

Kyoto

learning from

Territorio

A creative travel experience of city and rural villages

Umekoji

Urban Green Ver.

Nature-based Solutions & Green Infrastructures in Kyoto

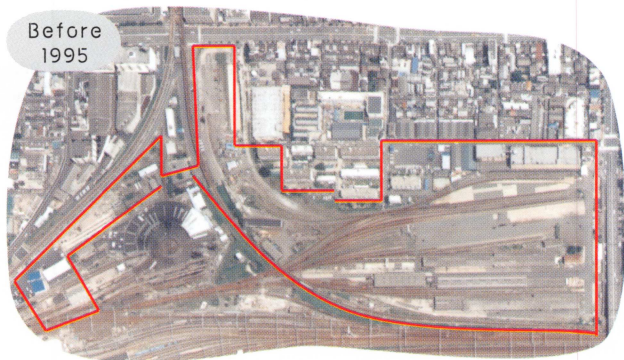
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Precious records from the opening to the present day

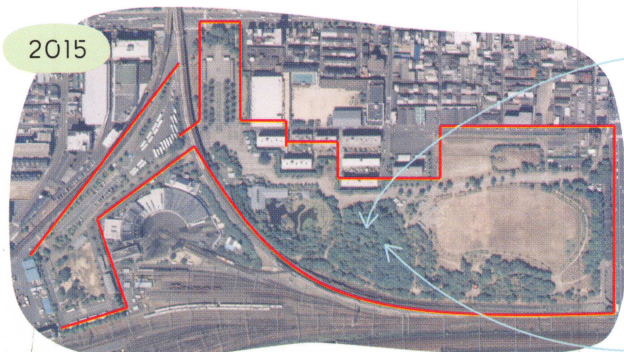
The history of Umekoji park in the last 20 years

In 1995, Umekoji park was created on a vacant lot of freight station. The total area is 13.7 ha under the themes "Tradition and Creation" and "Nature Restoration in the City Center". The annual number of visitors reaches 4.3 million (survey in 2017), and 50,000 people can be evacuated in the event of a disaster. With a Heisei

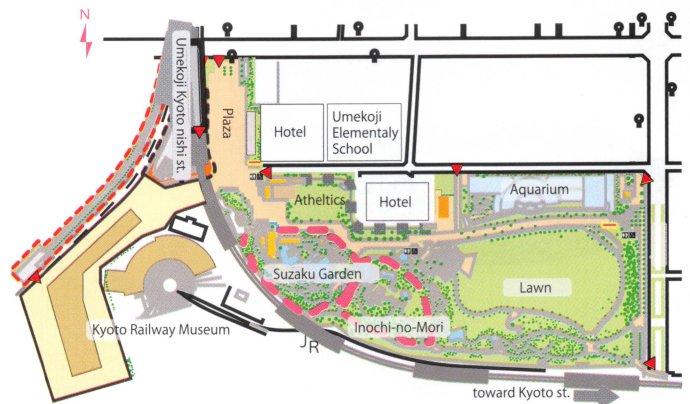
Japanese garden and a biotope that is home to a variety of living creatures, the park is a precious oasis in Kyoto where visitors can experience the abundant greenery even though it is located in the heart of the city.



Before 1995



2015



1998

2015



Suzaku Garden

Suzaku-no-Niwa garden was built in commemoration of its 1,200th anniversary of establishment of "Heian kyo", the capital of Heian era (794-1192). It features landscaping techniques and methods unique to Kyoto which have been developed over long history. It was constructed to achieve a blend of tradition and creativity. Water mirror and the pond are centered among

artificial hills, waterfalls, undulating mounds and flower beds. Training seminars to learn the traditional skills are held in the garden for the present landscape constructors. The garden is also famous for the events: Exhibition of culturally and ecologically important flowers in Kyoto held in Spring and Autumn, and Autumn color festival held in November.



(a) Water mirror

The pond with the mirror-like surface was built by using an innovative method covering black granite slabs with flowing water only one centimeter deep.



(b) "Nosuji" (Undulating Mounds)

Meandering streams run through undulating mounds. Aristocratic poetry-composition events called "Kyokusui-no-Utage" were held at this type of landscape almost 1,000 years ago.



