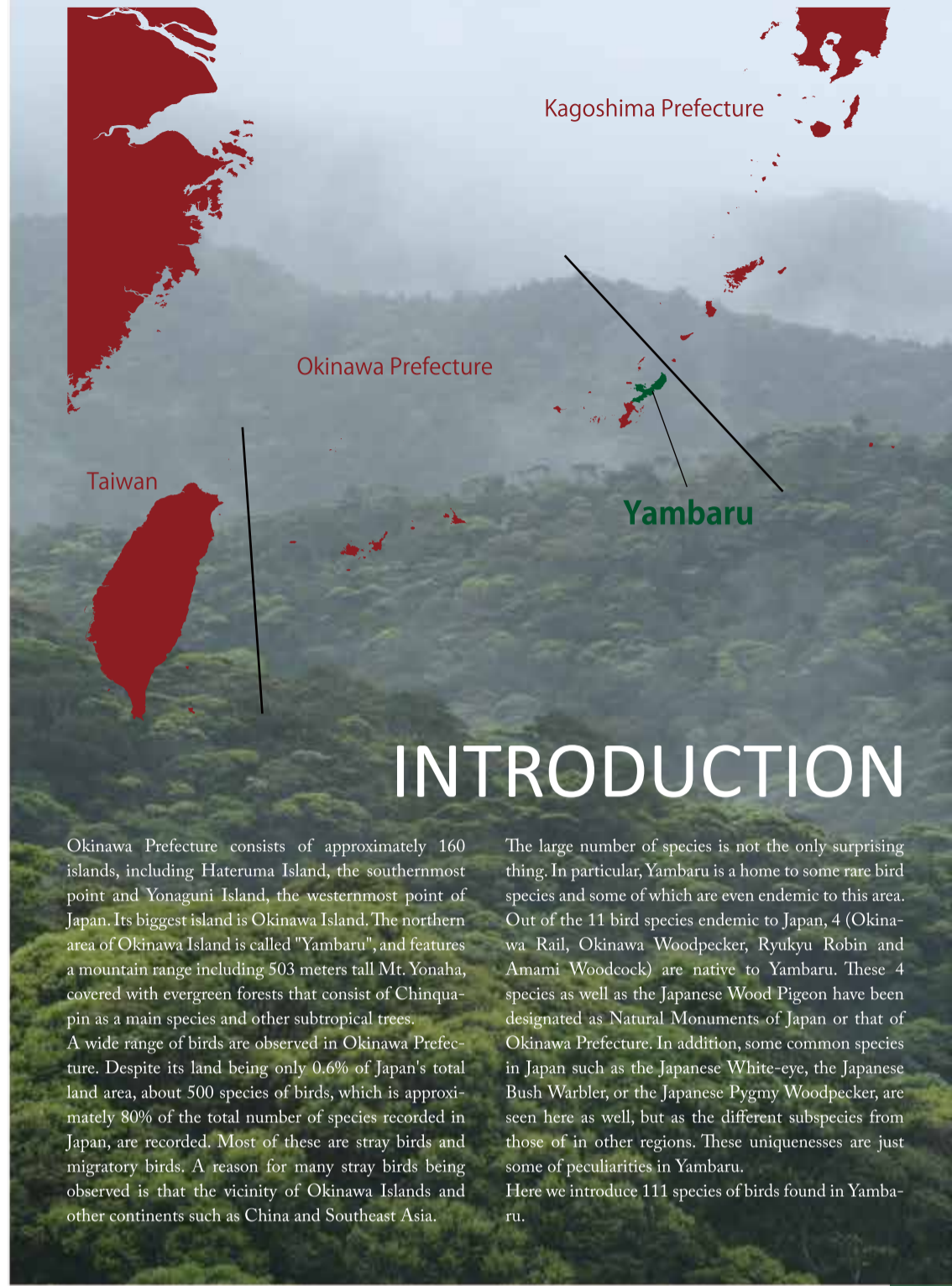


Birds of Yambaru

111 species in forests, open fields and watersides



INTRODUCTION

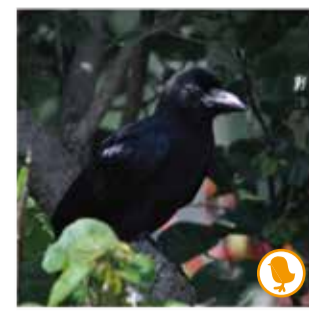
Okinawa Prefecture consists of approximately 160 islands, including Hateruma Island, the southernmost point and Yonaguni Island, the westernmost point of Japan. Its biggest island is Okinawa Island. The northern area of Okinawa Island is called "Yambaru", and features a mountain range including 503 meters tall Mt. Yonaha, covered with evergreen forests that consist of Chingquapin as a main species and other subtropical trees. A wide range of birds are observed in Okinawa Prefecture. Despite its land being only 0.6% of Japan's total land area, about 500 species of birds, which is approximately 80% of the total number of species recorded in Japan, are recorded. Most of these are stray birds and migratory birds. A reason for many stray birds being observed is that the vicinity of Okinawa Islands and other continents such as China and Southeast Asia.

