

A community information paper created and edited by people who live in Azabu.



Kings of the Sky hovering over the Azabu and Roppongi Area

Looking for **Verdure** in Azabu Series: No. 7

I saw something remarkable on the first day of January some years ago.

I happened to look up in the direction of the Roppongi Crossing on a quiet morning on New Year's Day, and my gaze was drawn to an elegant hawk-like silhouette hovering in the cold, crisp and clear sky! I thought, "Can this be true? A raptor in Roppongi!?"

Of course, this is one of the three lucky omens to have in your first dream of the New Year in Japan (an eggplant is good, a hawk is better, and Mt. Fuji is the best). "Surely this was a good omen, a sign of good luck for me!" With this thought in mind, I did some research to confirm what I had seen.



Photo provided by the Institute for Nature Study, National Museum of Nature and Science

Just as I thought: It was there! In Roppongi Hills!

I consulted Mr. Tsuyoshi Kageyama, an office worker in Roppongi Hills, who told us; "I see falcons, common kestrels, Goshawks, Eurasian Sparrow Hawks, Kites and common Buzzards during my lunch time or when I go to work early in the morning. Many of these raptors have quite a range, traversing a very large territory every day. With some of them it depends on the season, but I generally see a falcon almost every day or at least once every two days".

Mr. Kageyama set up a website (<http://www.tsuidenibw.com/index.html>) to archive his bird-watching records about 20 years ago. He has been observing wild birds in the sky over the AZABU (Azabu and Roppongi) area since the opening of Roppongi Hills. He is a famous bird watcher, guides bird watching tours for the "Hills Machi-Iku Project", and he plays an active role in the "Biodiversity Minato Network" organized by Minato City.

Also, according to the managing company "Mori Building", they sometimes ask a falconer to release a Harris Hawk or similar bird to scare off birds that have become pests. A falconer in a business district! This is a sight of AZABU that only insiders would know. They are focused on maintaining the area in ways that ensure everyone using the local facilities is safe and comfortable.

* Birds of Prey are divided into two groups: diurnal such as eagles, hawks and falcons, and nocturnal such as owls. Based on DNA investigation results, some types of falcons are related to parakeets and sparrows. In this article, falcons are included as "Predators".



A Goshawk spreading its wings
 Photo provided by Tsuyoshi Kageyama

This snapshot of a Goshawk, the "Symbol of Nature Conservation", and the Mori Building is truly representative of Minato City's initiatives: "Regulations to protect greenery" and "Urban Redevelopment for a User-friendly Big City Together with Nature".

Discovered! Baby Birds born and raised in Minato City

After learning all of this, I also found out that Goshawks have been part of a breeding program locally since about 2017, at the Institute for Nature Study, National Museum of Nature and Science, located in Shirokanedai. So, I soon made a plan to visit the Institute.

"In the first year, the baby birds were attacked and killed by other aggressive species. However, two years ago a pair survived and left the nest successfully, along with another two last year. This year has been even better, with three out of four chicks surviving to adulthood", said Mr. Takumi Endo, the office staff.

He has been in charge of managing the local greenery, and rapidly started up the nesting Goshawks project. All the staff members of the Institute are enthusiastically monitoring the Goshawks' prog-

According to the Institute for Nature Study, there are 1,473 types of plants, 2,130 types of insects and 130 types of birds that inhabit an area of 20 hectares covered by evergreen or broad-leaved trees.

It is like a parallel universe for us where we can enjoy nature in all seasons. We can enjoy clear, fresh air like in the mountains, in the heart of the big city.

ress.

A pair of Goshawks can sometimes be seen gathering nest-building materials. For about 6 months, from hatching to fledging, they must protect their offspring from the dangerous birds that surround them. In particular, packs of large-billed crows attack relentlessly, targeting eggs or the young chicks.

From 2019, live-stream surveillance cameras were put in place in the exhibition hall of the Institute. This is open to the public, together with information panels and an explanatory video. Now everyone can watch their progress, from hatching in spring to about July when they leave the nest.

From the Countryside to the Big City: Predators have adapted well to the Urban Environment!

Recently, falcons and hawks can be seen in many large cities, including London. One of the reasons might be that urban development continues to encroach on their natural habitat.

