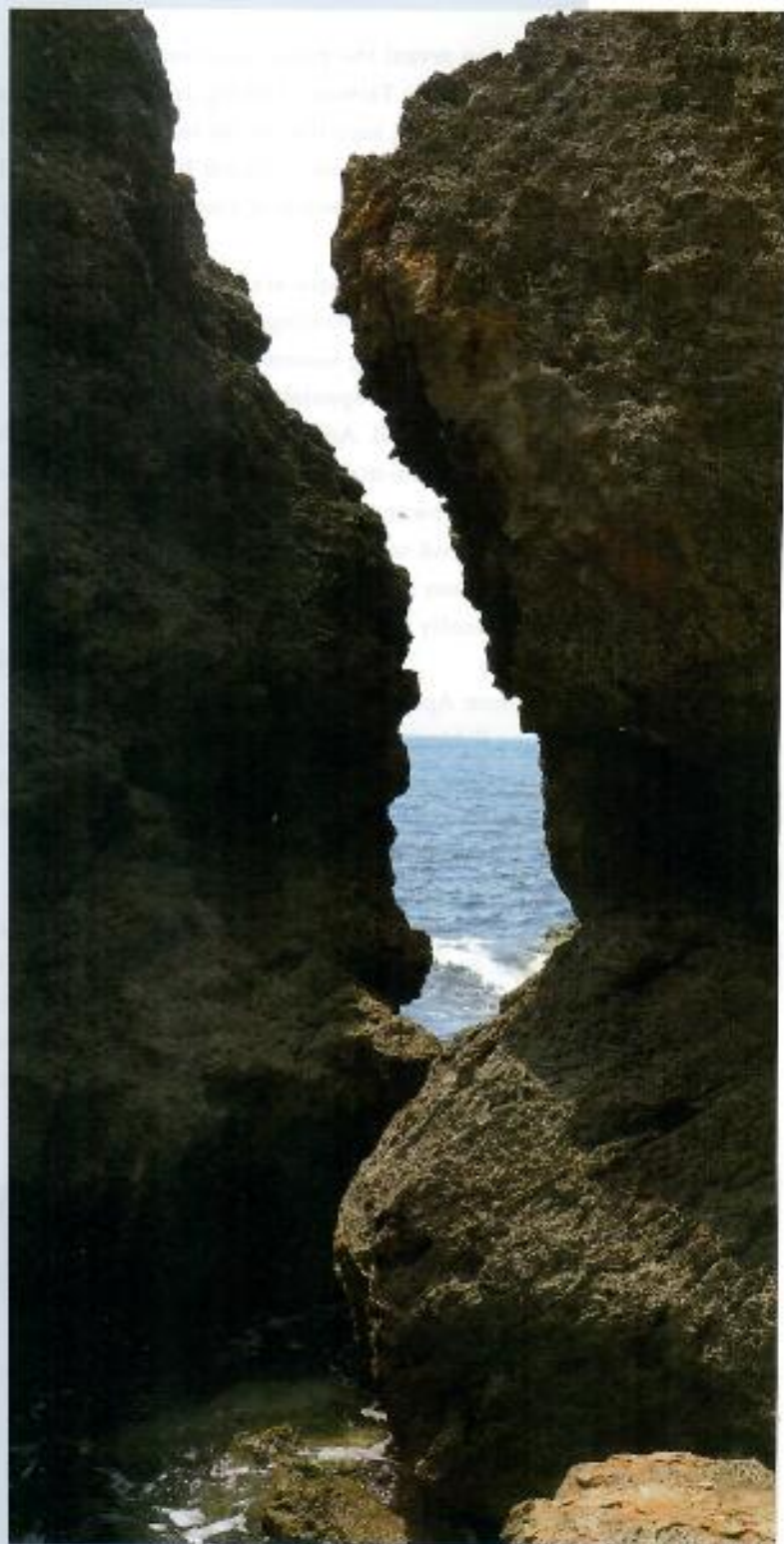
由於海上作業風險高，小琉球人的宗教信仰相當虔誠，鄉公所推估島上公、私寺廟有上百座，密度也冠全台，信仰中心碧雲寺、「迎王」主廟三隆宮等大小廟宇，皆有神尊供漁民「請神同行」出海去捕魚，廟方說，需擲三聖筊才能迎請。船長洪福家的船艙就有從大元堂迎請上船的「大元師爺」神尊，他說，祈求行船平安，農曆年前再請回廟宇。

