Description: Is there a distinctively Japanese feeling for nature? Was premodern Japan a model of environmental sustainability? How did post-WWII Japan become infamous as a “toxic archipelago”? And why has Japan’s natural environment recently become the object of fierce conflict and controversy?

To address these questions, we explore how people living on the Japanese archipelago have interacted with, imagined, and represented the natural environment from the time of the Tokugawa shoguns to the Fukushima meltdown (1600–present). The primary audience for this course is upper-division undergraduate students, but lower-division and MA students are also welcome.