

Spring Burning Activities

Bogatsuru Marsh is an area subject to traditional spring burning, known as *noyaki* in Japanese. Burning boosts the regeneration of grasses and plants in the area. In Bogatsuru, many species of fern, grass, and other plants have been recorded. Some of these are unique to this area of Kuju and have been designated as protected or endangered varieties. In order to maintain the vegetation, curb the spread of shrubs and trees, and keep the grasslands pristine, the local community, with the help of trained volunteers, conducts controlled burnings every spring.

Volunteers start in the autumn months, around September, by sectioning out the wetland into small areas following the contour lines. This helps to portion the land into manageable sections for burning and prevents fires from spreading into areas that do not need regeneration.

When it comes to spring burning in March, fires are set at opposite ends of the wetland, meeting in the middle where they will naturally be extinguished. Volunteers are also on hand with water jets to help control any areas in which the fires become too large or out of control. Within the wetland, areas of shallow water and dry areas burn easily. Areas covered by deeper water do not burn. The spring burnings act as an effective way of managing the regeneration of Bogatsuru.