

Our Lakes  
**Shinji-ko and Nakaumi**  
 and  
**The Ramsar Convention**

Largest Brackish Lakes in Japan

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Ramsar  
 Convention on  
 Wetlands  
 Certificates



Our Lakes  
**Shinji-ko and Nakaumi**  
 and  
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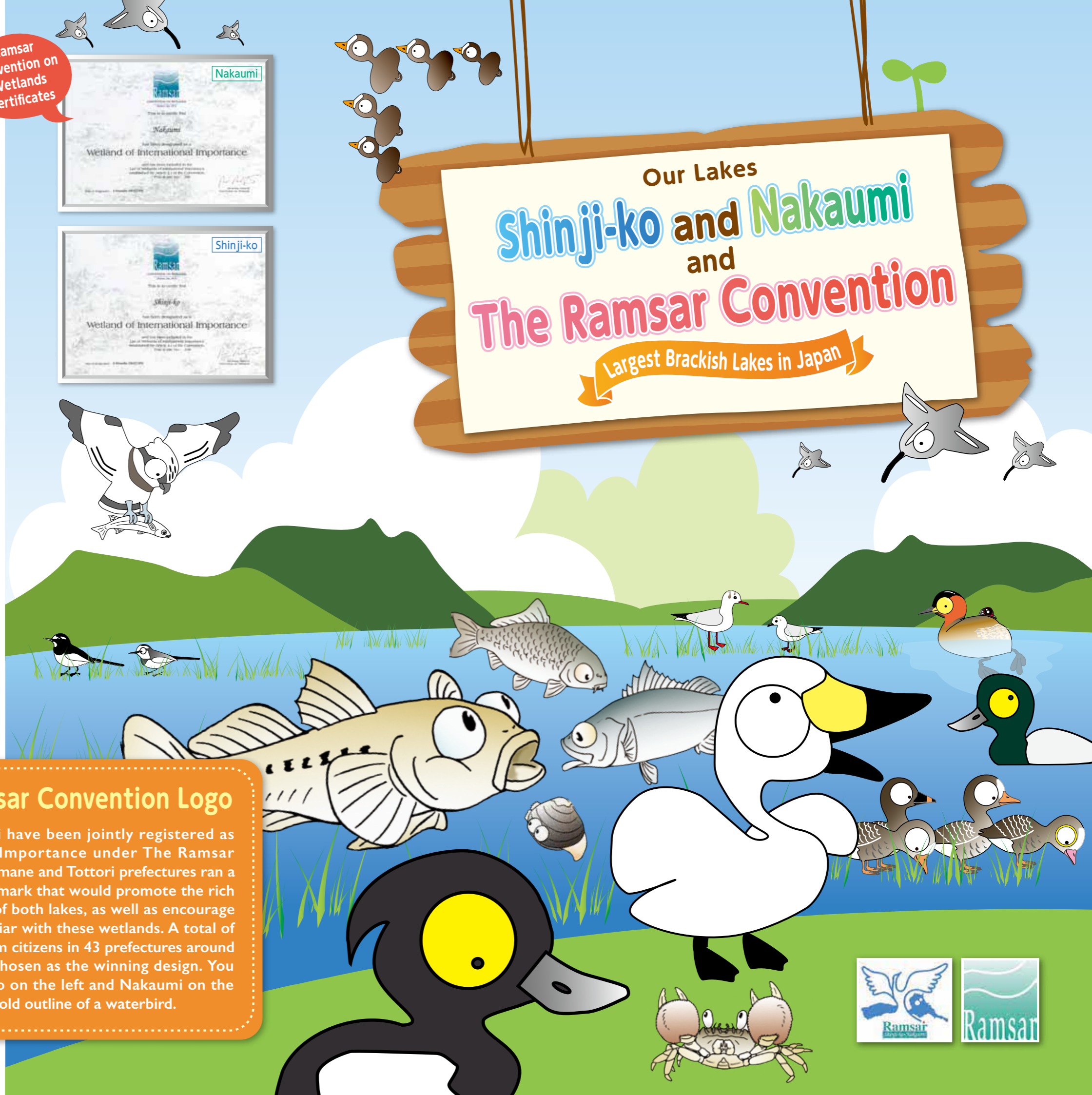
Largest Brackish Lakes in Japan