洪省慧也說，討海人外出，平安為要，有時在海上捕不到魚，他也會請家人到廟宇許願，許多人常捐獻建廟還願，因此小琉球的廟多且富麗雄偉，碧雲寺就常有信徒還願，或敬獻酬神戲，漁業興盛時還得排檔期。三年一科的小琉球「迎王祭典」，迎請代天巡狩的千歲爺至地方遶境，以求平安，熱鬧更勝於年節，離家或出海捕魚的遊子，都會在迎王前趕回故鄉共襄盛舉。

小琉球除了船長多、寺廟多，還有「校長多」之說。曾毓宗說，早期不跑船者只能讀書脫貧，許多人選擇當老師，因為漁家普遍有克服萬難的奮鬥天性，因此一路升至校長，而有了小琉球「船長多、寺廟多、校長多」之稱。

處處是地質奇岩

小琉球不只「三多」，陸上多是珊瑚礁景緻，兩條地塹呈十字形，將全島分為四塊小台地，在地質學上頗具研究價值。



琉球鄉遍佈奇岩地質，大自然的鬼斧神工令人讚嘆。
Xiaoliujiu's unique rock formations are a testament to the incredible power of nature.

Temple and Sanlong Temple, along with the many smaller temples, all have deity statues that fishermen can invite to accompany them on their voyage. Temple officials say that fishermen must cast divination blocks and have them fall in the *shengjiao* position three times running, indicating the deity's acceptance of their invitation, to take a statue with them on board.

Hong Shenghui says that for seafarers, safety is the top priority. Sometimes, when they can't catch anything, they will ask their families to make wishes at the temple. Many people regularly donate money to a temple's building fund when their wishes are fulfilled, which is why there are so many magnificent temples on Xiaoliuqiu. Biyun Temple often has believers making donations in fulfillment of vows made, or offering theatrical performances to the gods. In the heyday of the fishing industry, so many performances were donated that temples had to arrange a strict schedule to fit them all in. Every three years, Xiaoliuqiu holds a festival to worship Wangye, the Thousand-Year-Old Lord and Imperial Inspector, inviting him to visit and bless the area. It's even livelier than the Lunar New Year celebrations, and those who have



moved away from home or are out at sea will make sure to return to the island and join in the festivities.

Xiaoliuqiu may be known for its abundance of boat captains and temples, but it is also sometimes called the "land of many school principals." According to Zeng Yuzong, in the early days, those who didn't work on boats had to study hard to escape poverty. And with the island's fishing community known for their tenacity and perseverance, many of them went on to become teachers and eventually rose through the ranks to become school principals.

Geological marvels everywhere

Xiaoliuqiu is not just about excelling in these three categories, though—there are also many beautiful coral reefs on land.

According to Peter Yuan, associate professor of Earth Sciences at National Cheng Kung University, for geologists deep-sea mudstone and shallow-water limestone are like oil and water—they just don't mix. But on Xiaoliuqiu, there's a layer of limestone that's ten meters thick, yet deep-sea mudstone has somehow made its way onto the island's surface. How did that happen?

Yuan explains that Xiaoliuqiu was formed by a mud volcano erupting from the seabed due to intense pressure within the Earth's crust. This caused mudstone to rise above the surface of the sea, and the calcium carbonate nodules that formed on the surface of the mudstone became the foundation for coral reef growth. As a result, the island not only has limestone, but also deep-sea mudstone and calcium carbonate nodules, a rare combination

成功大學地球科學系副教授袁彼得介紹小琉球的地質生成：表層是石灰岩，基盤是泥岩，兩者間的「嵌嵌鈣結核」是珊瑚礁生長的基礎，這是世界罕見的特殊現象。

Professor Peter Yuan of National Cheng Kung University gives an introduction to the geological makeup of Xiaoliuqiu. The surface is composed of limestone, while the base is mudstone. The calcium carbonate nodules between the two are the foundation for coral reef growth and a rare phenomenon worldwide.

山豬溝保留島上最完整的原始樹相，樹木的根系盤踞在高位珊瑚礁石灰岩，非常壯觀。

Wild Boar Trench (Shanzhugou) is the area where the island's native vegetation is best preserved. The tree roots sprawling over uplifted coral limestone create a truly impressive sight.