In order for these birds to hunt effectively, they need the updrafts produced in the air around mountains and cliffs. However, cities with many high-rise buildings provide similar updrafts. If a little greenery is provided as well, they can find good hunting grounds. There is a treasure trove of prey such as rats, smaller birds, lizards, frogs, and insects in such areas.

Goshawks were once endangered, but this year they laid twice as many eggs compared to an average year. It's an interesting coincidence that this happened during the COVID-19 pandemic, when we stayed indoors and the world fell silent. These predators are at the top of the food chain, and are critical in maintaining ecological balance. Sudden and remarkable changes such as this provide clues for us about how to survive in the future.

When you're outside, look up at the sky, take your eyes off your smart phone for a minute.



Why don't you join the <Biodiversity Minato Network>?

Minato City has built a network for individuals or groups that are involved in voluntary activities related to biodiversity and protecting nature and natural resources, so they can cooperate or collaborate each other. Registration is free. Refer to the Minato City website for details.

The Amazing History of Azabu and Hawks!

Falconry and Shogun Culture

Falconry has been a symbol of enormous wealth and power throughout the history of many countries. Breeding, training and maintaining the birds is prohibitively expensive for all but the wealthiest in society.

Ieyasu Tokugawa, the first Shogun in the Edo Period, was well known as a lover of falconry. His son and the Second Shogun, Hidetada, and his grandson and the Third Shogun, Iemitsu, inherited Ieyasu's legacy of falconry. Among Daimyos (feudal lords), the customs of offering gifts and "sontaku" (currying favor) became popular, and hawks were often exchanged as valuable gifts.

It is said that Hiroo Inari Shrine in 4-chome, Minami-Azabu, was established when Hidetada transferred a guardian deity from a previous location, when he became involved with falconry. In the middle of the Edo Period, a second house called "Azabu Goten (Palace)" was constructed around here (also called: Fujimi Goten/Shirokane Goten) by the Shogun with a large falcon hunting ground. However, five years after construction it burnt down. After the Meiji Era, this area was called "Azabu Fujimi Cho (Town)". The present name "Azabu Fujimi Cho Kai (neighborhood association)" came from it.

There is a theory that whenever Iemitsu came to practice falconry, he visited the Azabu-san Zenpuku-ji Temple in 1-Chome, Moto-Azabu, and had lunch in the mountain teahouse called "Seisen Tei", located on the hillside of the Temple. It is true that the "Seisen Tei" teahouse is in an Ukiyo-e Painting done between 1818 and 1844 (Bunsei to Tempo Era), so, this theory looks credible.



Zenpuku-ji Temple

"Seisen Tei" teahouse

"Tohto Azabu-san Zenpuku-ji Keidai no Zu" (Precinct Map of the Eastern Capital Azabu-san Zenpuku-ji Temple) drawn by Eisen KEISAI (Collection of Minato City Local History Museum)



- a (February) A male Goshawk gathering materials to build its nest. Goshawk mates share the work of nest building, incubation, and rearing the young chicks.
- b (April) The female Goshawk incubating her eggs, which lasts about 40 days.
- c (May) Mealtime for the baby birds. Goshawks catch other small birds or rats etc. to feed their hatchlings. They keep their nests clean by preparing their catch in a different place. Then, they bring bite-sized pieces of meat to their young.
- d (June) Around the end of June, the young birds leave the nest. For about one week after that, the mother and father Goshawk continue to bring food back to the nest for them. (July) They train these young birds how to hunt for themselves. (August) In August they become independent, and go off to find territory of their own.

