

#1

Hosted by: Kushiro International Wetland Centre

Activity: WWD Commemorative Event “Eco-tour in Winter”

Date: February 2nd, 2008

Summary: Local people of Kushiro were taken to an eco-tour conducted by the Kushiro International Wetland Center.

Participants headed for Shirarutoro-ko (lake) in the east side of the wetland while enjoying watching the meandering Kushiro river, wild Yezo sika deer, etc. from a steam locomotive which only runs in winter.

On the frozen surface of the lake, they searched for some traces (such as animal tracks) of red fox, red-crowned crane and Yezo sika deer, and they observed some ice and snow. They also felt the warmth of the spring water which never freezes despite the subzero atmospheric temperature. Sound of cracking ice made some people startled as they went along.

Those experiences made them realize how severe the Hokkaido’s nature is in winter and how hardy the wild animals are.

After warming themselves up in a hot spring at the lakeside, they had a lecture related to the World Wetlands Day. In the lecture, this year’s theme “Healthy Wetlands, Healthy People” was explained with some case examples.



WWD Commemorative Winter Eco-tour

#2

Hosted by: Hamatonbetsu-cho

Activity: Exhibition of a Snow Statue of Swan and a Piece of Drift Ice

Period: February 2 -29, 2008

Summary: A snow statue of a swan and a piece of drift ice welcomed the winter visitors at Waterbirds Observation Center. The ice was washed up on the beach of Hamatonbetsu-cho, however the drift ice has decreased in recent years.

This ice was exhibited as to make people aware of global warming together with the statue.



A snow statue of a swan and a piece of drift ice

#3

Hosted by: Osaki City, Greater Sendai Area ESD/RCE Projects

Activity: "Ramsar Festival 2008"

Public Symposium by Greater Sendai Area Tajiri RCE

-Let's hand over the local treasure to next generations!-

Period: February 9 -10, 2008

Summary:

Three goals were stated at the symposium:

First goal was to help people understand the natural wonders of a Ramsar Site 'Kabukuri-numa and the surrounding rice paddies' and one of the 500 important wetlands in Japan, 'Kejo-numa.' 'Kabukuri-numa and the surrounding rice paddies' is a Ramsar Site with a great variety of creatures and also a stopover for tens of thousands of geese.

The 2nd goal was to discuss the role-sharing of relevant organizations and citizens to be specified in the protecting and utilizing plan.

The last goal was to create an opportunity to exchange opinions for the sustainable protection activities for the wetlands.

The symposium was held with the topics mentioned below:

- (1) Gathering in the Ramsar Site, 'Kabukuri-numa and the surrounding rice paddies'
- (2) Visiting home of the geese that winter in 'Kabukuri-numa' and 'Kejo-numa'
- (3) Considering the wise use of 'Kabukuri-numa' and 'Kejo-numa'

- (4) The present and future conditions of 'Paddy field farming and Biodiversity'
- (5) Marking the 2nd anniversary of the Ramsar Site designation.



A lecture by Dr. Nikolay Gerasimov



Using reeds in Kabukuri-numa (Papers made of reeds: Tajiri Asunarono-kai)

#4

Hosted by: Niigata City

Event: A Bird Watching Tour for Sakata citizens & Experiencing Food Culture

Date: January 27th, 2008

Summary:

The 12th Bird Watching Tour was held at Sakata Park (Nishi -ku, Akatsuka).

101 participants observed 56 kinds of birds including swans and teals.

Those people also had a chance to eat Sakata's local food called 'Koikoku (carp meat in miso soup).' Some favorable comments were received such as "As Sakata's carps have no smells, they're easy to eat!"

#5

Hosted by: NPO Wetland Nakaikemi

Event: World Wetlands Day 2008 Commemorative Event

Nature and historical walk in Nakaikemi in winter

Date: February 2nd, 2008

Summary: Nakaikemi-shicchi (in Tsuruga City, Fukui Prefecture) has one of the deepest peat layers in the world (120 to 150 thousand-year worth of sediments which is 40m deep), combined with rich biodiversity.

In this 2nd WWD event to be held in Nakaikemi, the NPO conducted a 5 km walking tour around the wetland. In the tour, they visited Yozaikemi, which has landscape similar to Nakaikemi but turned to a residential district as the land development expanded. They also visited a guardian deity of 'wave breaker' which is described in the local history. Those experiences increased the recognition of the nature and history of Nakaikemi-shicchi.