**5 Key Point**

### Shinji-ko and Nakaumi Ramsar Convention Logo



Both Shinji-ko and Nakaumi have been jointly registered as Wetlands of International Importance under The Ramsar Convention. In 2006, both Shimane and Tottori prefectures ran a competition to design a logo mark that would promote the rich natural beauty and wonders of both lakes, as well as encourage people to become more familiar with these wetlands. A total of 651 entries were received from citizens in 43 prefectures around Japan, with this mark being chosen as the winning design. You can see the shape of Shinji-ko on the left and Nakaumi on the right, joined together by the bold outline of a waterbird.



# What is The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands?

The main aims of The Ramsar Convention are conservation and wise use of wetland areas. It has taken many years for this treaty to be established.



## Conservation and Restoration

Wetlands function not only as important habitats for waterbirds, but also as a vital ecosystem that supports the natural environment of humankind.

We ask everyone to work together to conserve and restore all kinds of wetlands.

## Wise Use

In order to promote a more balanced and sustainable relationship between the lifestyle of local people and industries, we advocate the 'wise use' of wetlands, whereby the ecosystem is maintained, and these blessings of nature can be utilized in a sustainable way.

## Exchange and Learning

As part of The Ramsar Convention, a resolution was passed regarding activities relating to communication and information exchange, education and public awareness to encourage conservation and wise use of wetlands.

## The Ramsar Convention Contracting Parties



### Contracting Parties

170

### Wetland Sites

2,337

Contracting Parties

Non-Contracting Parties

### Total Area

252,051,740 hectares

(As of January 2019)

\*Some small countries or areas may not be visible on this simplified map.



Long ago...

Many civilizations flourished alongside rivers and waterways.



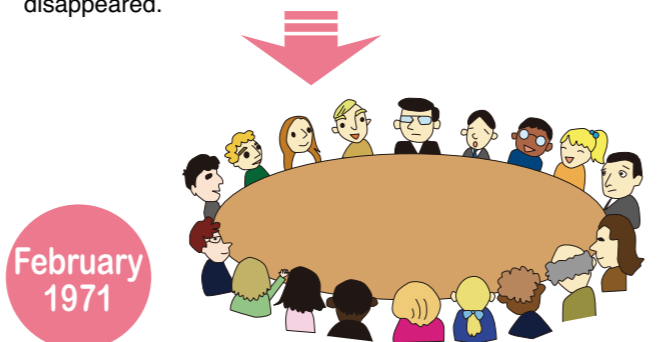
Since the Industrial Revolution

Waterways were gradually dammed up and houses and factories took over the riverbanks.



Then...

Rivers became polluted and many species of aquatic life disappeared.



