

Yatsu-higata

Tidal Flat

Geographical Coordinates: 35°40'N, 140°00'E / Altitude: 0m / Area: 40ha / Major Type of Wetland: Tidal flat / Designation: Special Protection Zone of National Wildlife Protection Area / Municipalities Involved: Narashino City, Chiba Prefecture / Ramsar Designation: June 1993 / Ramsar Criteria: 3 / EAAFP Flyway Network Site



View of the Yatsu-higata



Left to right: Cleaning up of Yatsu-higata / Activities in the tidal flat with rangers / Shorebirds flying from the south in spring

General Overview:

Yatsu-higata is located approximately 2km inland of the Tokyo Bay. It is a 40ha tidal flat of sand and mud. Yatsu-higata is situated only 30 minutes by train from Tokyo, among housing complexes, schools and an expressway. It is connected to the Tokyo Bay via two channels on the western and eastern ends, through which the tidal water flows in. At high tide, the tidal flat is filled with sea water up to a depth of about 1m. It is a habitat for numerous creatures such as plankton, shrimp, crab, shellfish, *Neanthes japonica*, and fish. Yatsu-higata also plays an important role as a stopping site for migratory shorebirds to feed and rest on their migration.

A Tidal Flat Remains in a Metropolis:

The bay once had one of Japan's largest extensive tidal flats. Visitors to the Yatsu-higata area came not only from the Tokyo area but also from all over the Kanto region to enjoy sea bathing, clamming, and the former Yatsu Amusement Park. However, most of the area was reclaimed for factories, housing and roads in the process of rapid industrialization. Yatsu-higata is an exceptional tidal flat that has survived this process thanks to the local community's active conservation efforts.

In 1988, Yatsu-higata was designated as a national wildlife protection area. It was designated as a Ramsar Site in 1993, after which paths were prepared for public use. In 1994, the Yatsu-higata Nature Observation Center (YNOC) opened as a core facility for nature observation and environmental education. From April 2010 to March 2020, conservation projects such as raising tidal flats have been implemented to improve habitat for birds, and monitoring is currently in progress.

Circle of People Gathering at Yatsu-higata:

City of Narashino considers public participation and cooperation essential for the conservation of tidal flats, and has accepted citizen volunteers based at the YNOC, where they are actively engaged in environmental management and the creation of exhibits. It also organizes training programs such as "Yatsu-higata Junior Rangers" for elementary and junior high schools and "Yatsu-higata Youth" for young generations. On "Yatsu-higata Day," the day of designation under the Ramsar Convention, events are planned and managed, in cooperation with the local community, to expand the circle of those who conserve the tidal flat.

[Wetland Education] YNOC provides various environmental education programs

for elementary, junior high, and high school students, universities, and citizen groups to experience the tidal flat in the field to learn about the ecosystem and conservation of the wetland. The center is also working on developing its own educational materials, such as bird carvings, handmade toys, and picture story shows. Moreover, Brisbane City in Australia and Narashino City formed a wetland partnership in 1998. They exchange information on migratory birds and conservation of wetlands, and visit each other's wetlands to enhance personal exchanges.

Contact Information:

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