- **Research Support**
 Mr. Takumi Endo, Institute for Nature Study, National Museum of Nature and Science
 Address: 5-21-5, Shirokane-dai, Minato City (Admission is free for those over 65, and under senior high school age)
 Tel: 03-3441-7176 <http://www.ins.kahaku.go.jp>
- **Information Provision**
 Mr. Tsuyoshi Kageyama, staff of TechnoPro Holdings, Inc.
 Staff members of Town Management Business Department, Mori Building Co., Ltd.
- **References**
 "Taka to Shogun: Tokugawa Shakai no Zoto System" (Hawks and Shogun: Present Exchange System) written by Hironori Okazaki, published by Kodansha in 2009
 "Through a Lens: Common Kestrels, Coexisting with Changing Humans" written by Princess Takamado appeared in Fujin Gaho, November issue in 2015
 "Falconry by Shogun: Doseisha's History Book of the Edo Period" written by Mitsuo Nezaki, published by Doseisha in 1999
 "FALCON" written by Helen Macdonald, translated by Kiyomi Utan, published by Hakuuisha in 2017

(Researched and written by Mimi S Koike)



The Azabu Future Photo Studio

The Diversity of Lives hidden in this Small Slope

Nezumi-Zaka (rat slope)

It feels like a long time ago, but it was just February this year when the cruise ship "Diamond Princess" anchored in Yokohama harbor. Since then, we have had to endure the unprecedented menace of a virus pandemic and we were forced to change our lifestyles.

You might have already forgotten which zodiac animal represents this year (actually, I forgot too).

This year's zodiac animal is the humble rat.

The slope being introduced here is the second slope with an animal name, the first being "Ushi-Zaka" (cattle slope) introduced in issue No. 42.



1975; View from the foot of "Nezumi-Zaka"
Photo shot by Mr. Masanori Taguchi and provided by Mr. Shigehisa Taguchi



2012

Origin of the Slope's Name

There are differing scholarly opinions on this, but according to the Minato City signpost, "There was a custom of occasionally referring to long and narrow slopes as "Nezumi-Zaka" in the Edo period. At one time this slope was called "Itachi-Zaka" (weasel slope), which was connected to the Ueki-Zaka above it". When I finally went to see it for myself, I thought there would be two distinct slopes, "Nezumi-Zaka" and "Itachi-Zaka", and that it would have a single name, as it does on some of the older maps. On some maps, it is only called "Itachi-Zaka", but on others, it is only called "Nezumi-Zaka". The name of the slope seemed to change depending on the period. This is understandable, since the network of roads and slopes is pretty complicated, and a lot changed depending on the period. Also, a lot of road works have been done in the area, so the slope is now not as narrow as it was before. However, this little slope is still essentially a footpath, inaccessible to motor vehicles. (The foot of the slope is 10.2m above sea level, 17.5m at the top).

While doing detailed research into "Nezumi-Zaka", I found something interesting on two old maps. I will describe them below.

Matsudaira Ukonno Shogen (Right Division Lieutenant of the Inner Palace Guards)

The first one was found in a book entitled, "Gofunai Basue Okan Sonohoka Enkaku Zusho Bunkyu 2-nen" (The History of people in the poorer quarters of the Edo period in the 2nd year of the Bunkyu Era, (1862) and their movements within the town limits), marked with a red box.

Although "Nezumi-Zaka" is not mentioned, the "Suburban Residence of Matsudaira Ukonno Shogen" was clearly in the same location at that time. This shows us that Takeakira Matsudaira was there. He was the 8th head of the Ochi-Matsudaira Family and the 4th feudal lord of Iwami no Kuni (Iwami Province) Hamada Han (Hamada feudal domain) (present day Hamada City, Shimane Prefecture). He was the younger half-brother of Yoshinobu Tokugawa, the last Shogun of the Tokugawa Family. Takeakira joined the Choshu (present Yamaguchi Prefecture) Expedition as a member of Sabaku-ha (supporters of the Shogun), but was defeated by the Choshu army lead by Masujiro Omura, and escaped to Tazuta in Mimasaka Province (present day Tsuyama City, Okayama Prefecture), another territory of his. He almost missed out on becoming the lord of the Tazuta Domain, because 30 soldiers of his clan had participated in the Former Shogunate Army, and they were regarded as enemies of the Emperor. Unfortunately, he had been bedridden since the Choshu Expedition, so he could not come to Kyoto to apologize. As a result, he and his clan were severely punished, and four of his chief retainers were ordered to commit hara-kiri (suicide by self-disembowelment). He never did recover from his illness and only the Tazuta clan was unable to reply to the "Hotoshu document", formally expressing their allegiance to the Emperor, before the abolition of feudal domains and establishment of prefectures in 1868. In a sense, this was something of a tragedy because Takeakira was a younger brother of the Shogun. However,

er, the Ochi-Matsudaira family continued to exist even after the Meiji Era. Later, this family produced Ryudan Mazura (1935 to 2007), who was well known as an extraordinary painter. He had a unique appearance for that time and led a colorful life. As this is not directly related to Azabu, I'll finish this story here. However, if you are interested, you can easily do research yourself.