The large number of species is not the only surprising thing. In particular, Yambaru is a home to some rare bird species and some of which are even endemic to this area. Out of the 11 bird species endemic to Japan, 4 (Okinawa Rail, Okinawa Woodpecker, Ryukyu Robin and Amami Woodcock) are native to Yambaru. These 4 species as well as the Japanese Wood Pigeon have been designated as Natural Monuments of Japan or that of Okinawa Prefecture. In addition, some common species in Japan such as the Japanese White-eye, the Japanese Bush Warbler, or the Japanese Pygmy Woodpecker, are seen here as well, but as the different subspecies from those of in other regions. These uniquenesses are just some of peculiarities in Yambaru. Here we introduce 111 species of birds found in Yambaru.

Birds in forests



Ashy Minivet (Okinawa Sub.)
Ryukyu-sanshokui*
Widespread from forests to green spaces in city parks. Its distribution has been recently expanded to southern Honshu.



Large-billed Crow (Okinawa Sub.)
Ryukyu-hashibuto-garasu*
Common and widespread from forests to cities. Omnivorous and sometimes it causes damages on crops such as pineapple.



Varied Tit (Okinawa Sub.)
Amami-yama-gara*
Inhabits mountainous forests. Songs "tsu-tsu-pee, tsu-tsu-pee". Feeds on insects and fruits.



Eurasian Woodcock
Yama-shigi
Migrates to grasslands and cultivated fields near mountains in winter. Puts bill inside the ground to feed earthworms.



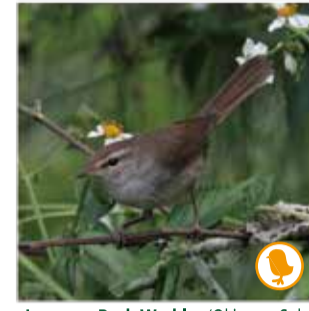
Chinese Sparrowhawk
Akahara-daka
Migrates from Korean Peninsula in flocks around September. Passes a night and then goes farther south. Female in the picture.



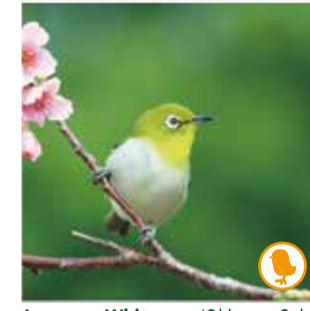
Yellow-browed Warbler
Kimayu-mushikui
Migrates to forest in fall and winters. Wings have white or yellowish white stripes.



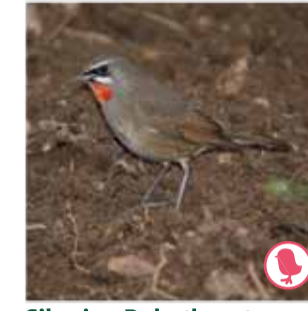
Japanese Tit (Okinawa Sub.)
Okinawa-shiju-kara*
Inhabits from mountainous forests to city parks. Songs "tsu-pee, tsu-pee". Feeds on insects.



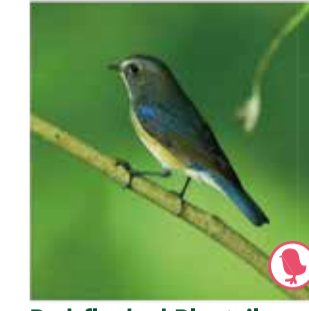
Japanese Bush Warbler (Okinawa Sub.)
Daito-uguisu*
This subspecies of Japanese Bush Warbler inhabits from forests to cultivated fields in Okinawa Island. Non-migratory.



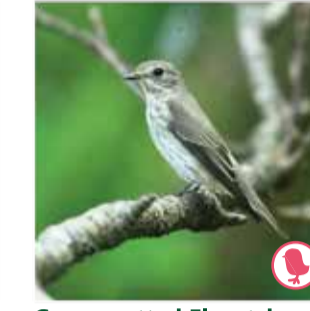
Japanese White-eye (Okinawa Sub.)
Ryukyu-mejiro*
Inhabits from mountainous forests to residential areas. Breeds in nests hanging from trees.



Siberian Rubythroat
No-goma
Migrates to mountainous to lowland forests and farmland to winter. Often calls in the bush. Male in the picture.



