

## ☆Wildlife

### **\*Three rivers**

Moriya City is surrounded by three rivers.

Tone River runs in the south-west part of Moriya City.

Kinu River runs in the north part and joins the Tone River in Moriya City.

Kokai River runs in the north-east part of Moriya City.

### **\*River banks**

The Tone River has a huge river bank where you can see various plants, insects, and birds. This river bank is known to be a part of the biggest route for hawks which travel from Japan to South East Asia. You can see the big flock of birds leaving from Japan usually during the last week of September. The Wild Bird Society of Japan observes this 'watari' every year at the bank.

### **\*Koya**

Koya is close to Tone River and sits on the table lands that descend from the northern plateau. 'Ko' means 'high' and 'ya' means 'field' or 'land', so it can be translated as 'highlands'. It borders on the river bank in the southern part. The bank in this area boasts a wide variety of plants.

Wildlife around here is abundant and well reserved. Alongside the paths leading down to Tone River, there are several stone monument of the 'bato kannon' (Goddess of Mercy with horsehead). This indicates that in the old days these paths had been used as transportation routes to the water front.

Underneath the plateau runs Ohno River. Alongside this river you can find more than five hundred species of plants including Japanese larch (designated as an endangered species). There are also many insects, butterflies, several birds of prey, wild ducks and snipes around the area.

### **\*Forest Park**

The park is located near Kurouchi Primary School and the Chuo Kominkan ( Chuo Community Center) and quite close to the national route 294. It measures two hectares ( 100 acres) and it is an oasis in the busy area of the city. Long before, local people made use of trees in this wood to get the finest kind of charcoal. Oak Hedge is the remains of these days. Next to the park sits Chouryuuji Temple, which is supposed to have been founded by Taira-no-Masakado in 925.

### **\*Shiki no Sato Park**

This park opened in 1993. There is a stream and along the stream there are about 43000 irises. There are also cherry trees, maple trees, weeping willows, and elm trees. In spring, the cherry trees blossom. In June, about 200 different kinds of irises are in full bloom. In mid June Iris Festival is held.

## ☆ Places of Interest

### **\*A tree bearing a fire bell**

In Suzuka, you can find a tree which looks as though it has bore a fire bell from its limb. The fact is that there used to be a cottage where people stored fire bells close to this tree. Somehow one of the fire bells got stuck to the limb of the tree.

### **\*Kaizenji Temple**

This temple is said to have been built by Taira-no-Masakado. Legend has it that Taira-no-Masakado had six doubles (so-called 'kagemusha' in Japanese) to cover him. There are seven tombs for seven Masakados here in this temple.

### **\*Dososhin: Guardians for the community**

Many of the dososhin are made of stone. They are placed along the roadside - at the corner where two or more streets meet near the boundary between villages, or at the division between the village and outskirts. They are supposed to protect travelers.

word list

abundant : 豊富な

Japanese larch : 落葉松

endangered species : 絶滅危惧種

birds of prey=raptorial : 猛禽類

snipe : シギ

oak : くぬぎ, カシワ, ナラ, カシなどをさすがここではクヌギがあてはまる

iris : アヤメ, カキツバタ, ハナショウブなど

weeping willow : シダレヤナギ

elm tree : 榆の木

Iris Festival : あやめ祭り