



PONSO NO TAO - The island where we live

Official name: **LANYU** ≡ [蘭嶼](https://zh.wikipedia.org) (zh.wikipedia.org) ≡ [Orchid Island](https://en.wikipedia.org) (en.wikipedia.org)



1 - Touristic map. Area: 45 km² (about half the area of Zurich city). Coastal perimeter: about 38 km



2 - For more infos check [Orchid Island on Wikipedia](#)

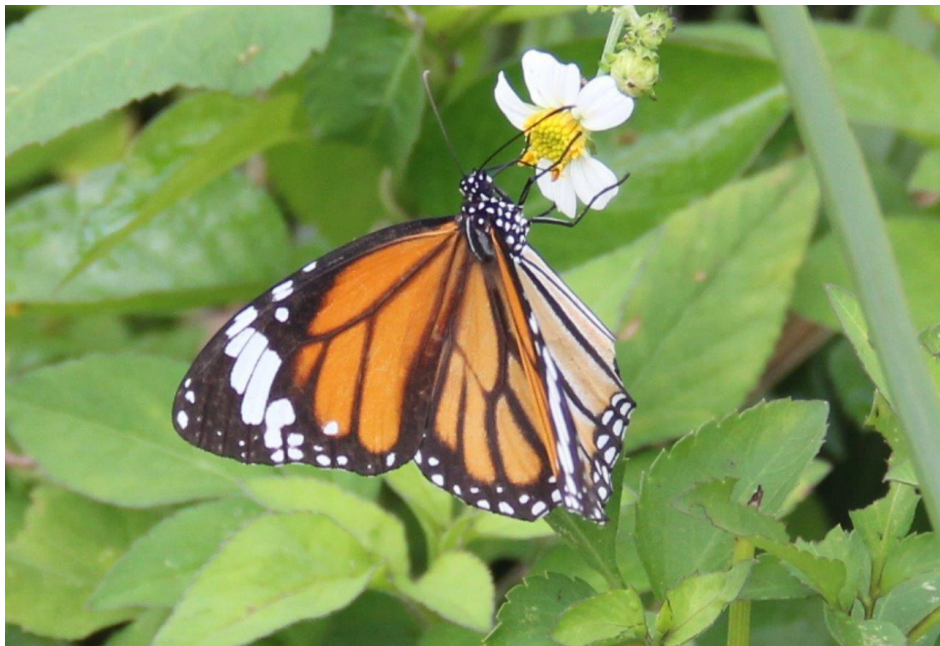
ABOUT DIFFERENT ISLAND NAMES

A rough historical outline

- *The native Tao call their island **PONSO NO TAO** (the island where the Tao people live) or **IRALA** (land)*
 - *Japanese: Early 17th century Japanese charts list **Tabako Shima**; during their colonial occupation in the first half of the 20th century **Kotosho** (red head island)*
 - *French: mid 17th century French maps labeled it **Tabaco Xima***
 - *Aborigines from Taiwan: The Puyuma name it **Botol** and Formosan native Ami **Buturu**;*
 - *Westeners: **Botel Tobago***
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Source: [World Summit of Indigenous Cultures](#); [Island name](#) ([archive.org](#); [indigenous.pristine.net](#))









3 - Try to find the perfectly adapted forest inhabitant!



4 - Right - it's a lizard.

Flying fish season





5 - Flying fish season starts roughly in March and ends in June.



The native Tao are experts in catching flying fish and its conservation and preparation.



6 - Cleaning procedure



7 - There are different techniques of hanging up.



8 - It matters if it's day or night.

It's said that there are cultural habits defining which fish men or women are allowed to eat or touch. That's why most traditional houses have two sets of cooking utensils for handling the two classes of fish.

Source: [Native diet](#) (archive.org)



9 - Tan tan (Tao girl from the northeast coast) and her Taiwanese friend (on the left) are eating flying fish and spring onion pancake for breakfast.



10 - Flying fish for dinner ...

"Lin hau guo" is a local fruit and used for the preparation of cold refreshing drinks!