(c) Water fall

It has a vertical drop of 6 m, the largest of all waterfalls in the Japanese gardens in Kyoto.

(d) Valley of maple

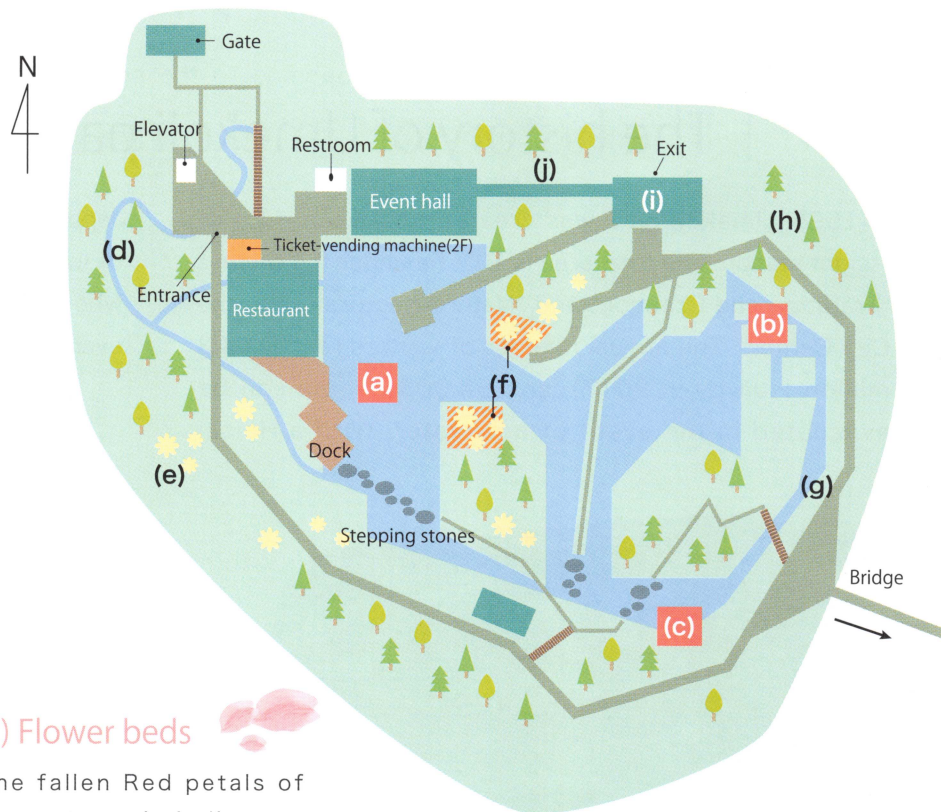


It can evoke the scenery of "Takao", a notable site famous for autumn color of maples.

(e) Red pine grove



Japanese red pine woods with *Rhododendron reticulatum* and *Sasa veitchii* on the floor were familiar landscape up until 1950's.



(f) Flower beds



The fallen Red petals of *Lagerstroemia indica* are reflected on the surface of the water mirror.

(g) Stone monument at the site of Saihachijo-do of Taira no Kiyomori



Southeast of this monument, there was a group of residences of the Heike clan, "Nishi Hachijo-dai", including Taira no Kiyomori.

(i) Covering shed

The area produces the atmosphere of Japanese tea gardens.

(h) Cypress grove



Cryptomeria japonica, famous cypress in Kyoto, processed into good timber was planted.