Tadahiro Shimazu

The second finding was found in a book called "Meiji Kanto Zenzu Meiji 9-nen" (Map of the Entire Kanto Region in the 9th year of the Meiji Period, 1876), also marked with a red box.

In this map, "Nezumi-Zaka" does not appear, but the "Suburban Residence of Matsudaira Ukonno Shogen" is now listed as the "Mansion of Tadahiro Shimazu". The owner changed 14 years after the first map I discovered.

Tadahiro Shimazu was the 11th and last lord of Hyuga no Kuni Sadowara Han (Sadowara Domain in Hyuga Province) (present day Miyazaki City, Miyazaki Prefecture). During the Boshin Senso (Boshin Civil War), he followed the Satsuma Han, their head family, and took part in the war as a member of the new government army (anti-Shogunate faction). He distinguished himself on the field of battle. His heir, Tadaakira studied in Shoheizaka Gakumonjo School and went to the U.S. to study in 1869. After returning home, in 1879, he was appointed as the first Mayor of Akasaka Ward in Tokyo Fu (Prefecture) and served for one year. In 1888, when Koran Jogakko (girls' school) opened, he lent part of the premises of his mansion to them. ("the present Koran Jogakko, Junior High School and Senior High School is located in 6-Chome, Hatanodai, Shinagawa-ku). As an aside, the main mansion of Sadowara Han was located in Shiba Mitatsuna Machi in the Edo Period, presently the site of the Tsuna-Machi Mitsui Club. His mansion was sold to Mitsui-Gumi (Mitsui Bank) at that time, in 1878. Tadahiro Shimazu was born in this mansion.

Rats

Rats are small, but there are many of them. Slopes like "Nezumi-Zaka" exist in many places. Nezumi-Zaka Slope in Azabu is also small, but countless lives have been lived there, with rich personal histories, all hidden in this Slope. It's easy to see why this small slope continues to hold fascination for us. Recently, there are so many restrictions, and we can't just go out anytime we want because of COVID-19. However, how about a virtual walk using your PC? You can enjoy a walk remotely.

I truly wish for "Maximum Originality and Ingenuity to create a Minimum of Stress".



1984; View from the foot of the "Nezumi-Zaka"
Photo shot by Mr. Masanori Taguchi and provided by Mr. Shigehisa Taguchi



2012



Gofunai Enkaku Zusho
*There are indications of Suburban Residence in the red circle, Nezumi-Zaka in the green circle, Itachi-Zaka in the blue circle.



Meiji Tokyo Zenzu (Map of the whole of Tokyo in the Meiji Era)
Mansion of Tadahiro Shimazu in the red circle

References

"Zoho Minato-ku Kindai Enkaku Zusho Azabu/Roppongi" (Supplemental Minato City History Map in the Modern Period: Azabu/Roppongi) published by Minato City former "Kyodo Shiryokan" (present Minato City Local History Museum) (on March 31, 2010)

About the Azabu Future Photo Studio

The Azabu Regional City Office conducts activities that record the changes to the cityscape of Azabu, preserving and passing down its history in order to deepen the affection of the town among its residents.

The Azabu Future Photo Studio Association consists of local residents, workers and students in the Azabu area, and has been actively organizing activities such as taking photographs at fixed-point locations and collecting old photographs of the Azabu area. The photographs collected are shown as panes in the Minato City website and at local exhibitions. The Azabu Future Photo Studio Association hopes to broaden knowledge of the history and culture of the town to as many people as possible.

The Azabu Future Photo Studio is looking for old photographs.

If you have any old photographs of the Azabu area from the Meiji to the Showa eras, such as buildings, scenery or festivals, please contact the Azabu Regional City Office. For details, please contact the Community Policy Subsection, Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office

Inquiries: Tel: 03-5114-8812

All together with
People who've been here for a long time,
People who came here recently, and
People who just come here only on business



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We have added a list of things we can do in this city!



