



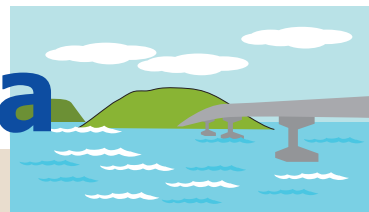
United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



San'in Kaigan
UNESCO
Global Geopark

The History of Lake Koyama and Its People

Lake Koyama Course



Lake Koyama is a brackish water lagoon with an area of 6.8 km², a shore length of 18 km, and an average depth of 2.8 m. In the past, it was thought that the lagoon was formed by coastal regression of the Jomon Sea, but recent studies have shown that it was a bay directly connected to the Sea of Japan up until the Middle Ages. It is possible to know about the people who lived in such an environment from the tombs and historic ruins around Lake Koyama.

From the observation platform, you can see a sweeping view of the Koyama sand dunes and the Sea of Japan!

There are currently five islands in Lake Koyama. Among them, the largest island is Aoshima. There is a promenade around the island and many planted cherry trees. From the observation platform, the Koyama sand dunes and the Sea of Japan can also be seen, and one can see that it was once a bay.



Aoshima Island, floating in Lake Koyama



The Sea of Japan, seen from the Aoshima observation platform



Aoshima Circular Course

Start Estimated walking time

①Koyamaike Information Plaza
20min → About 900m

②Aoshima observation platform
16min → About 800m

③Fujishima
11min → About 600m

④Ishigama Remains
8min → About 400m

①Koyamaike Information Plaza

Total traveling time:55min
Total distance:About 3 km

Quiz1

Can you guess what the magatama jewels discovered in Aoshima are called, based on their distinctive shape? (Find the answer on the reverse side!)

Bicycle rental available (only in Aoshima)

①Koyamaike Information Plaza

Major wild birds that can be observed at Lake Koyama
(Year-round) Grebe, Spot-billed Duck, Black Kite, Osprey, Kingfisher
(Summer) Great Reed Warbler, sandpipers such as the little-ringed plover and other plovers
(Autumn) Great Crested Grebe, Great Cormorant, Mallard, Tufted Duck, Common Pochard, Coot
(You'll be lucky to spot these!) Common Goldeneye, Smew, Steller's Sea Eagle, White-tailed Eagle

Potholes When the water level of Lake Koyama is low, you can see them.

Aoshima - Fuse Connecting Route

Aoshima Island

②The Aoshima observation platform

Best spot for lunch!

Best spot for lunch!

Best spot for lunch!

Best spot for lunch!

Best spot for lunch!

Best spot for lunch!

Best spot for lunch!

Best spot for lunch!

Best spot for lunch!

Best spot for lunch!

Best spot for lunch!

Lake Koyama Natural garden

Lake Koyama Oasis Park

④Fuse-Tenjinyama Castle ruins

③Fuse Ancient tomb

②Hie Shrine

①Fureai Square

②Hie Shrine

③Fuse Ancient tomb

④Fuse-Tenjinyama Castle ruins

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①Fureai Square

②Hie Shrine

●Aoshima Circular Course

①Koyamaike Information Plaza



Amenities that reveal the charm of Lake Koyama's four seasons. You can take advantage of nature to enjoy all sorts of experiences. It is popular as a source of information, culture, and education about Lake Koyama.
(Information) 0857-31-2900 / 10:00am - 4:00pm / Closed on Wednesdays
http://blog.goo.ne.jp/koyamaike_jp

②Aoshima observation platform



Aoshima is the largest island in Lake Koyama. Before the bridge was built, it was accessed by boat and used as a field. From the observation platform at the top of the mountain, you can view the Koyama sand dunes and the Sea of Japan, and imagine Lake Koyama as once a bay, later developing a reef and transforming into a lagoon.

③Fujishima



It is said that Lake Koyama was once home to the 7 islands of Aoshima, Tsubushima, Dangojima, Nekoshima, Torigashima, Iijima, and Fujishima. Iijima became the land of Fuse, and Fujishima joined with Aoshima, leaving the 5 islands of today.

④Ishigama Remains



An "ishigama" is a pile of stones that secures the passage of crucian carp at the bottom of the lake. The type of fishing performed with these stone piles is known as "ishigama fishing," and it has been passed on to the Mitsu area on the west bank of Lake Koyama. Of the nearly 80 stone cauldrons in the past, only 4 can be used today.
(*Refer to geo column 2)

Recommended:Nekoshima



On Nekoshima, there is a branch shrine dedicated to the Benteen Shrine on Chikubu Island in Lake Biwa. The legends of the "Cat Physician of Koyama" and "The Tale of Nekoshima," related to the cats kept by Koyama Choja, are passed on here.

●Fuse History Course

①Koyamaike Information Plaza



Equipped with a lawn space and gate ball fields, with trees from all prefectures of Japan planted in the surrounding area. You can learn about trees from each prefecture through a series of quizzes in a tree education course.