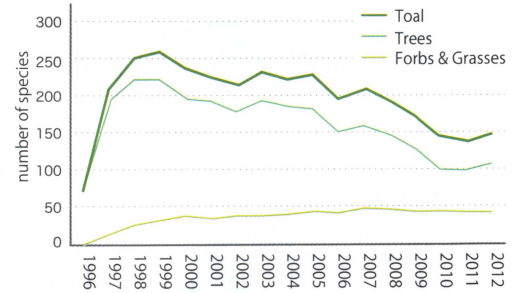
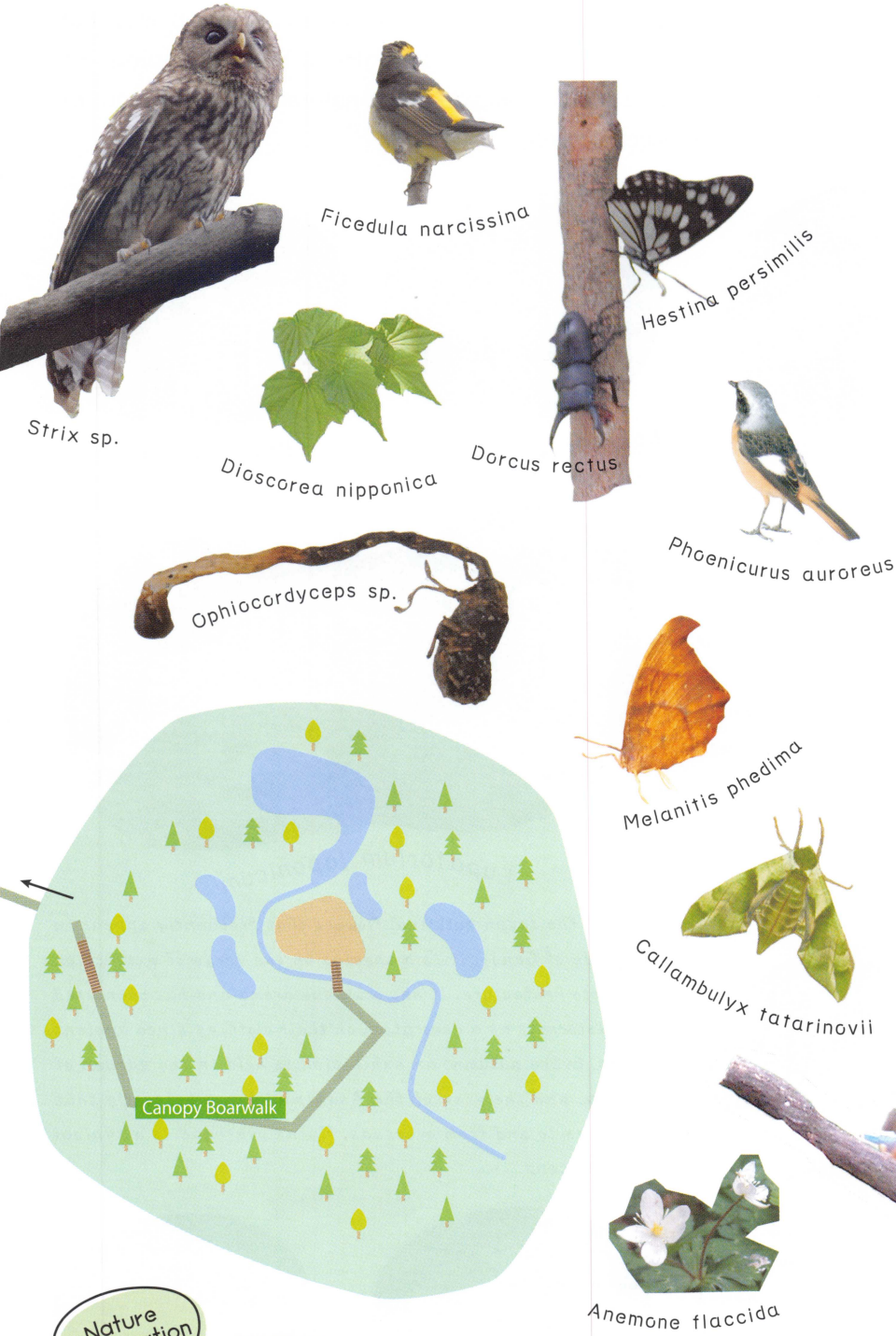
(j) Bamboo fence

This elaborate bamboo fence is crafted by artisans with traditional skills unique to Kyoto.

