

Lakes and People : Towards a Better, Symbiotic Relationship

A Profile of the Lake Biwa Museum



LAKE BIWA MUSEUM

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* Cover photograph: Rainbow seen from Treetop Walk of the Lake Biwa Museum

I The Lake Biwa Museum – Serving a Vital Need

Although Lake Biwa occupies only one-sixth of the area of Shiga Prefecture, it has a significant influence not only on those who live along its shores, but on all the residents of Shiga and neighboring prefectures. Besides playing a central role in the lives of local residents, the lake is an important freshwater resource and is, in fact, Japan's largest lake. It is a symbol of the prefecture, and its beautiful natural surroundings are a source of national pride having few equals in the country.

Interestingly, Lake Biwa is one of the world's oldest lakes. Having evolved over millions of years, its many organisms - including some found nowhere else on earth - are extremely diverse and fascinating to behold. The human settlements on the shores of the lake also have a rich history, with origins dating back to ancient times. Settlers in the area have engaged in agriculture and fishing and have developed unique regional cultures. Over the years, their interesting way of life has fostered a number of cultural traditions. Clearly, Lake Biwa is a multifaceted resource of great value, not only to the Japanese, but to all of humanity. The lake is without doubt an integral part of Japan's natural and cultural heritage.

During Japan's pursuit of rapid economic growth in the postwar period, dramatic industrialization and urbanization in the area improved the living standards of local residents and resulted in material affluence. On the other hand, it is apparent that this economic progress has adversely affected the environment and has led to a decline in some of the more spiritual aspects of Japanese society. We are only now beginning to understand these changes.

Today, the world has come to understand that we must shift our cultural trends and way of life in a more desirable direction and, in the process, hand down to coming generations a renewed culture focused on our surroundings. This can be thought of as a gift to the future, the idea that "we must dedicate our lives, and the health of the environment, to future, as-yet-unborn generations." Encouragingly, this ideal has taken root worldwide.

Building on this understanding, we must identify the multifaceted values of Lake Biwa, consider the reciprocal effects on the lake and its people over their shared history, ponder our own relationship with the lake, develop a better attitude toward the lake in the new era, and reexamine the focus of our culture. This is the most important challenge confronting the present generation. This challenge is important not only to the preservation of Lake Biwa and its environs, but also to the preservation of the global environment.

The Lake Biwa Museum was established in April, 1996, and was opened to the public in October of the same year, following more than a decade of preparation. Its purpose is to conduct research on humanity's historical relationship with lakes, collect and classify related data, and share its research findings with the people of Shiga Prefecture in order to pursue a better future. The Lake Biwa Museum is a research institute, cultural center, and life-long study facility, as well as a center of interaction and information. In other words, it is a facility that meets our intellectual needs, offers a forum for communication, and fosters creativity for the future, and it thereby leads the effort to create a new way of looking at our relationship with freshwater lakes.

II Founding Principles

1. To be a viable, growing museum that explores an unknown world under the theme of “Lakes and People”

Lake Biwa is characterized not only by its beautiful natural environment, but also by the historical ties local residents have developed to the lake over the years. Studies of Lake Biwa have inevitably involved studies on our relationship with nature, and thus require a truly comprehensive approach.

Acknowledging this reality, the Lake Biwa Museum will develop the capability to collect information on Lake Biwa and other lakes – including their natural features and the relationships between people and the lakes – and present exhibitions as well as provide public services incorporating its findings under the theme of “Lakes and People.” At the same time, the museum will emphasize the development of advanced research capabilities as an essential function.

The ability to continue providing such comprehensive services will add to the appeal of the museum, as it will enable the museum to offer visitors something new to discover with every visit and will make visitors want to return again and again.

By conducting research of international significance on Lake Biwa, the Lake Biwa Museum is expected to contribute to preservation of the global environment and biological diversity, deepen understanding of indigenous culture, and assume a leading role internationally in the study of lakes and marshes.

2. To serve as an entrance to the study field.

The Lake Biwa watershed has undergone an evolution of its natural ecosystem and suffered the effects of conflicts with mankind throughout human history. This area deserves close observation, as something important yet intangible and unknown lies behind the visible and perceptible. In the belief that nature is an unending source of exciting discoveries and creativity, the Lake Biwa Museum will design and offer a variety of programs to stimulate research and civic interaction in the local community. In so doing, the museum will direct the attention of local residents to their own lives and community.

The museum’s scope is not limited to Japanese lakes; it also includes lakes and marshes in Asia and the world. Comparative studies of these lakes will help deepen understanding of the value and significance of Lake Biwa, as well as our relationship with lakes.

3. To offer varied public services and serve as a venue for interaction in the community.

The Lake Biwa Museum is not merely an exhibition facility; it also aims to serve as a focal point for people to encounter new information. Moreover, it will grow and evolve by inviting visitors – both experts and lay people – to participate in activities such as exhibitions, interactive events, public services, and research, and will offer opportunities for simultaneous recreation, learning, and association.

Today, our society requires individuals to develop their originality and vitality through life-long study. In this context, the museum must seek the involvement of people of all ages by presenting a venue where people meet and learn, and where a new sense of values can be created.

III Activities

The Lake Biwa Museum undertakes the following activities, through which it encourages visitors to exchange knowledge and information while serving as a venue for interaction. In this way it will continue to develop and evolve.

1. Research

The museum undertakes research covering a broad range of themes, present exhibitions, and offer public services incorporating the results of this research. The museum also established a research system that invites local residents to participate in research activities in a broad range of fields. Furthermore, the museum develops the capabilities for drafting, planning, and launching long-term, comprehensive and interdisciplinary research programs, while fostering cooperative ties with other research institutes and universities located near Lake Biwa. It also established a network with other institutions involved in lake and marsh research around the world.

2. Civic interaction and public services

In order to offer the public a forum for intellectual stimulation, the museum emphasizes public services and launches a variety of programs in which all can participate and take pleasure. The museum operates its own unique user participation systems, such as “Field Reporters” and “Hashikake”.

The museum also offers nature-observation programs at its outdoor exhibition facilities, as well as field trips to observe natural features, fauna, historical properties, and cultural life, while also stressing public relations and publication activities.

3. Collections

The museum systematically collects, curates, and preserves data, specimens, and artifacts representing the natural and cultural features of Lake Biwa and its drainage basin, as well as similar information and materials pertaining to other lake districts in Japan and around the world. Efforts are also directed at developing technologies and methods to store, manage, and maintain these specimens and artifacts in good condition.

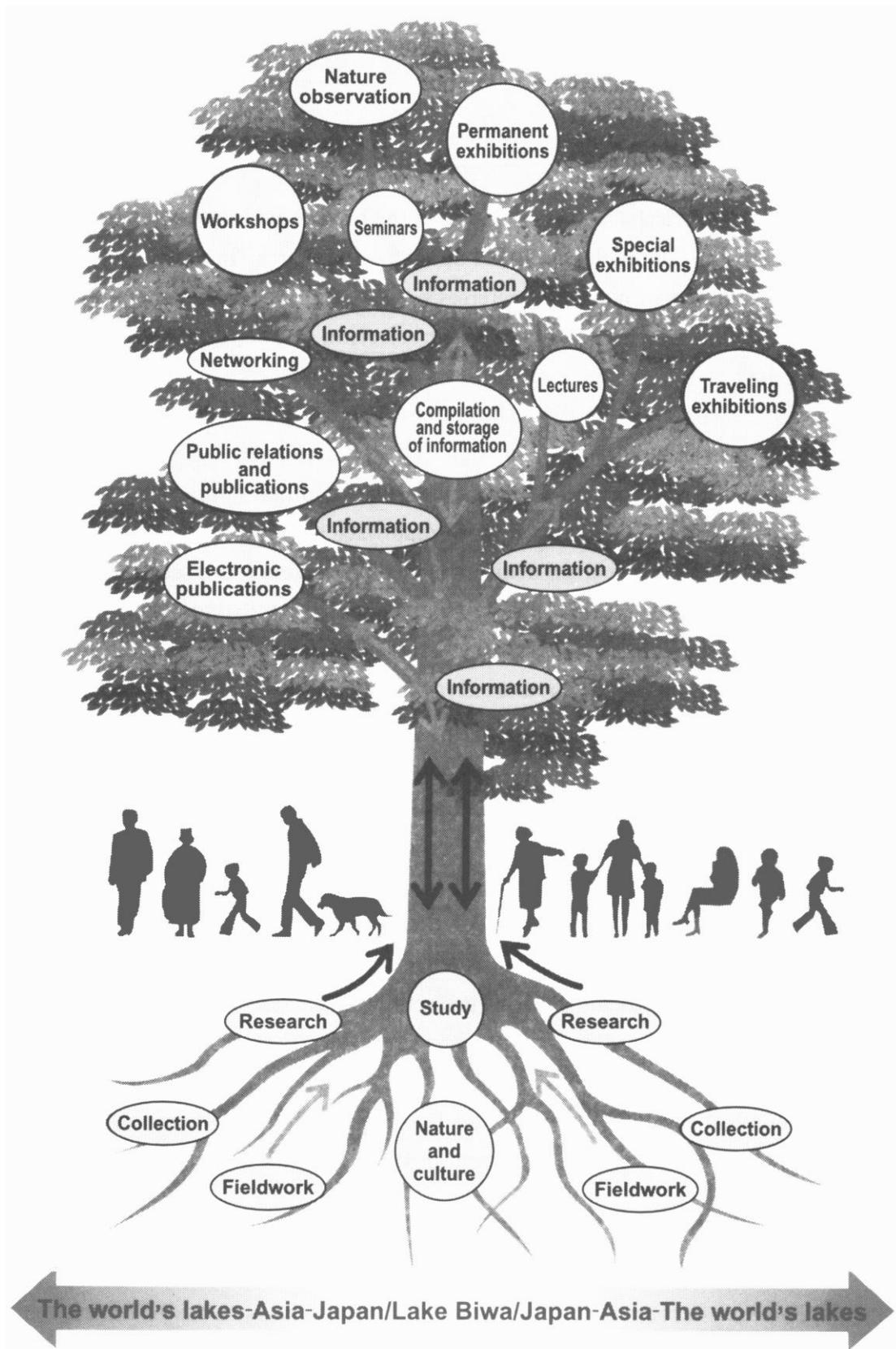
4. Information

The museum collects and stores data on Lake Biwa and other lakes and marshes in Japan and abroad, and offers this information to the public after analysis and classification. In order to develop new information channels, it also promotes networking with local citizens and related bodies both within and outside Shiga Prefecture while encouraging exchanges of information.

5. Exhibits

The museum presents clear, friendly, and enjoyable displays in its permanent, special, and traveling exhibitions. As part of its effort to involve local citizens in its activities, the museum has its Field Reporters and “Hashikake” group members present exhibits and provide information in person in order to offer opportunities for interactive communication. The museum also invites visitors to submit their opinions, which assist the museum in its efforts to increase public interest in the neighboring natural environment.

