

The Nature Handbook

A guide to observing creatures of the Nogawa River basin

There are various life forms such as fishes, birds, insects and flowers in Nogawa river and Hake-no-mori forests. These pictures describe some of the various creatures that can be seen along the watersides, underwaters and in the forests of the river basin.



Observing aquatic lives

Underwater of the river, many creatures such as Loach, Japanese Rice Fish, Carp, Amur Catfish, Lake Prawn, and Soft-shelled Turtle can be seen. In spring-fed spots of that, you can see Lefua echigonia swimming and Japanese Freshwater Crab crawling in their cold clean streams.

Observing wild birds

Common Kingfisher, Nogawa's symbol can be seen frequently by the river. Other birds such as ducks and herons also can be watched along that. In Hake-no-mori forests, Northern Goshawk and Ural Owl sometimes occur.



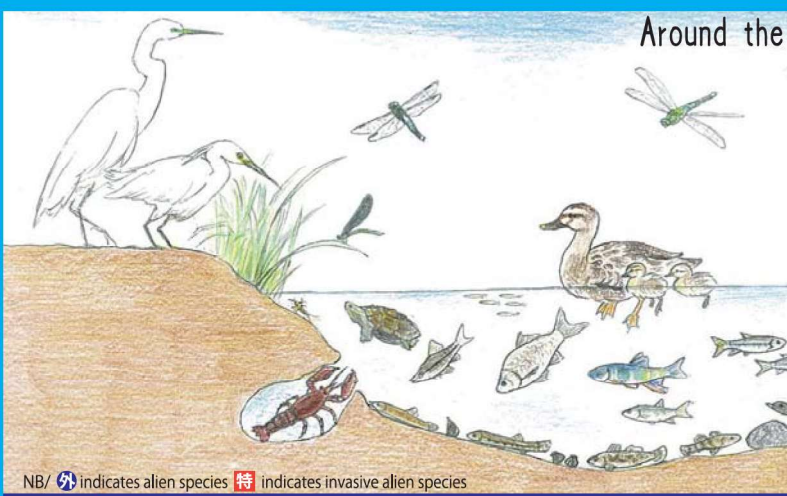
Observing insects

In Hake-no-mori forests, beetles, stag beetles and butterflies can be seen.

You can also see various of dragonflies flying in the daytime, and Japanese fireflies glowing in the night by the river.

Observing plants

Along Nogawa River, Southern Cattail Cumbungi and Common reed grass grow wild. Branched bur reed and Japanese Sweet Flag grow around the springs. In Hake-no-mori forests, wild flowers such as Red Heart Lilly and Soft Windflower grow among Sawtooth oak and other oak trees.

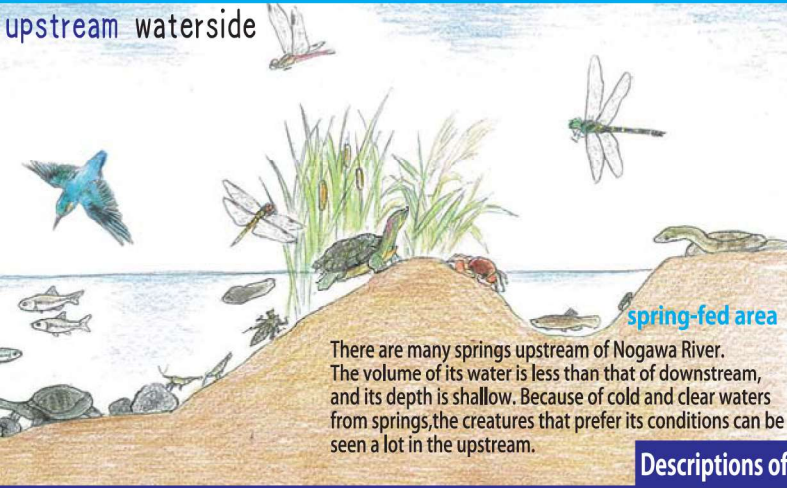


Around the

NB/ indicates alien species 特 indicates invasive alien species
 ※Resident birds live around Nogawa River all year and not migrate seasonally.

Birds Spot-billed Duck • Resident • 60.5 cm  Yellow-tipped bill. Mothers often are with chicks from May to August.	Green-winged Teal • Winter visitor • 37.5 cm  Smallest in the ducks. Males have maroon heads and green patches around eyes.	Little Grebe • Resident • 26 cm  Smaller than the ducks. Dive frequently to catch small fish and insects.	Little Egret • Resident • 61 cm  Black bill, yellow feet. Drive fish out of muddy bottom with feet and catch with bill.
Insects Ebony Jewelwing • Jun. ~ Nov. • 57 ~ 68 mm  Prefer the clean and gentle streams. Males' abdomens are green and glistening.	March Bluetail • Apr. ~ Sep. • 30 ~ 35 mm  Sections 8 and 9 of the abdomen of males are light blue. Two types of females with two different colored bodies.	Common Skimmer • May ~ Nov. • 47 ~ 61 mm  Males and females have black tail tips. Females are also called "Mugiwara-Tonbo".	Wandering Glider • Jun. ~ Oct. • 44 ~ 54 mm  Seen around the waterside. Wide wings and reddish brown bodies.
Fish ▶ Riverbottom fish Loach • About 10 cm  Prefer muddy riverbeds. With an elongated body, 10 whiskers.	Japanese Striped Loach • About 10 cm  Prefer gravel riverbeds. Line of black dots run on both body sides. 6 whiskers and a square tail fin.	Lefua echigonia • About 6 cm  Prefer cold spring waters. A short, thick body and a flat head, and 8 whiskers.	Swimming fish Japanese Rice Fish • About 5 cm  Big eyes, and a long wide anal fin.
Goby Minnow • About 13 cm  With spots on a body and fins, 2 whiskers, and a long-sharp mouth. Prefer gravel riverbeds.	Amur Catfish • 50 ~ 70 cm  With a small dorsal fin, and 4 whiskers (2 of which are very long). Nocturnal.	Dark Chub • About 15 cm  Similar to Pale Chub, but front edge of a dorsal fin is red. Indigo lines on both body sides.	Tamoroko • About 8 cm  Blurry lines on both body sides, and 2 whiskers.
Stone Moroko • About 8 cm  Mouth is pointed and faces up. Noticeable black lines on both body sides.			