Go out on The Town and take a walk!

Even here, we can do it!

Is the place around here on this map?



Review from MINAYOKU Participants

I have two houses, one is here in Azabu and the other is in Kanagawa Prefecture. I realized one day that I didn't know much about Azabu, so I am very happy to have a great opportunity to meet the people of Azabu through this project.

It is not just the residents who spend a lot of time in Azabu. There are also a lot of students and workers who spend at least a 1/3 of their day studying or working here. I had a chance to speak to them about what they do and what they like, and developed bonds of friendship. Ideas of how to enjoy Azabu now have taken shape.

Listen to other people's ideas!



This is a great idea! Let's try to do it!

Review from MINAYOKU Participants

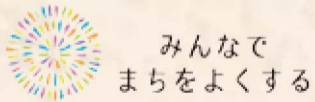
I used to work in Minato City, and I wanted to contribute to the local society here as well as the neighborhood where I live. That's the reason why I participated in this project.

I found there is a real energy to develop ideas to make things better around us, and to do things everyone can enjoy! Here, ordinary citizens can do simple positive things that help resolve larger issues in Minato City.

We practiced our idea first among MINAYOKU members in a room!



We search for what we can do out in the field of Azabu!



みんなであちをよくする
ミナヨク

Improve the Town Together
Invitation to the "MINAYOKU" Project.

Community Design Thinking for Town Improvement
"Local Power" Activation Project in Azabu

It is the 6th year of the "MINAYOKU" project, which began in 2015. There have been many favorable reviews from participants and also local people.

Through the MINAYOKU project, the Minato City Azabu Regional City Office actively supports the local community fitting in with the current times by thinking deeply about what the local community needs, as well as fostering local leaders for the next generation.

This year, the whole programs of this project are being held online.

Every year participants have activities 6 to 7 times a year. This year, the activities will be performed online, instead of meeting directly at the venue.

For schedule details and how to apply, please see here. (Written in Japanese)

Review from MINAYOKU Participants

Let's connect about what we have been researched, seen and heard.

Even from Tweets about what interests us, we can learn from each other and be generally more empathetic toward each other. We can form healthy bonds even online.



ミナヨク

We are looking forward to your participation!

Information from Azabu Regional City Office



Toward a Roppongi with ZERO Violations! Our Slogan is “ZERO ROPPONGI” — Roppongi Charter for Safety and Peace of Mind —

We are free because we have rules. In Roppongi, where many people and cultures come together, rules are in place for everyone to be free and have fun.

We are looking for Shops and Businesses that are in Agreement with the Spirit of the Roppongi Charter for Safety and Peace of Mind.

Minato City is developing the “Roppongi Charter for Safety and Peace of Mind” Certification System for Recommended Businesses as part of its efforts to raise awareness about the Charter. Shops and businesses that support the Charter are constantly being recruited.

- Eligibility** Businesses etc. that are located in, or are active mainly in the Roppongi District (Roppongi 3-chome to 7-chome and Akasaka 9-chome 7)
- How to apply** Fill out the required information in the Letter of Agreement and send it by post or directly submit it to the Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office. You can also apply through the following Minato City website.

*: The names of certified businesses etc. will be posted on the Minato City website and published in community newsletters as “Recommended Businesses, etc.”

Access the Minato City website here to obtain the Letter of Agreement form.

Minato City Website: <http://www.city.minato.tokyo.jp/>

Roppongi Charter for Safety and Peace of Mind



Roppongi Safety and Peace of Mind Project Eat at home (Stay Home Project)

Take-out and food delivery information of businesses or shops that are recommending or supporting the Roppongi Charter for Safety and Peace of Mind is provided.



Access here for the List of Businesses and Shops



ルール違反 ゼロの六本木へ。
合い言葉は、ZERO ROPPONGI

Inquiries: Collaboration Project Subsection, Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office
Tel: 03-5114-8802

We are recruiting volunteers for the Minato City Barrier-Free Map!

