

Special Feature 3

Biodiversity Conservation of the Nankai Group: Parks Garden Contributes to the Biodiversity of the Namba Area

The Nankai Line area has a diverse range of attractions, from the Yamato and Kino rivers and other large and small rivers that flow through the plains, to the area that faces Osaka Bay in the west and is surrounded by the Izumi-Katsuragi mountain range and other rich mountains in the east. This rich natural environment, supported by the existence of diverse species and the various ecosystems in which they live, is one of the management resources of our Group.

The Nankai Group has positioned biodiversity conservation as a key environmental issue and will be mindfully avoiding or minimizing our impact on biodiversity within all of our business activities. We aim to maintain the ecosystem and achieve the sustainable use of natural resources in areas along our railway lines.

In this feature, we will introduce the efforts of Parks Garden, which contributes to the biodiversity of the Namba area, as a representative example.

Basic policy and overview of initiatives

We revised our environmental policy in 2017, adding items for biodiversity and establishing our Biodiversity Action Guidelines. In addition, in 2023, we endorsed the Osaka Declaration for Biodiversity and the Keidanren Declaration on Biodiversity, and in 2024, we participated in the 30 by 30 Alliance for Biodiversity and the TNFD Forum.



We are continuously working in various ways to conserve biodiversity in the local area. In particular, we focus on activities at Parks Garden, Nankai Forest, and Tanagawa Biotope.

Parks Garden's initiatives

Parks Garden is a rooftop park located on the roof of Namba Parks, a major shopping complex in the center of Namba. The garden, which spans 11,500 m² of the terraced rooftop area of the building from the 2nd to the 9th floor, has a green area of 5,300 m². The garden's beauty, which is decorated with a variety of plants, and its careful management and operation, which take into account the ecosystem, have been recognized, and it has received numerous awards and certifications from various sources since it first opened about 20 years ago.

From FY2022 to FY2023, we conducted a biological survey of Parks Garden with the assistance of outside experts.* After two years of research, we were able to confirm that our garden had grown into a rich green space inhabited by a diverse range of birds and insects.

* Joint research with Obayashi Corporation

Background to the establishment Creating a "real forest" in the middle of Namba

In 1995, the Namba District Redevelopment Plan began in full swing. The core of this major project, which the Nankai Group approached with great expectations and enthusiasm, was the large-scale shopping complex Namba Parks, which opened in 2003.

The keyword that was often discussed at development meetings at the time was "sustainable community development" and Parks Garden was a symbol of this. The Namba area was originally an area with a shortage of green spaces, so the presence of Parks Garden, one of Japan's largest rooftop parks, has been significant, and it has changed the atmosphere of the Namba area.



The garden is not a separate entity, but is integrated with the indoor stores. On the upper floors, visitors can enjoy the blessings of nature, such as the sky, wind, and sunlight, together with the greenery.



An office building directly connected to Parks Garden. The opening of the building in 2003 led to a significant expansion of our office business in the Namba area.

The Nankai Group's ongoing efforts to conserve biodiversity

Nankai Forest

Our company owns approximately 520 hectares of forest (approximately 300 ha of man-made forest and approximately 220 ha of natural forest, etc.) in Totsukawa Village in Yoshino, Nara Prefecture. We started planting cedar and cypress trees in 1977, and have been systematically planting trees and doing pruning and thinning work to help control erosion and preserve water sources and biodiversity, as well as CO₂ absorption. Since 2008, we have also been conducting tree-thinning activities with executives and employees.

In 2023, we carried out tree thinning over an area of approximately 18 hectares.

Tanagawa Biotope

In 2009, we concluded a Green Partner Agreement with Osaka Prefecture, and in 2014, we concluded an Osaka Biodiversity Partner Agreement with Osaka Prefecture, Misaki Town, and the Research Institute of Environment, Agriculture and Fisheries, Osaka Prefecture. Since then, we have been conducting environmental conservation activities, such as pond management and wildlife observation, on an ongoing basis with the aim of regenerating the natural environment at the Tanagawa District Biotope, which is located on the site of the Kansai International Airport Phase II sand excavation.

In 2023, we participated in ten conservation activities.

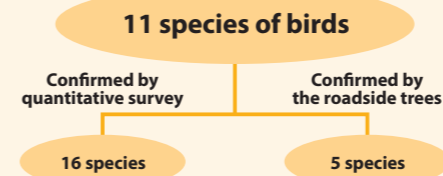
Results of the biological survey Biodiversity nurtured by Parks Garden

At Parks Garden, we regularly conduct biological surveys by outside experts. The second survey of birds and insects—the first in about ten years—was conducted between FY2022 and FY2023. It found that a variety of living creatures inhabit and breed in Parks Garden, including sparrows, whose population is feared to be declining nationwide, and the semi-endangered (NT) *Sympetrum kunkeli* dragonfly, which is listed on the Osaka Red List 2014.

Namba is an area that lacks green spaces, and within a 2-km radius of Parks Garden, there are almost no large-scale green spaces other than Tennoji Park, a landmark of Osaka, and the Uemachi Plateau Slope Forest. For this reason, the role of Parks Garden as a green space where birds and insects can come and fly is significant. Furthermore, the diverse environment of the garden, including bushes, water features, and an abundance of plants with around 500 species and 100,000 medium and tall trees, along with long-term management and operation that takes into account the needs of living things, is thought to contribute greatly to the conservation of biodiversity.

Survey results

Species thought to have increased due to the presence of Parks Garden



Of the 16 species of birds in the area identified in the quantitative survey, only five were identified in the neighborhood roadside trees. The presence of Parks Garden is thought to have led to an increase of 11 species of local birds. This includes species that only appear in urban areas where there are large green spaces.

Toward the future Connecting the "urban forests"

At Parks Garden, people can come into close contact with a variety of plants, birds, and insects, making it a place for people to relax. Parks Garden, which is visited by a wide range of guests, including families with children, office workers taking a break, and tourists from overseas, is one of the attractions of the Namba area.

As we have done for the past 20 years, we will continue to protect and nurture an environment that is close to a real forest, where the diverse creatures that inhabit the Namba area can continue to live, and contribute to improving the appeal of the city.

Examples of rare species (birds) that can be seen at Parks Garden



Asian brown flycatcher
Muscipapa dauurica



Eastern crowned warbler
Phylloscopus coronatus

- Species listed in the Osaka Red List 2014
- Can be observed during the spring and fall migration periods



Stakeholder's message



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An oasis in the city for people and other living things created by rich planting and attentive management

At Parks Garden on the rooftop of Namba Parks, each zone has a different theme. Visitors can enjoy a diverse range of plants, each with its own characteristics, such as flowers, fruits, and leaves. Rest areas are arranged under the trees, providing a place of healing for many people. A two-year survey has revealed that many wild animals also use Parks Garden. Parks Garden, where a variety of plants that bear flowers and fruit grow, and where trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants of various sizes and shapes have been introduced, seems to be attractive to birds as well. The species of dragonfly, *Sympetrum kunkeli*, which is endangered, probably found the waterside of the Parks Garden, which is rich in vegetation, and flew there. The dedicated gardeners also carry out detailed management work that takes into account the ecosystem, such as leaving some of the insects that become bird food. Parks Garden is a good example of measures to combat climate change and conserve biodiversity in urban areas. I hope that the concept of Parks Garden will spread to other places and create green oases in many cities.