February 1971

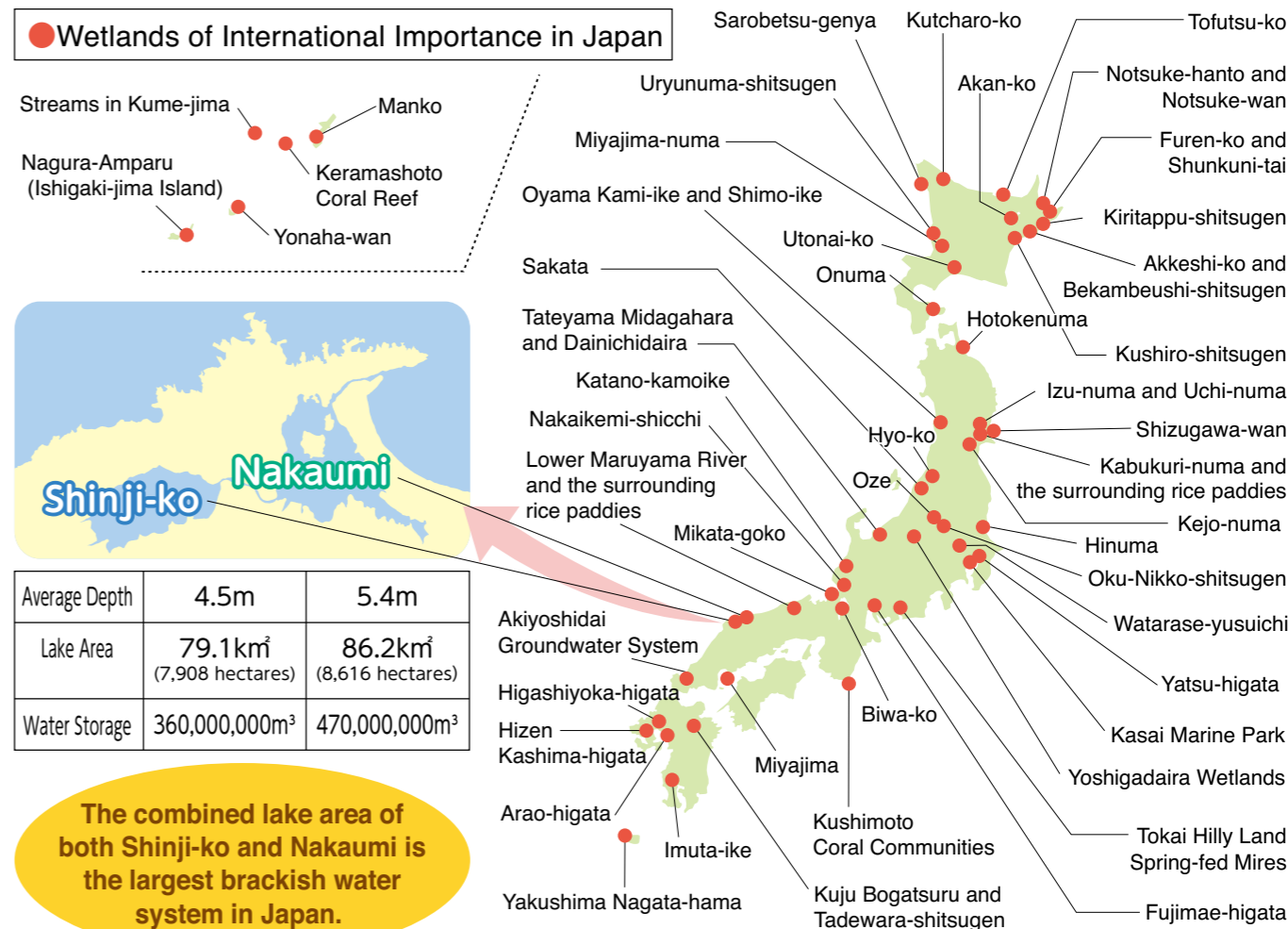
Representatives from 18 countries met in Ramsar, an Iranian city on the banks of the Caspian Sea where a convention on the international importance of wetlands as a habitat for waterbirds was formally adopted.

This became known as the 'The Ramsar Convention.' Japan became a contracting party to the convention in 1980.

# Shinji-ko and Nakaumi: Inclusion into The Ramsar Convention

The 9<sup>th</sup> Ramsar Convention (COP9) was held in Uganda, Africa on 8 November 2005. At this meeting, both Shinji-ko and Nakaumi were internationally recognized as valuable sites and were included into the List of Wetlands of International Importance.

It is essential that we take pride in these two lakes and conserve the natural resources of these wetlands for future generations.



**Kushiro-shitsugen (Kushiro Marshland) became the first site in Japan to be listed under The Ramsar Convention in 1980.**

Every year, more and more places are added to this list.

There are currently 52 wetlands listed throughout Japan (as of March 2019).

1 Key Point

## What is a wetland?

The Ramsar Convention accepts all wetland areas, including places that are manmade, waterways that may dry up from time to time and lakes that have no flowing water. They also allow coastal areas where the sea level is no more than 6m deep, meaning that almost all waterways can be considered as wetlands.