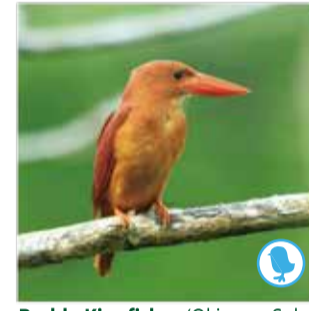
Red-flanked Bluetail
Ruri-bitaki
Migrates to forests and farmland and winters. Feeds on insects on the ground or trees. Male in the picture.



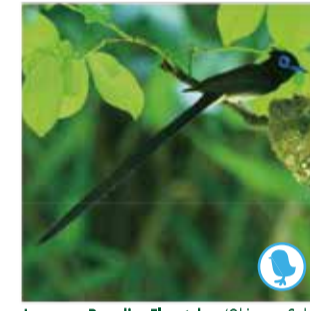
Grey-spotted Flycatcher
Ezo-bitaki
Transient bird passing through various places of Okinawa in fall. Seen in mountainous and lowland forest edges and cultivated fields.



Narcissus Flycatcher (Okinawa Sub.)
Ryukyu-ki-bitaki*
A subspecies endemic to Nansai Islands. Inhabits mountainous forests. Breeds in tree hollows. Male in the picture.



Ruddy Kingfisher (Okinawa Sub.)
Ryukyu-aka-shobin*
Migrates to mountainous forests in summer. Digs holes in dead trees to breed.



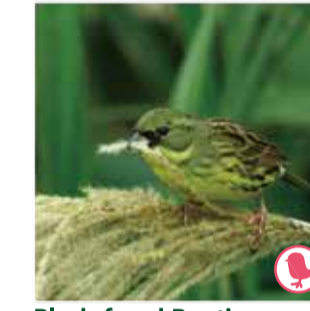
Japanese Paradise Flycatcher (Okinawa Sub.)
Ryukyu-sankochi*
Migrates to mountainous forests in summer. Builds cup-shaped nest on forked tree to breed. Male in the picture.



Brambling
Atori
Migrates to mountainous to lowland forests and green spaces in city parks and winters while moving in flocks.



Eurasian Siskin
Ma-hiwa
Migrates in flocks to various places of Okinawa. Seen in mountainous forests, cultivated fields and parks. Male in the picture.



Black-faced Bunting
Aoji
Bunting which winters in mountainous to lowland forests and cultivated fields. Relatively common. Male in the picture.

Resident birds

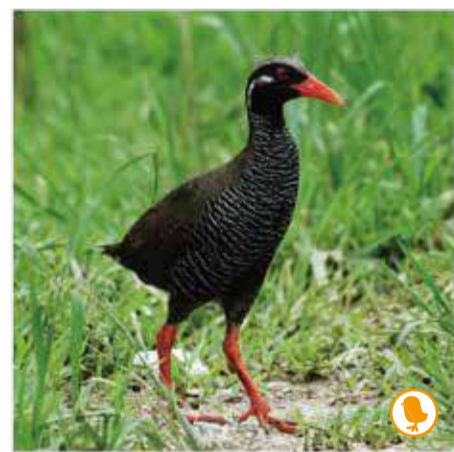
Summer visitors

*Subspecies endemic to Okinawa area are referred to with the Japanese subspecies name.

Winter visitors or passage migrants

Birds in forests

Birds in open fields

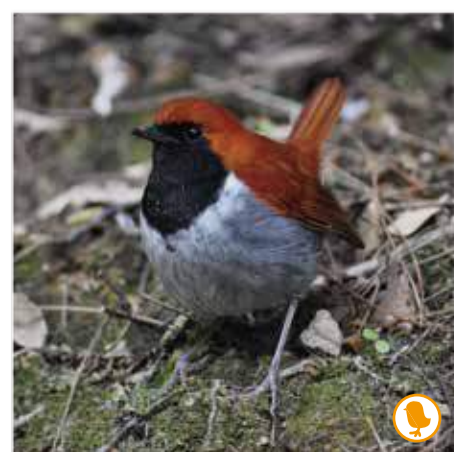


Okinawa Rail
Yambaru-kuina

Endemic to the northern Okinawa Island, first described in 1981. The only flightless bird in Japan. It inhabits forests and mountains. Walks around in dark forests and looks under fallen leaves or in the soil for worms or frogs to feed. It sometimes feeds snails by breaking their hard shells. Call is a loud "kek-kek-kek". At night, it climbs upon big tree branches sloped gently enough, and roosts there. Local name is "Agachi".

