

Notice Regarding July's Obihiro Pioneer おびひろパイオニア 7月号の休止

Hello, pioneers! We would like to inform you that Obihiro Pioneer will be taking a month hiatus and we will not be publishing the July 2021 issue. The staff at OP will be working on format and content changes to the newsletter in hopes of providing more relevant information and a more intuitive format. We will, however, be publishing an online-only edition containing only movie and event information at the beginning of July. That and other past issues can be found on Obihiro City's homepage, or via the following QR code. We apologize for the inconvenience, please look forward to the August issue!



The Red-Crowned Crane of Hokkaido

Hard to believe it's June already! While the waters of Japan's rainy season reach us here in Tokachi, the animals start to come out as well. Keep your eyes peeled and you might encounter the following beautiful bird of Hokkaido!

While the sakura is right up there with Mt. Fuji as an international symbol of Japan, images and references to the *tancho* (red-crowned crane) are strung all throughout Japanese culture.

Tancho are a large bird characterized by the red circle on their heads, which they grow when they become adults. They are a friendly bird, but can fight back when provoked in their territory. They can be found throughout south-eastern Hokkaido.

They are a monogamous bird, mating with the same bird throughout their life. Because of this, they are a symbol of marriage and many women wear *uchikake* (large kimono) during their wedding made to resemble or contain imagery of *tancho*.

From February to March, single males

北海道のタンチョウ

perform a courting dance learned from their parents. Most pictures you'll find depict this, which is why they are often associated with winter and snow.

If successful, they will pair off, make a nest in the mountains, and lay eggs which hatch mid-May. Starting around June, baby



tancho are raised by their parents. They start to learn how to fly around September and in the spring, once mature, they

leave their nest to start their own lives.

Tancho live 20-30 years, making them a symbol of long life and good fortune. There is an expression in Japanese that says *tsuru wa sennen, kame wa mannen* (the crane lives for 1000 years, the turtle for 10,000), used when celebrating a monumental occasion. This refers to the crane's status as one of Japan's mythical creatures among the turtle and dragon, said to live for 1000 years.

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Events in Tokachi

NOTE: Please be aware that these and most other events may be cancelled to COVID-19 concerns and the current State of Emergency. During the State of Emergency, public facilities including parks and libraries are closed and many events have been cancelled. Currently, the state of emergency in Hokkaido is set until June 20th and may be extended into the future. To find out if these events are still running, please contact the respective organizers or check out their webpages online.

When	What	Where/Contact
6/9 (Wed) 19:00-21:00	International Mini-Volleyball Night 国際ミニバレー・ナイト CANCELLED(中止)	
6/26 (Sat) 16:00-17:30	Japanese Conversation and Learning Table 森の日本語レッスン Improve your Japanese language skills in a friendly environment. Open to all levels of Japanese language learners NOTE: The 6/12 lesson has been CANCELLED(中止). The 6/26 lesson is still planned, but contact the TIRC beforehand for confirmation. TIRC Winter Garden Fee: Free of charge (no registration required) Organized by the Tokachi International Association	Tokachi International Relations Center 森の交流館・十勝 0155-34-0122 tirc@city.obihiro.hokkaido.jp
6/19 (Sat) 9:30-12:00	14th Annual Footpath Walking 第14回フットパスウォーキング Enjoy the beautiful Tokachi weather on a 5 km round-trip walk from the Ecology Park Visitor Center to the Tokachigaoka Observation Deck. Fee: ¥1000/adults, ¥100/children, includes lunch and insurance. Participants: Max 20, elementary school and below must be accompanied by an adult. Bring suitable clothes for the weather.	
6/26 (Sat) 13:00-14:00	Aozora Yoga 青空yoga Come and take part in a yoga class offered by Ms. Hoshina, a patient and celebrated yoga instructor! Fee: ¥1500/middle school and up, ¥300/elementary school and below. Includes drinks and snacks. Bring yoga clothing, a towel, water, and a yoga mat.	Tokachi Ecology Park Visitor Center 十勝エコロジーパーク財団 0155-32-6780 www.tokachi-ecopark.jp

The Red-Crowned Crane of Hokkaido

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This status and symbolism is one reason why origami cranes are so popular. If you work at a school, you may have seen students string together a ton of origami cranes into a rope of sorts. This is called *senbazuru* (1000 cranes). It is said that if you fold 1000 cranes, you will be granted health and happiness, or even a wish!

You may have heard the story of Sadako, a girl from Hiroshima who developed radiation-related leukemia from the atomic bombing of World War 2. While in the hospital, he heard about the *senbazuru* and set off on her paper-folding journey. When she died, she became a symbol for peace, origami cranes along with her.

The Ainu had a strong reverence for the *tancho*. It was considered a *kamui* (god) from the swamplands called *sarorun*. Its dance was a symbol of natural beauty and was honored by a dance developed by the Ainu called *sarorun rimse* (crane dance) in which women dressed in blue traditional clothing and performed a dance imitating the dance of



I saw this nice bird hanging out near Honbetsu!

