



## COVER PHOTOGRAPH



**COVER PHOTOGRAPH: TAITUNG COUNTY, TAIWAN**

### **Sansiantai, Taitung County, East coast of Taiwan**

Sansiantai (or Sanhsientai) is a well-known tourist destination in Taitung county, on the East coast of Taiwan (Formosa). The bedrock in the Sansiantai area is volcanic agglomerate. Originally a rocky cape, the sea eroded away the neck of the cape and created an offshore island surrounded by coral reef. The island has an area of approximately 22 hectares, and its highest point is 77 m above sea level. A folk legend claims that three of the Eight Immortals of Taoism (Lu Tungpin, Ho Hsienku, and Li Tiehkuai) stopped at Sansiantai on their way across the sea. The name “Sansiantai” thus arose (“Sansiantai” means “Three Immortals Terrace”). Taiwan’s East coast, which is battered regularly by typhoons, has a steep shoreline on the Pacific Ocean. The coastal plain is very narrow, and it widens slightly only around Sansiantai which is one of the three main sea terraces of the East coast. This view was taken on 23 November 2006, and it looks North at the coastline. Note the gravel beaches in the foreground, and the mountains behind. The top of the mountains is barely visible through the clouds. (Photograph of the East coast looking North from Sansiantai on 23 November 2006 by Hubert Chanson, Department of Civil Engineering, The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Queensland 4072, Australia.)