

Waterbird and Wetland Center

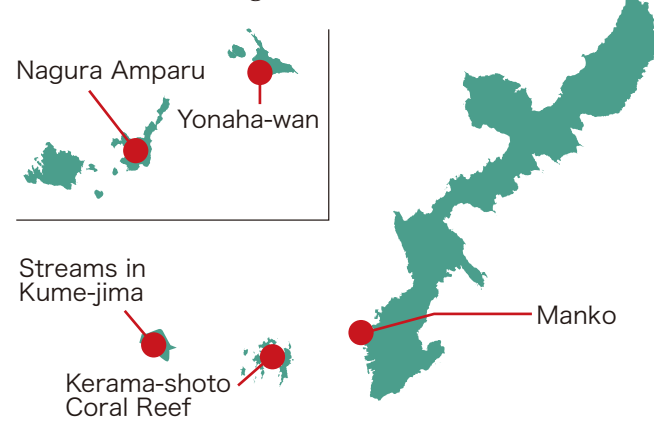
About the Ramsar Convention

The official name of the treaty is "The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, Especially as Waterfowl Habitat." It is named after the town of Ramsar in Iran, which is where the treaty was adopted in 1971. The aim of the treaty is not only to protect waterbirds, but the general conservation of wetland areas. Its defining feature is the concept of "wise use". Essentially, the Ramsar Convention is an international treaty for happiness, something that everyone wants, in which people and wildlife are able to enjoy life waterside areas.

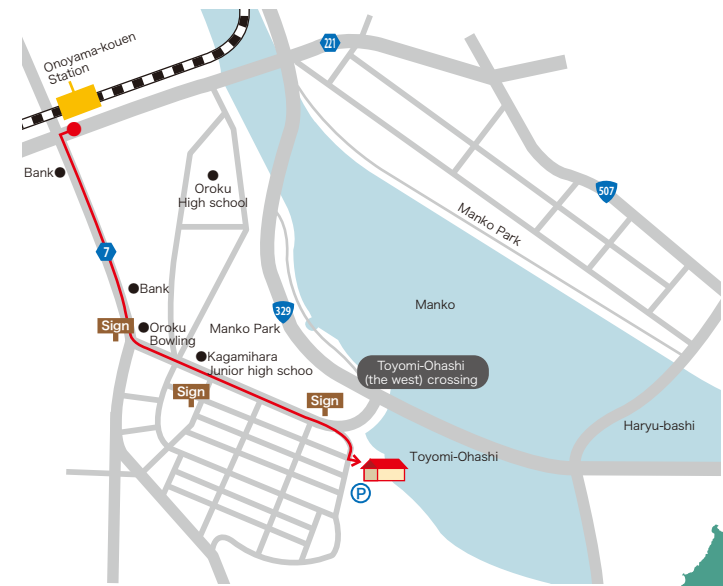
Ramsar Sites in Okinawa

Manko was designated as a wetland of international importance in May 1999 under the Ramsar Convention. The reasons for its designation were that it is an important relay point for sandpipers and plovers, which are nationally well-known, and because it is an important habitat for many waterbirds, etc. Manko became the 11th wetland in Japan and the first in Okinawa to be designated under the Ramsar list of wetlands of international importance.

As of August, 2012, in Okinawa prefecture, there are five wetlands designated under the Ramsar Convention, including Manko.



7 minutes by car from Naha Bus terminal
15 minutes by car from Naha Airport
15 minutes walk from Onoyama-kouen Station



Manko Waterbird and Wetland Center

982 Aza-Tomigusuku, Tomigusuku City, Okinawa
901-0241
TEL(098)840-5121 FAX(098)840-5118
Homepage: http://www.geocities.jp/manko_mizudori/

● Open: 9am-5pm daily ● Entrance fee: Free
● Closed: Mondays (next day when holiday) and
New Year (Dec 29-Jan 3), Irei no Hi (Jun 23)
※ Please contact us in advance for groups of 15 or more people

Ramsar Convention designation wetland

Manko

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環境省 那覇自然環境事務所
Ministry of the Environment Naha Nature Conservation Office

Welcome to Manko and the Manko

About Manko

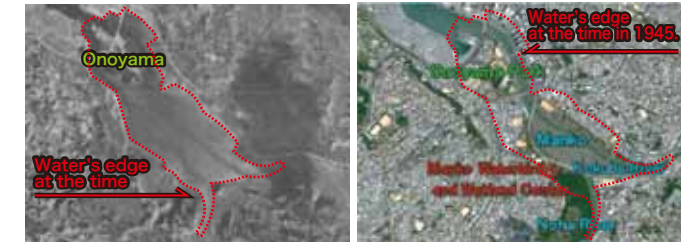


Photo taken by U.S. military in 1945.

Photo taken in 2009.

Manko was once full of water, much like a lake. Although it was called "Taiko (=big lake)" during the Ryukyu Dynasty, it is said that a Chinese emissary named it Manko when he visited the area during the mid 17th century. It is said that the lake's magnificent sight was greatly admired by Commodore Matthew Perry, famous for his "Black Ship," as well as Chinese emissary.

During the mid 1950s, Manko was a playground for kids as well as a place where fisheries activities took place. A sudden increase in the development of tideland, caused by landfill projects, etc. from the mid 1960s onward, has made Manko look the way that it does today. While the magnificent sight that Commodore Perry and the envoys admired no longer exists, a vast tideland, which stretches out up to 47 hectares (roughly 116 acres), can be seen at low tide.

If you look carefully in the tideland and mangrove forest, you will be surprised to find many creatures. The birds prey on young fish, crabs, sandworms, etc. living in the tideland. Manko, which is abundant with young fish and benthic organisms that become food resources, is an important landing spot for waterbirds and is also a relay point for migrating birds. Birds arriving at Manko include large herons such as grey herons and great egrets; sandpipers and plovers such as pacific golden plovers, grey-tailed tattlers, and greenshanks; as well as unusual birds such as black-faced spoonbills and saunders' gulls.

