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JAPANESE MONKEYS AND THE JAPANESE PEOPLE: HISTORY AND ISSUES IN JAPANESE MONKEY CONSERVATION

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The ancestors of the Japanese people arrived to join monkeys in the Japanese archipelago 120,000-40,000 years ago, starting an intimate but fraught relationship in which the Japanese monkey has become interwoven into the lives and culture of the Japanese people in many ways. With an indigenous macaque species in their own nation, the Japanese people made an early start with primate research and conservation, reflecting traditional views of nature. However, Japanese views on nature have become more varied with the social changes brought about by the continuing westernization and modernization of life in Japan. Conflicts have intensified among an increasing number of stakeholders expressing interest in the conservation or utilization of Japan's primates. New views of nature are needed for new generations of the Japanese people to come to grips with many complex issues involving primates in Japan, such as the approximately 10,000 Japanese monkeys culled as pests every year, managing feral non-Japanese monkeys, or the experimental use of primates. Management and conservation based on biological principles and techniques need to be reconciled with society and culture. This imperative is unavoidable for any nation with primate habitat or managing a large primate population. This symposium revisits how researchers and the public have interacted with primates in Japan, to review conservation activities in light of social, cultural, biological, and environmental conservation frameworks, and identify critical issues for the co-existence of humans and primates.

Keywords: *Macaca fuscata*, wildlife management, conservation, Japanese society and culture