成功大學地球科學系副教授袁彼得說，深海的泥岩與淺海的石灰岩本是「水火不容」，小琉球的陸地卻同時出現石灰岩與泥岩，何也？

他解釋，琉球嶼的構成，是海底的泥岩因「泥貫入體」（地殼強烈擠壓）的作用力，被抬昇到淺海，接著泥層中的甲烷菌形成「碳酸鈣結核」，鋪在泥岩上成為珊瑚礁生長的基底，才讓石灰岩得已發育，這種在深海泥岩上出現碳酸鈣結核，然後產生珊瑚礁，是世界罕見的特殊現象。

在永安橋遺址就能探查這種特殊的地質。袁彼得帶領我們涉險攀越石灰岩，抵達一凹處，這凹處正是距今250萬年至500萬年的上新世泥岩，泥岩的上層，往上層層堆疊，有圓礫、生痕化石，更上層是距今100萬年的珊瑚礁石灰岩，完整呈現小琉球被往上抬的地質運動。另一處的沙瑪基，僅能見到珊瑚礁地質，由此可拚出島嶼地質運動的特殊性。

島上處處可見地質奇景，例如，在厚石裙礁可見海蝕柱，望海亭附近有崩崖地形、裙礁海岸；斷崖形成的山豬溝，是高位珊瑚礁石灰岩植群的代表區域，也是島上保留最完整的原始植相地區，全島宛如地質寶庫。

袁彼得說，在小琉球，視野所及是區區10公尺的石灰岩表層，但構成這座島嶼的主要地層卻以泥岩為主，致土質緻密且鹽分含量高，農耕不易，僅適合生長生性強健的植物，例如榕樹等。陳盈宏說，早期農作以甘藷為主，近年改種芒果樹，居民以海浪拍打上岸的馬尾藻為肥料，果實甜度高，香氣足，果肉還有水蜜桃味。

海洋、地質與漁村文化，豐富了小琉球的魅力，近年來吸引百萬遊客登島。屏東縣政府在島上加速建置污水處理設施，管制潮間帶的人流，以保護海洋生物，並鼓勵遊客在岸上欣賞海龜、花瓶岩、龍蝦洞、美人洞、厚石群礁，甚至是全島12公里的海岸線任一置高點，聽著海濤凝神注視海面，免下水就可欣賞海龜悠遊大海，甚至可見「龜抬頭」浮出水面換氣的可愛模樣。

來到小琉球，我們可以實踐永續旅遊，捍衛大海，讓它成為生生不息的生態觀光學習之島。 □



居民使用海浪拍打上岸的海藻，將之曬乾後做為芒果樹的肥料，果樹長出的果實纖維細緻，果肉還有水蜜桃香，被視為珍品。

Residents take seaweed washed ashore by the waves, dry it in the sun, and use it as fertilizer for mango trees. The fruits are prized for their delicate flesh and peach-like fragrance.





At the site of the former Yong'an Bridge, you can explore some really unique geology. Our guide, Peter Yuan, leads us on a daring climb across the limestone crags to reach a depression in the rock. The cliff above this depression is made up of mudstone from the Pliocene Era, dating back 2.5 to 5 million years. The rock face reveals layer upon layer of sediment, including rounded pebbles and fossilized imprints. At the very top is a layer of coral limestone from 1 million years ago, making the site a perfect showcase of the geological movement that raised Xiaoliuqiu out of the seas. Over at Shamaji, we only see coral reef geology, but it still gives us a glimpse into the unique geological movements that shaped this island.

Everywhere you look on the island, there are amazing geological wonders to behold! For example, at Houshi Shore you can see sea-eroded pillars rising up behind the shore reef. And near the Ocean View Pavilion, there are shore reefs and collapsed cliffs that will take your breath away. The whole island is a treasure trove of geological marvels.

Yuan says that on Xiaoliuqiu, the visible surface is made up of only ten meters of limestone, but the main geological structure of the island is actually dominated by mudstone, which makes the soil dense and saline, making farming difficult. Chen Yinghong adds that in earlier times, sweet potatoes were the main crop, but in recent years they have switched to growing mango trees. The island's residents use seaweed that washes up on the shore as fertilizer, resulting in sweet and fragrant fruit with a taste reminiscent of peaches.

The ocean, geology, and fishing village culture have enriched the charm of Xiaoliuqiu, attracting millions of visitors in recent years. The Pingtung County Government has accelerated the construction of sewage treatment facilities on the island and regulated access to the intertidal zones in order to protect marine life. They also encourage visitors to find high points on land to listen to the sound of the waves and gaze at the sea rather than going into the water to watch the sea turtles swim. You might even catch sight of a turtle popping its head out of the water to take a breath!

When you visit Xiaoliuqiu, you can do your part for sustainable tourism and to protect the ocean, helping it become a thriving hub for eco-tourism and learning. □

*(Mei Kuo/photos by Jimmy Lin/
tr. by Geof Aberhart)*







封面說明：

是前輩藝術家們不輟的創作，為台灣點燃了文化覺醒與自信的火種。圖為黃土水的作品〈釋迦出山像〉。（林曼萱攝，劉俊良設計）

Cover: Sakya, by Huang Tu-shui. The timeless works of pioneering artists have lit the flame of Taiwan's cultural awakening and self-confidence. (photo by Lin Man-hsuan, design by Lanzi Liu)

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