北海道のタンチョウ

the crane.

Did you know that they are endangered? Throughout history, the *tancho* disappeared from mainland Japan due to overhunting, and the urbanization of their homes in the swamplands of Kushiro reduced their numbers to the point of extinction. At one point, there were only 33 confirmed *tancho* in all of Japan... At that time, a local farmer in Kushiro fed some cranes he saw in his farm. They continued to return for food and his farm was converted into a preservation for cranes. Thanks to his

efforts, the number of wild *tancho* is well over 1000!

Although they mainly live in the marshes of Kushiro, young cranes often travel over the mountains into Tokachi. I hope that any cranes you encounter in your travels bring you good luck!

You can visit the crane preservations in Kushiro to gain more first-hand information on cranes and, depending on what time of the year you go, get a chance to see wild cranes dancing. Have fun learning!

Japanese Corner: Homonyms

にほんごコーナー: 同音異義語

This month, I would like to talk about homonyms! They are words that have the same pronunciation but different meaning, such as here vs. hear, and won vs. one. Some have the stress on different syllables, such as DEsert vs desERT.

Japanese also has intonation, even though most textbooks avoid it. There are complex rules that are involved, but in a nutshell, Japanese words have accent patterns involving rising and falling pitch.

There are many homonyms in Japanese which differ only by pitch. Here are some common words that you might be mispronouncing! Note that these are based on the standard Tokyo dialect of Japanese and is different depending on regional dialects.



aME	飴	candy
Ame	雨	rain
kaMI	紙、髪	paper, hair
KAmi	神	God
iTSUKA	5日	5th of the month
Itsuka	いつか	sometime
NIhon	2本	2 long objects
niHOOn	日本	Japan
HAshi	箸	chopsticks
haSHI	橋	bridge

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Movies At Cinema Taiyo, in Obihiro

(Nishi 3, Minami 11)
Tel: (0155) 20-1525

**Due to COVID-19, release dates for new films may be postponed.
Please contact Cinema Taiyo directly for more details.**

Times and movies are subject to change! For space reasons, not all movies are listed.
To confirm, call or check online at: http://www.taiyogroup.jp/cinema/theater/_obihiro/movie.shtml

Title	Language	Dates
Gentlemen (<i>Jentorumen</i>)	Eng with Jpn sub	Until 3 rd
Evangelion: 3.0+1.0 Thrice Upon a Time (<i>Shin •Evangerion Gekijō-ban</i>)	Jpn	Until 17 th
Cruella (<i>Kuruera</i>)	Eng with Jpn sub, Jpn dub	Until 24 th
Rurouni Kenshin: The Beginning (<i>Rurouni Kenshin Saishūshō The Beginning</i>)	Jpn	From 4 th
CHARACTER (<i>Kyarakutaa</i>)	Jpn	From 11 th

Japanese Corner: Homophones (continued)

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Let's get advanced! A word's accent pattern affects the intonation of other parts of the sentence. While 2 words might have the same accent pattern, the particles that come after might be pronounced high or low depending on the word they come after! This leads to 4 kinds of accent patterns in Japanese. In the following words, the lines represent "high" and "low" pitches.

1. Start high, continue low

TO ni ka ku とにかく anyway

2. Start low, rise and come back down at some point

a ZA ra shi あざらし seal (animal)

3. Start low, rise and never come down

ke SHI GO MU 消しゴム eraser

4. Start low, rise and come back down AFTER the word

ha SA MI はさみ scissors

You may be wondering that if 3 and 4 both start low and continue high, then what's the difference? It has to do with what I mentioned earlier about particles. You see, particles don't have a set pitch accent. They change depending on the previous word. In the following, both words are homonyms and have the same pitch accent (low-high), but "nose" is category 3 and "flower" is 4. Notice how the pitch for the particle *ga* changes!

ha NA	鼻	nose
ha NA	花	flower
ha NA GA ka YU i	鼻がかい	My nose itches.
ha NA ga sa ku	花が咲く	Flowers bloom.

Confusing...but interesting! If you'd like to learn more about pitch accent in Japanese, you can check out the NHK Japanese Accent Dictionary from your local library, or search for "OJAD—Online Japanese Accent Dictionary". Good luck with your studies!

Obihiro Pioneer can be found at the following locations: Obihiro City Hall, Tokachi International Relations Center, Obihiro University International Center, Obihiro Tourism and Convention Center inside the Obihiro JR Station, Obihiro Public Library, Tokachi Plaza, Cinema Taiyo, Joy English Academy and online at www.city.obihiro.hokkaido.jp (click on "Information for Foreigners")

"Obihiro Pioneer" is a newsletter published monthly by the Obihiro City Tourism and Goodwill Exchange Section for residents of the Tokachi District and related parties. The contents of this newsletter do not necessarily represent the official views or opinions of the Tourism and Goodwill Exchange Section or the City of Obihiro. Questions? Tel (0155) 65-4133 or send e-mail to the Editing Team at international@city.obihiro.hokkaido.jp.