

Nakaumi

Brackish Lake

Geographical Coordinates: 35°32'N, 133°09'E / Altitude: 0m / Area: 8043ha / Major Type of Wetland: Brackish lake / Designation: Special Protection Area of National Wildlife Protection Area / Municipalities Involved: Yonago City and Sakaiminato City, Tottori Prefecture; Matsue City, Yasugi City, Shimane Prefecture / Ramsar Designation: November 2005 / Ramsar Criteria: 5, 6



Little grebe, Osprey, Common Moorhen, Tundra swan

View of Nakaumi from the west

General Overview:

Nakaumi is a lagoon located on the boarder of Tottori Prefecture and Shimane Prefecture in the southern part of Honshu Island. Isolated from the Japan Sea by the Yumigahama peninsula extending northwest from Yonago City to Sakaiminato City, the lagoon drains into the sea via a narrow waterway in the north. It is the fifth largest lake in Japan, with an area of 9200ha, an average depth of 5.4m and the maximum depth of 8.4m.

Nakaumi is located at the estuary of Hii River system in the lower reaches of Lake Shinji-ko. Nakaumi has a high salinity as much as 1/2 of that of seawater, while Shinji-ko's salinity remains low as much as 1/10 of that of seawater. The difference in salinity created diverse fish habitats. Although both lakes are brackish and belong to the same water system, each lakes has distinct characteristic and diverse natural environment with both freshwater and saline water species.

Discontinued Reclamation Project:

A reclamation project started in Nakaumi from 1963 in order to form new farmlands. There was a plan to transform Nakaumi into a freshwater lake along with the reclamation. However, because of the

activity of the local people and the acreage-reduction policy of the government, the farmland project was called off and eventually the freshwater plan was cancelled in 2002. The lake is now designated as a Ramsar site.

A lake was created in the process of the reclamation project in the northwest of Yonago City and it now attracts many waterfowl. Yonago City has established a waterfowl park in the 30ha reclaimed area to promote bird watching and environmental education. This area is included in the Flyway Site Network under the Partnership for the East Asian-Australasian Flyway.

More than 200 species of wild birds are identified in Nakaumi. It is one of the largest wintering spots in Japan as well as an internationally important waterfowl habitat visited by over 75,000 birds in the family Anatidae every year. In particular, Nakaumi supports more than 1% of the East Asian population of Tundra Swan, Common Pochard, Tufted Duck, and Scaup. Especially, Nakaumi is one of the largest wintering spots for Tundra Swans in western Japan along with Shinji-ko.

[Tundra Swan *Cygnus columbianus*] Its body length is 120cm and has a white body and a black-pointed yellow bill. It

is smaller than the Whooper Swan *Cygnus Cygnus*. It inhabits areas throughout Eurasia and North America. It breeds in the tundra, and then flies to Japan to spend the winter regularly in lakes, marshes, and rivers mainly along the Japan Sea. Nakaumi and Shinji-ko are its southernmost wintering grounds.

Contact Information:

Yonago City Office
<http://www.city.yonago.lg.jp/>
Sakaiminato City Office
<http://www.city.sakaiminato.lg.jp/>
Matsue City Office
<http://www.city.matsue.shimane.jp/>
Yasugi City Office
<http://www.city.yasugi.shimane.jp/>