The Minato City Barrier-free Map is an online map providing barrier-free facility information, etc., including public facilities, traffic facilities, parks and public restrooms, etc., for senior citizens, handicapped people and for people with toddlers, to get around safely in Minato City.

We are recruiting volunteers to investigate and research the information we need to post on the Minato City website. Participants can walk together around the area. We can find many things doing research in this way, so if you are interested, please contact us.

Main activities are as follows.



Barrier-free Research on Roads

- Road inclines, sidewalk widths, and studded paving blocks used by the visually challenged are checked about 10 times a year.

Information Sharing Meetings

- Recommended walking courses for everybody to enjoy are posted in detail on the website.

Information Sharing Meetings

- Discussions about research operations and recommended courses, etc., are held about five times a year.

Inquiries: Volunteer and Community Support Dept., Minato Council of Social Welfare Tel: 03-6230-0284



Let's widen the circle of people to improve manners among businesses together: Recruiting Members to Join the “Minato City Smoking Rules Ordinance”!

Minato City wants to create a town where “people follow smoking rules regardless if they are a smoker or not, so everyone can live comfortably”. Minato City is making a great effort to promote the “Minato City Smoking Rules Ordinance Project”, so that all the smokers who work in or visit Minato City voluntarily follow the “Minato City Smoking Rules”.

“We (name of the company) understand and agree with the purpose of the “Minato City Smoking Rules Ordinance Project” and will actively follow the Minato City Smoking Rules”!

Businesses that are in agreement with the above can simply apply and register through the Minato City website. Please search: “Minato City Smoking Rules Ordinance” for details.

A registration certificate along with in-house enlightenment activity posters, stickers, and goods appropriate for your action plan to promote the activity will be provided when you register. Also, information regarding registered businesses will be posted publicly on the Minato City website.

Inquiries: Environmental Policy Subsection, Environmental Section, Environment and Recycling Support Department, Minato City Office, Tel: 03-3578-2487
Collaboration Project Subsection, Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office, Tel: 03-5114-8802

Sample of Enlightenment Goods



Smoking Areas Map



Registered Business Emblem



Registration Certificate



We would like to ask for your understanding and cooperation to build momentum promoting the notion, “People who work in Minato City are those who follow the city rules and have good manners” through the cooperation of the many businesses that support the “Minato City Smoking Rules Ordinance”.

Going shopping?
Visit our local shopping streets.

Please send us your comments or requests regarding
The Azabu



Please send your application with your address, name, occupation (school name), telephone number, and the reason why you are interested (in Japanese or English, format and number of letters have not limit), and deliver directly, mail, or fax to the following:
Community Policy Subsection Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office, 5-16-45, Roppongi, Minato City, Tokyo (106-8515).

● Tel: 03-5114-8812 ● Fax: 03-3583-3782

We are looking for
Editorial Staff

You can also access this newsletter from the Minato City website.



AZABU

● Locations of the Newsletter: Roppongi 1-chome, Roppongi, Hiroo, Azabujuban and Akabane-bashi subway stations, The Chii Bus, Minato Library, Azabu Library, Minami-azabu Iki-Iki Plaza, Nishi-azabu Iki-Iki Plaza, Igura Iki-Iki Plaza, Azabu Civic Center, Azabu Regional City Office, etc.
● Usage of articles, illustrations, and photographs from this newsletter is prohibited.

Staff

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
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Editor's Note

While taking pictures of “Nezumi-Zaka” in 36°C sweltering heat in August this year, I noticed someone waiting behind me to finish shooting.

I immediately made room for the person to pass, but the person smiled and said, “Please continue!”

In the scorching heat, with beads of sweat trickling down my body, I felt as though I had caught a glimpse of the true gentle Azabu style in the person keeping a social distance. (Yasuhiro Tanaka)

The original article is written in Japanese.

“Minato Call” information service.

Minato call is a city information service about services provided by City Hall, facility guide, event information, etc., available from 7:00am to 11:00pm everyday.

※ English speakers are also available.

Minato Call :

Tel: 03-5472-3710 Fax: 03-5777-8752

E-mail: info@minato.call-center.jp

Inquiry submission form: <https://www.city.minato.tokyo.jp/kouchou/kuse/kocho/iken/form-inquiry.html>