

Located in the bay of a major city, it is an important tidal flat reserved for shorebirds

Fujimae-higata

Tidal Flat

Geographical Coordinates: 35°04'N, 136°50'E / Altitude: 0.8-4.0m / Area: 323ha / Major Type of Wetland: Rivermouth tidal flat / Designation: Special Protection Area of National Wildlife Protection Area / Municipality Involved: Nagoya City and Tobishima Village, Aichi Prefecture / Ramsar Designation: November 2002



Fujimae-higata at low tide



Aerial view of Fujimae-higata from the south

Principal Features:

Located at the head of Ise Bay facing the Pacific Ocean is Nagoya City, Japan's third largest city, next to Tokyo and Osaka. Numerous rivers such as the Kiso, Nagara, and Ibi flow into Ise Bay, which created vast tidal flats along the shores. However, most of these were to be reclaimed in the development of port facilities and factories in the area. An exceptional example was the Fujimae-higata, developed at the mouth of the Shonai and Nikko rivers, southwest of Nagoya City. Although its isolation made it a crucial stopover for migratory birds, the area was slated to become a landfill site to manage mounting levels of waste in the region. What resulted was a local campaign to save the tidal flat, which soon gained national attention. In 1999, the plan was withdrawn,

and in 2002, Fujimae-higata was designated as a Ramsar site.

The Tidal Flat and Waste Management Issues:

In order to conserve Fujimae-higata, residents of Nagoya City participated in a waste reduction campaign. Thanks to their astounding efforts, city waste was reduced by approximately 30%. Indeed, it was the cooperation among residents and the local government that saved the tidal flat. Not only is Fujimae-higata important for migratory birds, but it also serves as a symbol for the transition from a consumer society to a recycling-based one.

Flyway:

Although no vegetation is visible at Fujimae-higata, it abounds with benthos such as nereid and shellfish. These become important sources of food for



Bar-tailed godwit

migratory shorebirds. This tidal flat serves as a stopover, and thus is a vital point in the lifecycle of these shorebirds, which breed in Siberia and winter in Oceania. It is said that it regularly supports 20,000 or more waterbirds. Fujimae-higata is a part of the Waterbird Site Network based on the Partnership for the East Asian-Australasian Flyway.

[Dunlin *Calidris alpina*] A shorebird approximately 21cm in length with a somewhat long beak, short neck, and stooped posture. Known for the white bands on its feathers, a beautiful display of contrasting colors is visible when they fly in flocks.

[Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*] There are many species of shorebird with long beaks, which are used to insert into holes, such as those of crabs. For example, there is the Black-tailed Godwit with its straight beak, the Curlew with its beak down-turned, and the bar-tailed godwit with its beak slightly upturned.

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