Activities of the Lake Biwa Museum





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Summary of the Third Medium- to Long-Term Basic Plan

Lake Biwa Museum's mission: its purpose and role

The Lake Biwa Museum provides information and opportunities for people to think about living with lakes. Together with citizens, the Lake Biwa Museum will explore the diversity and origins of Lake Biwa and its surrounding nature, as well as the lives that coexist with the lake, and will widely share the information it has generated, creating a space for everyone to learn together. In addition, by storing and passing on valuable materials for the future and making them available to many people, we will support and pass on the activities across generations.

Basic philosophy: Guidelines for activities/What kind of museum do we aim to be?

- A museum with a theme
A museum that grows and develops by researching the unknown world around the theme of "Lakes and People"
- A museum that invites visitors into the field
A museum that serves as a gateway to an attractive region and a place that invites visitors into the field
- A museum as a place of interaction
A museum that values a wide range of use and interaction by many people

The state of society ten years from now as envisioned from the mission of Lake Biwa Museum

- ① A society where many people can appreciate the value of living with Lake Biwa and where that appreciation can be passed on to future generations.
- ② Everyone has the opportunity to explore and practice better ways of living with the lake in their daily lives and share the results with many people.
- ③ Furthermore, by diverse people meeting and learning from each other, new discoveries and activities can be made and sustained.

Planned development to fulfill our mission (history so far)

Lake Biwa Museum Medium- to Long-Term Master Plan (FY2005-FY2014) "A Museum for Anyone, Anywhere in the Community"

Conduct research, collect materials, and engage in exchange activities together with local people, and become a museum that can support people who are active in the community.

New Lake Biwa Museum Creation Master Plan (FY2015-FY2020) (Second Medium- to Long-Term Master Plan) "From the Museum's 'Trees' to the Community's 'Forest'"

By renovating the exhibition and exchange space, we aim to make the museum more accessible to more people, and to expand cooperation with various organizations, so that more people can think about "lakes and humans" together.

Lake Biwa Museum's Third Medium- to Long-Term Master Plan Period: 2021-2030 "Toward a museum that promotes Lake Biwa to the world through encounters and learning"

The museum will communicate the value and appeal of life on and around Lake Biwa to many people both in Japan and overseas, and will also provide daily support for people's activities aimed at sustainable coexistence.



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Summary of the Third Medium- to Long-Term Basic Plan

Plan structure: We have set six goals to contribute to society 10 years from now, and have identified priority projects that are necessary to achieve each goal.

Plan operation: We will proceed with the plan while evaluating the progress of priority projects and the degree to which business goals have been achieved, and will review the plan at the midpoint in the fifth year.

Goals

Goal 1: Deepen the appeal of Lake Biwa and introduce it to the world

We will discover the value of Lake Biwa and the life around it together with local people and researchers from Japan and abroad, and spread its appeal to people both in Japan and overseas.

Priority activities

- Promoting research that enhances the value of Lake Biwa as one of the world's ancient lakes
- Disseminating research results domestically and internationally and conveying the appeal of Lake Biwa to people
- Creating an environment that invigorates and enhances the quality of research

Goal 2: Preserve materials for the future and make them available for use anywhere

We will continue to properly organize and store valuable specimens and materials so that they can be used by people in the future, and by developing ways to use them using ICT, we will make the museum's intellectual resources available to anyone, anywhere, at any time.

- Strengthening the specimen and material management system
- Promoting the organization of specimens and materials and promoting their use by making them public
- Utilizing ICT to create a museum that can be used by anyone, anywhere, anytime

Goal 3: Towards a museum where everyone can learn together

We position our exchange programs as a place for mutual learning where knowledge and experience can be exchanged, and we aim to enrich the programs by collaborating with various people and organizations, while creating an environment where participants' mutual encounters can lead to new activities.

- Enhancing exchange programs to meet a wide range of needs
- Creating opportunities for encounters
- Supporting Lake Biwa learning based on the "ability to learn deeply"

Goal 4: Towards a more user-friendly museum

We will continue to develop the exhibits, which serve as a gateway to learning about Lake Biwa, into more user-friendly and ever-growing exhibits.

- Growth of museum exhibits that everyone can enjoy and learn from
- Growth from "viewing" exhibits to "viewing + using" exhibits
- Growth of exhibits that reflect social changes and research findings

Goal 5: Towards a museum that is used by more people

We will utilize ICT to promote public relations with a global perspective, thereby attracting more visitors. Furthermore, through two-way public relations, we will constantly collect information on the museum's social reputation and use it to improve the museum's appeal. .

- Introducing the charms of Lake Biwa and Lake Biwa Museum as a gateway using ICT
- Collecting information through interactive PR and various surveys and evaluations, and incorporating it into our programs
- Creating an environment that makes the museum more accessible

Goal 6: Continue museum activities in a stable manner

We will continue to renovate aging facilities and establish a disaster-resistant system, as well as create a system to receive various forms of support in order to stabilize our base of operations.

- Renovating aging facilities and preparing for disasters
- Creating a system to ensure a stable base for activities

IV Research Activities

Through publications, exhibitions and communicative activities, the museum has continued to disseminate information attained through constant accumulation of the latest knowledge and data, and their analysis and classification. The museum aims to develop and evolve in tandem with the museum users. The museum believes that it is important to retain a highly skilled research staff and to transmit the latest information continuously so as not to fail to promote its development and to gain support from users.

1. Research

There are three categories of research project supported by internal funding in the Lake Biwa Museum: Comprehensive Research, Joint Research and Specialized Research. For the Comprehensive Research and Joint Research projects and some of the Specialized Research projects, a panel of referees selected mainly from outside the museum evaluates each project proposal and decides upon its rejection or adoption and its research budget allowance.

(1) Comprehensive Research

The museum conducts comprehensive and multidisciplinary research activities under the main theme "Lakes and People". Through such projects' wide-scope approach it is hoped that an innovative and unique perspective, which would not be obtained within a single discipline, will be gained. Such research findings are disseminated locally, nationally, and internationally, so that the public broadly recognizes the 'value' of Lake Biwa and the significance of the museum. Thus, Comprehensive Research constitutes the most important category amongst the research projects of the museum, and also play a critical role in consideration of the future of Lake Biwa by local people and different levels of government. Comprehensive Research Projects are planned by curators of the museum, and are implemented collaboratively with scientists from within and outside the museum. The term of an individual project is 3 - 10 years.

(2) Joint Research

Joint Research Projects focus on a more specific and limited theme than those of Comprehensive Research. Curators of the museum plan the projects, and the research is undertaken collaboratively with scientists from within and outside the museum. The objective of this research is not only to address the topics of conventional study fields, but also to find, create, and transmit innovative and unique research themes and approaches. The research includes themes that may contribute towards or develop into Comprehensive Research Projects in the future. The term of an individual project is 1 - 5 years.

(3) Specialized Research

Specialized Research is conducted on an individual curator basis to foster the academic abilities of curators and to expand and diversify the museum's abilities. The project term is not defined.

(4) Externally funded research

The Lake Biwa Museum was appointed as a research institution by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in fiscal year 2002, and is thus eligible for Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research. Additional external funds are also utilized for research.

2. Other Research Activities

(1) Publication within the Scientific Research Department

The museum actively encourages curators to make public their research results in scientific journals and at meetings. Alternatively, research results of Comprehensive and Collaborative Research projects may also be published as a Research Report of the Lake Biwa Museum. Performance records of the Lake Biwa Museum are also presented annually on the museum's website.

(2) Research Communication

Research seminars are held monthly for curators to share their own research results and information. Special seminars by external researchers are held irregularly. The Lake Biwa Museum Research Presentation Meeting is held once or twice a year to introduce the museum's research activities to the public.

(3) Special Researchers

The museum accepts researchers involved in a collaborative capacity in Comprehensive and Joint Research projects, etc., to study in the museum. There is also a provision for non-museum staff to use facilities and research equipment in the museum.

3. Structure of the Scientific Research Division

The Scientific Research Division is comprised of the following three divisions:

- (1) Cultural History and Geoscience Research Group: studies the patterns and processes of the development of lakes and society.
- (2) Biotic and Human Interaction Research Group: studies the biology and ecology of lakes, and the effects and interrelationships of human activities with these features.
- (3) Museum Studies Research Group: studies ways to best design, manage, and operate a museum that provides information and leads research centered upon the "Lakes and People" theme.

The Lake Biwa Museum strives to present opportunities for information exchange and interactions between the museum and visitors. Toward this end, the museum makes public its research results and collections inventory in order to encourage more effective use of the museum.

1. Community Groups

(1) Field Reporter System

Field Reporters submit to the museum periodic reports on natural, historical, and cultural aspects of their local surroundings throughout Shiga Prefecture. These results from Field Reporters' surveys are often incorporated into the museum's exhibits.

(2) "Hashikake" System

Users register for the "Hashikake" system and participate in the research, outreach, and exhibit activities of the museum independently. Many different opportunities are thus provided for users to become actively involved in museum activities.

2. Public Services

(1) Nature Observation Meetings Observations, tours, experience classes

Nature observation meetings and field trips are conducted to offer the public opportunities to learn about nature and human activities outdoors. The museum encourages visitors to deepen their interests in nature, living things and the museum itself, by offering nature observation opportunities around the museum; guided tours behind the scenes of the museum; and instruction in scientific experiments and other hands-on practical training.

(2) Special Lectures and Courses in the Museum

For persons who desire advanced and specific knowledge concerning scientific studies of nature and culture, the museum conducts various special lectures and courses at an advanced level.

(3) Question Corner

Each day in the Search and Discover Room of the museum a different curator takes turns in answering diverse questions from visitors. "Question Corner" allows interaction between visitors and curators.

(4) Floor Talks

Curators take turns talking about their studies to visitors in the exhibition rooms and outdoor facilities of the museum. Usually, talks are conducted from 11:00 A.M. everyday.

(5) Answering Questions by E-mail

Questions and requests can be made via the museum's query e-mail address. Queries are forwarded to the curator in charge of each field.

3 Cooperation with Schools and Communities

(1) School Groups

Explanatory outlines of the exhibitions are given to school groups and staff so that they can use the museum more effectively.

(2) Training for Faculty and Staff

The museum provides training to teaching staff to improve professional skills and raise their interest in nature.

(3) Regional Cooperation Support

The museum develops and provides learning programs throughout the year in cooperation with various local organizations, such as local resident groups.

4 Interaction and Service Facilities

(1) Grand Hall

The Grand Hall is used for museum-sponsored lectures, symposiums, and academic conferences. It has 246 seats and is equipped with wheelchair spaces, simultaneous interpretation booths, and a projection room.

(2) Seminar Room

The Seminar Room is used for various events such as explanations for museum user groups and museum lectures. About 60 seats are available.

