

Tanchos Now

Tanchos in Japan once came within an inch of extinction. The local people took willing conservation measures, mainly winter feeding, and helped the number of cranes to increase to about 1,500.



Information

the outline of facilities

- the total area : about 72,000m²
- the area of the building : about 1,500m²
- the area of the outdoor breeding cages : about 6,000m²
There is a parking area and a picnic area nearby AICC.
- 9:00-17:00 open
- open everyday

Entrance fee for Akan International Crane Center and Tancho Observation Center

through ticket		individual	group reduction (over 14 persons)	annual ticket
	adult <small>(over Junior high school)</small>	480yen	350yen	3620yen
	juvenile	250yen	180yen	1810yen

The Tancho Observation Center is only open through Nov. 1 to Mar. 31.
The ticket can be used at both of the centers.



Akan Kokusai Tsuru Center

[GRUS]

The nickname for the AICC is "Grus" - the generic name for 10 species of cranes including the Tancho, *Grus japonensis*. This name was chosen from entries submitted by the public.



23-40 Kamiakan, Akan, Kushiro, Hokkaido
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Traffic Information

- 20min. from Kushiro airport by car
- 60min. from Kushiro station (Japan railway) by bus
- 40min. from Lake Akan by car



Akan Kokusai Tsuru Center

[GRUS]

AKAN
international
CRANE
CENTER



GUIDANCE

What is the Tancho, the Red-crowned Crane?

There are 15 species of cranes in the world. Eleven species of them are endangered. Three species of cranes, the Tancho, the White-naped Crane, and the Hooded Crane are mainly found in Japan. Only the Tancho is resident throughout the year and breeds in Japan. The scientific name of the Tancho is *Grus japonensis*, the crane of Japan. Before the Meiji Restoration of 1868, the magnificent cranes were once found over Honshu and Hokkaido. But then because of uncontrolled hunting and disappearance of wetlands, the cranes continued to decline until it was believed that they were extirpated from Japan. Fortunately a small non-migratory flock survived in eastern Hokkaido and the Tancho has since been protected as a Special Natural Monument. They now are restricted to eastern Hokkaido in Japan.

Save the Tancho!

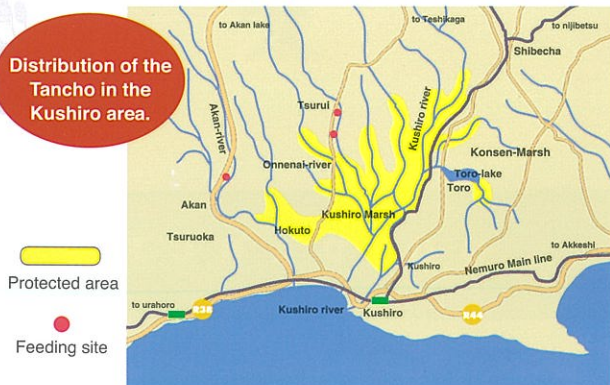
Throughout the winter, the cranes are artificially fed at several sites in eastern Hokkaido. Food in winter is no longer a limiting factor for the crane population. The cranes require large wetlands and open rivers respectively for breeding and wintering. Each year more wetlands are destroyed. Wetland conservation is vital in the conservation of the Tancho. And particularly during the breeding season, Tanchos are extremely shy and cannot tolerate disturbance.

What is the Akan International Crane Center?

The farm fields near the town of Akan are known as birthplace of the artificial feeding program for cranes and the area is well-known as a major wintering area for large flocks of cranes. Although the citizens of Akan have been involved in crane conservation for many decades, the Akan International Crane Center (AICC) is a new institution dedicated, also to public education and crane research.

In the main building at AICC, through the use of audio-visuals and exhibits, the visitor learns about the biology of the Tancho. Captive cranes are maintained in semi-natural wetlands and visitors are able to observe cranes without disturbing wild cranes on the natural wetlands. Researchers at AICC study the ecology and behavior of the captive and wild cranes, and the habitats of the wild cranes, information that is essential in developing sound conservation programs. The information and the results are shared with visitors through special lectures and workshops convened at AICC.

Distribution of the Tancho in the Kushiro area.



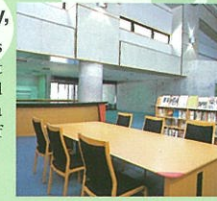
Protected area
Feeding site

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1 The Entrance Hall includes an information counter, a resting place, and a video system where by the visitor can film wild cranes on the



2 In the Library, visitors can read books and magazines about cranes, wetlands, and conservation and a wide selection of videos can be viewed.



3 The Museum Shop provides books, post cards, and other gifts all featuring various aspects of cranes.

4 In the Lecture Room, special programs about cranes and conservation are given.



5 The Theater, with its 200 inch screen, transports the visitors to the world of the Tancho in all seasons.



6 In the Laboratory, you can observe chicks through one-way glass, if you are lucky!



8 In one of these Outdoor Aviaries, visitors can appreciate a pair of the Tancho in seminatural surroundings.



7 In the Exhibition Hall, creative exhibits using dioramas, photographs and video, tell about the life of the cranes and the relationships between people and the cranes.



Tancho Observation Center

Just north of the AICC is the Tancho Observation Center established in 1977. This annex is open from November through March and about 250 wild cranes can be observed. It is here that a farmer, Mr. Sadajiro Yamazaki, started feeding cranes in 1950.



The Monument of Waka by His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince,

honors the visit of H.I.H. the Crown Prince in 1991. Upon observing the cranes dancing on the snow, H.I.H. the Crown Prince made a poem. A calligrapher from Sapporo, Mr. Shusou Kato, wrote this poem on the monument.

Monument of the Tancho Conservation Birthplace

To honor the birthplace of the artificial feeding program for Tanchos and people's continuous efforts is the Monument of the Tancho Conservation Birthplace. Dr. Takashi Inukai, a famous Manyoshu scholar, wrote the inscription on the monument. ("The Manyoshu is the oldest existing anthology of waka, poems in Japan.")