So is this!



# Why were Shinji-ko and Nakaumi designated as a Wetland of International Importance?

Your waterway must meet certain criteria in order to become a registered as a Wetland of International Importance under The Ramsar Convention. Both Shinji-ko and Nakaumi meet many of these criteria. Both are brackish lakes, meaning the water content is a mixture of salty sea water and fresh river water. Each lake has a different salinity, with different characteristics that make them unique.

Shinji-ko and Nakaumi are two amazing wetlands that we should be proud of!

## Shinji-ko

## Nakaumi

More than 3,000 greater white-fronted geese!

Shinji-ko salinity is 1/10 that of seawater.

Nakaumi salinity is 1/2 that of seawater.

More than 1,000 tundra swans!



More than 20,000 tufted ducks!



More than 20,000 common pochards!

International Criterion 5

“...regularly supports 20,000 or more waterbirds.”

More than 40,000 ducks and geese come to Shinji-ko and Nakaumi every year!

International Criterion 6

“... regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of waterbird.”

(The population of one waterbird species is determined through calculating the estimated number of that species in that region.)

Approximately 10,000 greater scaups come to Shinji-ko and Nakaumi!

International Criterion 7

“...supports a significant proportion of indigenous fish subspecies, species or families...”

This is the habitat for **Shinji-ko-haze (Lake Shinji Goby)**!



Shinji-ko-haze

International Criterion 8

“... is an important source of food for fishes, spawning ground, nursery and/or migration path on which fish stocks, either within the wetland or elsewhere, depend.”

These waterways boast one of the largest catches of **Yamato-shijimi (Corbicula Clam)** in Japan. These clams are an important ingredient in the specialty dish ‘Seven Delicacies of Lake Shinji’ that celebrates the abundant supply of seafood in this lake.



Yamato-shijimi

2 Key Point

### What are the criteria for becoming a registered wetland?

Criterion 1

A wetland should be considered internationally important if it contains a representative, rare, or unique example of a natural or near-natural wetland type found within the appropriate biogeographic region.

Criterion 2

A wetland should be considered internationally important if it supports vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered species or threatened ecological communities.

Criterion 3

A wetland should be considered internationally important if it supports populations of plant and/or animal species important for maintaining the biological diversity of a particular biogeographic region.

Criterion 4

A wetland should be considered internationally important if it supports plant and/or animal species at a critical stage in their life cycles, or provides refuge during adverse conditions.

Criterion 5

A wetland should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 20,000 or more waterbirds.

Criterion 6

A wetland should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of waterbird.

Criterion 7

A wetland should be considered internationally important if it supports a significant proportion of indigenous fish subspecies, species or families, life-history stages, species interactions and/or populations that are representative of wetland benefits and/or values and thereby contributes to global biological diversity.

Criterion 8

A wetland should be considered internationally important if it is an important source of food for fishes, spawning ground, nursery and/or migration path on which fish stocks, either within the wetland or elsewhere, depend.

Criterion 9

A wetland should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of wetland-dependent nonavian animal species.

\*The wording ‘fish species’ includes fish, shrimp, crab and crustaceans.

# Shinji-ko

# Flora, Fauna and Scenery

# Nakaumi

Many migratory waterbirds visit these lakes!

You might see a rare waterbird...



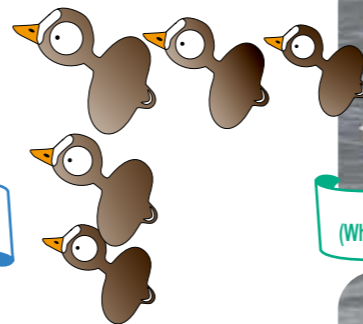
**Hishikui**  
(Bean Goose, *Anser fabalis*)