(3) Discovery Labs

The Discovery Labs are used for practical training events hosted by the museum, and hands-on learning for school groups.

(4) Annex

The Annex provides additional meeting rooms for groups, and is also equipped with a room dedicated to caregiving and a toilet for people with disabilities.

VI Collection and Curation of Specimens and Artifacts



Corridor of the Collections Rooms

The Lake Biwa Museum houses more than 1.5 million specimens and artefacts in the fields of nature, humanities, social sciences, etc. from Japan and around the world, with a focus on Lake Biwa, its catchment area, and the Yodo River Basin. It houses a variety of materials such as original artefacts, aquatic specimens such as preserved fish, videos, and books, making it a diverse group of collections unlike any other in Japan. The museum also houses a large number of valuable materials, including type specimens used to describe species, collections of prominent researchers, and national and prefectural designated cultural properties. Materials are collected not only by curatorial staff, but also by means of purchase, donation, deposition, collection, etc., with the cooperation of related institutions, experts, "Hashikake" community groups, and residents of the prefecture.

The materials in the collection are organized according to the system for each material category, stored safely and in good condition for a long period of time, and used for exhibitions, viewing, lending, etc.

1 Facilities

The wide variety of materials collected by the Lake Biwa Museum require different handling depending on their nature. There are nine collection rooms: Zoological, Geological, Archaeological, Liquid-Preserved, Botanical, Ethnological, Special, and Video Collections rooms. There are two entry points for materials, one for general materials and one for aquarium materials. In addition, there are also low-temperature/freezer storage areas, and the Conservation and Breeding Center. Books and other reading materials are also stored in a stack room separate from the storage rooms.

2 Characteristics of Collections

The collections cover 11 fields: geological specimens, animal specimens (dried/immersed), plant specimens, microbial specimens, aquatic specimens (living organisms), archaeological materials, historical materials, folklore materials, environmental materials, books, and videos. Representative materials in each field are as follows: Geology: Fossil collection of the Paleo-lake Biwa Research Group; Zoology: type specimens of insects, crustaceans, shellfish, etc., the Shuichi Murayama Butterfly Collection, fish specimens collected by the community group Hashikake "Uonokai"; Botany: The Sakuba Plant Specimen Collection; Microbiology: type specimens of microorganisms, protists etc.; Archeology: the Prefectural Designated Tangible Cultural Property "Matsubara Naiko ruins spatula-shaped wooden artifacts"; History: the Important Cultural Property "Toji Documents", Hiyoshi Sanno Festival folding screens; Ethnology: Fishing equipment of Lake Biwa and its catchment area; Books: More than 150,000 books, serial publications; Images: the Takasuke Maeno Photo Collection.

3 Organizing Artifacts and Breeding of Live Specimens

Staff organize specimens and artifacts according to the system of each collection, perform preservation processing that matches the characteristics of the materials, and proceed with maintenance, shelving, and storage. Since some aquatic specimens are living organisms, breeding programs are conducted.

(1) Curators: Newly collected specimens and artifacts are preserved and maintained by a curator who has a particular high degree of expertise in the relevant field. Additionally, materials are registered in the relevant museum database.

(2) Aquarium Keepers: In addition to breeding freshwater organisms in the Aquarium and Exhibition Room C, Aquarium Keepers also maintain the breeding facilities. Together with the curators, they hold aquatic exhibitions and topical exhibitions, conduct feeding demonstrations, and participate in aquatic exhibition exchanges.

4 Storage of Materials

In order to protect the stored materials from insects and fungi and preserve them semi-permanently, an annual plan based on the concept of IPM (Integrated Pest Control Management) is carried out.

- (1) Regular cleaning: In order to prevent pests and mold from growing in each storage room and storage corridor, etc., cleaning is carried out once a month.
- (2) Biological environmental survey: In June, October, and February, a biological environmental survey is conducted by placing insect traps in more than 200 locations in the building, in order to investigate the occurrence of pests. Special cleaning is carried out based on the results.
- (3) Storage temperature and humidity management: The temperature and humidity are set according to the properties of the materials in each storage room, monitored 24 hours a day, and checked twice a week.
- (4) Fumigation, etc.: For materials brought into storage, either carbon dioxide fumigation, ethylene oxide fumigation, freeze fumigation, or deoxygenation treatment is carried out in the fumigation room.
- (5) Others: A clean environment is maintained at all times, such as prohibiting outdoor shoes in the collection rooms. In addition, lectures on IPM are held for the training of new employees, etc., and efforts are made to raise staff awareness.

5 Material Databases

A database is used in each field to manage the collected materials. The databases can be searched via the Museum's webpage.

6 Utilization of Materials

Under the management of the curator in charge, materials are used for museum exhibitions and exchange projects. In addition, based on the ordinance regarding the establishment and management of the Lake Biwa Museum, special viewing and lending, such as inspection, copying etc. are available.

Category		Unit	Fee
Inspection		1 item per day	1,520円
			3,050円
			3,050円
Photographs	Monochrome	1 item per time	3,050円
	Color		6,110円
Use of Negatives	Monochrome	1 sheet per time	1,520円
	Color		3,050円

7 Use of the Library

Many books and academic periodicals are part of the collections of the Lake Biwa Museum. In the Search & Discover Room (Exhibition Room E), books related to each field are open on the shelves, creating an environment where visitors can quickly consult reference books. Other books are stored in the adjoining stacks and can be viewed through a request to a librarian. The Museum does not lend out library materials, but does provide a copy service for a fee. In the stacks are technical books, reports from universities and research institutes, academic journals, academic documents, administrative materials, such as city history and statistics published by municipalities in Shiga Prefecture, excavation reports, and museum publications from all over the country. A wide variety of materials such as catalogs, newsletters, and research reports are also stored.

VII Information Activities

The Lake Biwa Museum uses its website and social media to provide a variety of information. In addition, new developments are underway so that permanent exhibitions and collections can be accessed anytime, anywhere.

1 Website

Our website provides information on viewing fees, opening hours, various events, transportation access, nearby facilities, etc. 360-degree videos of the permanent exhibitions are also available. Information on the museum's activities, including research, publications, and museum participation programs, is also given.

2 Social Media

The museum's Facebook, X, and Instagram accounts provide timely information on the museum's activities. Furthermore, the museum's YouTube channel "Biwako Chikara" provides videos of curator's research activities in an easy-to-understand manner, videos of museum activities, and footage of fauna and flora from the lake.

3 Document Database and Web Encyclopedias

All materials in the museum's collection are managed in databases that can be searched from the museum's website, including information on how they are stored, academic information, and information on distribution and use, such as copyright. In addition, the museum is reorganizing and publishing the results of research as "web encyclopedias", which are useful for learning activities.

VIII Exhibits

I. Concept of the Exhibits

- (1) The exhibits shall deal with the geology, history, environment, and aquatic organisms of Lake Biwa and be designed to suggest a way to foster a better relationship between "Lakes and People."
- (2) The exhibits shall deal extensively with articles from around the world, yet will concentrate on the local community.
- (3) The exhibits shall be designed to encourage visitors to think about the environment and will renew visitors' awareness of their surroundings in conjunction with the museum's participatory learning opportunities and other public services.
- (4) Special exhibitions by local people as well as traveling exhibitions shall be offered to make the exhibits more extensive and meaningful.
- (5) The exhibits shall be designed with due consideration for persons with disabilities, the elderly, and children.
- (6) Research findings and results shall be incorporated in the exhibits whenever possible to encourage their continual refinement.
- (7) The exhibits shall be designed to attract people of various needs and backgrounds while adhering to the principle of offering opportunities for all to learn about Lake Biwa and its environment.
- (8) The exhibits shall be designed to inspire visitors to explore the outdoors around Lake Biwa.
- (9) To ensure that the exhibits continue to grow and develop, information submitted by the community shall be incorporated and the suggestions of visitors concerning the museum's daily activities will be acknowledged.

2. Permanent Exhibits

From 2014, the A, B, and C exhibition rooms, Aquarium, Discovery Room, Search & Discover Room, and the Outdoor Exhibits were renewed in three stages over a six-year period, with the grand opening held in October 2020.

(1) Exhibition Room A "Four Million Years of Lake History, and People: Changing Lake Biwa"

Centering on the changes that have occurred in the natural environment, the long history of Lake Biwa, which spans approximately four million years, is divided into three parts: "land and lake," "living creatures," and "climate and forest." Through the exhibits, it is conveyed that the current environment is the result of environmental changes from the past, and is also in the process of changing into the future. The land and lakes corner exhibits geological specimens, the living creatures corner exhibits animal fossils, and the climate and forests corner focuses on plant fossil specimens, along with explanations based on research results. In addition, there are also exhibits of an excavation scene of fossil footprints, and a diorama of a forest in which elephants lived about two million years ago. In the exhibition corner for local people, those who are researching fossils in the area are exhibiting the specimens they have collected.



Half-skeletal reconstructed specimen of a Tudanski elephant (left) and reconstructed skeleton of an Akebono elephant (right)

1. The beginning of the story of Lake Biwa
2. Story of Lake Biwa and its creatures
3. The changing land and lake
4. Transforming creatures
5. Changing climate and forest
6. History of Lake Biwa and us

(2) Human History and the Lake: Nature and Our Lifestyles

In this exhibition room, the natural environment of Shiga Prefecture is divided into "forests", "waterfronts", and "lakes", with explanations about how people and the natural environment have been intertwined in each area. In addition, the place where people are based in the natural environment is regarded as a "village", and the system that has maintained it is conveyed. As an environmental history navigator, a "dragon," which is a creature made of fear of nature, appears, and by looking back on the history of living with the dragon (nature), an opportunity is provided to think about the relationship between humans and the natural environment in the future. Visitors can learn about Shiga's environmental history from a variety of perspectives, mainly from displays of actual artefacts, such as fishing equipment, which is nationally registered tangible folk cultural property, as well as photo spots, hands-on exhibits, one-word explanations, and explanations in English.

1. The beginning of our lifestyles
2. Forest
3. Waterside
4. Lake
5. Village
6. To our current lifestyles



Waterside

(3) Exhibition Room C: Nature Connecting with Our Lifestyles

Using familiar landscapes, from the shores of Lake Biwa at the entrance, to forests, this exhibition room introduces the relationships between the environment, humans, and living things. From there, visitors are invited to discover the fun hidden in the world around them, connect to the museum's outdoor exhibitions and exchange projects, and experience the appeal of nature. The exhibition utilizes the results of research carried out at the museum and the specimens collected since its opening, and is designed to display living organisms and allow visitors to experience the realism of nature with all five senses. Several exhibition corners are also equipped with exchange spots that introduce the activities of local people and the latest research results.