②Hie Shrine



At a shrine located on the hillside of Uyama, at the time of the guardianship of Inaba (1354), Yamana Tokiuji performed a ritual to divide and share the spirit from Sakamoto in Omi (Shiga Prefecture), which marked the beginning of Hie Shrine. It is still known as Sanno of Fuse (King of the Mountain), and monkeys are enshrined in the grounds as the guardian deities of children.

③Fuse Ancient tomb



This is a tumulus (59 m in length) located in the hill behind the Hie Shrine. Based on the excavation of haji ware, sue ware, and cylindrical terra-cotta fragments, it is considered to be the tomb of a powerful chief of the Inaba region, which was built in the late Kofun period. It was designated as a national historic site in 1974 (Showa 49), due to its large scale and the preservation of the tumulus.

④Fuse-Tenjinyama Castle ruins



It is said that in 1466, Katsutoyo Yamana of Inaba built it as a place for safeguarding. It was the center of politics in Inaba for about 100 years before the political base moved to Kyushosan Mountain. An ancient map of the Edo period depicts it surrounded by a moat that pulled water from the Koyama River.

The Legend of Koyama Choja

There still remain numerous legends surrounding the lake, but the most famous among them is the legend of "Koyama Choja."

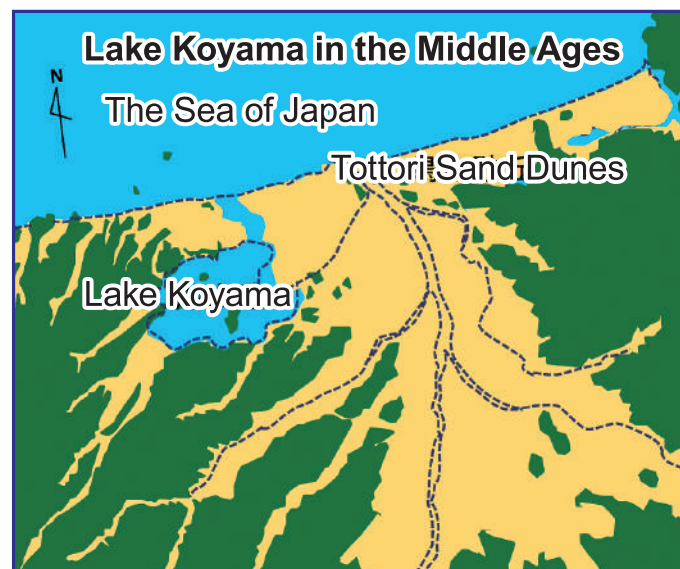
"Long ago, there lived a wealthy elder here, known as "Koyama Choja." In Choja's residence, it was customary to finish rice planting in one day. One year, while gathered and made to plant rice, a group of young girls was distracted by a monkey and could not finish planting in one day. Choja was disappointed, and used a golden fan to beckon to the sun, which was sinking over the west mountain. The setting sun returned, and the rice planting could be finished. The next day, when Choja saw the rice fields, they had become large ponds."

Geo-Column①

Formation of Lake Koyama

Lake Koyama is a lagoon formed where a sand dune developed and separated a bay from the Sea of Japan. About 200,000 to 150,000 years ago, the Tottori Plain was an inner bay dotted with small islands (Old Tottori Bay). From 150,000 to 100,000 years ago, pebbles were deposited in the inner bay, and ancient sand dunes were formed.

Following this, the sea level fell due to the cooling of the earth and the coastline retreated far offshore, although in the Jomon period about 6,000 years ago, the earth warmed and the sea level rose, forming an inner bay once again. With the continued sedimentation, the inner bay was dried up to form the Tottori plain, leaving the area around Lake Koyama. The lake was connected to the Sea of Japan until the Middle Ages, but the connection was cut off by the growth of the Koyama sand dunes, leaving the present geography.



■:water ■:mountains ■:rivers and plains

Geo-Column②

Ishigama Fishing

In Lake Koyama, there is an unusual fishing method called "Ishigama Fishing," found nowhere else in Japan. An "ishigama" is a pile of stones that secures the passage of crucian carp at the bottom of the lake. Ishigama is a type of winter fishing that takes place for a day around the end of January, where a prod is used to poke the gaps in the pile of stones from above, driving the carp out into a capturing device known as a "doukan." It is said that this fishing was done as a side job of farmers during the Edo period. In the past there were nearly 80 of these ishigama, but only 4 exist today in the Mitsu region on the west bank of Lake Koyama.

Quiz - Answer

- ①:Komochimagatama
- ②:Monkey



Ishigama Fishing in Action

Production
The San'in Kaigan Geopark Promotion Council & Research Section for Geo-environment,
Institute of Natural and Environmental Sciences, University of Hyogo