Okinawa Woodpecker
Noguchi-gera

Only species of the genus Sapheopipo inhabiting the lush forests of northern Okinawa Island. Recently, some studies have placed it as a species of genus Dendrocopos. It rarely leaves the forests and feeds on the insect larvae such as longhorn beetles as well as other arthropods and fruits. Breeding season is from April to June, when it nests inside holes in dead or dying trees such as chinquapin and oak. Juveniles and males have a red crown, while females have a dark brown one. Local name is "Kitataya". Subadult in the picture.



Ryukyu Robin (Okinawa Sub.)
Honto-akahige*

A subspecies of Ryukyu Robin inhabiting forest area of the northern part of Okinawa Island. During the breeding season, from April to June, it sings with a remarkable volume as "peep-rururu" or "cheep-cheep". It nests in hollows in a low position of dead trees or on dead tree ferns *Cyathea lepidifera* and lays three to five eggs. Ryukyu Robin is an endemic species to Japan, inhabiting Danjo Islands, Tokara Islands, Amami Islands, and Okinawa Islands. Some of the robins breeding north of Okinawa come to Okinawa as winter visitors. Local name is "Ako". Male in the picture.

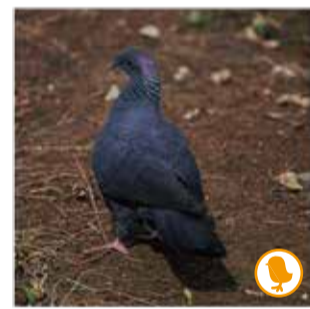
Resident birds

*Subspecies endemic to Okinawa area are referred to with the Japanese subspecies name.



Mandarin Duck
Oshidori

Breeds in the northern Okinawa Island. Feeds acorns and snails in the forest. Some come as winter birds. Male in the picture.



Japanese Wood Pigeon
Karasu-bato

Black Pigeon inhabiting forests. During the breeding season, it calls "coo, cooooo", like a cow's low.



Whistling Green Pigeon
Zuaka-ao-bato

Green-bodied pigeon inhabiting forests. During the breeding season, it repeatedly calls "poh-aoh-oh".



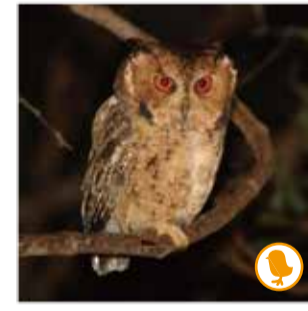
Amami Woodcock
Amami-yama-shigi

Breeds in Amami Islands. A few live in Okinawa Island year round. Some migrate to Okinawa as winter birds. Primarily nocturnal.



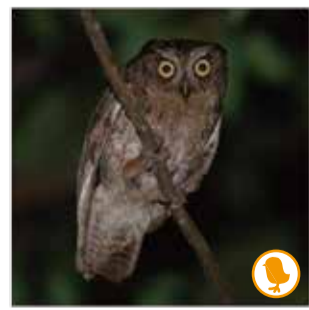
Japanese Sparrowhawk
Tsumi

Widespread small hawk inhabiting from mountainous forests to green spaces in city parks. It preys on smaller birds.



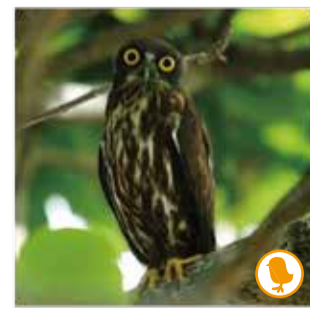
Collared Scops Owl (Okinawa Sub.)
Ryukyu-o-konoha-zuku*

Owl inhabiting from mountainous forests to remaining forests in the cities. Mainly breeds in tree hollows.



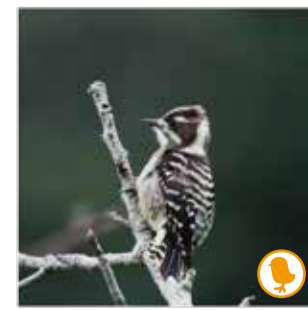
Ryukyu Scops Owl
Ryukyu-konoha-zuku

Owl inhabiting mountainous forests. It calls repeatedly "ohh, ohh". Breeds in tree hollows.



Brown Hawk-Owl (Okinawa Sub.)
Ryukyu-aoba-zuku*

Owl inhabiting mountainous forests. It calls repeatedly "poh-poh, poh-poh". It has a round face and no ear tufts.



Japanese Pygmy Woodpecker (Okinawa Sub.)
Ryukyu-ko-gera*

Small woodpecker inhabiting mountainous forests and green spaces in city parks. It feeds on insect larvae on dead trees.

Resident birds

*Subspecies endemic to Okinawa area are referred to with the Japanese subspecies name.

Birds in forests

Birds in open fields



Oriental Turtle Dove (Okinawa Sub.)
Ryukyu-kiji-bato*

Widespread and common pigeon in mountainous forests, cultivated fields, residential areas and parks. Breeds year round.