1. Let's go to Lake Biwa
2. Let's enter the reed beds
3. To the rice fields
4. From the river to the forest
5. Our lives
6. Specimen collection
7. Lake Biwa in the future



From Rivers to Forests

(4) Aquarium: Humans and Lake Environments – Aquatic Organisms and Our Lifestyles

The Aquarium shows relationships between our lives and Lake Biwa, and the value of Lake Biwa as an ancient lake. The environment of Lake Biwa and its catchment area are reproduced with fish tanks to show the ecology of creatures living there. At the same time, it shows how our lives are associated with creatures of Lake Biwa, by combining tanks with dioramas and commentary panels.

Through the exhibits about Lake Baikal, the oldest ancient lake in the world, and lakes of the African Great Rift Valley, visitors can appreciate the value of Lake Biwa as an ancient lake, and increase their desire to protect it.

The Micro Aquarium displays the minute creatures that live in Lake Biwa and the surrounding area to highlight the crucial role that such tiny organisms play in the lake's ecosystem.

- 1 Let's go out into Lake Biwa
2. Fish in our daily lives
- 3 Into the river
- 4 Waterside birds
- 5 Revive! Japanese freshwater fish
- 6 The world of ancient lakes
- 7 Ancient fish
- 8 Touching corner
- 9 Micro Aquarium



Micro Aquarium

(5) Discovery Room

The Discover Room serves as the "entrance to the Lake Biwa Museum," by providing an opportunity for visitors to experience the joys of learning and discovering through hands-on exhibits, using the five senses. The aim is to increase the number of museum enthusiasts in the future through an enjoyable experience using exhibits that children and adults can enjoy together. The main explanation panel gives only simple directions, and the supplementary commentary panels includes the purpose of the corner and displays content that can be understood by many users, from children to adults. It is also a place where first time visitors can learn how to handle exhibits and experience real artefacts, and enjoy the concept of discovery using their five senses, providing fun for both adults and children.

1. Let's touch
2. Let's ask
3. Let's smell
4. Let's make it bigger
5. Let's search
6. Let's find out - creatures' homes
7. Let's find out - creatures' shapes
8. Let's take a peek - the world of fish
9. Puppet show
10. Grandma's kitchen
11. Become a crayfish
12. Discovery corner
13. Boar teeth, bat teeth
14. Everyone's treasure
15. Book corner
16. Thread drawing corner



Discovery Room

(6) Search and Discover

This is an exhibition room that stimulates adults' curiosity and enjoyment. It aims to be used repeatedly, mostly as an experiential exhibition space, a place for people who are active in the museum to meet and gather, and a space that makes them want to go out into the field. In the research zone, visitors can pick up specimens and materials and observe them up close. The specimens are devised so that their texture and beauty can be intuitively perceived. There are easy-to-operate microscopes, so visitors can take a favorite specimen box, magnify it on the monitor, and observe it carefully. There is also a question corner, where curators are stationed daily. In the glass-enclosed open laboratory, work that is usually done in a laboratory or storage room, such as processing specimens and organizing materials, is demonstrated.

1 Investigation zones:

Insects, birds, mammals, fish, shellfish, amphibians/reptiles, folklore, archeology, documents, plants, rocks/minerals/fossils, sketch table

2 Question corner

3 Open Lab

4 Exchange corner

5 Shiga Prefecture main corner



Search & Discover

(7) Outdoor Exhibitions

"This is the field closest to the museum." In the Outdoor exhibitions, the past forests surrounding Lake Biwa, introduced in exhibition rooms A and B, are reproduced. There is also a Life and Culture Laboratory and a rice field where visitors can experience the old lifestyle. If you walk the "Treetop Walk", which is an aerial promenade around the outdoor exhibition forest, you can observe the forest creatures in front of you while feeling the breeze from Lake Biwa.

1 Jomon forest

2 Ancient forest

3 Life and Culture Laboratory

4 Treetop Walk



Treetop Walk

3. Other Exhibition Facilities

(1) Special Exhibitions

This facility is used for various types of exhibitions, such as annual "Special Exhibitions" and smaller-scale "Gallery Exhibitions," showcasing the Museum's collections. Exhibitions planned in collaboration with other organizations are also held here.

(2) Aquarium Special Exhibition Room

This facility is for special exhibits on selected themes, and focuses on freshwater fishes and other organisms. It is also used for the display of aquatic organisms connected with the museum's "Special Exhibitions".

4 Operation of the exhibition room

In addition to museum curators, the exhibition rooms are managed by Exhibition Exchange Staff, Aquarium Keepers, Discovery Room Management Staff, and Exhibition Repair and Maintenance Staff. Staff utilize their specialized knowledge and skills to operate the exhibition rooms on a daily basis in cooperation with each other. The museum is developing activities to deepen exchanges with visitors through exhibitions, to make them feel closer to the exhibitions, and to enhance their enjoyment of them.

(1) Exhibition Exchange Staff

In addition to serving as a guide for visitors, Exhibition Exchange Staff interact with visitors through the exhibits, drawing out visitors' interests, and turning their attention to the nature and life around them. They actively interact with visitors, and include their own commentary on the exhibits. They also play important safety roles, such as daily safety management in the exhibition rooms and evacuation guidance in case of an emergency.

(2) Discovery Room Management Staff

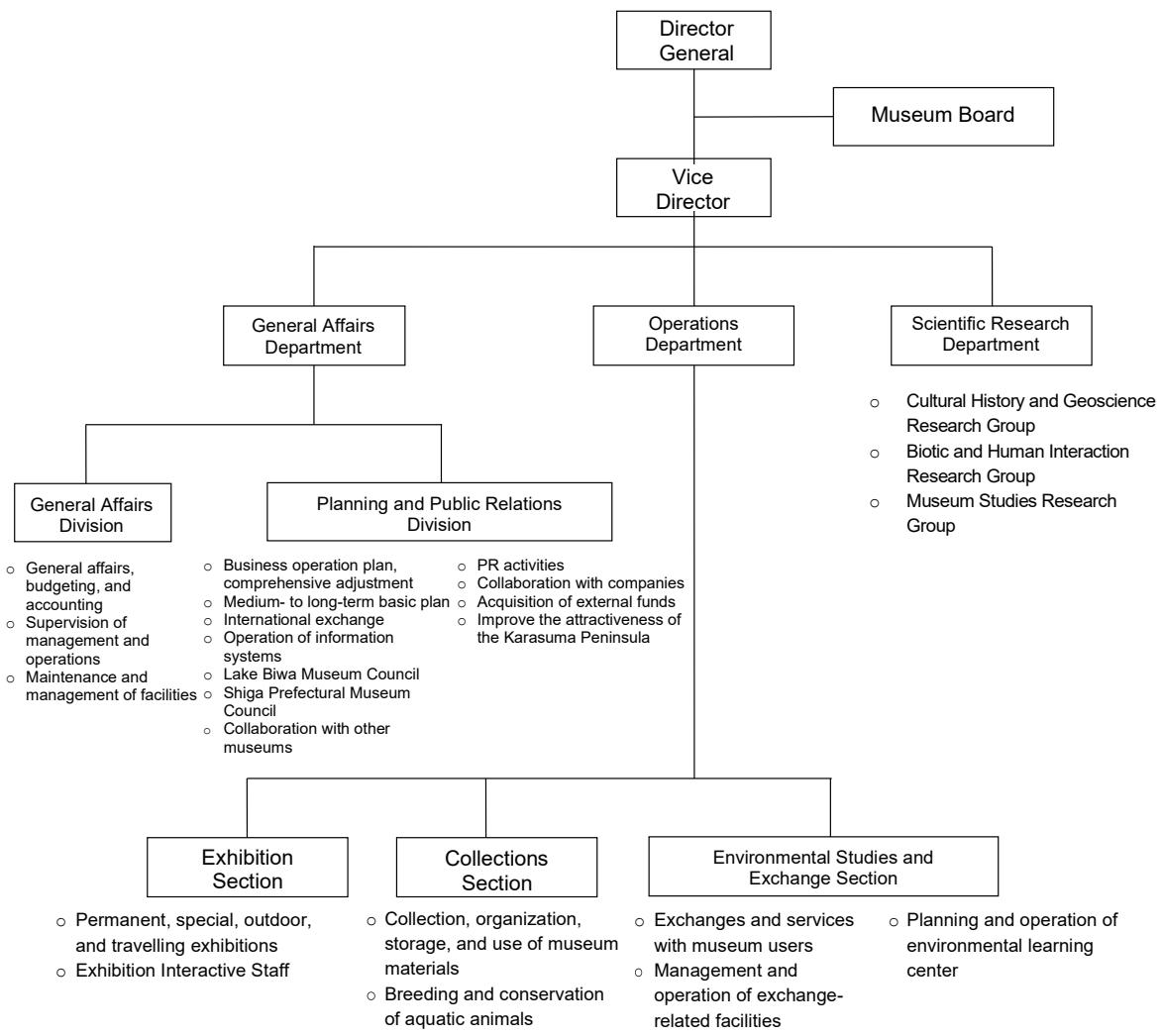
The Discovery Room, which is an introductory part of the museum, aims to cultivate future museum fans who are familiar with the museum, from children to adults. The Discovery Room Staff organize exhibits and events so that visitors can participate and make new discoveries.

(3) Exhibition Repair and Maintenance Staff

The museum's exhibition rooms include many easily accessible exhibitions and hands-on exhibits, which are prone to damage and wear and tear. The Exhibition Repair and Maintenance Staff maintain and manage the exhibition rooms, such as repairing damaged exhibits.

IX Organization

April 1st, 2025



Classification	Director General (part-time)	Administrative personnel	Research personnel	Educational personnel	Subtotal	Other part-time staff	Total
Number of staff	1	11	28	2	42	23	65

X History and Background of the Museum

Fiscal Year 1979

- The Shiga Prefectural Study Group for High School Science Education submits a request form to the Shiga Prefectural Government.

Fiscal Year 1985

- February 1986: The Prefectural Museum Construction Fund, with assets of ¥2 billion, is founded. (The Lake Biwa Management and Coordination Fund donates ¥700 million to the fund.)

Fiscal Year 1986

- A survey is conducted to examine the current situation, problems, and desirable direction for museums in general.

Fiscal Year 1987

- November 1987: The Committee to Develop the Basic Concept of the Prefectural Lake Biwa Museum is established under the chairmanship of Dr. Tatsuo Kira, President of the Lake Biwa Research Institute.

Fiscal Year 1988

- April 1988: A Subcommittee to the Committee to Develop the Basic Concept of the Prefectural Lake Biwa Museum is established under the chairmanship of Dr. Taizo Miura, Assistant Professor of Kyoto University.
- March 1989: The basic concept of the Prefectural Lake Biwa Museum is determined.

Fiscal Year 1989

- 1989: First curatorial staff member is hired.
- June 1989: The Preparatory Committee for the Construction of the Lake Biwa Museum is established under the chairmanship of Dr. Manzo Chiji, Professor of Kyoto Tachibana College. (Four task forces dealing with exhibitions, administration, facilities, and the aquarium are founded.)