On shore the Tao cultivate [taro](http://greenharvest.com.au) (greenharvest.com.au) in wet fields. They also grow crops that are less labour-intensive as [yams](http://greenharvest.com.au) (greenharvest.com.au), millet, sugarcane and onions. Cultivated fruits include bananas, pineapples, coconuts, pumpkins and bitter melons. The islanders also raise goats and pigs "which can be seen running about on roads and near homes almost everywhere".

[World Summit of Indigenous Cultures; Native diet](#) (archive.org; indigenous.pristine.net)



12 - Wet field with taro plants.



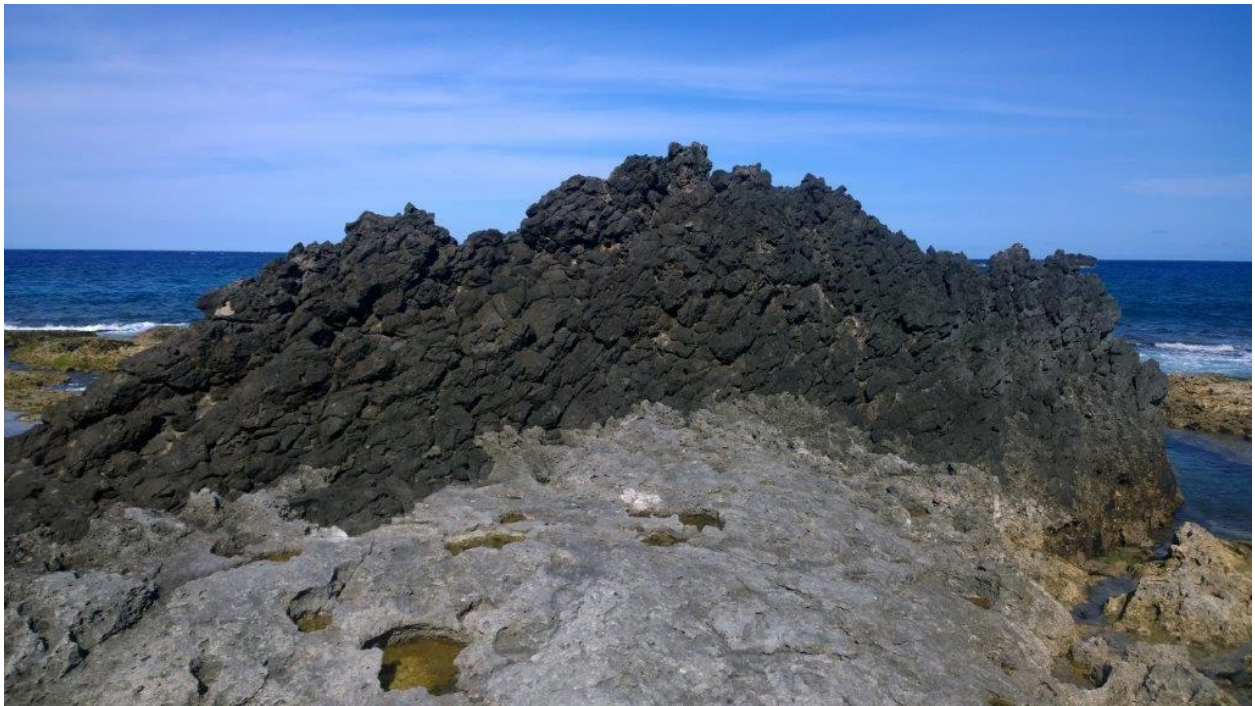
13 - Taro root is toxic in its raw form, but delicious after cooking.



14 - Traditiona Taiwanese all day dish: "Songtze" (rise & meat wrapped in bamboo leaves)



Traces of volcanic activity



Since 3.5 million years up to about 20,000 years ago Lanyu has been transformed several times by volcanic eruptions.