White-breasted Waterhen
Shirohara-kuina

Inhabits rice cultivations and wetlands. Recently, occurrence in Kyushu and Shikoku has been confirmed.



Barred Buttonquail
Mifu-uzura

Inhabits grasslands and cultivated fields. Male incubates eggs and raises chicks. Female has black patch from chin to chest.



Pacific Swallow
Ryukyu-tsubame

Breeds in south of Amami Islands. Non-migratory. Has shorter tail and less white belly than Barn Swallow.



Light-vented Bulbul
Shirogashira

Inhabits open spaces such as residential areas and farmland. It is considered to be an introduced species in Okinawa Island.



Brown-eared Bulbul (Okinawa Sub.)
Ryukyu-hiyodori*

Widespread through residential areas, farmland to forests. The Okinawa subspecies is darker than the most common subspecies.



Zitting Cisticola
sekka

Seen in grasslands, cultivated fields, and pastures. Builds bag-shaped nests with grasses to breed.



Blue Rock Thrush
Isohiyodori

Formerly, lived only near the coasts but is recently seen in residential areas in the inland as well. Male in the picture.



Eurasian Tree Sparrow
Suzume

Seen in farmland and rice fields. Sometimes forms flocks and feeds on grass seeds.

Resident birds

*Subspecies endemic to Okinawa area are referred to with the Japanese subspecies name.



Scaly-breasted Munia
Shima-kinpara

Seen in farmland and rice fields. Forms flocks and feeds on grass seeds. Also called "Amihara". It is an introduced species.



Tricolored Munia
Ginpara

Seen in around cultivated fields. Forms flocks and feeds on grass seeds. It is an introduced species.



Indian Pratincole
Tsubame-chidori

In summer, migrates to cultivated fields and thin grasslands and breeds. Voice is "cree-cree".



Cattle Egret
Ama-sagi

Migrates in flocks to farmland, pastures, and rice fields and passes winter. Pale yellow head, breast and back in breeding plumage.



Intermediate Egret
Chu-sagi

Migrates to farmland and rice fields and winters. Usually stays alone, but forms flocks when migrating.



Grey-faced Buzzard-eagle
Sashiba

Transient visitor which migrates in large flocks around October. Some remain for the whole winter.



Short-eared Owl
Komimi-zuku

Uncommon winter visitor to grasslands and meadows. Feeds on rodents.



Eurasian Hoopoe
Yatsugashira

Seen in grasslands and cultivated fields near coasts in spring and fall. Spreads out crest in fan-shaped.



Common Kestrel
Chogembo

Migrates to open spaces such as farmland and rice fields and winters. Searches for preys while hovering.

Resident birds

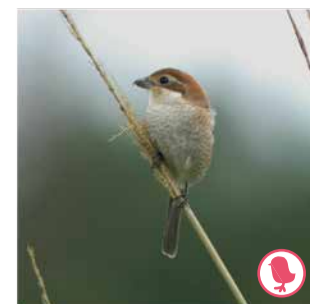
Summer visitors

Winter visitors or passage migrants



Peregrine Falcon
Hayabusa

Migrates to open spaces such as farmland and rice fields and winters. It preys on small birds.



Brown Shrike
Aka-mozu

Migrates to open spaces such as cultivated fields and meadows and winters. It preys on grasshoppers and other insects.



Barn Swallow
Tsubame

Passage migrant in spring and fall. Some winter. Tail is narrow and long. A case of breeding in Okinawa Island was confirmed recently.



Scaly Thrush
Tora-tsugumi

Rare winter visitor to forest edges and farmland. Feeds on earthworms under fallen leaves.



Pale Thrush
Shirohara

Common winter visitor to forests, forest edges and farmland. Feeds on earthworms under fallen leaves and insects.



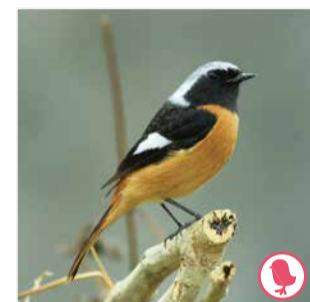
Brown-headed Thrush
Akahara

Uncommon winter visitor to forest edges and farmland. Feeds on earthworms under fallen leaves.



Naumann's Thrush
Tsugumi

Winter visitor to low grasslands and cultivated fields. Feeds on earthworms under fallen leaves and small insects.



Daurian Redstart
Jo-bitaki

Winter visitor to open spaces such as farmland and grassland. Feeds on insects. Male in the picture.