#6

Hosted by: Biwa-ko Ramsar Convention Liaison Council (consists of 14 cities and villages along Biwa-ko and Shiga Prefecture)

Event: The 15th Biwa-ko Waterbird-watching Tour

Period: February 2-3, 2008

Summary:

Biwa-ko Waterbird-watching Tour is the event that has been held at several places along the Biwa-ko lakeshore at the same time since 1993 in connection with World Wetlands Day. People enjoy watching waterbirds while being lectured on those waterbirds, their habitats and the Ramsar Convention from the experts called on for the event.

This 15th anniversary event was held at 7 places, including Higashi-Omi City, Kusatsu City, Hikone City, Nagahama City, Kohoku Machi and Takashima City (2 places) (Otsu City's event was cancelled due to bad weather). Participants were around 180 in total consisting of all age groups.



Ibanai Lake in Higashi-Omi City



Higashi-Omi City



Nishi-Ike in Nagahama City



Karasuma Peninsula in Kusatsu City



Shin-Asahi Waterbirds Observation Center in Takashima City



Makino Sunny Beach in Takashima City



Kohoku Wild Bird Center



Inugamigawa Estuary in Hikone City

#7

Hosted by: Nakaumi Waterbirds International Exchange Fund Foundation

1)

Event: Children's Ramsar Club at Yonago Waterbirds Sanctuary

'Let's watch the swans at Yasugi and make Japanese playing cards of wetland creatures!'

Date: 9:00-15:00 February 10th, 2007

Summary:

The following program targeted for children took place at the sanctuary.

Children watched the winter-flooded rice fields, Tundra Swans and White-fronted Geese, etc. at the rice paddy area in Yasugi City, Shimane Prefecture (10:05-10:30), and then they moved to Ito Sea Coast. On the Sea Coast, they were lectured about the waterbirds they have just seen at the rice paddy area and the history of Nakaumi's swan protection activities (11:10-11:35).

In the afternoon, the children made some playing cards of wetland creatures at the Nature Center of Yonago Waterbirds Sanctuary (made Senryu* poems and drew pictures of the creatures on cards) (13:15-14:45), and presented them to each other. Ceremonial photos were taken at the end of the program (15:00).

15 elementary school children, 1 infant and 9 guardians participated in the event.



Observation of Yasugi's Winter-flooded Rice Fields and Tundra Swans

*Senryu – short, witty Japanese poems in 5-7-5 syllables



Making Japanese playing cards of wetland creatures



2)

Activity: Wetlands Day Ceremonial Project 'Let's make some wetland creatures with colored clay!'

Time: 13:30-15:30 February 17th, 2008

Summary:

The following program targeted for children took place at the Nature Center of Yonago Waterbirds Sanctuary.

At the beginning, cards with a picture of a wetland creature on each were put on a whiteboard. Then they were connected to each other with arrows indicating the direction of 'pray-predator' and an explanation was given on how those wetland creatures are connected with our lives (13:30~14:00).

Next, the children looked through a telescope at some waterbirds at Yonago Waterbirds Sanctuary and they watched some small animals in the aquarium (14:00~14:30).

And then they made some wetland creatures with colored clay (14:30~15:30).

6 elementary school children, 2 infants and 7 guardians participated in the event.



Explaining 'Food Chain'



Making Tundra Swan with colored clay



3)

Project: 'Pintails' Proposing Tactics'

Date: 13:30-14:30 February 9th, 2008

Summary: The following program was conducted at Nature Center of Waterbirds Sanctuary.

Participants had a briefing on Pintail's figure with stuffed specimen (13:30-13:35), and the birds' breeding behavior was introduced by a picture-story show (13:35-13:50).

And then they had a chance to watch the birds' courtship display (13:50-14:30).

25 adults and one child participated in the program.

#8

Hosted by: The executive committee of the 'amusing class' at Wajiro Higata

Activities: "Let's learn about migratory birds through games!"

Date: February 2nd, 2008

Summary: This committee aims to create opportunities for local people and citizens to get to know and experience the environment of Wajiro Higata.

In connection with World Wetlands Day, the committee held an environmental class on the theme of migratory birds that stop over at Wajiro Higata. They played two kinds of games called 'Bingo on Duck Behaviors' and 'Food Chain' at the Marine Open Space and the community center.

As for 'Bingo on Duck Behaviors,' the participants observed the ducks' behaviors and then checked them in the 16 (4x4) patterns of behaviors listed on the paper (e.g., courtship dance, foraging, etc.)

The aim of the 'Food Chain' is to complete a 'Food chain map' of Wajiro Higata. Participants were required to think of 'prey-predator' relationships among various living organisms by using cards that show various kinds of creatures.

The total of 38 people (adults and children) participated in the event.