



World Wetlands Day Morning Speech #15 By Sophie



Good morning everyone. February 2nd is known as World Wetlands Day (世界湿地の日) and is celebrated around the world to raise awareness about the importance of wetlands. Wetlands are really important for the natural environment for habitat, food and function.

But first of all, what is a ‘wetland’? Wetlands are simply “wet areas”. They can be in salt water (海水) or fresh water (淡水) environments. They include things like rivers, lakes, swamps (沼) and even rice paddies! Many wetlands are so important that they are protected under international laws.

Also, many types of birds rely on wetlands and travel around the world to visit different ones, depending on seasons. How can this be? Well, many wetlands are important habitats (生息地) for many birds including the Red-Crowned Crane, or Japanese Crane (タンチョウヅル) and Stellar sea eagle (オオワシ). Birds often move across the earth in search of warmer weather. For example, in Australia there are about 36 species of birds that visit from other countries yearly, when in the north, like in Japan, we are experiencing winter! So, if we harm the wetlands in one country like Japan, it can affect the health of other wetlands in other countries like Australia. We are connected as a global community!



One famous wetland and national park in Australia is called Kakadu, and is located in the Northern Territory. It is about 20,000 km² (about half the size of Sweden) and is home to about 280 different species of birds. During the summer time, Kakadu gets tropical rain (typhoons) getting about 1.5 m of rain. This floods about one third of the park! Kakadu is protected under international laws as it is a very important habitat for many species of animals around the world. There are many famous waterfalls in Kakadu and I was lucky to go and see this beautiful area with my own eyes. It didn’t disappoint!

Please choose the correct answer:

<p>1) What are wetlands?</p> <p>A) Wet areas</p> <p>B) Rice paddies</p> <p>C) Rivers</p> <p>D) All of the above</p>	<p>2) Why are wetlands protected?</p> <p>A) They are beautiful to look at</p> <p>B) They are important for recreation</p> <p>C) They are important for ecosystems</p> <p>D) Many birds can be found there</p>
<p>3) Why do birds travel around the world?</p> <p>A) They are looking for warmer climates</p> <p>B) They enjoy flying</p> <p>C) They want to travel</p> <p>D) They are forced to move places</p>	<p>4) What is Kakadu?</p> <p>A) A national park and wetland area</p> <p>B) A large habitat</p> <p>C) Half the size of Sweden</p> <p>D) Protected under international law</p>