

Published by the Okayama Insider Group
Supported by the Fukutake Education and Culture Foundation
E-mail: OkayamaInsider@hotmail.co.jp

Catch Me If You Can!

by Noriko Ehara

From June to August, the *Otoshima Shaku* (photo), known as Ana-jako in other areas of Japan, are in season. They look similar to crawfish but their shell is soft. They live in deep holes in muddy coastal beaches.

Otoshima in Tamashima, Kurashiki city is a special spot for fishing for Ana-jako, so local people call them "*Otoshima Shaku*."

Not many people in Okayama city or other parts of Kurashiki city know or have ever tasted *shaku*, because *shaku* is very much a local food and to be honest they do not look tasty at all.

However, they are tasty when cooked and local



people deep fry them like tempura, shell and all, or boil them in soy sauce and sugar, and shell them before eating. *Shaku* turn red when cooked and taste like shrimp. In Tamashima, they are a part of the traditional food culture.

Fishing *shaku* is fun, too. First, rake away a patch in the mud and find the *shaku's* holes. Next, stick a calligraphy-brush into the hole. When the *shaku* inside comes out to defend its territory, you quickly catch it.

Shaku fishing is a battle of wits. It sounds easy but

come and try it! You might not catch any, but it sure is fun!

Okayama Insider's Shaku Fishing Event in Tamashima

From 4.00pm, 29 July 2007

Okayama Insider invites you to join other insider readers and writers in our first ever Shaku Fishing Event in Otoshima in Tamashima, (about 20-30 minutes by car from JR Shin-Kurashiki station.) Master *shaku* fisherman, Mr. Asano will show you where to find them and teach you how to fish them FOR FREE! We will deep fry our catch tempura-style and taste fresh Shaku on the foreshore. After sunset, we'll let of a few celebratory firecrackers together! All you need is a pair of rubber boots for fishing in. Bring your friends but you MUST book by emailing the Okayama Insider editors at OkayamaInsider@hotmail.co.jp. We hope to see you there!