

# Hinuma

## Brackish Lake

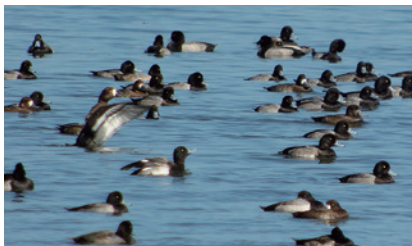
Geographical Coordinates: 36°16'N, 140°30'E / Altitude: 0m / Area: 935ha / Major Type of Wetland: Brackish lake / Designation: Special Protection Area of National Wildlife Protection Area / Municipalities Involved: Hokota City, Ibaraki Town and Oarai Town, Ibaraki Prefecture / Ramsar Designation: May 2015 / Ramsar Criteria: 2, 4, 6



Full view from the west



Inland water fishery



Greater Scaup

### General Overview:

Hinuma is the largest brackish lake in the capital region and located 5km inland from Oarai Beach on the Pacific coast in Ibaraki Prefecture. It was once a sea inlet approximately 6,000 years ago. Owing to the sea's recession, it was separated from the sea over time by sediments accumulated on its estuary, forming a lagoon stretching from east to west with an area of 935ha and an average depth of 2.1m. It is fed by several rivers such as Hinuma River and Kasama River and drains water from the lake's northeastern end. The water flows through Naka River and into the Pacific Ocean approximately 10km away.

This lake is situated in a flat paddy field where the sea water flows in at high tide, creating a brackish environment with a mix of sea and fresh water. Since the salinity of the lake varies from place to place, there are a variety of living creatures present, including brackish, marine, and fresh water species. Local people have been engaged

in active fishery for a long time as a result of this rich biodiversity. The local community is still supported by the thriving fishery for Japanese basket clam (*Corbicula japonica*), Yellowfin Goby and Japanese Smelt.

Four-spot Midget (*Mortonagrion hirosei*), an endangered damselfly that lives in brackish water has a significant reed bed habitat in this lake. Hinuma is also known as one of the remaining habitat for those declining plant species such as *Penthorum chinense*, *Carex rugulosa* and *Monochoria korsakowii*.

### Important Wintering Habitat for Greater Scaup:

So far, 88 species of birds have been recorded in this lake. A variety of ducks, including Mallard and Greater Scaup, thrive in the winters here. It is an important wintering habitat for Greater Scaup, as approximately 5,000 birds visit every year, accounting for more than 1% of the species' population in East Asia.

### Abundant Resources:

Given the abundance of fish resources in Hinuma, some full-time fishers thrive in the region, which is rare in inland water fishery in Japan. Fishing regulations, however, limit the size and open season for each species to conserve fish resources.

A traditional fishing practice called "Takappo, Sasabitashi" is followed in the region where fishers use no hooks, nets or baits. Moreover, since the Edo period, a special fishing rod named "Hinuma sao" has been passed down.

### Recreational Waterfront for Locals:

Hinuma used to be an important water route for transporting goods such as rice from northern Honshu to the capital. Today, the lake is highly valued for recreation and tourism activities such as bathing, fishing, yachting, camping and nature walking.

On the 23.9km long lake-shore, there are several good spots for outdoor activities, including Hinuma Nature Park, Hiroura Park

which is famous for the magnificent landscape of Mt. Tsukuba, Oyazawa Park and its popular sand beach, Ikoinomura Hinuma with a swimming pool, and Hinuma Yacht Harbour.

**[Four-spot Midget]** A damselfly species known as, "Hinumaitotombo" lives in brackish water such as estuaries. It was first found in Hinuma in 1971, it was named after the lake. Although it can be found in some places other than Hinuma, it is threatened with extinction as its habitat of reed bed has been reduced in exchange for estuary weirs and bank protection.

### Contact Information:

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