Fiscal Year 1990

- 1990: Three curatorial staff are hired.
- December 1990: The basic plan of the Prefectural Lake Biwa Museum is adopted.

Fiscal Year 1991

- 1991: Five curatorial staff are hired.
- June 1991: The task forces of the Preparatory Committee for the Construction of the Lake Biwa Museum are dissolved and a project team is organized. (The project team is dissolved in May, 1993.)
- August 1991: The Exhibit Plan Review Team is founded in the Shiga Prefectural Government. (The team is dissolved in March, 1992.)
- The basic designs of the museum's exhibits are determined.

Fiscal Year 1992

- 1992: Five curatorial staff are hired.
- April-June 1992: The outdoor nature-observation program is launched.
- September 1992: The basic construction plan is determined.
- October 1992: The design of the exhibits, construction work, and information system design are started. The museum's administration policy is deliberated until March, 1993.

Fiscal Year 1993

- 1993: One curatorial staff is hired.
- 1993: Participatory surveys involving local residents are launched.
- January 1994: A draft agreement for exhibits and construction is passed by the Prefectural Assembly on January 6. (The construction period is January 7, 1994, to March 31, 1996, with a groundbreaking ceremony on January 29.)
- Production of exhibits begins, the information system is configured, and the museum's administration policies are considered.

Fiscal Year 1994

- 1994: One curatorial staff is hired.
- July 1994: The "Hwang Ho (Yellow River) Elephant Exhibit" is held from July 30 to August 4 at the Kusatsu Culture and Art Hall.
- January 1995: A symposium entitled "Surveying our Environment and Construction of the Museum" is held on January 22 at the Yasu Culture Theater.
- March 1995: The launching ceremony is held for the Maruko-bune, a traditional type of cargo boat. A public exhibition of the boat is held on March 25 at the Matsui Shipbuilding Yard and on March 25 and 26 at the Karasuma Peninsula.

Fiscal Year 1995

- September 1995: The Preparatory Committee for the Opening of the Shiga Lake Biwa Museum is established under the chairmanship of Dr. Manzo Chiji, Professor of Kyoto Tachibana College.
- October 1995: Museum seminars begin.
- February 1996: A photo exhibition, "The Story of Lake Biwa by Takashi Maeno", is held as a preliminary event before the opening of the museum at the Minakuchi Culture and Art Hall, and Nagahama Rakuichi.
- February 1996: A symposium entitled "Probing the History of Lake Biwa in Kafuka Village" is held at Minakuchi Hekisui Hall.
- March 1996: The construction of the main building is completed.

Fiscal Year 1996

- 1996: Nine curatorial staff are hired.
- April 1996: The Shiga Prefectural Lake Biwa Museum is established. The museum's logo is adopted.
- October 1996: Opening ceremony, preview, and opening to the public take place.

Fiscal Year 1997

- April 1997: Jurisdiction is transferred from the Board of Education to the Department of Lake Biwa and the Environment.
- April 1997: Three new curatorial staff are hired.
- June 1997: The International Conference on Ancient Lakes is held.
- August 1997: Total number of visitors reaches one million.

Fiscal Year 1998

- July 1998: The Long- and Intermediate-term Examination Committee for the Lake Biwa Museum is organized.
- September 1998: A memorandum of cooperation is concluded between the Muséum Nationale d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris, France, and the Lake Biwa Museum.
- November 1998: Total number of visitors reaches two

million.

Fiscal Year 2000

- November 2000: Total number of visitors reaches three million.

Fiscal Year 2002

- September 2002: Agreement for a research exchange program with the Institute of Hydrobiology, Chinese Academy of Science, is concluded.
- November 2002: Total number of visitors reaches four million.
- December 2002: "Local Area, Whoever, Wherever Museum" Lake Biwa Museum mid-term plan is issued.

Fiscal Year 2003

- July 2003: Cooperation agreement with the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris, France, is renewed.

Fiscal Year 2004

- March 2005: Total number of visitors reaches five million.
- March 2005: Lake Biwa Museum's mid- to long-term plan for the "Local Area, Whoever, Wherever Museum" plan is initiated.

Fiscal Year 2006

- October 2006: Ceremony to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the opening of the museum is held.

Fiscal Year 2007

- May 2007: Total number of visitors reaches six million.

Fiscal Year 2009

- September 2009: Total number of visitors reaches seven million.

Fiscal Year 2010

- April 2010: Shiga Prefecture Environmental Learning Center is relocated into the Lake Biwa Museum's Public Services Center.

Fiscal Year 2011

- October 2011: 15th anniversary of the Museum's opening takes place.

Fiscal Year 2012

- April 2012: "New Lake Biwa Museum" Preparation Office is established.
- June 2012: Total number of visitors reaches eight million.
- March 2013: "The Vision of Creating the New Lake Biwa Museum" is adopted.

Fiscal Year 2013

- November 2013: Signing of cooperation agreement between the Hunan Museum in China and the Lake Biwa Museum.
- March 2014: "The Basic Plan of Creating the New Lake Biwa Museum" is adopted.

Fiscal Year 2014

- June 2014: Designs of the exhibits of the first stage of the renewal (Exhibition Room C and Aquarium) are started.
- September 2014: Signing of the cooperation agreement between the Baikal Museum, Russia, and the Lake Biwa Museum.
- March 2014: Total number of visitors reaches nine million.
- March 2014: Signing of the cooperation agreement between

the Institute of Hydrobiology, Chinese Academy of Sciences and the Lake Biwa Museum.

Fiscal Year 2015

- April 2015: Signing of the cooperation agreement between Seian University of Art and Design, and the Lake Biwa Museum.
- July 2015: Contracts for building, electric equipment and machinery construction of the first renewal are made. (The construction period is 15 July 2015, to 30 June 2016.)

Fiscal Year 2016

- April 2016: "New Lake Biwa Museum" Office is established.
- June 2016: Start of preliminary design for the second phase of renewal (Treetop Walk), ends October 2016.
- June 2016: Start of a geological survey for the second renewal (Treetop Walk), ends September 2016.
- June 2016: Second stage renewal (exchange spaces) exhibit design started, ends March 2017.
- July 2016: First stage of the renewal opens (preview, opening ceremony, and opening to the public).

Fiscal Year 2017

- August 2017: Total number of visitors reaches 10 million.

Fiscal Year 2018

- June 2018: Third stage of renewal (Exhibition Room A, Exhibition Room B) exhibit design starts, ends March 2019.
- July 2018: Second stage renewal opens (preview, opening ceremony, opening to the public).
- November 2018: Treetop Walk opens.

Fiscal Year 2019

- October 2019: Total number of visitors reaches 11 million.

Fiscal Year 2020

- October 2020: Third stage of renewal opens (preview, grand opening ceremony, and opening to the public).
- March 2020: The "Lake Biwa Museum Third Medium- to Long-Term Basic Plan: Meeting, Learning, and Becoming a Museum that Promotes Lake Biwa to the World" was formulated (a 10-year plan starting in fiscal year 2021).

Fiscal Year 2021

- October 2021: Symposium commemorating the 25th anniversary of the museum's opening.
- January 2022: Cashless and ticketless ticketing system begins operation.

Fiscal Year 2022

- November 2022: Total number of visitors reaches 12 million.
- February 2023: An accident damaging the giant catfish tank occurs.

Fiscal Year 2023

- April 2023: The Digital Museum Promotion Project is launched.
- September 2023: The third-party committee on the Lake Biwa Museum tank damage accident submits the "Report on the Investigation into the Cause of the Shiga Prefectural Lake Biwa Museum Tank Damage Accident".
- November 2023: Crowdfunding campaign and donations to support the restoration of the aquarium exhibits are conducted.

Fiscal Year 2024

- April 2024: The tunnel tank reopens.
- August 2024: Crowdfunding campaign is conducted for the restoration of the aquarium exhibition room.
- February 2025: Total number of visitors reaches 13 million.

I. Construction and Design

The Lake Biwa Museum was designed in a manner that represents the museum's theme, "Toward greater appreciation of the lake." The design was also intended to win the endorsement of the residents of Shiga Prefecture as a community asset. The construction was undertaken according to the following specific principles :

(1) Architecture of lasting value that contributes to the pride of the local community

- Representative of the characteristics of the local community.
- Easy management and low maintenance costs.
- Flexible design to accommodate possible future alteration.

(2) People-friendly architecture.

- Consideration for the safety of people with disabilities and the elderly.

Exhibition rooms: The rooms, including the floor and audio devices, are specifically designed to be accessible to physically handicapped and elderly people, taking into account their safe movement, smooth operation on wheelchairs, and ease of access to the exhibitions.

Other indoor facilities: Facilities such as the lavatories, telephones, elevators and drinking fountains are designed for safe use.

Outdoor facilities: The paved roads, including approaches to the museum and paths to the outdoor exhibitions, are designed for safe walking.

- Clear, simple floor layout.
- Spacious, relaxing floor arrangement.

(3) Environmentally friendly architecture.

- Environmentally conscious architecture that matches the surroundings.
- Resource-conserving and low-polluting construction:

(Effective use of natural and solar energy as well as measures against non-point source pollution and use of rainwater)

Insulation: Construction of a roof garden; use of wood-woven cement panels for exterior walls; drawing of external air into the pits in the framework of the foundations (to cool down the ground and to increase the warming effect).

Solar heat and light: Solar heat collected through a vacuum-type solar thermal collector installed on the roof of the building is used as a subsidiary heat source in the museum building; sunlight reflected by automatic solar light tracking devices is used to introduce natural light into the aquarium exhibits.

Rainwater: Rainwater collected from the roof and the grounds of the museum is used to flush the toilets.

This system prevents the direct entry of nutrients (non-point source pollution) together with rainwater flow into Lake Biwa.

(Utilization of recycled materials)

Used solid concrete is smashed and reutilized.

Sludge removed from the bottom of the lake and from sewage treatment plants is processed into slugs, then mixed with concrete as an aggregate, which is then used to fabricate secondary products. Those used in the construction of the museum include exhaust and venting pipes, U-shape gutters, and curved stones.

Interlocking blocks are used on the building exterior and in the drainage works.

(4) Architecture that enhances the lakeside environment.

- Harmony with the surrounding environment that enhances the aesthetic value of the lakeside scenery.
- Exploitation of the geographical features of the lakeside area and utilization of the lakeside landscape.
- Large roof modeled on the hull of the old cargo boat, "Maruko-bune".

2. Outline of Premises and Facilities

(1) Address: 1091 Oroshimo-cho, Kusatsu-shi, Shiga Prefecture, 525-0001

(2) Site Area: 42,434 m²

(3) Buildings:

(a) Main Building: Reinforced concrete construction, with some steel and steel-framed reinforced concrete construction. Two stories above ground and one story below.

Building area: 17,512 m².

(b) Aquarium building: Reinforced concrete construction, with some steel and steel-framed reinforced concrete construction. Two stories.

