

## Inoseto Wetlands

### How the Inoseto Wetlands Were Formed

Situated between Mt. Tsurumi (1,374 m) and Mt. Yufu (1,583 m), with the Kijima Plateau on its western side, the Inoseto Wetlands, at an altitude of 700 m, was formed by the unique climate of the area. Due to its geographical location, geological structure, and heavy annual rainfall, mineral-rich groundwater collects in subterranean reservoirs and strata. Groundwater then wells up throughout the low-lying Inoseto area, producing a wetland environment that is rich in plant and animal life.

Human activity and land management around the Inoseto Wetlands have preserved the characteristic grasslands of the area. They are actively maintained by seasonal cutting and controlled burnings known as *noyaki* in Japanese. Pictures from the 1950s show the entire area as grassland, but a decreasing rural population and agricultural activity have led to an invasion of trees and the growth of forested areas. Recently, a project was initiated to regenerate the Inoseto Wetlands and reverse the forestation process.

In 1970, there was a plan to develop the Inoseto area as a golf resort. However, the locals in Yufu opposed the plans as they wished to preserve the diverse wetland ecosystem. The plan has since been shelved, and the site today is actively managed and protected as a wetland area.