**Hojiro-gamo**  
(Common Goldeneye, *Bucephala clangula*)



**Hajiro-kaitsuburi**  
(Black-necked Grebe, *Podiceps nigricollis*)



**Ohakucho**  
(Whooper Swan/Common Swan, *Cygnus cygnus*)



**Onaga-gamo**  
(Pintail/Northern Pintail, *Anas acuta*)



**Kai-tsuburi**  
(Little Grebe, *Tachybaptus ruficollis*)



**Hama-shigi**  
(Dunlin, *Calidris alpina*)



**Zuguro-kamome**  
(Saunter's Gull, *Chroicocephalus saundersi*)



**Misago**  
(Osprey, *Pandion haliaetus*)



**Seitaka-shigi**  
(Black-winged Stilt, *Himantopus himantopus*)



**Yoshigo**  
(Yellow Bittern, *Ixobrychus sinensis*)



**Chuhi**  
(Eastern Marsh Harrier, *Circus spilonotus*)

There are many fish and plants too!



**Suzuki**  
(Sea Bass, *Lateolabrax japonicus*)



**Shirauo**  
(Icefish/Whitebait, *Salangichthys microdon*)



**Wakasagi/Amasagi**  
(Pond Smelt, *Hypomesus nipponensis*)



**Asari**  
(Clam, *Ruditapes philippinarum*)



**Sarubo-gai**  
(Arc Clam, *Scapharca kagoshimensis*)



**Hiiragi**  
(Spotnape Ponyfish, *Nuchequula nuchalis*)



**Nagoya-sanae**  
(*Stylurus nagoyanus*)



**Reed Community**  
(Yoshi, *Phragmites*)



**Ogonori**  
(Sea Hair, *Gracilaria verrucosa*)



**Koamamo**  
(Japanese Eelgrass, *Nanozostera japonica*)

There are some spectacular scenic spots! You can go close to the shore too!



**Shinji-ko Fureai Park**



**Aika-Nagisa Park**



**View from the lookout point across Shinji-ko**



**Mt. Daisen and Nakaumi**



**Hakucho-kaigan**  
(White Swan Coast)



**Sunset over Nakaumi**

# Activities relating to the goals of The Ramsar Convention



## Conservation and Restoration

Wetlands are very important places that are the home to a variety of plant and animal species. In order to preserve the wetland environment and be able to share this with future generations, many activities are being carried out at both Shinji-ko and Nakaumi.

### Lake Cleaning Project

Cleaning activities have been carried out by people living in the areas around these waterways for many years. After becoming designated as an internationally important wetland area, the local governments of Shimane Prefecture, Tottori Prefecture and municipalities around the lake area have been supporting local people in their efforts. Since 2006, both lakes are cleaned on the same day of the year in a wetland-wide project. This large-scale cleaning event is carried out on the second Sunday of June as part of the nationwide Environment Month campaign. Every year, over 8,000 people come together for the sake of their wetlands. We encourage you to help us and join in this annual event. You too can help preserve the rich natural environment and help us to share this wetland area with future generations.

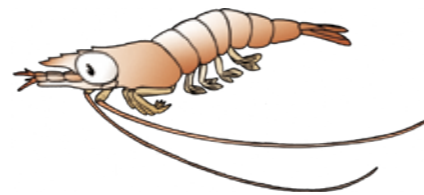


### Yoshi (Reed) Cutting

There are many communities of reeds growing in Shinji-ko. In winter every year, volunteers from local groups and businesses work together to cut back the dried reeds, so that they do not drift away and dirty the lake.

### Cleaning and Beautification Work

There are many local people who work hard to make sure this wetland area is clean and beautiful for everyone to enjoy by keeping the area around their homes and fields tidy.



## Wise Use

The Ramsar Convention strives to not only conserve wetlands, but to also utilize these areas in a sustainable way. This is called 'Wise Use'.

### Many Faces of Wise Use

There are many ways in which people can wisely use and enjoy everyday life in and around this wetland environment, such as catching fish and gathering shellfish, playing along the lakeshore and taking part in festivals.

