

## **Wildlife on your doorstep: Open the door to the nature in front of you at the zoo!**

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Since 2008, we have been working with the Wild Bird Society of Japan to help children find out about their surrounding environment through a series of programs observing native birds living in the zoo. There is a 1.4 ha copse in the zoo including various plants, insects and birds. For this program we focused on the Japanese great tit, one of the most well known birds in Japan. The program consists of three parts;

- Making a bird-house and putting it in a tree.
- Observing parental care and watching protected chicks in the zoo if possible.
- And examining nest materials.

The following effects were observed in this program;

- Raising awareness of the importance of an ecosystem; to support one life, an enormous number of lives are needed for survival.
- Providing a better environment for native birds; Hollow trees are rarely found in the copse at the moment, the Japanese great tit needs bird-houses as temporally nest space.
- Educational use of protected native birds in the zoo; the zoo accepts a 100 chicks a year from people who find weak or injured animals in the region. Zoo veterinarians treat them and re-introduce them to the wild when they recover.