African Stonechat
No-bitaki

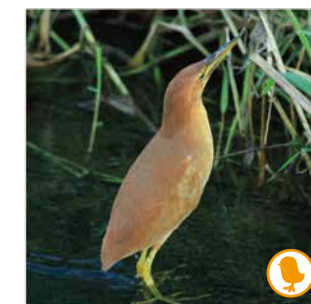
Winter visitor to farmland and grassland. Feeds on insects and other small animals. Male in the picture.

Winter visitors or passage migrants



Little Grebe
Kaitsu-buri

Waterside bird seen in dam lakes, rivers and ponds. Often dives into the water to catch small fish and aquatic insects.



Cinnamon Bittern
Ryukyu-yoshi-goi

Inhabits rivers, wetlands and common rush cultivations. Widely distributed in southern Asia. Male in the picture.



Black-crowned Night Heron
Goi-sagi

Inhabits rivers, wetlands and taro fields. During breeding season, colonizes along rivers. Some come as winter birds.



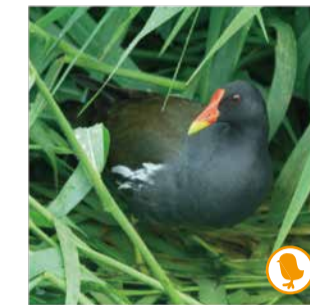
Pacific Reef Heron
Kuro-sagi

Seen near coastlines. There are black type and white type. Black type in the picture. Has shorter legs compared to other egrets.



Ruddy-breasted Crake (Okinawa Sub.)
Ryukyu-hi-kuina*

Inhabits rice, wetlands, and taro fields. Reddish brown from face to belly. Calls "kyot, kyot, kyot".



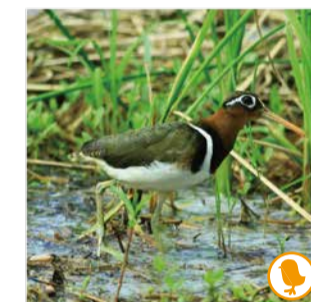
Common Moorhen
Ban

Seen in rivers, wetlands and taro fields. Brownish black body with white flank stripe.



Kentish Plover
Shiro-chidori

Plovers seen in coastlines. Breeds in sandy beaches. Some come as winter birds.



Greater Painted Snipe
Tama-shigi

Inhabits rice and taro fields and wetlands. Male incubates eggs and raises chicks. Female in the picture.



Common Kingfisher
Kawa-semi

Inhabits watersides such as rivers, ponds and marshes. Back is bright blue. Preys on crustaceans and small fish.

Resident birds

*Subspecies endemic to Okinawa area are referred to with the Japanese subspecies name.



Little Tern
Ko-ajisashi

Migrates to coastlines and breeds in colonies. Preys on small fish.



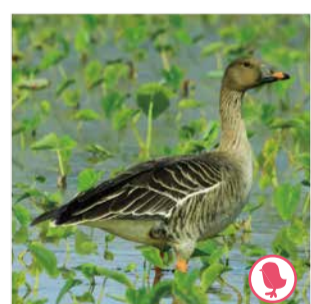
Roseate Tern
Beni-ajisashi

Migrates to reefs and uninhabited islands and breeds in colonies. Preys on small fish.



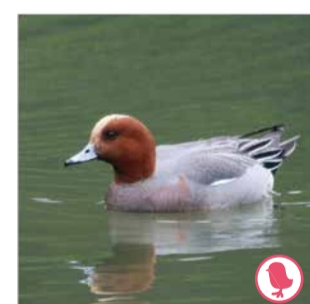
Black-naped Tern
Eriguro-ajisashi

Migrates to coastal cliffs and reefs and breeds in small colonies. Preys on small fish.



Bean Goose
Hishikui

Uncommon winter visitor to rice and taro fields. Has orange spot on the tip of the bill.



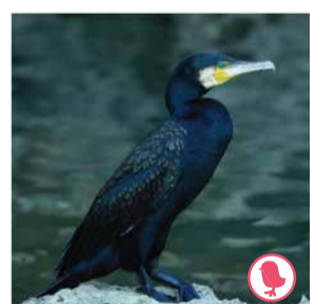
Eurasian Wigeon
Hidori-gamo

Winter visitor to marshes, ponds and rivers. Male has golden brown forehead. Male in the picture.



Mallard
Ma-gamo

Winter visitor to ponds, marshes and rivers. Male has green head. Male in the picture.



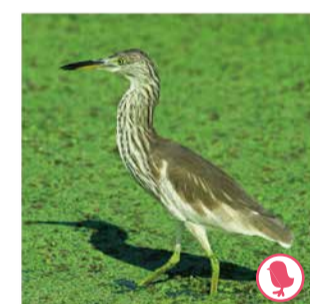
Great Cormorant
Kawa-u

Common winter visitor to ponds and dam lakes. Dive into the water to prey on small fish.