15 - Lanyu's northeast coast



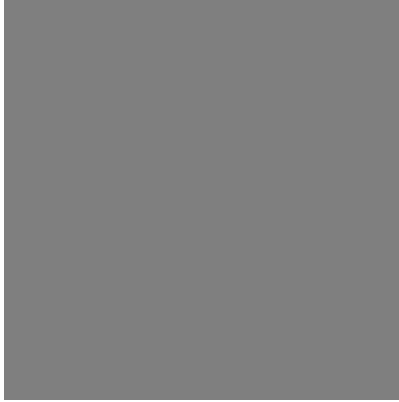
Most of Lanyu is covered by thick piles of dark-colored vesicular volcanic rocks (geol. "cenozoic andesites") erupted from volcanic activity associated with [convergent plate boundaries](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Convergent_plate_boundaries) (wikipedia.org). The Philippine plate is a small plate between the Eurasian and Pacific plates. Right at this juncture Lanyu is located as one of a chain of volcanic islands.

Source: [Orchid Island Visit 2006, Geology](#) ([archive.org](#); [indigenous.pristine.net](#))



16 - Lanyu's west coast





17 - Patterns and traces of the sea: fossil coral



18 - Try to find the exit!

Lanyu's aborigines - The Tao people

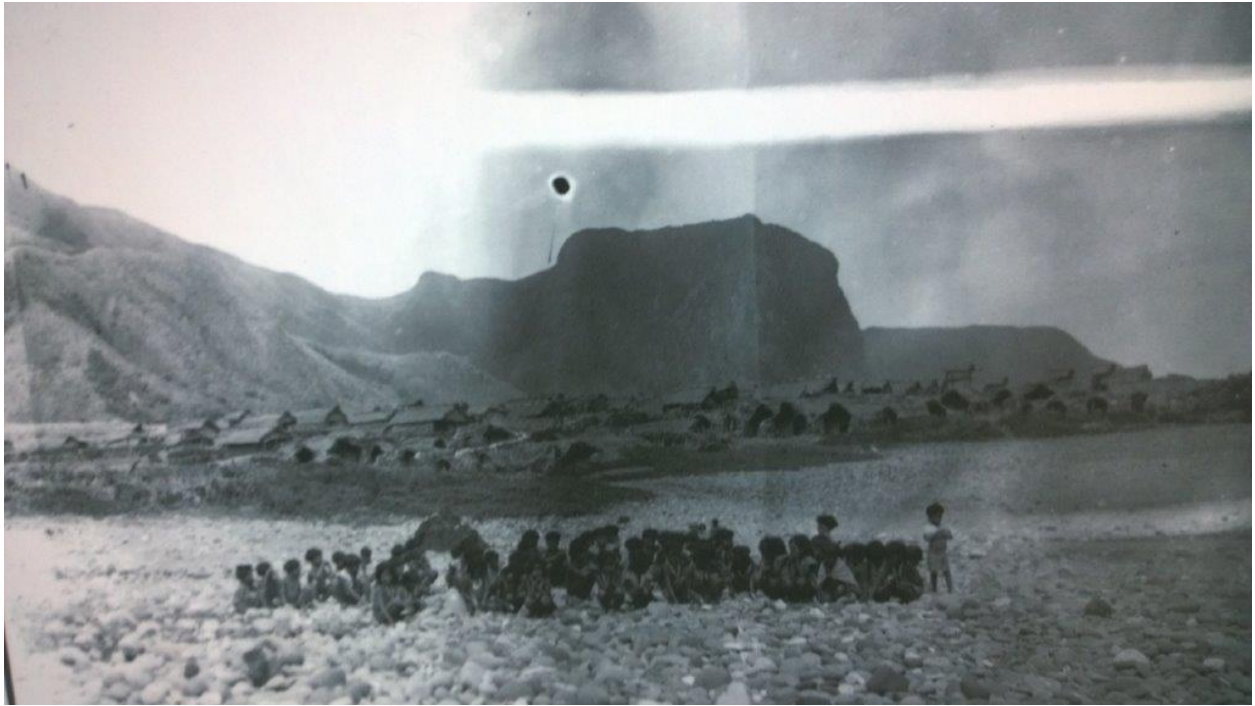


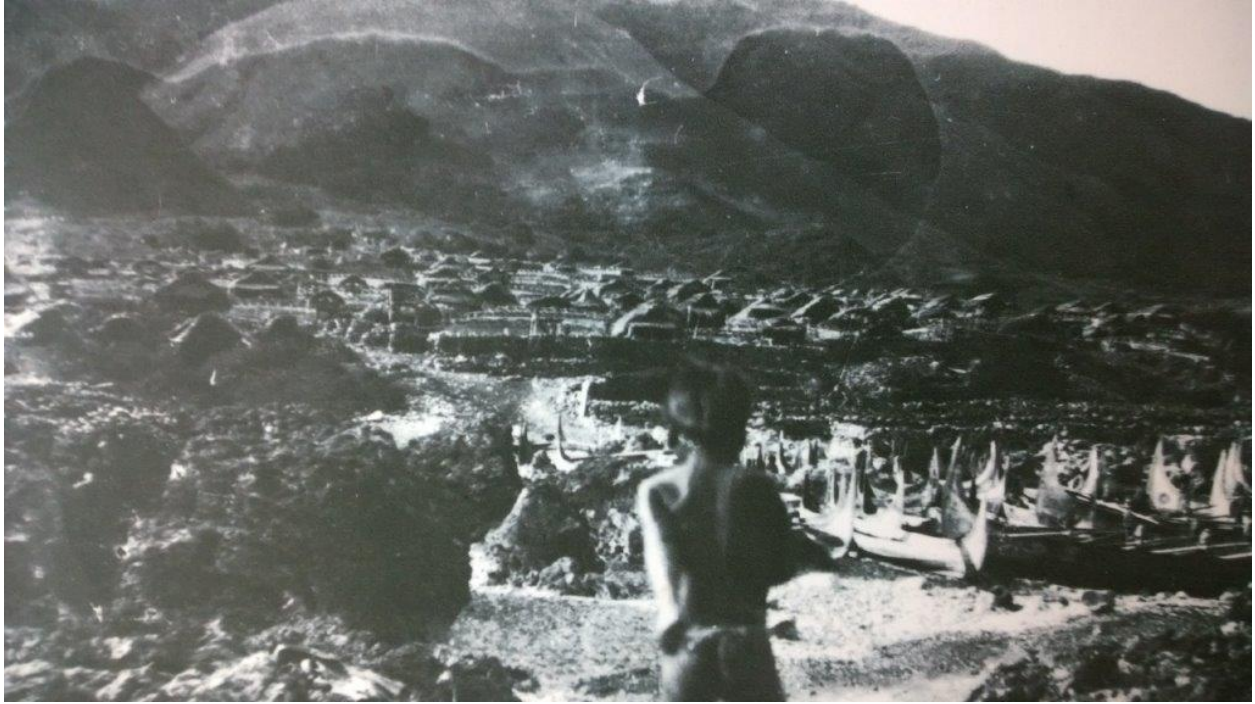
19 - Photos from between 1947 and 1966 (source: exhibition at Lanyu's airport)

The island was "undiscovered" until Japanese occupation of Taiwan (1895-1945) when the Japanese government declared the island an off limits ethnological research area and it was not open to tourists

until 1967. The relative isolation of Lanyu has allowed the native Tao to maintain their traditions, language and culture better than the Taiwan mainland's aborigines. The Tao migrated to Lanyu about 800 years ago from the Batan Archipelago (巴丹群島) in the northern Philippines, maintaining communication with their homeland, trading pigs, goats and millet for weapons, pearls and gold. [More infos about the Tao](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tao_people) (wikipedia.org)









20 - Today's exhibition piece.



21 - Family life



22 - Excitement



23 - Astonishment



24 - Caring



25 - Hope



26 - Street life



27 - Sated & settled



28 - Lanyu's specialities?

Under water meditation and fish bothering ...





29 - Cool selfie taken by our instructor Vic



30 - Flying fish:o)



31 - "It's my territory, isn't it?"



