

Toshijima Island

Area: 6.98 km² (2.69 mi²)
Population: 2046 (January 2019)

答志島

Toshijima Island is located on the point where the nutrient rich water of Ise-bay and the Kuroshio ocean current meet. That's why the fishing waters are abundant and the island has prospered since ancient times. More than half of the inhabitants are fishermen. There are three villages on the island and everyone has its own unique character.



People in Momotori area cultivate a local brand of oyster called "Momokomachi" which is one of the tastiest foods on the island. Wakame seaweed and Nori seaweed are cultivated in this area too, as well as many types of vegetables and rice.

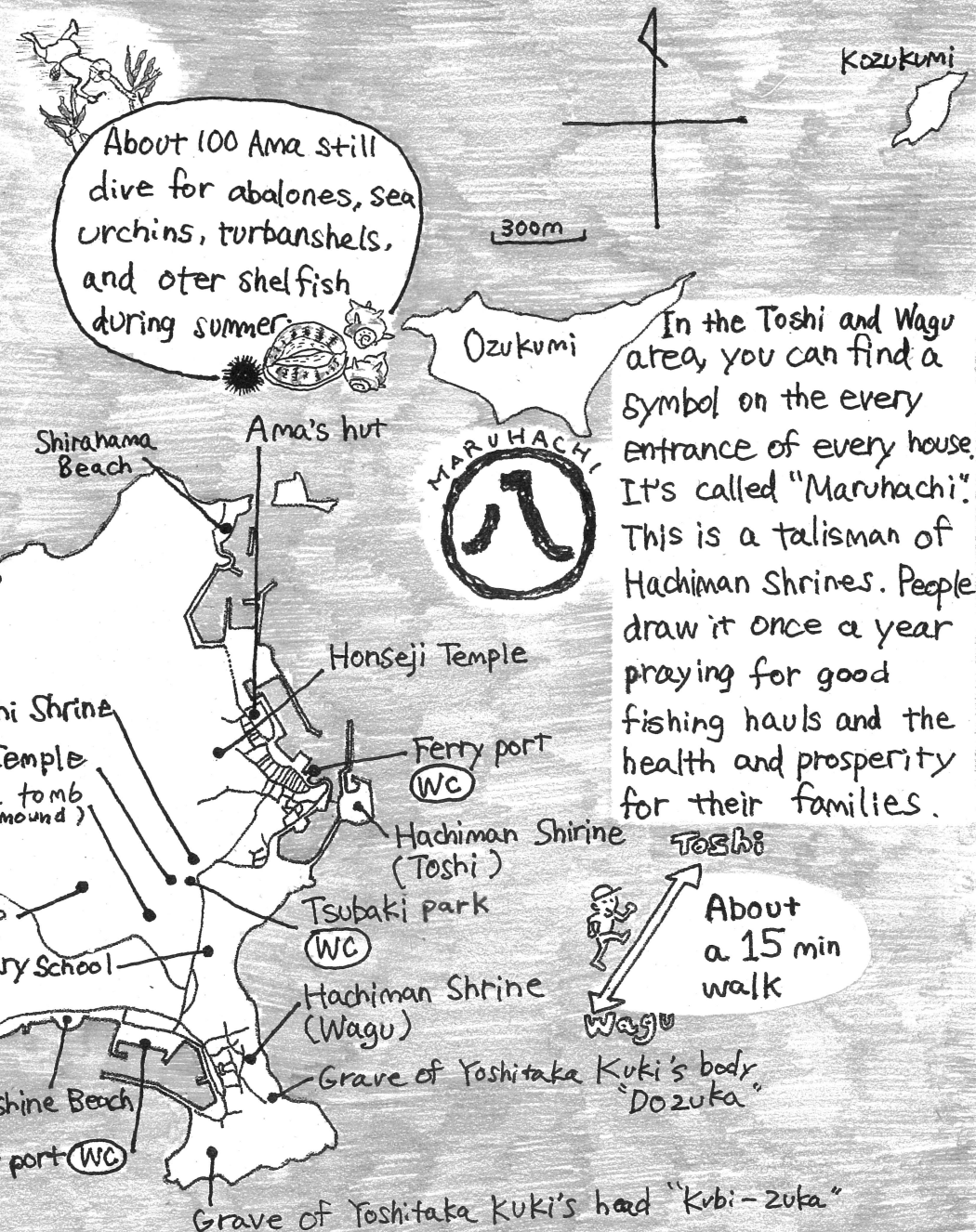
Toshijima Island cannot be talked about without mentioning the **Neyako system**. This is an island custom where 15 year-old boys are placed in under a set of Neya-oya (fosterparents) who can act as their guardians or substitute for their parents. The boys stay at their Neya-oya's house every night and pass the time with their Neya-oya and companies until they get married or become 26 years old. Even though the Neyako groups break up over time, the strong relationships with their Neya-oya and companies last for ever. Many coastal villages in Japan used to have this kind of system.

Toshi

The biggest village on the island
Population: 1000 approx
30 minutes by ferry from Toba's Sadahama ferry terminal.

答志

However, Toshijima's Toshi community is the only remaining village where it survives to this day.



和 Wagu

The village known for Wakame and Sawara
Population: 400 approx
20 minutes by ferry from Toba's Sadahama ferry terminal.

Wagu is a large producer of cultivated Wakame seaweed and pole-and-line fished Sawara (Spanish mackerel). There are about 50 suppliers of the Wakame in this area harvesting and salting the Wakame from February to April. You can see the locals cutting the Wakame into parts for processing and smell the Wakame boiling in vats all around the port during this season.

Momotori 桃取

The half-agricultural and half-fishing village
Population: 600 approx
12 minutes by ferry from Toba's Sadahama ferry terminal.



Momotori faces west, so you can see beautiful sunsets from here.



An archery ritual is held in February.

Yoshitaka KUKI was a general who commanded a strong navy in the 16th century. He used to live in Toba Castle which was located in center of Toba City. After being on losing side of a large civil war (Sekigahara), he came to Toshijima Island, and performed seppuku (committing suicide by cutting open the abdomen). Historic landmarks of Yoshitaka Kuki can be found in the Wagu area.