#### Nakaumi



Lakeside Concert



Open-Water Swim



Seaweed Harvesting

#### Shinji-ko



Shijimi (Corbicula Clam) Fishing



Haze (Goby) Fishing



Sunset

### Activities Focused on Wise Use

The prefectural governments of Shimane and Tottori are very keen to ensure conservation and wise use of both wetland areas, taking it in turns to hold symposiums (including guest speakers and outdoor education activities) that anyone can join.



Field Work



Hands-On Experiences



Presentations



# Exchange and Education



In order to wisely utilize and protect these special wetland areas, it is very important that we learn about the wetlands and have the opportunity to meet and discuss with people living nearby other wetland areas in Japan and around the world.

## National Children's Wetland Exchange Meeting

Both Shimane and Tottori prefectures send participants to these forums each year with the hope of encouraging the next generation of leaders to meet and exchange ideas about wetlands, including their home area of Shinji-ko and Nakaumi.



2015

**Location: Nakaumi, Japan**

(Participants: Korea, Hong Kong, Japan – Toyooka and Shiga)



2016

**Location: Upo-numa, Korea**



2017

**Location: Akiyoshidai Groundwater System, Yamaguchi Prefecture, Japan**

## Field Work

There are many ways we can learn about our wetlands – taking a guided boat tour on the lake, researching about the flora and fauna in the streams and rivers that feed the lakes, visiting nature museums to learn more about the birds and fish, listening to local elders tell stories and much more.



Guided Boat Tour



Water Quality Survey



Bird Watching

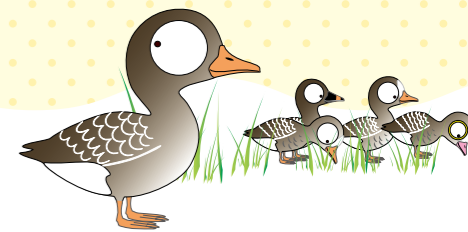


Lake History Study Trip



Presentations

# Commemorative Events



We have held special events to mark important anniversaries of Shinji-ko and Nakaumi becoming registered as important wetland areas under The Ramsar Convention.

## 1st Anniversary Event

In December 2006 (one year after Shinji-ko and Nakaumi became registered wetland areas under The Ramsar Convention), Shimane Prefecture, Tottori Prefecture and municipalities around the lakes worked together to hold a special forum entitled 'Nakaumi and Shinji-ko: 1st Anniversary Commemorative Event.'



### Declaration

- We will conserve and restore the precious environment of our treasured wetlands Shinji-ko and Nakaumi, so that we can hand these rich natural treasures down to the next generation.
- We will protect the ecosystems of Shinji-ko and Nakaumi, and at the same time work hard to ensure that 'wise-use' is carried out in order to sustain the rich natural treasures of these wetlands.
- We will start this immediately, making sure that each and every adult and child has a role to play in taking care of these wetlands.

## 5th Anniversary Event

In 2010 a series of events were organized by Shimane and Tottori prefectural governments, including an exhibition, symposium and an exchange program for children from Japan and Korea.

**North-East Asian Children's Exchange Event: We Found a 'Wetland Treasure'!**



**Commemorative Symposium: Rich Blessings of Nature for the Next Generation**



Special Message to the Lakes in the Future



Environmental Education Musical: Ai-to-Chikyu-to-Kyobainin (Love, Earth and the Auctioneer)

## 10th Anniversary Event

In 2015 both Shimane and Tottori prefectures held special events to mark the 10th anniversary of the wetland areas being designated under The Ramsar Convention. A commemorative symposium was held in Yonago City (Tottori Prefecture) and a Ramsar Fair was held in Matsue City (Shimane Prefecture). Children were also invited to join in a special exchange program with other Asian countries.



