

About the Institute for Nature Study

The Institute for Nature Study is a precious forest, an oasis within the city, where natural surroundings have been preserved despite its location in the heart of the metropolis of Tokyo. Covering approximately 20 hectares, it is one of the largest forests in central Tokyo, and the entire area is designated as a protected forest and a Natural Monument.

Within the park, forests of deciduous trees such as Japanese hop-hornbeam and zelkova, and evergreen trees such as Japanese chinquapin, oak, and pine species, are interspersed with grasslands of Japanese silver grass and reeds, ponds, and small streams. Various botanical gardens utilizing this natural setting have been established, allowing visitors to observe a wide variety of plants, birds, insects, and other living creatures up close throughout the seasons. To date, approximately 1,500 plant species and 2,000 insect species have been confirmed, with visiting birds reaching about 130 species.

Furthermore, to protect nature, vegetation management is carried out without the use of pesticides or fertilizers, preserving the original natural environment.



Rules for Use

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Do not catch insects or other animals.
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Do not drink alcohol.
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Do not take flowers or seeds home with you.
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Please take your trash home with you.
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Do not bring pets, other animals, or plants.
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Running is not permitted within the park.
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Do not bring toys or other play items.
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Do not make loud noises.
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Do not use fire.
Do not smoke.

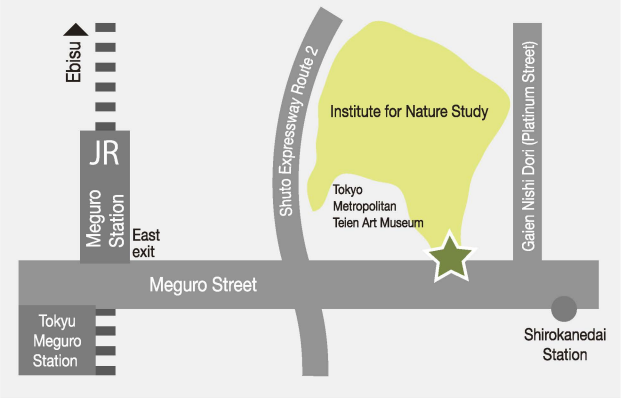
This is precious nature that should be passed on to future generations.
Please follow the rules when using the park.

Visitor Information

- Opening Hours**
- May 1 - Aug. 31 9:00 - 17:00 (Last admission at 16:00)
 - Sep. 1 - Apr. 30 9:00 - 16:30 (Last admission at 16:00)
- Closed Days**
- Every Monday** (Open if Monday is a national holiday or holiday; closed on Tuesday instead)
 - The day after a national holiday** (Open if the holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday)
 - Year-end and New Year holidays (December 28 - January 4)

- Admission Fee: General Admission 320 yen**
- Free for high school students and younger, and persons aged 65 and over (Proof required)
 - Free for persons with disabilities and one accompanying caregiver (Disability certificate required)

Access



天然記念物及び史跡

科博 自然教育園

Institute for Nature Study,
National Museum of Nature and Science

日本博 JAPAN CULTURAL EXPO 2.0

- 108-0071
5-21-5 Shirokanedai, Minato-ku, Tokyo TEL. +81-(0)3-3441-7176
<https://www.ins.kahaku.go.jp>
- From Meguro Station (JR Yamanote Line; JY22, East Exit, or Tokyu Meguro Line; MG01): Walk for about 9 minutes along Meguro Street.
 - From Shirokanedai Station (Tokyo Metro Namboku Line; N-02) or Toei Mita Line; I-02): Take Exit 1 and walk for about 7 minutes along Meguro Street.

National Museum of Nature and Science

Institute for Nature Study

An Oasis of Healing
in the Metropolis

Natural Monument and Historic Site

History of the Institute for Nature Study

The history of the Institute for Nature Study dates back 400 to 500 years, beginning as the estate of an influential clan (known in Japan as gōzoku). During the Edo period, it served as the secondary residence of Matsudaira Yorishige, the lord of the Takamatsu Domain. In the Meiji era, it was used as an arsenal for both the Army and Navy, and in the Taisho era, it became the Shirokane Imperial Estate. Because the general public was prohibited from entering throughout this long period, the land's rich natural environment was preserved. Subsequently, the area was designated a Natural Monument and Historic Site in 1949 and opened to the public. To ensure the appropriate preservation, utilization, and transmission of this valuable natural and historical heritage to future generations, a "Conservation and Utilization Plan" has been formulated.