Creatures live in the water-sides of Nogawa River









Descriptions of waterside creatures





※ A name of the italic type is notation by the scientific name.








Great Egret • Resident • 90 cm  <p>The black bill in summer turns to yellow in winter. Right side is a Little Egret in the picture.</p>	Grey Heron • Resident • 93 cm  <p>Largest heron in Japan. Semi-nocturnal and often rest during the day.</p>	Night Heron • Resident • 57.5 cm  <p>Nocturnal, stay still during the day. Fly to feeding grounds in the evening.</p>	Common Kingfisher • Resident • 17 cm  <p>Called "waterside gems". Dive into the water to catch fish.</p>	Great Cormorant • Resident • 82 cm  <p>Dive for fish to eat. Got soaked after diving, spread wings to dry.</p>	Common Moorhen • Resident • 32 cm  <p>Yellow-green legs with long toes. Vigilant, and often hide into waterside grasses.</p>	Common Sandpiper • Resident • 20 cm  <p>Wagging tail, Walk along watersides and catch aquatic insects, etc.</p>	Common Snipe • Winter visitor • 27 cm  <p>Stick long bill into muddy grounds and catch insects and worms.</p>
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Lesser Emperor • May ~ Oct. • 65 ~ 84 mm  <p>Males' abdomen joint are blue colors and females' are yellowish green.</p>	Golden-ringed Dragonfly • Jun. ~ Oct. • 82 ~ 114 mm  <p>Largest dragonflies in Japan. The larvae live in spring waters.</p>	Autumn Darter • Jun. ~ Dec. • 32 ~ 46 mm  <p>Typical red dragonflies. Move to mountains in summer and return to lowlands in autumn.</p>	Banded Darter • Jul. ~ Dec. • 30 ~ 41 mm  <p>Japanese name of "Miyama" means "deep mountain", but often appear in riversides and nearby rice fields.</p>	Japanese Firefly • May ~ Jul. • 15 mm  <p>Eating freshwater snails, Larvae (Pic.R) grow up in spring waters. June is a emergence season, and adults glow for breeding.</p>	Plants Amur Silver-grass • Bloom Sep. ~ Oct. • Perennial  <p>No bearded seeds called "nogi" at ears tips.</p>	Common Reed Grass • Bloom Aug. ~ Sep. • Perennial  <p>Growing on riverbanks. About 2 to 3 meters high.</p>	Branched Bur-reed • Bloom Jun. ~ Jul. • Perennial  <p>Growing along the streams from springs of Nogawa River.</p>
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Goby • About 10 cm  <p>Two dorsal fins, and a black dot on trailing edge of first dorsal fin.</p>	Floating Goby • About 8 cm  <p>Black tail base, similar to Goby. No black dots on both dorsal fins.</p>	Freshwater Goby • About 6 cm  <p>Common type of some Freshwater Gobys. Live in slow flowing waters.</p>
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Japanese Silver Crucian Carp • 15 ~ 40 cm  <p>No whiskers. The first spine of a dorsal fin is hard.</p>	Carp • 40 ~ 80 cm  <p>Prefer more stagnate and deeper waters than crucian carp habitats. 4 whiskers.</p>	Pale Chub • About 15 cm  <p>Green and pink patterns on both body sides. An anal fin extends backwards.</p>
Amur Minnow • About 10 cm  <p>Black lines on both body sides. Covered by mucus, body surface is slimy.</p>	Rosy Bitterling • About 6 cm  <p>With red coloration around eyes. Blue lines run on both body sides.</p>	Sweetfish • 15 ~ 25 cm  <p>An adipose fin between dorsal and tail fins. Eat diatoms on stones in riverbeds.</p>

Crustaceans Neocaridina • About 1 cm  <p>Live in the submerged grasses at waters' edges.</p>	Lake Prawn • About 5 cm  <p>Clear streaks. Live around the foot of large stones in river pools.</p>	Red Swamp Crayfish • About 10 cm  <p>Omnivorous and resistant to dirty waters.</p>	Japanese Freshwater Crab • Shell-width 3 cm  <p>Rare in Nogawa River. Main habitats are spring-fed areas.</p>
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Shellfish Bladder Snail • About 1 cm  <p>Sinistral shell. resistant to dirty waters.</p>	Thiarid Snail • About 3 cm  <p>Known as bait for Japanese Firefly larvae. Prefer relatively clean waters.</p>	Amphibians Japanese Tree Frog • About 3 cm  <p>Often lay eggs in paddy fields.</p>	Japanese Common Toad • 6 ~ 18 cm  <p>Release poison from skin surface to protect from enemies.</p>
Corbicula fluminea • About 2 cm  <p>Resembling "Masijimi" clam in Japan (corbicula leana), but with a deep purple inner surface. Lurk in sand. Not suited to eat much.</p>	Japanese Brown Frog • About 5 cm  <p>Usually live in forests, gather watersides in breeding season.</p>	American Bullfrog • 12 ~ 20 cm  <p>Eat other creatures greedily. Voice is similar to cow s.</p>	