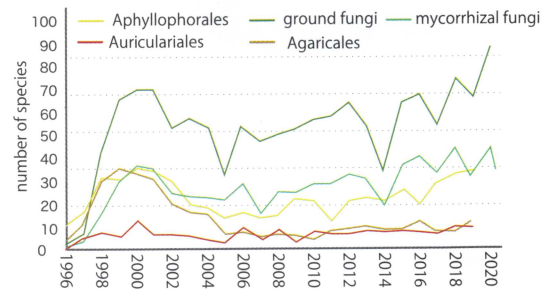
Inochi-no-Mori (Forest of Life)

Inochi-no-Mori (Forest of Life) was created on the site of a former freight station with the dream of restoring the original nature of Kyoto before urbanization. One of the targets is the deciduous broad-leaved forest of the Tadasunomori (Tadasunomori Forest) of Shimogamo Shrine. In 1996, one year after Umekoji Park opened, the Kyoto Biotope Study Group, consisting of experts and citizens, created the Inochi-no-Mori

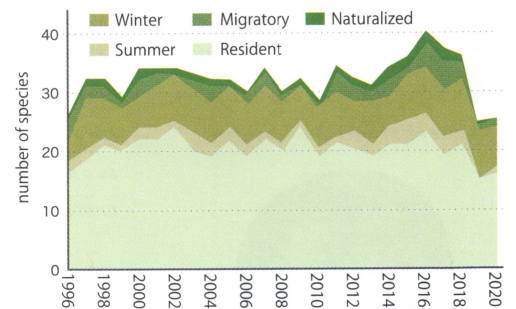
(Forest of Life) and has continued to monitor living organisms. Although there have been some problems, such as the appearance of non-native species, surveys have revealed that in the 20 years since the park opened, 572 species of plants, 344 species of fungi, 64 species of birds, and 29 species of insects have been discovered, indicating that the man-made forest is becoming a "real forest."



Change of the number of plant species other than planted



Change of the number of fungi species by ecological group

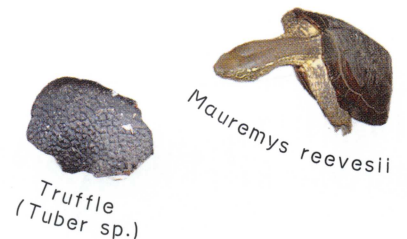


Change of the number of bird species

Nature Observation



Inochi-no-Mori is not only an oasis for living creatures in the heart of the city, but also a valuable place where people can experience and learn about nature in the city. For example, children can experience rice cultivation, observe jagos, and participate in observation sessions with commentary by members of the Inochi-no-Mori Monitoring Group.



Conservation of "Japanese Flowers"

In the woodlands near Kyoto, "Japanese flowers," plants that have appeared in literature and are used in daily life, festivals, and other familiar ways, are disappearing. It is believed that this is due to the fact that the forests have become darker as trees are no longer cut down for use, making it difficult for these plants to grow, and that they are being uprooted and eaten by an overabundance of deer. Inochi-no-Mori takes advantage of its location in the city, where deer cannot enter, to protect plants that have become rare in the mountains of Kyoto. In the terminology of conservation ecology, conservation outside of the natural habitat is called "Ex situ conservation" and the place is called a "refugia".



Primula japonica



Iris domestica



Asarum caulescens



Lobelia sessilifolia



Typha orientalis

It has been decorated to ward off bad luck, and its rhizome has been valued as a herbal medicine called "yakan". The flower stalks begin to grow in mid-July, just in time for the Gion Festival. The jet-black seeds are the origin of the Japanese word "ubatama," which means "night" or "darkness in Japanese traditional poetry.

The sacred crest of Kamigamo Shrine and Shimogamo Shrine. During the Aoi Festival, one of the three largest festivals in Kyoto, more than 10,000 stems of this plant ("futaba-aoi" in Japanese) are used to decorate the garments and court carriage of all attendees with "hollyhock laurel" insertions. Nowadays, the shortage is sometimes supplemented from outside the prefecture.



Eupatorium japonicum

One of the seven autumnal flowers that frequently appear in the Tale of Genji, it is a species on the verge of extinction in Kyoto Prefecture. It has a unique aroma and has been used by aristocrats as a decoration on their clothing since ancient times. Every autumn, an exhibition is held in the garden of Suzaku, and the view of the Asagimadara, a butterfly that migrates to and from overseas, flying overhead is a typical autumn scene.



Meehania urticifolia



Chelidonium japonicum

Columns: Significance of locality

There are many species that are at low risk of extinction on a national level but are in danger on a regional level. In particular, it has become an important issue in recent years in terms of biodiversity to scoop up local endangered species such as "Japanese flowers" and the "Seven flowers of autumn," which were once common around us but are rapidly disappearing.



Isodon longitubus



Iris ensata