32 - The art of neutral buoyancy

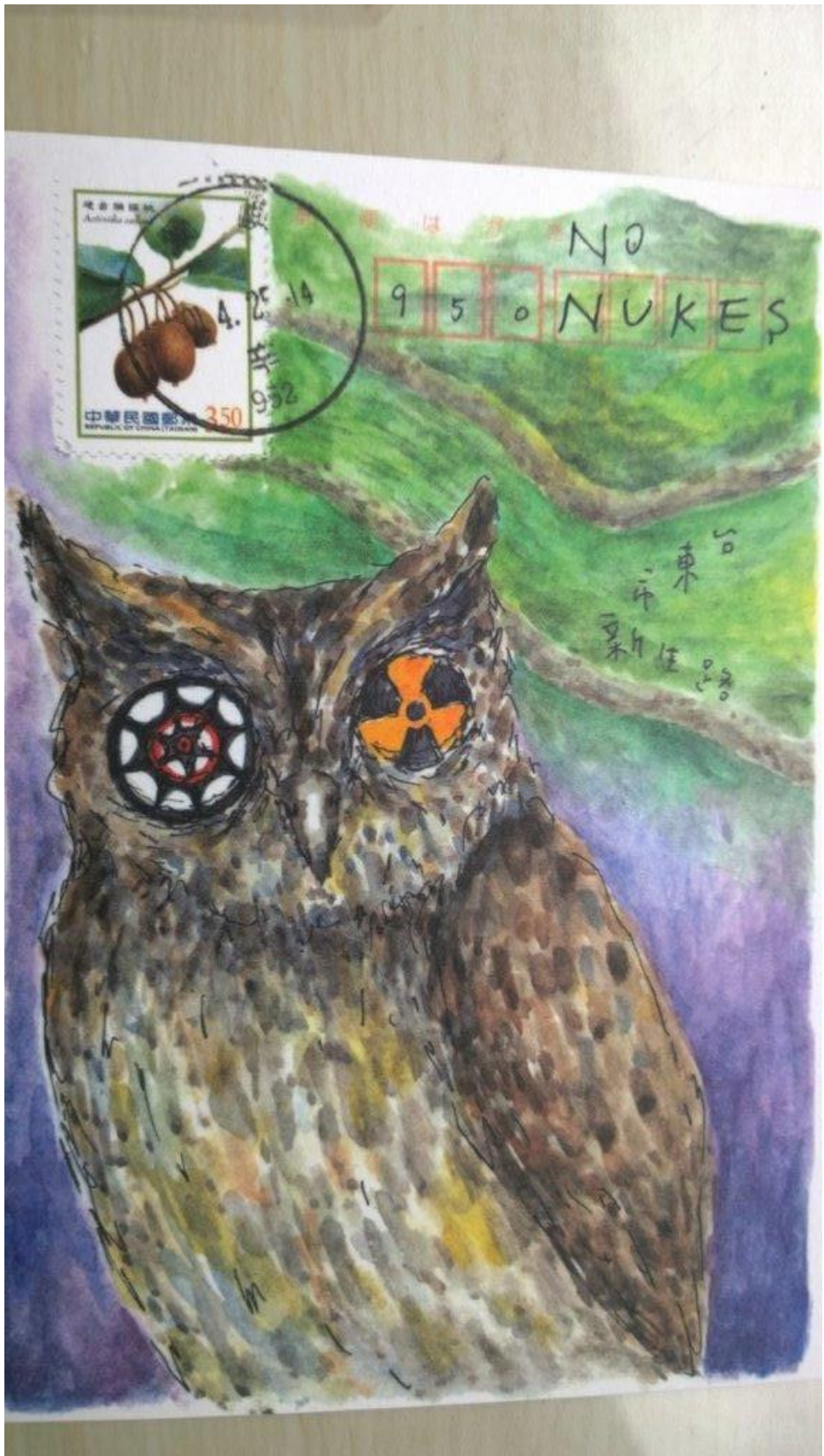


33 - In front of the Blue Hole



34 - Fresh PADI's

Nuclear waste in paradise



In 1974 Taiwan's Atomic Energy Commission selected Long Men 龍門 (Dragon Gate) at the southern tip of Orchid Island as a temporary storage facility for mid and low level nuclear waste. A harbor was built in 1978, construction began in 1980, and shipments began arriving in May of 1982. Since then, the site has been the depository for mid and low level nuclear waste from Taiwan's three nuclear plants. Source: [World Summit of indigenous cultures; Nuclear Waste](#) (archive.org; indigenous.pristine.net)

[About nuclear power in Taiwan](#) (wikipedia.org)



35 - There are signs of countermovements by the inhabitants.



website: lanyu.land ⇐ link to this Sway ⇐ Sway as PDF

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