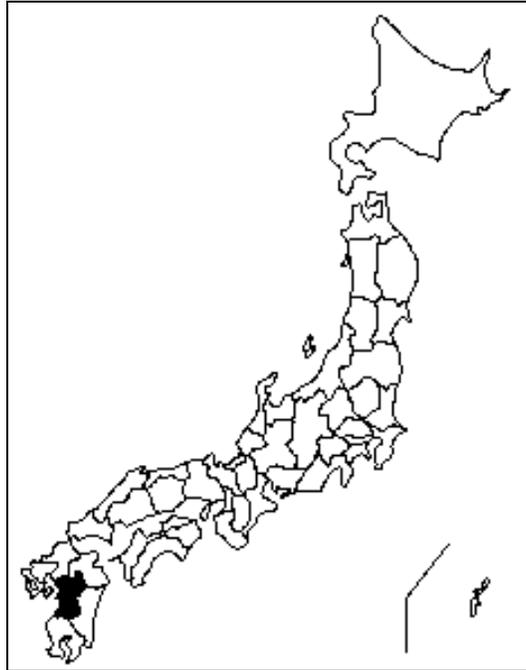


Kuma River Dance

# Kumagawa Ondo

Performed by Yukiko Shishikura, '05



Kumamoto, Japan

Summer is the season when insect damage to crops and unexpected typhoons and floods are most likely to occur. Summer Festival (Natsu-Matsuri) is originally held to pray for protection against these natural disasters. Today, summer festival is held in many cities, towns, and villages around Japan and it brings community and family together.

The highlight of Summer Festival is done by local folk dance. The local people gather in an open space and dance in a circle around Taiko. This particular dance, Kuma-River Dance, is from Yatsushiro-city, Kumamoto, Japan. It is located in the center of Kyushu Island, which is located in southern Japan. Many steps in this dance refer to features of Yukiko's hometown, such as the Kuma River, rice padding, rush padding, Yatsushiro Ocean, and Mt. Ryuhou.