Chronology

Period	Major Events
5,000 years ago	Humans settled in this area
Around 1500	It is said that Ota Shinrokuro (the Shirogane millionaire) built his mansion here.
1664	Became the secondary residence of Matsudaira Sanuki-no-kami Yorishige (Lord of Takamatsu Domain)
1872	Served as a military munitions depot
1917	Became the Shirokane Imperial Estate of the Imperial Household Ministry
1949	Designated a "Natural Monument and Historic Site" and opened to the public as the National Institute for Nature Study
1959	The route of Metropolitan Expressway Route 2 is altered to bypass the Institute for Nature Study
1962	Becomes the Institute for Nature Study affiliated with the National Museum of Nature and Science
1978	Construction of a nearby hotel is halted due to opposition from local residents
2004	To protect native fish from invasive species, three ponds within the park were dredged
2019	300-year-old "Orochi Pine" tree falls due to typhoon
2022	A preservation and utilization plan is formulated

A Musashino Botanical Garden

This botanical garden recreates Musashino woodlands with grasslands (Musashino Zōkibayashi), where people once gathered wood and fallen leaves for firewood, charcoal, and fertilizer. Visitors can see a diverse array of plants, including those that bloom in early spring.



4 Autumn Leaves and Hyotan Pond

Maples, zelkovas, and Japanese hackberry trees among many other species display vivid autumn colors, offering a serene and tranquil foliage experience unlike anything you'd expect in the city center. The sight of the autumn leaves reflected on the surface of Hyotan (Gourd) Pond is also quite a sight to behold.



6 Forest Path and Creek

The Forest Path is a walking trail where you can stroll quietly through the shade of zelkova and Japanese dogwood trees. A small creek flows along the eastern side, allowing you to quietly appreciate the expansive waterside nature and the gradation of plant life.

8 300-year-old "Orochi Pine" tree falls due to typhoon

B Aquatic Botanical Garden

This botanical garden maintains diverse wetland environments, including ponds and marshes. Visitors can observe various plants that thrive in such habitats, as well as waterfowl, fish, insects, and other animals that prefer water's edge.



1 Mansion Ruins

Earthen ramparts remain throughout the grounds, constructed to defend against external threats and wildfires. The presence of these ramparts, built in a U-shape around this area, suggests the location of a former residence.

7 Waterfowl Marsh

Waterfowl Marsh is one of the Institute for Nature Study's water sources, fed by groundwater springs. Many waterfowl, including ducks and herons, visit this place where you can experience nature's diversity and tranquility.

3 Monogatari Pine

The "Monogatari Pine" (Tale Pine) is an old tree with an estimated age of about 300 years. It is believed to have been planted in the garden of the secondary residence of Matsudaira Sanuki-no-kami (Lord of Takamatsu Domain) in the 1600s. Its name and form still convey the atmosphere of the strolling garden that existed here at the time.



Nature Conservation Area (Closed to the Public)

Most of the Institute for Nature Study is a closed-to-the-public area. Here, human influence is minimized to preserve the entire natural ecosystem intact, observing how urban forests evolve over time.

- Rest Area
- Drinking Fountain
- Restroom
- Accessible Restroom

5 Cherry Blossom Avenue and Wetlands

A cherry blossom avenue runs alongside ponds and wetlands. During spring's full bloom, a delicate landscape of flowers and water surfaces unfolds, while diverse wetland plants can be seen in the adjacent wetlands.

2 The Giant Sudajii Tree and Earthen Ramparts

The park still features many large Sudajii trees (*Castanopsis sieboldii*), with the largest estimated to be nearly 300 years old.

On the earthen ramparts, many individuals, including this giant Sudajii, have a trunk circumference of close to four meters.



C Roadside Botanical Garden

A section about 200 meters from the entrance features plants primarily growing along mountain and field roadsides. Many insects, such as butterflies, visit here, allowing visitors to enjoy varied scenery throughout the seasons.



Visitor Center

This building houses various exhibits introducing the nature of the Institute for Nature Study and provides a rest area. It also includes a museum shop.

Late March

