

## Shinji-ko

## Brackish Lake

Geographical Coordinates: 35°26'N, 132°57'E / Altitude: 0.3m / Area: 7652ha / Major Type of Wetland: Brackish lake / Designation: Special Protection Area of National Wildlife Protection Area / Municipalities Involved: Matsue City, Izumo City and Hikawa Town, Shimane Prefecture / Ramsar Designation: November 2005



Shinji-ko viewed from the west

### Principal Features:

The Chugoku region is a wide area extending westward from Osaka in Honshu, the largest island of the Japanese Archipelago. It is further divided into northern San-in region and southern San-yo region by the Chugoku mountain range that runs horizontally across east-west. While the San-yo region has relatively mild weather, the San-in region has severely cold climate with frequent snow in the winter.

Two brackish water lagoons of Shinji-ko and Nakaumi, are located at Shimane and Tottori prefectural border in the central part of San-in region. Those lagoons are linked by Ohashi River extending 7km in the estuary of Hii River originating in the Chugoku Mountains. The upstream lagoon, Shinji-ko, covers approximately 8000ha, with average depth of 4.5m. The salinity of Shinji-ko is only 1/10 of seawater, while that of Nakau-mi, the downstream lagoon, reaches as much as 1/2 of seawater. Although they both belong to the same river system, each lagoon has a very different characteristic with its unique biodiversity.

### Rich Biodiversity in Brackish Water Ecosystem:

Shinji-ko offers an essential habitat for approximately 80 brackish water species of fish and shellfish, including the Japanese indigenous species of Shinji-ko Goby and Corbicula Clam. Shinji-ko is blessed with the largest catch of Corbicula Clam in Japan.

Shinji-ko is also home to numerous migratory birds. 240 species have been recorded. To be specific, more than 20,000 Tufted Ducks and 5000 Scaups are sighted among over 40,000 wild ducks and geese, making it the southernmost wintering spot for over 2000 White-fronted Geese in particular.

### The Beautiful Sunset:

Yomegashima Island, located at the east edge of Shinji-ko, is a small and flat island with circumference of only 240m. The sunset over the island with pine trees is chosen as one of the best sunset scenery in Japan, and attracts many tourists.

### [Corbicula Clam *Corbicula japonica*]

Black-brown colored, triangular-shaped, bivalve shellfish. It is one of the best-adapted life-forms in the low-salinity condition of Shinji-ko. It feeds on planktons that accumulate on the bottom of the lake. They grow on rocks or roots of reeds when young, and start to move around as they mature. It is widely appreciated as an ingredient for traditional Japanese food such as Miso-soup.

### Contact Information:

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Catching Clams



Corbicula Clam

