

The Observation Tower

A 50-meter-high observation tower stands in the center of Hamanako Garden Park and offers sweeping views of Lake Hamana and the surrounding area. The top of the tower is accessible by elevator for a nominal fee. Mt. Fuji is visible on clear days, as is the point where the lake meets the Pacific Ocean. The lake and ocean were separated until 1498, when an earthquake altered the topography of the area and connected the two bodies of water. Lake Hamana is a source of cultivated *unagi* and *hamo* eel, which are a local specialty in Hamamatsu and are served in the park's restaurant.

Below the tower are large flower fields planted with three types of flower per year in rotation, including sunflowers, cosmos, and *Nemophila* flowers. The flowers are often arranged to form shapes and words, and these original displays are best appreciated when viewed from high above.