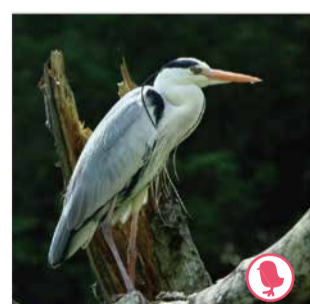
Striated Heron
Sasa-goi

Winter visitor to rivers and ponds. Back plumage looks like bamboo leaves.



Chinese Pond Heron
Akagashira-sagi

Uncommon winter visitor to wetlands and taro and rice fields. Winter plumage is reddish brown from head through breast to back.



Grey Heron
Ao-sagi

Winter visitor to rivers, ponds and marshes. Body is gray. Preys on small fish.



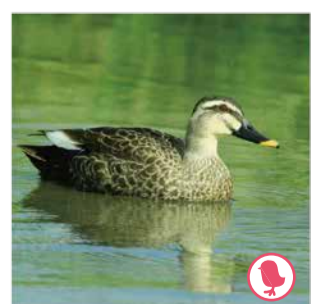
Great Egret
Dai-sagi

Winter visitor to rivers, ponds and taro fields. Has long neck and long yellow bill.



Little Egret
Ko-sagi

Winter visitor to rivers and rice and taro fields. Resident in some areas.



Eastern Spot-billed Duck
Karu-gamo

Winter visitor to marshes, ponds, rivers and taro fields. Some are residents.



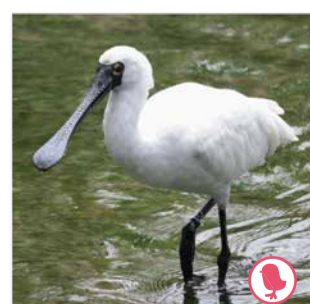
Northern Shoveler
Hashibiro-gamo

Winter visitor to ponds and common rush cultivations. Both sexes have spatulate bill. Male in the picture.



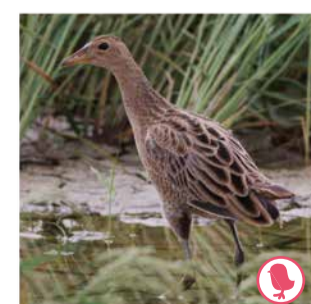
Northern Pintail
Onaga-gamo

Winter visitor to marshes, ponds and rivers. Male has long grey tail. Male in the foreground and female in the background in the picture.



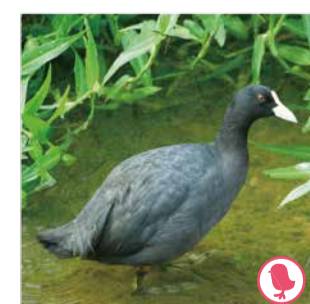
Black-faced Spoonbill
Kurotsura-herasagi

Uncommon winter visitor to rivers and tidal flats. Has distinctive large spatulate bill. Winter plumage in the picture.



Watercock
Tsuru-kuina

Uncommon winter visitor to rice and taro fields. Young male in the picture.



Eurasian Coot
O-ban

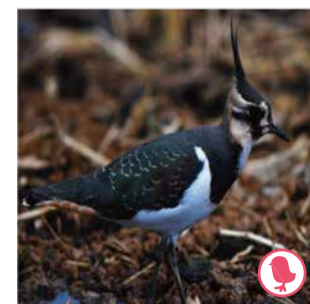
Common winter visitor to rivers, ponds and dam lakes. Body is grayish black and larger than Common Moorhen.

Resident birds

Summer visitors

Winter visitors or passage migrants

Winter visitors or passage migrants



Northern Lapwing
Ta-geri

Uncommon winter visitor to rice and taro fields. Has distinctive long and thin crest.



Pacific Golden Plover
Munaguro

Migrates to tidal flats, wetlands, and coasts in flocks and passes through. Some winter. Winter plumage in the picture.



Grey Plover
Daizen

Migrates to tidal flats and coasts in small flocks and winters. Larger than Pacific Golden Plover. Winter plumage in the picture.



Common Redshank
Aka-ashi-shigi

Winter visitor to rivers and rice and taro fields. Arrives from fall to winter. Legs are orange.



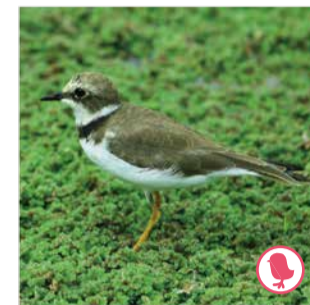
Common Greenshank
Ao-ashi-shigi

Winter visitor to rivers and rice and taro fields. Arrives from fall to winter. Legs are greenish grey.