Building area: 6,474 m².

(c) Annex: Reinforced concrete construction. Two stories.

Building area: 3,017.7m².

Total 27,004.7m².

(4) Height: 15.0 meters above ground level.

(5) Breakdown of Building Area (in m²)

	Museum	Aquarium
Administration area	982	34
Exhibition area	4,122	1,984
Public Service area	6,750	0
Research area	1,604	188
Storage area	4,647	353
Other areas	4,596	1,745
Subtotal	22,701	4,304
	Total	27,005 m ²

(6) Outdoor Facilities:

① Facilities Related to Exhibition / Observation / Experience.

1. Ancient Forest and Forests of the Jomon and Yayoi Periods.

2. Life and Culture Laboratory: Total area 265.8m².

3. Rice and Vegetable Fields.

4. Ecological Observation Pond/Ecological Observation Waterway

② Conservation and Breeding Center of Fishes: total area 251.7 m².

③ Experimental Facilities

1. Experimental channel.

2. Experimental pond.

④ Other Outdoor Facilities

1. Streams.

2. Bird-watching Point.

3. Parking: business use (20 spaces), people with disabilities (12 spaces), bicycles (50 spaces).

4. Outdoor lunch space "Umikko Hiroba": 450 m².

(7) List of Room Areas

(Unit: m²)

	Exhibition Rooms		Collections Section		Research Section		Public services and information
Museum	Exhibition Room A	886	Zoological Collection Room	362	Cooperative Research Laboratory	87	Grand Hall 330
	Exhibition Room B	886	Botanical Collection Room	589	Laboratory for Guest Researchers	62	Grand Hall Preparation Room 52
	Exhibition Room C	1,472	Geological Collection Room	577	Research Meeting Room	60	Effects Room 17
	Special Exhibition Room	555	Environment Collection Room	103	Photo Studio	85	Simultaneous Translation Booth 5
	Exhibition Preparation Room	65	Ethnology Collection Room 1	534	Photography Dark Room	13	Seminar Rooms 1, 2 & 3 163
	Exhibition Storage Area	56	Ethnology Collection Room 2	599	Electron Microscope Room	44	Discovery Laboratories 1 & 2 166
	Discovery Room	202	Archaeological Collection Room	228	Darkroom for Electron Microscope	13	Home Science Laboratory 51
	Search & Discover Room	331	Special Collection Room	303	Geology Laboratory	104	Exchange Rooms 1 & 2 57
			Room in front of Special Collection Room	45	Geological Specimens Preparation Room	32	Library 481
			Liquid-preserved Collection Room	456	Zoological Specimens Preparation Room	50	Media Room 118
			Frozen Collection Room	31	Terrestrial Ecology Laboratory	70	Museum Shop 115
			Refrigerated Collection Room	21	Botanical Specimens Preparation Room	47	Entrance etc. 1,457
			Film and Photography Collection Room	188	Terrestrial Ecology Laboratory	92	Restaurant 275
			Temporary Storage Room	95	Sterilized Room	20	Cafeteria 114
			Room in front of Temporary Storage Room	34	Artificial Environment Room	41	Annex 3018
			Truck Yard, Loading Bay	352	Workshop	39	
			Stock Room	76	Preservation Laboratory	58	
			Fumigation Room	54	Chemical Analysis Laboratory	59	
					Instrumental Analysis Laboratory	39	
					Chemical Storage Room	20	
					Social Science Room	84	
Aquarium	Viewing & Exhibition Space (outdoor area of 252m ² excluded)	1,847	Aquarium Temporary Storage	47	Aquarium Laboratory	48	
		97	Truck Yard, Loading Bay	94	Fish Management Room	69	
		Special Exhibition Preparation Room	40	Fish Tank Room	120	Aquarium Studio	32
				14	Experimental photography darkroom	12	
			Dried Food Storage	17	Equipment Storage	19	
			Frozen Food Storage	28	Changing Room	8	
			Food Preparation Room	33			
Museum		4,122		4,647		1,604	6750
Aquarium		1,984		353		188	

(7) List of Room Areas (Continued)

(Unit: m²)

	General Affairs Department	Common-use Facilities	Total	Other Outdoor Facilities
Museum	Director General's Room	54	Corridors, Stairs, Elevators, Rest Rooms, Equipment shafts etc. Air Conditioning Machine Room, Heat Source Machine Room, Electrical Room, Generator Room, Water Supply Pump Room etc.	Porch Staff Parking Area Bicycle Parking Hazardous Waste Storage Washing area for large items Storage Tanks of Aquatic Organisms Rooftop Square Life and Culture Laboratory 266 Outdoor lunch space "Umikko Hiroba" 450 etc.
	Vice Director Room 1	18		
	Vice Director Room 2	43		
	Special Reception Room	57		
	Reception Room	37		
	Administration and Curator's Room	359		
	Conference Room	84		
	Hot Water Supply Room	14		
	Storage	102		
	Disaster prevention monitoring center	57		
	Resting Room	24		
	Nursing Room	22		
	Women's Changing Room	24		
	Waiting Rooms 1 & 2	75		
Aquarium	Image Data Adjusting Room	12		
	Lodging Room	19	Keepers' Space	Conservation and Breeding Center 252
	Bathroom etc.	15	Corridors, Stairs, Elevators Equipment Shafts, Rest Rooms Machinery Rooms, Pump Rooms etc.	
Museum		982	4,596	19,683
Aquarium		34	1,745	4,304
		Total		23,987

3. Construction Schedule

(1) Basic design of exhibits: fiscal year 1991.

Basic design of building: fiscal year 1992.

(2) Final design of exhibits and building: fiscal year 1992.

(3) Construction: fiscal year 1993~1996.

(The ceremony of laying the cornerstone: January 29, 1994 / Completion of construction: March, 1996)

4. Construction Expenditures for the Lake Biwa Museum (fiscal years 1990~1995)

Proposed construction budget		Amount (thousands of yen)	
Construction of buildings, exterior and outdoor exhibition facilities	Construction cost	14,970,037	15,440,277
	Design and management cost	470,240	
Exhibits	Cost of exhibits	4,291,819	4,562,910
	Design and management costs	271,091	
Artifact research	Commissioned research	244,892	244,892
Production and purchase of artifacts	Commissioned production and purchases	915,463	997,679
	Book purchases	82,216	
Equipment and supplies	Construction equipment and supplies	733,631	733,631
Total		21,979,389	

5. Reconstruction Expenditures for Exhibits and Communication Spaces

(Fiscal years 2012~2016)

Contents			Amount (thousands of yen)
Establishment of vision	Fiscal 2012	Consignment of establishment of vision	5,460
Establishment of basic plan	Fiscal 2013	Consignment of establishment of plan	16,989
Renewal, first stage	Fiscal 2014	Consignment of design of exhibits and construction	56,281
	Fiscal 2015	Construction of exhibits	283,855
		Construction work	412,895
		Work management	8,887
	Fiscal 2016	Construction of exhibits	506,847
		Construction work	219,650
		Work management	3,595
	Total		1,492,010
	Fiscal 2015	Consignment of establishment of plan (Tree-crown trail)	2,916
Renewal, second stage	Fiscal 2016	Consignment of design of exhibits and construction, civil engineering	54,497
	Total		57,413
	Fiscal 2018	Final design	31,500
Renewal, third stage	Fiscal 2019	Construction of exhibits	225,300
	Fiscal 2020	Construction of exhibits	492,117
	Total		748,917
	Total		2,320,789

6. Amount of Donations for Renewal of Exhibitions

Year	Amount (thousands of yen)
Fiscal 2015	34,766
Fiscal 2016	12,830
Fiscal 2017	21,287
Fiscal 2018	19,860
Fiscal 2019	22,260
Fiscal 2020	2,990

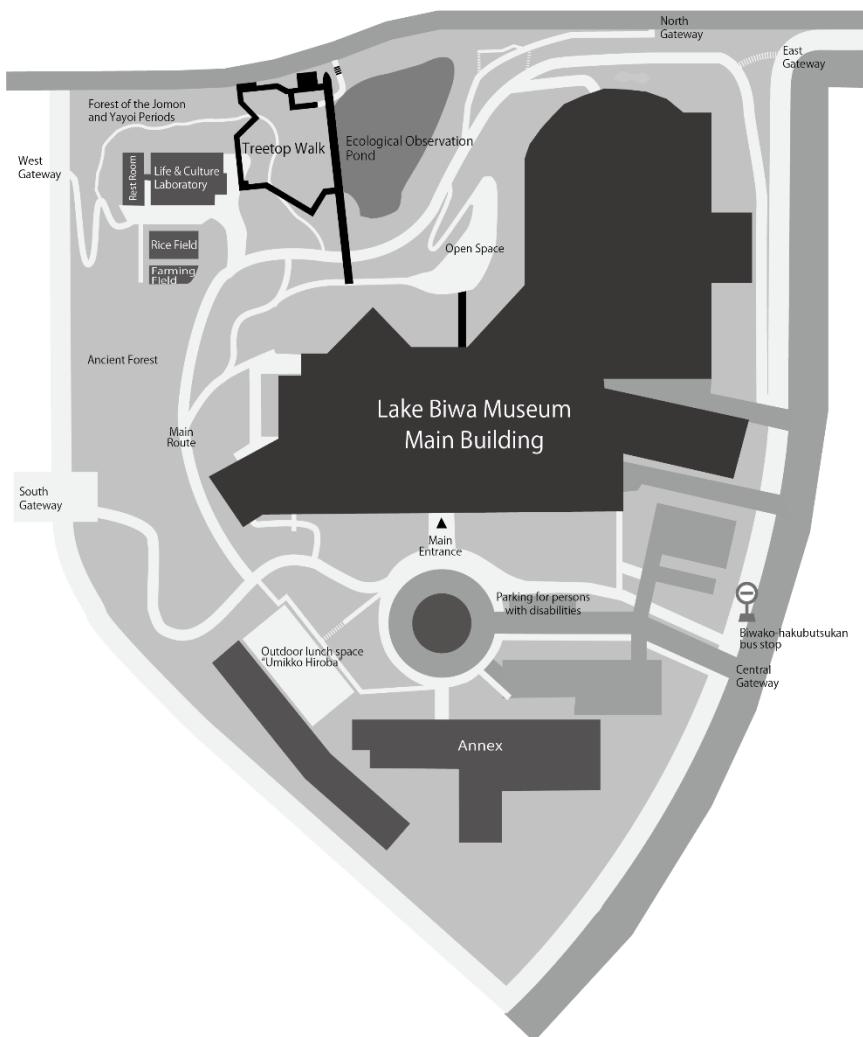
7. Aquarium restoration project costs (FY2023 to FY2025)

Year	Amount (thousands of yen)
Fiscal 2023	61,413
Fiscal 2024	109,639
Fiscal 2025	115,621
Total	286,673