Commemorative Symposium



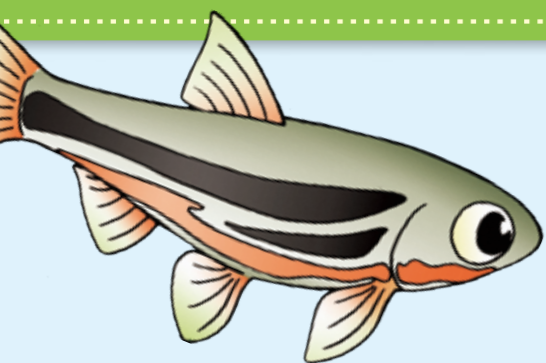
Ramsar Fair



Asian Children's Exchange Program

# How can we enjoy Shinji-ko and Nakaumi more?

There are many facilities in the region where you can enjoy the natural environment and landscape of Shinji-ko and Nakaumi. The staff will answer your questions about these lakes and teach you how to play some fun games. You can also enjoy the stunning scenery. Visit, see, experience...you too will come to love these wetland areas!



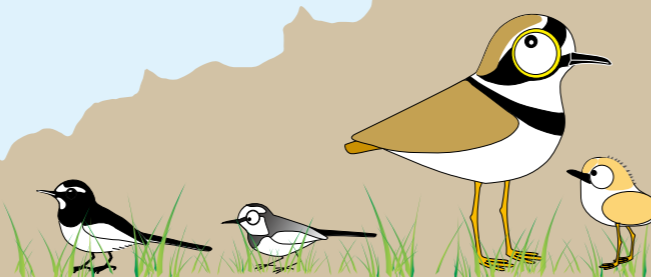
Sea of Japan

Shimane Prefecture

Nakaumi

Tottori Prefecture

Shinji-ko



1



## Shinji-ko Green Park

Enjoy bird watching and gazing out across Shinji-ko from this specially built watch tower complete with telescopes! Every month special nature observation events are held that locals and visitors can join. There are also special exhibitions held in summer and winter featuring birds, insects and plants where people can enjoy learning more about nature.

Phone (0853)63-0787

2



## Shinji-ko Nature Museum 'Gobius'

This small aquarium has displays of fish from the lake areas and living creatures from the surrounding rivers. The staff organize wildlife field work activities each month, as well as a range of special displays and events for everyone to enjoy learning about wetlands.

Phone (0853)63-7100

3



## Shimane Prefectural Youth Center 'Sun Lake'

This center offers visitors a chance to enjoy being out on Shinji-ko in either a rowboat, sailboat or a canoe – but you must book in advance! They also offer overnight training programs for groups.

Phone (0853)69-1316

4



## Aika-Nagisa Park

Enjoy canoeing, yachting, sailing or pedal-boating on Shinji-ko with experienced instructors. We recommend having a barbecue or picnic here on the open-lawn area.

Phone (0852)88-3700

5



## Shimane Art Museum

This museum is located on the shore of Shinji-ko and has amazing views from the lobby area and lakeside entrance area. It is proudly known as 'the museum in harmony with water.'

Phone (0852)55-4700

6



## Minato-yama Park

Young and old can enjoy their time at this park. Many events for Yonago City residents are held throughout the year here, including a cherry blossom festival in spring, fireworks in summer and an outdoor tea party in autumn. Children will enjoy looking at the old D-51 steam locomotive on display, playing in the playground and visiting the monkey park (where around 50 monkeys can be seen).

Phone (0859)37-2311

7



## Yonago Waterbird Sanctuary

This facility is located on the eastern shore of Nakaumi. Visitors can see birds up close and enjoy being in the outdoors. Nature watching activities and events are held throughout the year.

Phone (0859)24-6139

10



## Mt. Daisen, Nakaumi, Daikonshima, Eshima seen from Mt. Makuragi

We recommend hiking the trail to the top of Mt. Makuragi (456m) on the northern-tip of Shimane Peninsula. You will be rewarded with impressive views of Nakaumi and Mt. Daisen to the east and Mt. Sanbe to the west. There is an ancient temple (Kezo-ji) at the top of the mountain, well-known for its 1200 year-old traditions and many important cultural artifacts.

9



## Betabumi-zaka (Eshima Bridge)

This unusually-shaped bridge connects Watari-cho (Sakaiminato City, Tottori Prefecture) to Yatsuka-cho (Matsue City, Shimane Prefecture). The rigid-frame design is 1446.2m in length and at its highest point is 44.7m above sea level.