Green Sandpiper
Kusa-shigi

Winter visitor to rivers and rice and taro fields. Arrives in fall.



Little Ringed Plover
Ko-chidori

Migrates to rice and taro fields in fall and winters. Has distinctive yellow eye-ring. Winter plumage in the picture.



Mongolian Plover
Medai-chidori

Migrates to tidal flats and coasts in flocks from fall to winter and passes through. Some winter. Winter plumage in the picture.



Black-winged Stilt
Seitaka-shigi

Migrates to rivers and rice and taro fields in large numbers from fall to winter and passes winter.



Wood Sandpiper
Takabu-shigi

Migrates to rivers and rice and taro fields in flocks in early fall and winters.



Grey-tailed Tattler
Kiashi-shigi

Passage migrant to rivers and tidal flats seen in fall. Some winter. Legs are yellow.



Terek Sandpiper
Sorihashi-shigi

Passage migrant to rivers, tidal flats and coasts seen in fall. Has upcurved bill.



Pied Avocet
Sorihashi-seitaka-shigi

Rare winter visitor to estuary tidal flats and taro fields. Tall wader with upcurved bill.



Whimbrel
Chushaku-shigi

Uncommon passage migrant to estuary tidal flats seen in fall. Some winter.



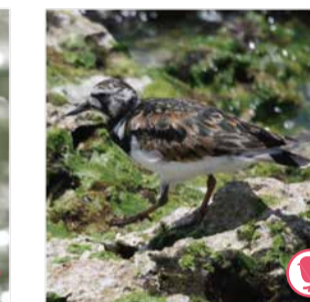
Eurasian Curlew
Daishaku-shigi

Uncommon passage migrant to tidal flats seen in fall. Some winter. Has distinctive long and downcurved bill.



Common Sandpiper
Iso-shigi

Common winter visitor to rivers and rice and taro fields. Arrives from fall. Wags tail up and down.



Ruddy Turnstone
Kyojo-shigi

Passage migrant to rivers, tidal flats and coasts in fall. Uses bill to turn over stones on the coast to search for food.



Sanderling
Miyubi-shigi

Passage migrant to rivers, coasts, and sandy tidal flats in fall. Some winter. Has three toes.

Winter visitors or passage migrants

Winter visitors or passage migrants



Long-toed Stint
Hibari-shigi

Migrates to rivers and rice and taro fields in flocks from fall to winter and passes winter.



Sharp-tailed Sandpiper
Uzura-shigi

Passage migrant to rivers and rice and taro fields in fall. Larger than Long-toed Stint.



Dunlin
Hama-shigi

Migrates to tidal flats in flocks in fall and passes through. Some pass winter.



Pheasant-tailed Jacana
Renkaku

Rare winter visitor to rivers and rice and taro fields. Arrives in fall and winter. Summer plumage in the picture.



Whiskered Tern
Kurohara-ajisashi

Passage migrant to rivers, taro fields and dam lakes in fall. Black from forehead to rear neck.



Western Osprey
Misago

In winter migrates to coasts, tidal flats and dam lakes and passes winter. Dive into water to prey on fish.



Yellow Wagtail
Tsumenaga-sekirei

Passage migrant to rivers and rice and taro fields in fall. Subadult in the picture.



Grey Wagtail
Ki-sekirei

Winter visitor to rivers, rice and taro fields and farmland. Arrives in fall. Wags tail up and down. Male summer plumage in the picture.



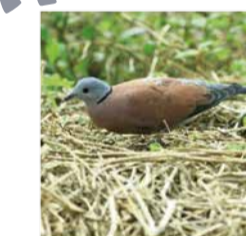
White Wagtail
Haku-sekirei

Winter visitor to rivers, rice and taro fields and farmland. Arrives in fall. Male summer plumage in the picture.

Winter visitors or passage migrants

Stray birds

Lost your way? By typhoon? Wandering birds



Red Turtle Dove
Beni-bato



Javan Pond Heron
Jawa-akagashira-sagi



Black Drongo
Ochu



Eurasian Magpie
Kasasagi



Common Blackbird
Kuro-utadori



Glossy Ibis
Buronzu-toki

Rules of birdwatching

1. Watch gently

Do not surprise birds by chasing them or getting too close to their nest. Sometimes, you may find chicks dropped on the ground while they are learning how to fly but do not pick them up unless they are injured.

2. Do not change the environment

Do not change their habitats, for example, by breaking tree branches to get a better view.

3. Consider those around you

Do not enter private properties. If you are birdwatching from inside a car, be careful not to hamper the traffic.

4. Watch out for dangerous animals

There are some dangerous animals such as venomous snakes in Yambaru forest. Do not forget safety while birdwatching.