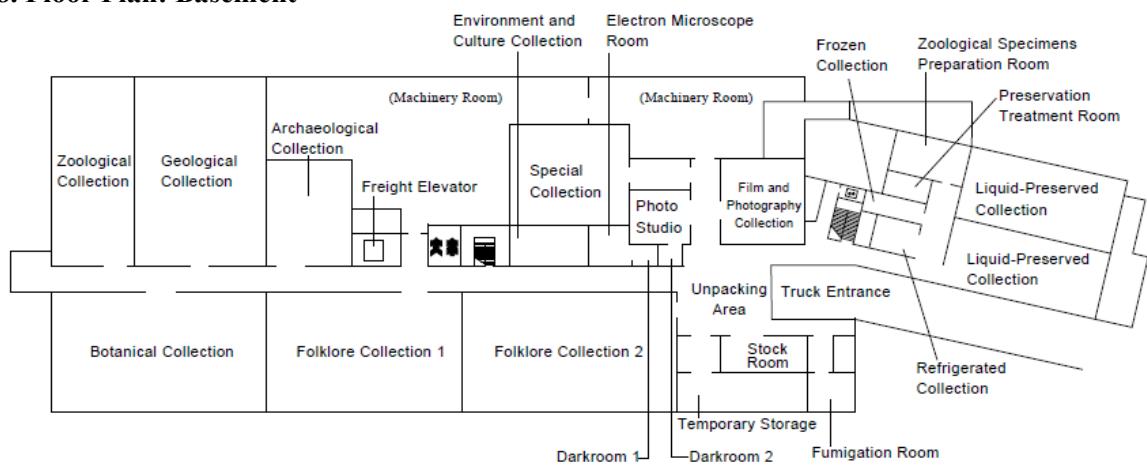
8. Amount of donations for aquarium restoration (2023-2024)

Year	Crowdfunding	Donations for restoration of the aquarium exhibits	Donation box	Total (yen)
Fiscal 2023	11,593,000	12,045,000	—	23,638,000
Fiscal 2024	17,739,702	12,310,000	305,255	30,354,957
Total	29,332,702	24,355,000	305,255	53,992,957