Sakai Port Authority  
Phone (0859)42-3705

8



## Tottori Nature and Environment Center

This building is located inside the 53.2 hectare 'Softbank Tottori Yonago Solar Park'. Visitors can take a tour around the solar park and learn about using natural energy resources, as well as discover more about the rich natural environment of Tottori Prefecture.

Phone (0859)21-8533

# What can we do?

People overseas have become very interested in both Shinji-ko and Nakaumi since these lakes became registered wetlands under The Ramsar Convention. Despite being highly regarded, both lakes are dealing with environmental issues, including poor water quality, algal bloom and red tide. As such, it is important for each individual to play their part in caring for the environment and help to make these lakes become even better wetland areas. What can you do to help?



3  
Key Point

## Ramsar-Level Check

What are you doing in your everyday life that helps to protect the nature of wetland areas? Put a TICK in the box for any point that applies to you.

 <input type="checkbox"/> I go birdwatching.	 <input type="checkbox"/> I research about living things and nature.	 <input type="checkbox"/> I go fishing or play by the lakeshore.
 <input type="checkbox"/> I take part in nature watching activities.	 <input type="checkbox"/> I enjoy looking at beautiful landscapes.	 <input type="checkbox"/> I pick up rubbish along the lakeshore.
 <input type="checkbox"/> I use an eco-bag when I go shopping.	 <input type="checkbox"/> I eat all my food (I do not leave food to go to waste).	 <input type="checkbox"/> I do not throw by rubbish into the waterways.

Now think about things that you can do...

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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# Try this! Ramsar Activity Challenge

Think about what you want to try doing in order to protect the natural environment of Shinji-ko and Nakaumi. Think about your goals related to your way of life.

## My Ideas

Learn more about The Ramsar Convention, Shinji-ko and Nakaumi!

## Visit Shinji-ko and Nakaumi!

### Discovery

When? Date: ( )  
Where? ( )  
What?

### Discovery

When? Date: ( )  
Where? ( )  
What?

## Find out more!

What I researched:

! What I learned:

? What I didn't understand:

4  
Key Point

## Use your Five Senses

Scientific facts and figures used by experts to evaluate lake environments can be very hard for the general public to understand. Shimane Prefecture and Tottori Prefecture worked together to create a simple 'Five Senses Checklist' for the general public. Anyone can complete this and learn more about the wetland environment. There are five senses that we have to help us find out more about our environment – sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. We recommend that you go to either Shinji-ko or Nakaumi and carry out this activity yourself. It will help you discover more about the actual state of the lake.

### Five Senses Checklist

Observation Day	Month	Date	Location	Weather
	Sight	Is the water clear/clean?	It is very clean and clear. 20 points It is a little cloudy. 10 points It is cloudy. 0 points	It is very clear. I can see the bottom. Score
		Is there any rubbish?	Almost none. 20 points A little. 10 points A lot. 0 points	Is there rubbish on the lake surface or on the shoreline? Score
		How is the scenery?	Beautiful, nice view. 10 points Average, same as always. 5 points Not very good, bad view. 0 points	Sunrise, sunset, shijimi clam fishing, mountains, buildings etc. Score
	Sound	What can you hear?	It is very quiet. I can hear nice sounds. 10 points No particular sounds. 5 points It is noisy. 0 points	Birds, Waves, Temple Bell, Boats, Cars, Construction etc. Score
	Smell	What can you smell?	Something smells good. I cannot smell anything. 20 points The smell doesn't bother me. 10 points Something smells. 0 points	Water, Trees, Flowers, Fish, Exhaust Gas, Smoke etc. Score
	Taste	Would you like to catch something and eat it?	Yes – I want to try. 10 points No preference either way. 5 points No – I don't want to try. 0 points	Would you like to try any fish or shellfish caught in the lake area, such as shijimi (corbicula clam), shirauo (whitebait) or asari (clam)? Score
	Touch	How does the lake water feel?	It feels nice. 10 points It is average. 5 points It feels bad/I don't want to touch it. 0 points	Would you like to touch the water? Score