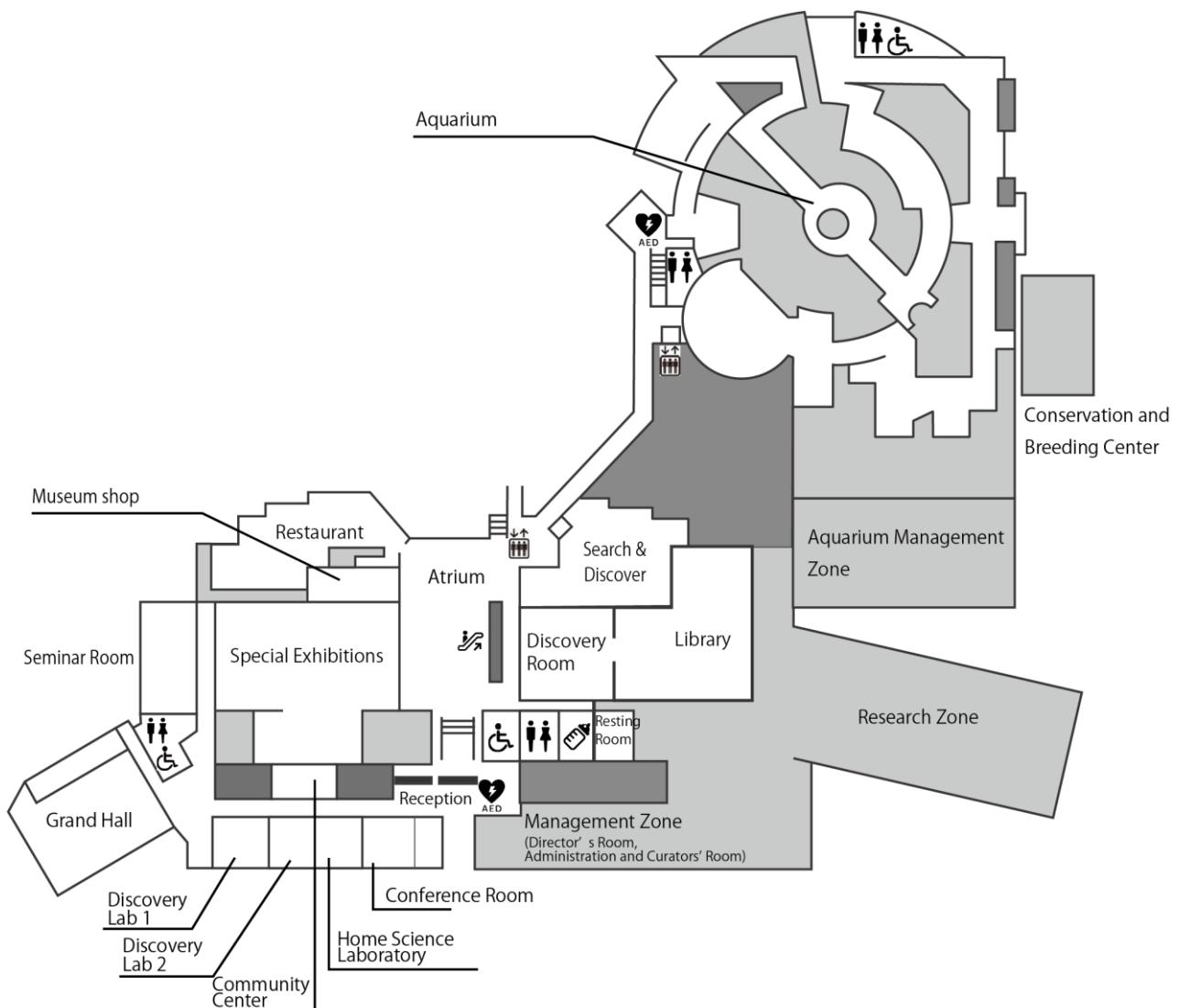
7. Museum Map



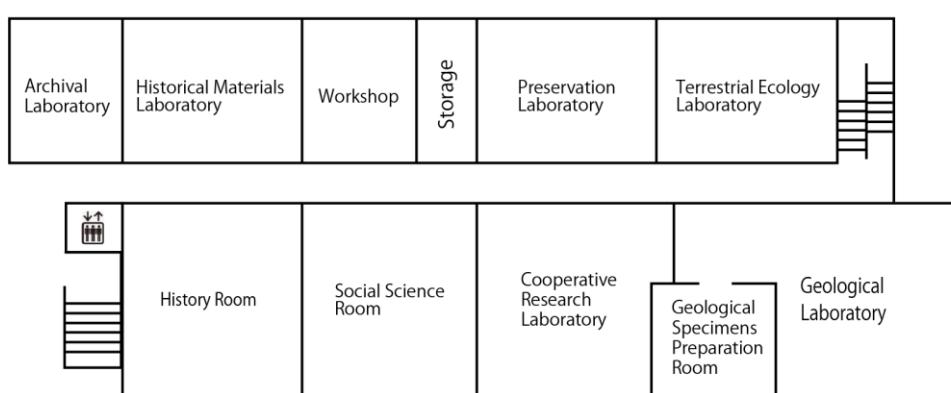
8. Floor Plan: Basement



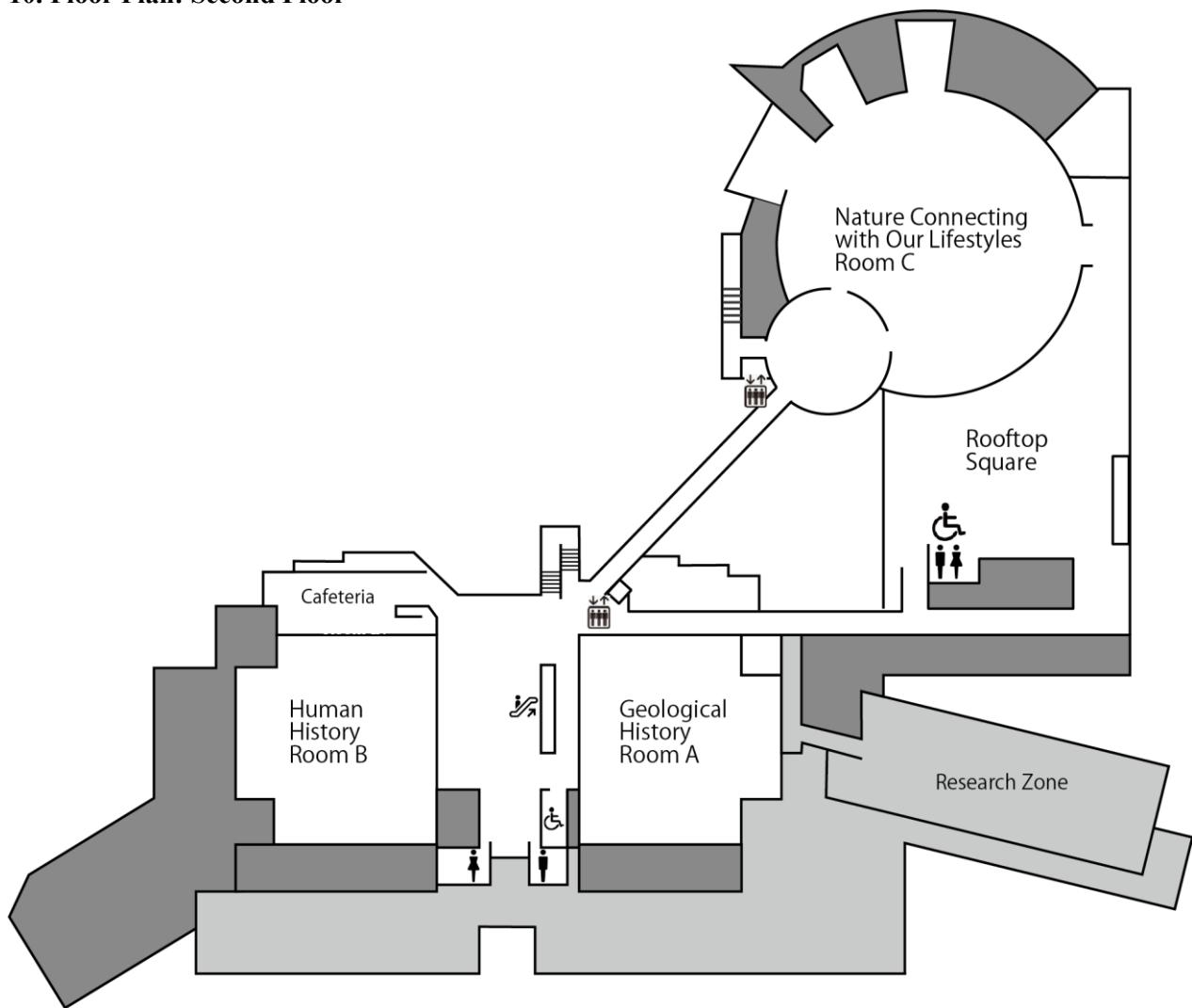
9. Floor Plan: First Floor



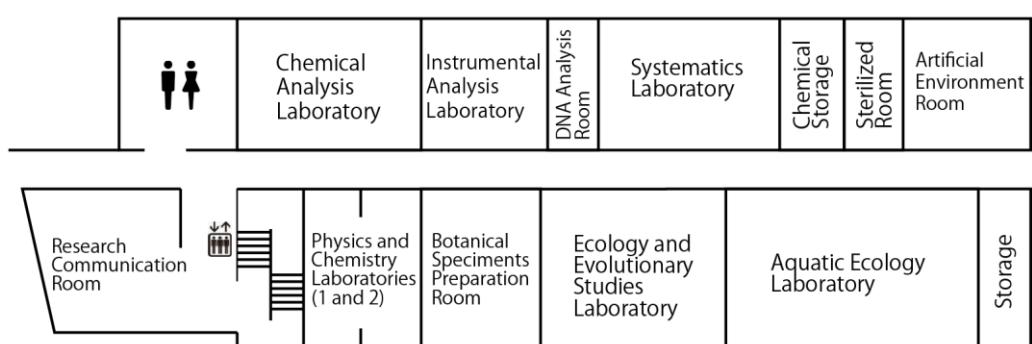
Research Zone



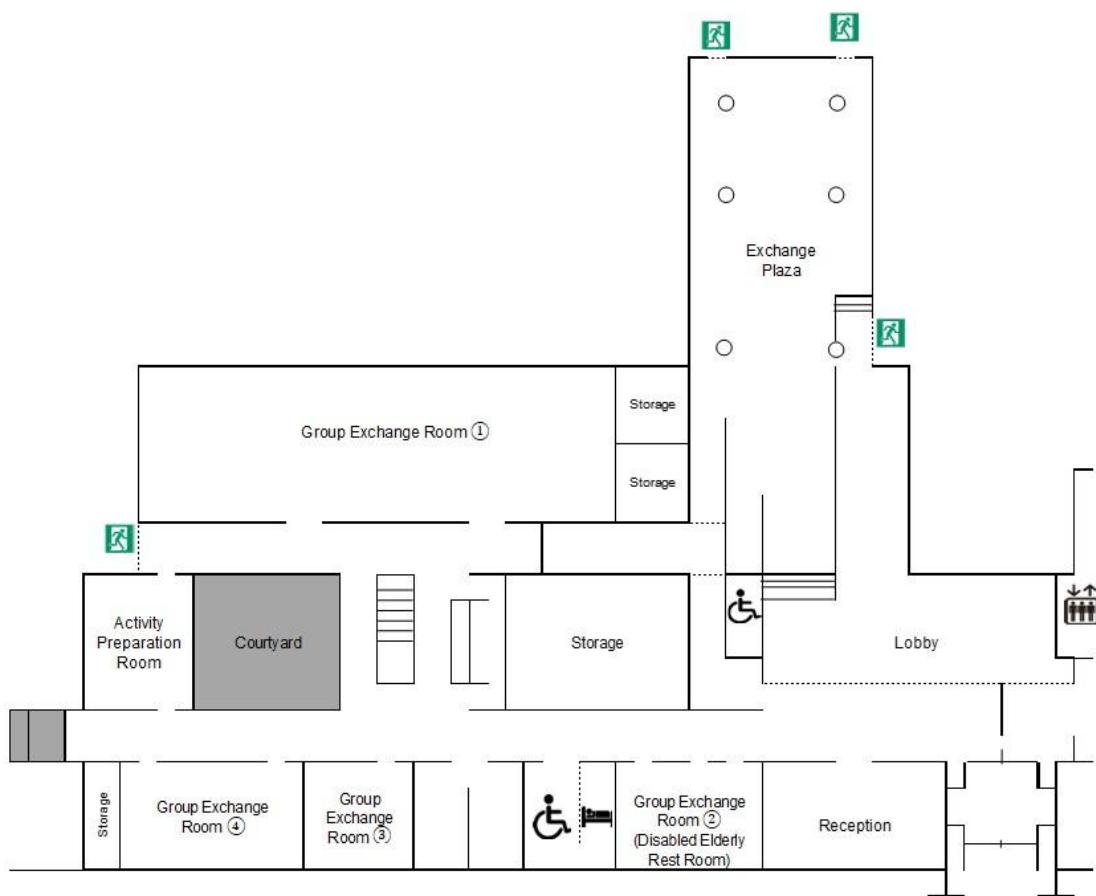
10. Floor Plan: Second Floor



Research Zone



11. Floor Plan: Annex



XII VISITOR INFORMATION

1 Museum Hours: 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Visitors may enter until 4:00 p.m.)

2 Museum Schedule—Open every day except as follows:

- Mondays (unless a public holiday and during summer and winter school breaks).
- The year-end and New Year holidays (December 29 to January 3).
- Other days designated by the museum Director General.

3 Admission fees

- Permanent exhibitions: University students 470 yen (380 yen), adults 840 yen (670 yen). Prices in () are for groups of 20 or more people (each).
- Annual admission ticket: University students 940 yen, adults 1,680 yen.
Holders can view the permanent exhibition and the special exhibition as many times as desired for one year after purchase.
- Special exhibition: Fees are determined for each event.
- Permanent exhibitions are free for preschoolers, elementary, junior high and high school students, people with disabilities, and people over 65 who live in the prefecture. (Please check for details.)

4 Parking fees

Category	Fee per vehicle
Large vehicle	1,700円
Micro-bus (11 to 29 seats)	1,100円
Ordinary car	550円
Motorcycles	200円

Note, in some cases, exemption may be granted according to the Law for the Welfare of Persons with Physical Disabilities, so please contact us.

5 Museum Facilities

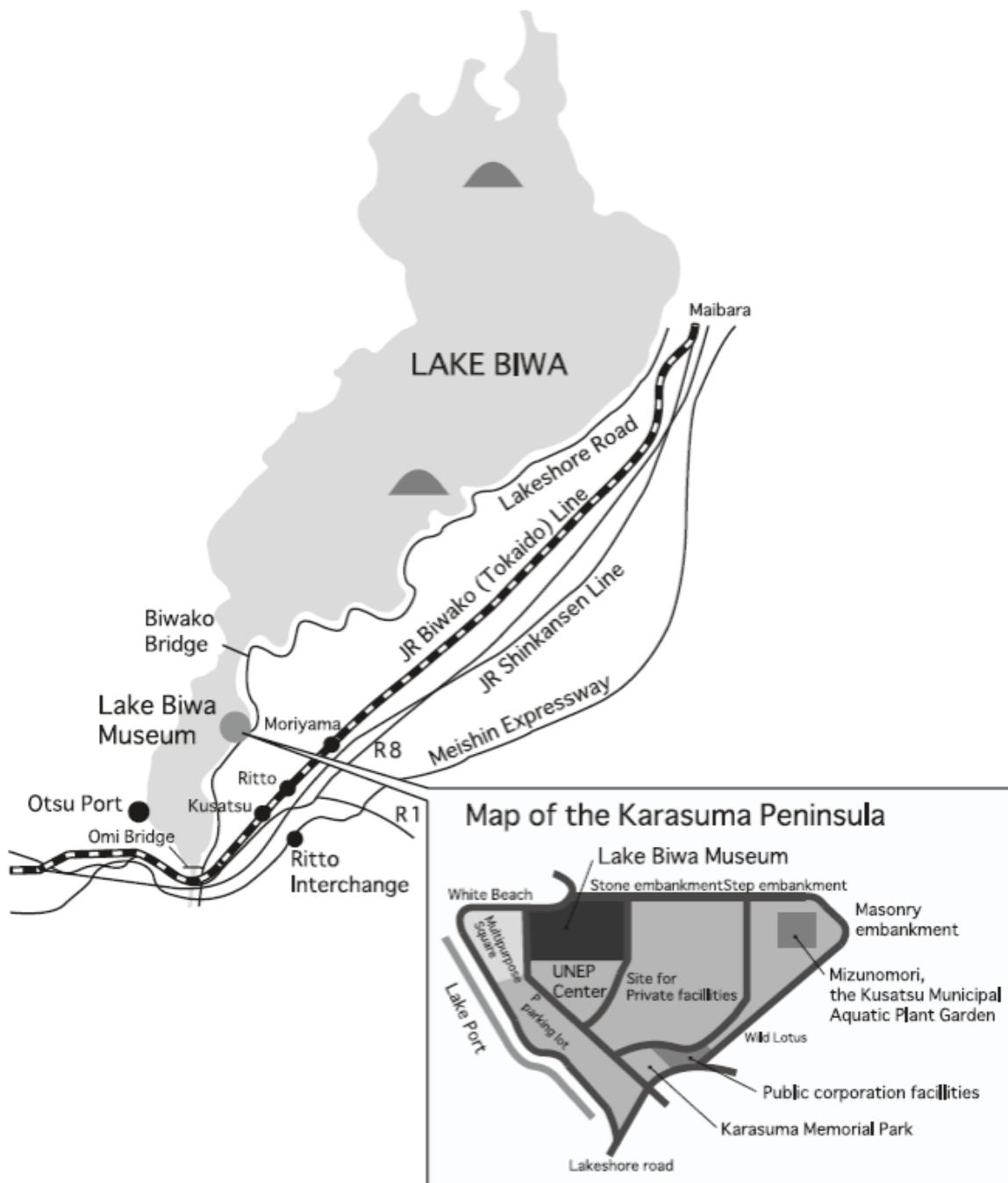
- Meals and refreshments are available in the restaurant and cafeteria.
- The Museum Shop sells publications and original museum products.
- Rooms for nursing infants and for visitors who are feeling unwell are available.
- If visitors purchase an admission ticket and use the parking lot, we provide a service ticket at the reception.
- Persons with disabilities can use the disabled parking lot in front of the museum free of charge.

6 Access to the Museum

- Transfer to the Biwako Line from JR Shinkansen "Kyoto Station" or "Maibara Station", get off at "Kusatsu Station" or "Moriyama Station" and take a bus or taxi
- By bus, take the Ohmi Railway Bus bound for "Lake Biwa Museum" from the West Exit of JR Kusatsu Station (approximately 25 minutes).
- By taxi, about 20 minutes from JR Kusatsu Station West Exit, or about 20 minutes from Moriyama Station West Exit
- By road: Exit the Meishin Expressway at the Ritto Interchange and drive along the Ritto- Shinanaka Route and the Lake Shore (Sazanami) Road (approximately 25 minutes). Alternatively, exit the Meishin Expressway at the Seta Nishi or Seta Higashi Interchange and drive along the Lake Shore (Sazanami) Road (approximately 30 minutes).

●For Information

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